



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

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Dear Chair

Work and Pensions Select Committee: Health and Safety Executive

Thank you for your time on 07 June 2021 to discuss the letter sent from my colleague, Professor John Simpson. As discussed, please see an updated table below.

2. Please could you share with the Committee some analysis of this data, in a form which would not risk identifying any of the workplaces, as you undertook to do on 17 March?

The “Public Health England (PHE) Regions Situations of Interest” spreadsheet was shared with the Committee on 22 April 2021. This includes workplace outbreaks reported to PHE that were judged to be of a more complex nature that might lead to major operational issues leading to closure of settings / disruption of services or might lead to significant ongoing transmission despite control measures. The document is an operational awareness tool that lists ‘situations of interest’ and their associated metrics, and in its complete form has identifiable information on work sites. It is not an exhaustive list of outbreaks as not all outbreaks are reported to, or managed by, PHE (some are managed by local authorities) and PHE teams will judge only some of these to be “Situations of Interest”. As a result, the number of workplace outbreaks reported in this spreadsheet are a significant underestimate. An analysis that shows sectors and types of workplaces that were reported to PHE and considered to be situations of interest can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1. High level analysis of 574 ‘Situations of Interest’ notified to PHE between January 2020 to March 2021 (not all are outbreaks)

Workplace	No. of situations of interest Jan 2020-March 2021	Average number of staff in workplace (min & max)	Average number of staff ill (min & max)
Close Contact Services	10	15 (1-64)	3 (1-13)
Distributors and Transporters	41	509 (15-2000)	14 (1-79)
First Responders	26	56 (5-250)	5 (1-21)
Manufacturers and Packers Food	183	460 (1-4000)	21 (1-291)
Manufacturers and packers Non Food	53	477 (4-6500)	15 (1-141)
Military sites	15	403 (5-2500)	12 (1-71)
Office	39	146 (14-750)	11 (1-47)
Other	91	234 (2-4200)	12 (1-86)
Primary food producers	16	344 (4-1000)	29 (1-123)
Restaurants and Caterers	26	33 (2-150)	3 (1-8)
Retailer	44	211 (4-4500)	10 (1-119)
Warehouses	30	794 (15-4371)	19 (1-138)

Notes:

1. This is not an exhaustive list of outbreaks as not all outbreaks are reported to, or managed by, PHE (some are managed by local authorities). PHE teams will judge only some of these outbreaks to be “Situations of Interest”.
2. “Situations of Interest” include workplace outbreaks that were judged to be of a more complex nature that might lead to major operational issues leading to closure of settings / disruption of services or might lead to significant ongoing transmission despite control measures.
3. The number of workplace outbreaks reported here is therefore a significant underestimate.

I hope that this update is helpful to the Committee.

Yours sincerely



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