

Labour Inspection and Covid-19: Challenges and Innovations

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Launch of National LI Guidelines on Covid-19

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Two Impacts of COVID-19 on Labour Inspectorates

OPERATIONAL

POLICY &
STRATEGIC

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

- Operational impact often depended on the features and effectiveness of public health responses
- LI classified as an essential service?
- Cessation or limitation of LI visits; and work from home arrangements

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

- Digital or distance inspection action as a stop-gap measure
- Enforcement of public health measures in workplaces
- Protection of LIs from infection in the performance of their work (training; PPE and support)
- Obstruction at workplaces

POLICY AND STRATEGIC IMPACT

- LI strategic response to vulnerable sites and worker communities (essential workers; migrant workers; dormitories; stranded overseas workers, etc.)
- Focus on occupational illness/disease which is a challenging field for labour inspection (and enterprises)
- Advisory services on prevention and mitigation took on a more prominent role

POLICY AND STRATEGIC IMPACT

- Strengthened cooperation between public health authorities and LI based on their respective mandates?
 - Developing consistent workplace policy guidance in line with public health measures
 - Coordinated actions enforcing public health measures
 - LI role in workplace reopening and subsequent outbreaks
 - Coordinated and consistent actions with regard to advisory services and enforcement measures (balancing support and protection of enterprises, jobs and workers).

POLICY AND STRATEGIC IMPACT

- Risk of attention on COVID-19 at work to the detriment of (significant) general working standards issues:
 - Wage reductions below legal minimums
 - Mass layoffs or work suspensions
 - Anti-union discrimination

(POSSIBLE) LONGER TERM IMPACTS

- Flexible LI working arrangements, remote inspection and the use of technology to assist labour inspection.
- Self-assessments are not a substitute for inspections.
- Emergency preparedness improved? What LI lessons can be applied to future public health crises?
- Budget cuts as a result of rising deficits

(POSSIBLE) LONGER TERM IMPACTS

- Longer term economic impact on key labour law issues and the need for LI vigilance (e.g. child labour; disguised employment)
- Covid-19 illness qualifying as an occupational disease and the role of LI in this determination
- LI cooperation with social partners in response to compliance challenges (LL and OSH)

NOTEABLE EVENTS AND RESOURCES

- 9th ASEAN LI Conference: “Strengthening LI Capability in the Post COVID-19 Era” (May 2021)
 - Strengthen link between public health and OSH policy
 - **Strengthen LI infectious disease management**
 - Formalise guidance to support E+W on workplace measures
 - Integrate mental well-being into OSH systems and policies

NOTEABLE EVENTS AND RESOURCES

- ILO Action Checklist “Prevention and Mitigation of COVID-19 at Work”
- IALI “Roles of labour inspection in a pandemic like COVID-19”
 - protecting the health of workers;
 - protecting the employment rights of vulnerable workers;
 - securing employment and incomes.

Thank You