

An MND Statutory Board

In collaboration with



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Audit and Inspection Group
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15th October 2020

Dear Sir / Madam

JOINT BCA / SCAL CIRCULAR 2020

MANAGEMENT OF ROVING SUB-CONTRACTOR (RSC) WORKERS

Objective

1. This circular is to –
 - (a) inform the industry of the potential risk of COVID-19 spread by RSC workers
 - (b) share with the industry good practices to mitigate the risk

Background and Potential Risk of COVID-19 Spread by RSC Workers

2. During the August resurgence of COVID-19 cases at Sungei Tengah Lodge (STL) (**Annex A**), there was a situation where numerous workers under one employer living in 2 rooms at STL were cross deployed to 6 different project sites. When 2 of the workers were tested positive for COVID-19, it resulted in safety time-outs to 3 projects. More sites could have been impacted if the roommates of the 2 workers had also tested positive.

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3. Such **Roving Sub-Contractor (RSC)** workers are not uncommon in worksites. Depending on the contractual arrangement, they could be plying various trades such as door/windows installation, vector control and instrumentation works. As they are only stationed at a worksite for a short period of time, they have the potential to rove between various worksites between the scheduled Rostered Routine Test (RRT) swabbing. Thus, they present a higher risk of spreading COVID-19 across different worksites if stringent safe management measures (SMM) are not adhered to, potentially causing disruptions to multiple worksites.

Current Requirements for Short Term Workers

4. Under the current COVID-Safe Worksite Criteria¹, short term workers who operate at site for short durations should carry out their site visits and tasks outside the work hours of the main workforce (including during off hours i.e. at night/ weekends or before work times), *where possible*. If this is not feasible, workers from these RSCs shall only work in their designated zones as demarcated by the builder and be under the close supervision of a Safe Distancing Officer (SDO) to ensure compliance to the worksite SMM.

Good Practices to Further Mitigate Risk of RSC Workers

5. BCA has collaborated with SCAL, to further develop good practices that construction site can adopt and implement, to further mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread by RSC workers.

6. Main Contractors shall ensure compliance with the existing requirements and are encouraged to adopt the additional good practices (**Annex B**) to mitigate the risk of RSC workers.

Use of Technology

7. Digital technology solutions to enhance compliance to the SMM (e.g. wearables to detect and enforce distancing and facilitate contact tracing) are being developed and would be made more widely available, following pilot trials. There is up to 80% co-funding support² for adoption of such technology. Main Contractors are encouraged to deploy these technologies to facilitate self-checks and supervision of RSC workers.

¹ Details can be found in <http://www1.bca.gov.sg/docs/default-source/bca-restart/covid-safe-restart-criteria.pdf>.

² Support is given under the funding scheme for Advanced Digital Solutions (ADS), as part of the Resilience Budget 2020 to help enterprises deepen their digital capabilities, strengthen business continuity measures and build longer term resilience. More details can be found in www.imda.gov.sg/advanceddigitalsolutions.

Clarification

8. Please disseminate the contents of this circular to your members. If you need any clarification, please submit your enquiry through BCA's Online Feedback Form at <https://www.bca.gov.sg/feedbackform/>. Thank you.

Yours faithfully



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GROUP DIRECTOR
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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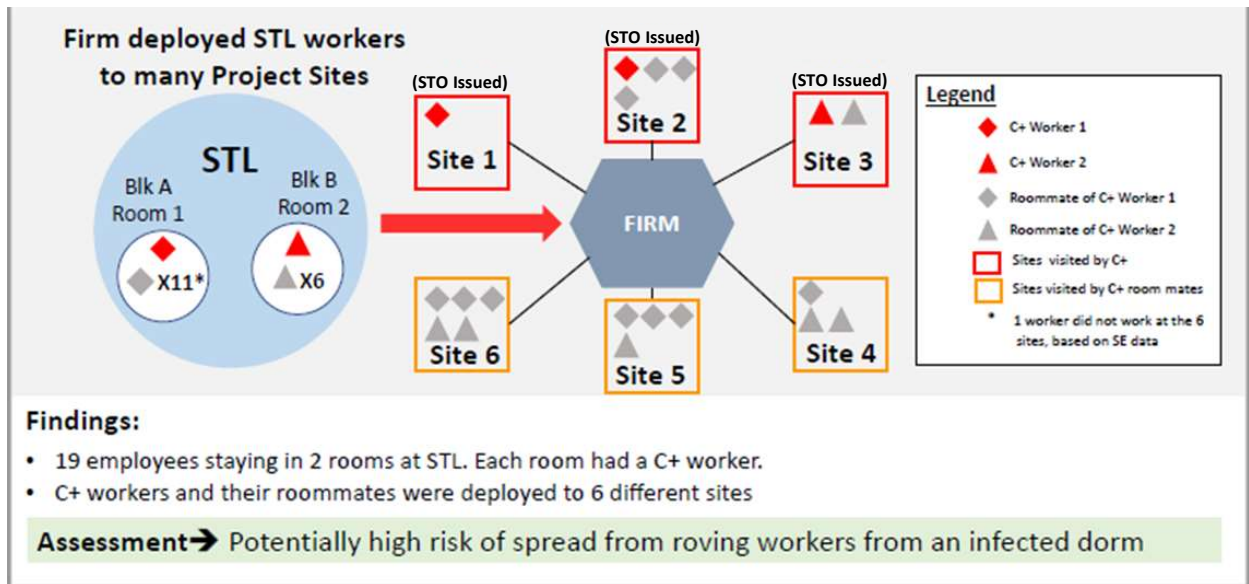
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Annex A – Case Study on Potential Risk of RSC Workers

Case Study on Sungei Tengah Lodge



Annex B – Requirements and Good Practices to Further Mitigate Risk of RSC Workers

1. Current Requirements

RSC workers who only need to work in construction sites for a short duration, must comply with the following conditions:

- i. All RSC workers are to only work in their designated zones as demarcated by the Main Contractor
- ii. All RSC workers are to be under the close supervision of a SDO, who is to ensure that the workers:
 - a. stay within their segregated zones, and do not interact with workers from other contractors
 - b. observe safe distancing practices while carrying out their duties

2. Good Practices

The following good practices can be implemented to further mitigate risk of RSC workers:

- i. RSC workers are clearly identified and provided with stronger visual identifier for ease of ensuring adherence to enhanced SMM, such as
 - a. Different coloured vest from the main workforce
 - b. Vest/PPE worded with “Roving” or any indicative logos/words to show that they are RSC workers
- ii. SDO to escort RSC workers from entrance of worksite, directly to their work zones
- iii. Separate or staggered usage of common facilities (e.g. canteen and rest areas) from the main workforce to prevent interaction between RSC workers and the main workforce
- iv. Briefing on the enhanced SMM to RSC workers to reinforce the additional responsibility of RSC workers in preventing COVID-19 spread across multiple worksites