

The Great Pause

When the dust settles on the Covid-19 crisis, how will downtime define your business?

While some jurisdictions across the country have defined construction and transport as essential activities, other areas have not been so lucky – to the extent that numerous industry leaders are considering declaring force majeure respective to their own circumstances.

Though this month does potentially represent a more productive chapter within what has been called the Great Pause, it's important to stay informed about construction projects in your region.

Acknowledging that the information is regularly updated, on March 28, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) issued an Advisory Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response. While merely advisory in nature, the declaration did provide a range of services and job types that CISA considers "essential critical infrastructure workers."

Industry or industry-related services on the essential list included: Food & Agriculture, Energy, Transportation & Logistics, Public Works & Infrastructure Support Services, Critical Manufacturing, Hazardous Materials, Defense Industrial Base, Commercial Facilities and Residential/Shelter Facilities and Services.

Tracking downtime

Further (also at the time of this writing), according to an evolving "Tracker of



Designed by some of the country's foremost transportation experts, the training system provides full tracking and reporting, and is customized to the type of vehicle your employees will drive, and specifically formulated for drivers operating mobile cranes, heavy haul tractors and concrete pump trucks.

Construction Shutdowns Across the U.S." report released in early April by law firm Foley & Lardner LLP, 28 states have allowed all projects to resume work, 13 states are allowing some projects to resume, 7 states are undecided and just 3 states are allowing no projects to resume.

Depending on individual situations, some industry companies have had to adapt in a myriad of ways in order to keep workers busy, informed, engaged or even confident that they'll have jobs when the dust settles on Covid-19.

Downtime being what it is, NBIS and its valued clientele are well-versed in

the language of risk – whether that risk is found on the job, or within a pandemic – and we continue to listen to our customers, industry leaders and association heads in order to get a feel for how organizations are adjusting.

What we have heard

Indeed, tough decisions proliferate as organizations continue to plan for decreases in capacity and cost structure. Some companies are, thankfully, still able to work a mostly normal schedule, while others have had to familiarize themselves with remote communication in order to bring together teams, or connect with individual employees.

For those companies working hard to keep employees focused and busy within a lull, consistent communication seems to be a key practice. One company executive described how he rotates responsibility of leadership for each Zoom meeting, which requires preparation and accountability. It keeps them focused during the week, he explained, and gives them a connection to the greater cause.

Another company has implemented what they call a "mutual support" program – where workers are assigned a rotating cast of co-employees they have to check-in with each day.

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THE AUTHOR

Bill Smith, executive vice president, NBIS, is an expert on risk management and safe crane operations. He was a member of C-DAC, which assisted writing the OSHA Crane & Derricks Standard.

“ Some industry companies have had to adapt in a myriad of ways in order to keep workers busy, informed, engaged or even confident that they will have jobs when the dust settles on Covid-19. ”

Additionally, continued education is on the rise. Especially for construction and transport workers, this may be the perfect time to take advantage of such opportunities.

No matter the challenge

On that premise, the NBIS Online Driver Training program is available 24/7 and takes just 15 minutes to complete. Designed by some of the country's foremost transportation experts, the system provides full tracking and reporting, and is customized to the type of vehicle your employees will drive, and specifically formulated for drivers operating mobile cranes, heavy haul tractors and concrete pump trucks.

Zooming out, this could be a strategic time to plug your team into our Culture-

Shaping Safety Training – designed specifically to spotlight regulations, workplace safety issues (like slips, trips and falls and PPE) and rigging safety. You and your employees can participate anytime, anywhere, using a unique login.

It might also be the perfect occasion to run your team(s) through a mock audit. Investing in this type of exercise will not only demonstrate a company-wide commitment to safety, organizational readiness and operational integrity, but also will drive home the need for everyone to remain focused on regulatory compliance in every area of your operations.

Webinar presentation

Taking that into consideration, NBIS Specialized Transportation Program

Manager Bill Hebron recently presented a webinar for the Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association covering “Department of Transportation Audit Readiness.” Hebron's presentation included an overview of a DOT compliance review and related factors, fines and ratings post-review and how mock audits can benefit companies.

As FMCSA audit frequency is set to increase throughout 2020, this presentation is very much worth your while. Contact us for information on how to access it for use by your company.

Ultimately, now more than ever, as you focus on strengthening your company where it needs it most, remember to take advantage of any opportunities available to bolster your workforce and stay educated and informed. As always, know that NBIS is ready and willing to assist you, no matter the challenge.

Be ready to roll

Don't hesitate to reach out today for all the information you will need to get your workforce trained up and ready to roll when the country officially gets back to work. Call us at (860) 877-RMSS. ■

