

COVID 19 Daily Brief – 22nd June

In today's brief:

- SL update from Martin Chown

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Lockdown is beginning to lift, and many parts of life and the economy are beginning to return to something more like the normal we were used to before lockdown. Non-essential shops have begun to reopen, and more and more people are returning to their place of work. For many of us work is an activity, not simply a location, but for thousands of people in our business and across our supply chain, work is both an activity and a location; this is why we have progressively restarted work in many of our offices and why we are opening more and more physical areas of work on our site.

We now have around 2,000 people safely working on the Sellafield site on a typical working day. By September we expect to have around 4,000 people on site. This is still roughly only half the 8,000-plus people who were working on site before COVID-19, but we have adapted the way we work, moved some people off site and paused some work lower down the priority of hazard and risk reduction so that we can make room for our highest priority work.

The people working on site over the next six months will be split roughly half and half between Sellafield Ltd employees and our supply chain. I took some time out on Wednesday to speak to our supply chain with a video meeting for the first time since my appointment. I shared with them the same priorities and focus I have shared with the business and our stakeholders.

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We take our responsibilities to our partners seriously: our workforce, our local communities and our business partners. Amongst the many lessons that we have been reminded of throughout the duration of the pandemic to date, the fact that our success is mutual is perhaps the most important one. When Sellafield succeeds, our partners succeed. We will soon be restarting more work across the four value streams and will bring forward plans for the restart of Magnox reprocessing.

This will not be a simple return to ‘business as usual’ – familiar places of work will look and feel different – so it’s more important than ever before to place safe working at the heart of everything we do, particularly when returning to work after time away. This means extra effort and care from line managers taking the time and making the space to have a conversation with people returning to work about how they feel and any concerns they might have. For all of us as individuals, it also means looking out for each other.

Our work continues to be noticed; pandemic or not, what we do matters. This week, Rebecca Weston, David Peattie and I welcomed BEIS Minister Nadim Zahawi MP as part of a ‘virtual visit’ of Sellafield - an innovative way in which to ensure that the Minister responsible for our area of work can remain connected to the details of our mission and the challenges ahead. With a physical visit not being possible, a ‘virtual visit’ allowed for presentations about the site to be made and for conversations to be had. Simple but effective, and an illustration of one of the many ways in which we are likely to change over coming months and years.

Thank you for everything you have done to help us reach this point and for making the acceleration of our work possible.

Stay safe, be kind and look after each other. Martin
