

WORKING SAFELY ON VESSELS AND IN THE FIELD DURING PHASE 3

If you still have concerns after reading this guidance, please discuss these initially with your line manager or supervisor. Discuss matters with the Ship's Master or Operations Manager. The team in HR or the Directorate, Rich Abell as the employee representative for health and safety, or Chris Clay as the Safety Health and Environment Advisor will be able to consider and address any concerns that remain outstanding.

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Summary

- Consider if your work needs to be completed at this time. Working at home is still the default position
- For work on SAMS' vessels, follow this guidance and any guidance and instruction issued through the vessel's staff
- For work on third party vessels, confirm that they have suitable arrangements in place
- Consider travel arrangements in your risk assessment. No car sharing is preferred, otherwise put in place suitable precautions that everyone is happy with
- Choose accommodation that complies with Government guidance
- Maintain social distancing
- Always employ good hygiene, including making sure you have access to hand sanitising gels if running water is not available
- Plan your work, and think about how your activity will need to change from how you have carried it out previously.

Phase 3 easing of 'lockdown' and work on vessels and for fieldwork

With the announcement of the move to Phase 3 for the easing of 'lockdown' by the Scottish Government on 9th July, the restrictions on many activities in Scotland began to ease. It is therefore now possible to resume work on vessels (owned by SAMS or third parties) and in the field, providing that this guidance can be adopted and subject to an individual risk assessment addressing the risks posed by COVID-19. There is no requirement to seek approval for the activity through the Directorate.

General precautions

It is important to continue with **social distancing**. That is, wherever feasible*, there should be a gap of at least 2m between you and your colleagues.

[* It has been acknowledged by UK Government that there may be times when this is not possible in research environments. The onus is on us all to effectively manage any enhanced risks.]

It is essential that **good hygiene** is maintained. Please continue to regularly wash your hands for at least 20 seconds where facilities are available. If running water is not available, ensure there is access to hand sanitising gel containing at least 70% alcohol.

A note on PPE. It is important that the measures we use to try and control the virus **do not rely unnecessarily on the use PPE**. The measures indicated above and below adopt this principle. There may be instances where we have to rely to the use of face coverings but we anticipate these will be very limited and they should be discussed with Chris Clay. Of course, the PPE that you would use normally for specific risk-assessed tasks **MUST** still be used.

Work on Seol Mara

Please discuss your activity with the Ship's Master and Ship's Operation Manager at an early stage. They have put in place control measures for safe working and will be able to advise on the feasibility of your work. You can also discuss your proposal with the SHE Advisor as needed.

The aim will be to try and reduce the number of times the Seol Mara sails by combining different activities into one sailing where possible. The Ship's Operation Manager will identify opportunities for this.

The **maximum number permitted on the Seol Mara will be FOUR**, including the skipper and crew. This will allow suitable distancing between the crew and workers. We anticipate that there will generally be two workers who position themselves at opposite sides of the vessel during operations.

During offshore operations, **only the skipper will be permitted in the wheelhouse**. Please therefore consider this in your planning as there will be no shelter for general workers during adverse weather. Ensure you have suitable clothing and that the duration of cruises are minimised as far as possible (generally, no more than half a day). Try to avoid using the vessel's toilet during the cruise, although the skipper will be able to temporarily leave the wheelhouse if there is an absolute need and if it is safe to do so. Please bring your own food and drinks with you.

You will need to **review your existing risk assessment** for your activity to consider the potential risks from virus transmission. This may need to include potential changes to loading and unloading of equipment and samples from the vessel, and changes to on board procedures, particularly with the deployment of equipment where previously you may have needed to have been in close proximity with a colleague. Can you make more use of the vessel's lifting equipment to avoid team manual handling? Can you use tag lines to stabilise loads during lifting which will allow better separation, rather than doing this by holding equipment? Is it possible to rig up multiple screens to view data, rather than all workers gathering around one computer?

Please make use of the **hand sanitising gels on board before and after each cruise**, and at regular intervals throughout.

Work on third party vessels

It is anticipated that the third party operator will have in place their own procedures and you should ask to see any documented risk assessments or guidance that they may have developed. You can refer to this information when developing your own risk assessment for your work.

We expect that the standards applied to the work on the third party vessel will be equivalent to those

detailed in this guidance. If there is any significant difference that may potentially impact your health, you should ensure that you can work with the third party to implement possible additional measures that may be needed. If this is not possible, you will need to determine through your risk assessment if the activity is feasible at this time. You may of course need to work to higher standards than those described in this standard that are dictated by the third party.

Work-related travel in private or SAMS' vehicles, or on public transport

You should **try to avoid using shared vehicles wherever possible**. If this is unavoidable, for example for reasons of safety or if costs are unreasonably elevated, the use of shared vehicles is permissible with the following precautions. This includes hired vehicles:

- All potential occupants must be completely comfortable with the arrangements proposed. It is very likely that some people will not be happy with sharing arrangements and every effort should be made to encourage people to speak out and subsequently support further arrangements that may be needed because of this
- You should try to plan multiple activities where you only share the vehicle with the same people
- The numbers in the vehicle should be limited as far as possible
- You should wash your hands before and after the journey
- The common touch points inside and outside the vehicle should be wiped down before and after the journey using a sanitising wipe containing 70% alcohol or equivalent. These include handles (inside and out), steering wheel, centre touchscreen and radio, handbrake and gearstick, keys, indicators and wiper stalks, windows, mirrors and mirror switches and seat adjusters
- A face covering must be worn by all occupants for the length of the journey
- You should try to keep as much distance between occupants as space allows
- You should maintain good fresh air ventilation throughout the journey with the windows open where possible

If you are hiring a vehicle, you should check with the operator for any requirements they may have and to confirm that suitable cleaning etc of the vehicle will take place before you use it.

The use of a private, SAMS or hired vehicle is preferred to the use of public transport for work purposes. If you must use public transport, [guidance is available from Transport Scotland](#) which you should familiarise yourself with. **The use of a face covering on public transport is mandatory** unless you are exempt.

Accommodation

It will be possible for you to use accommodation if necessary to support fieldwork and other travel but this should be in line with the [UK Government guidance](#). In brief:

- You should have a single bedroom with ensuite facilities
- The accommodation provider should be able to allow social distancing between guests
- Use a face covering when in common areas like corridors. You can of course remove your face covering to eat and drink

You should **check with potential accommodation providers** before booking that they have put in place suitable measures in line with official guidance. Larger providers may be more prepared.

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