

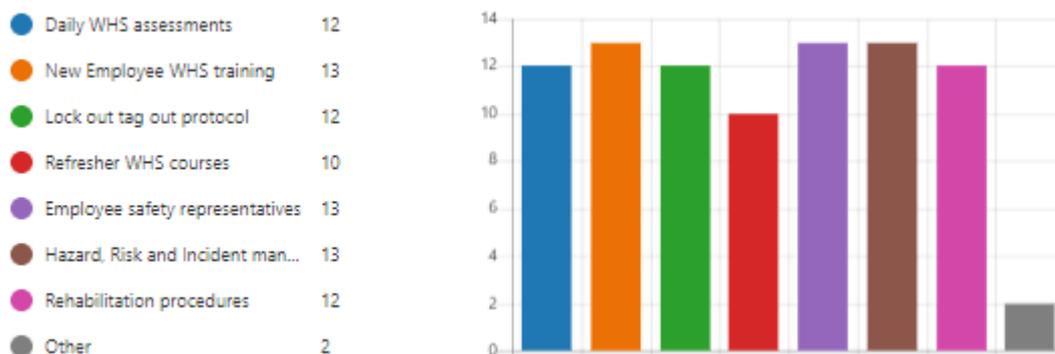


MINTRAC Industry WH&S Survey Results

As one of the initial stages of the project, MINTRAC conducted a survey through which they invited industry members from meat processing, small goods processing and butchers stores to participate. The purpose of this survey was to determine how industry WH&S protocol has changed as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic. Questions covered the topics of, what WH&S protocol was in place prior to Covid-19, how has protocol changed since Covid-19 and what impact has the pandemic had both on the workplace and the employees.

A total of 15 industry members responded to the survey questions. The results are discussed below.

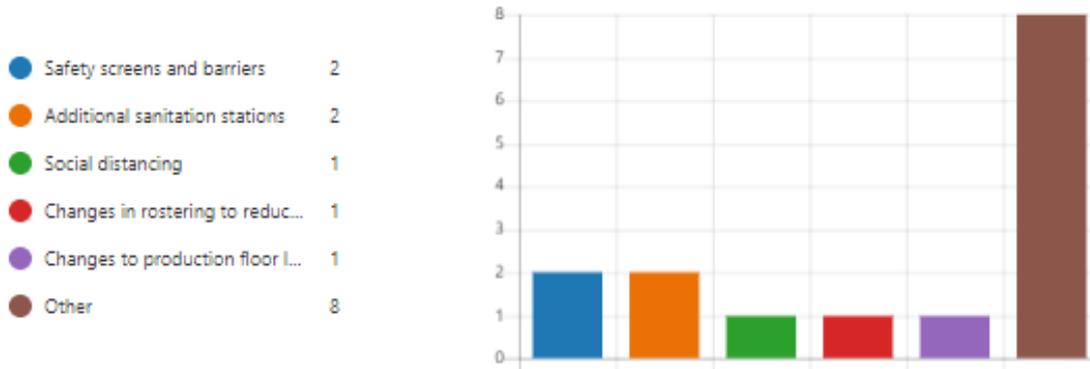
Firstly, employers were asked to discuss what WH&S practices were in place prior to Covid-19. We generated a list of the most common workplace WH&S practices within the meat industry. Respondents were also provided with the option of “Other” through which the responses: WHS procedures and polices was provided.



As seen by the response numbers in this question the majority of workplaces had similar WH&S processes in place prior to Covid-19.

Industry members were asked the following: “Prior to the outbreak of Covid-19 did you have any procedures in place for adapting to new health and biosecurity risks as they arose?” It was surprising to see that 50% of the survey respondents didn’t have any procedures in place with an additional three respondents stating that the protocol they had in place was specific to already identified health risks.

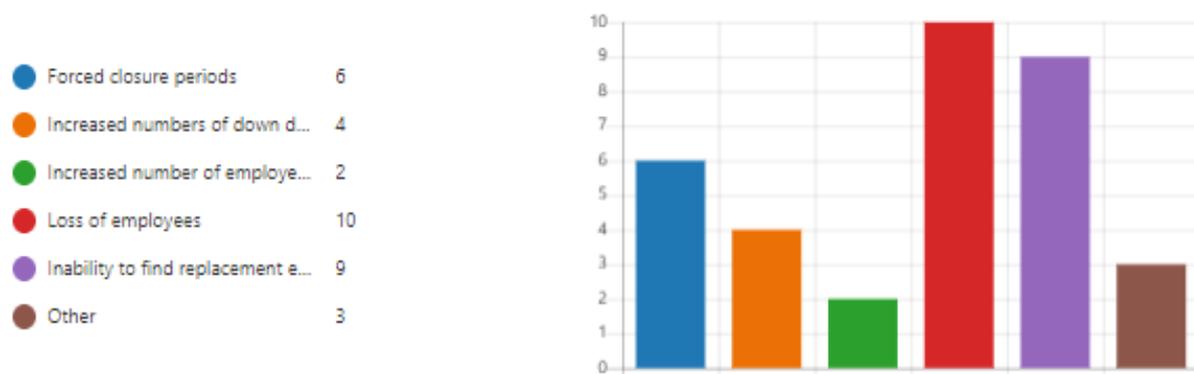
Employers were then asked to gauge the impact of Covid-19 on their workplace focusing on the impact to the workplace and it’s employees. When asked “Since the outbreak of Covid-19 have you implemented any additional WHS protocol?”. The majority of the respondents selected “other” when presented with the most common options of: safety screens and barriers, additional sanitation stations, social distancing, changes to rostering and changes to production areas. Some of the other implementations included mask wearing, temperature checks, QR codes and new processes and procedures.



Respondents were asked “How has Covid-19 impacted your company?”. They were provided with the options of:

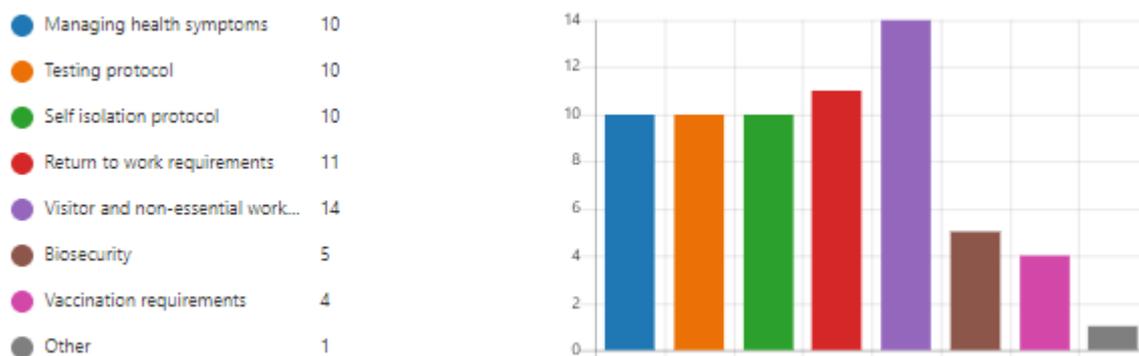
- Forced closure periods
- Increased number of down days
- Increased number of employee sick days
- Loss of employees
- Inability to find replacement employees
- Other

As you can see below the options most selected were related to the loss of employees and inability to find replacements along with forced closure periods and increased numbers of down days.

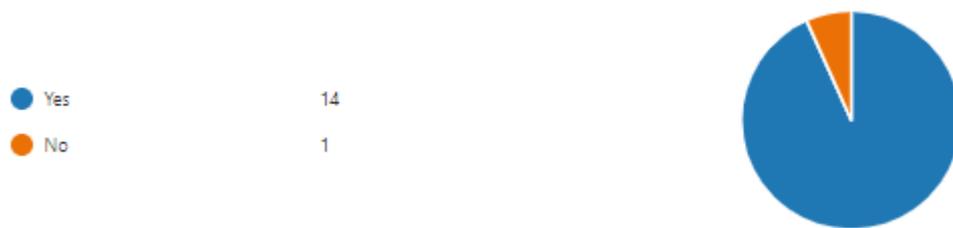


Regarding workplace policy changes have been widely adapted across industry organisations. These policy changes cover managing health symptoms, testing protocol, self isolation protocol and return to work requirements. However, the main area impacted by policy changes industry wide includes visitors and non-essential staff members access the plant.

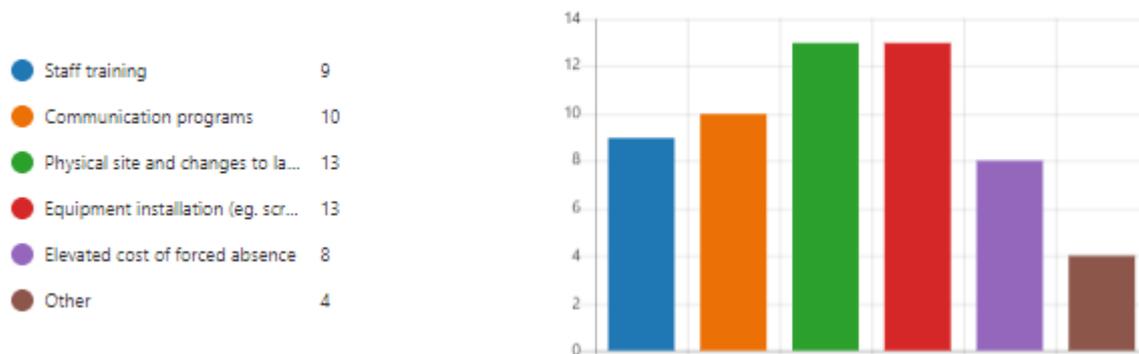
93% of respondents acknowledged that the implementation of these measures have incurred



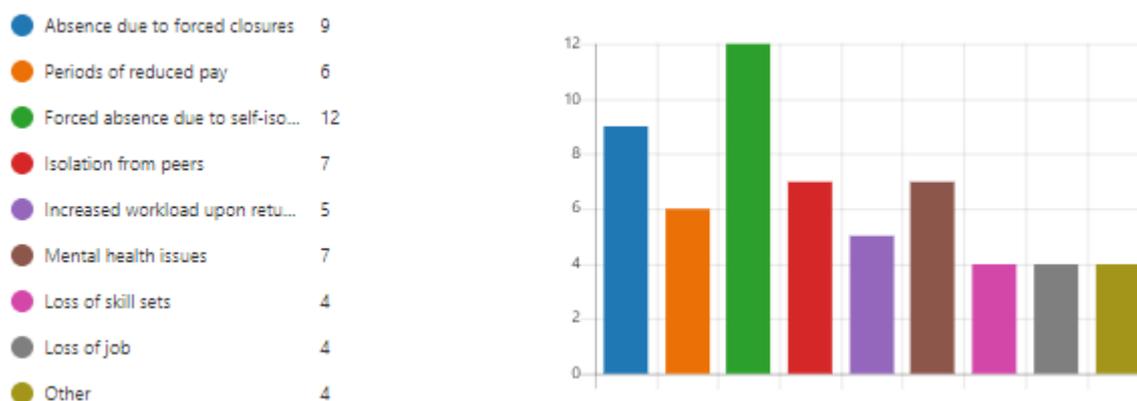
a cost to the employer.



The drivers of these additional costs was further broken down and evaluated through the following question: “What has driven the costs incurred with these changes/adoptions?”. Respondents identified that equipment installation and physical site changes were the largest cost factors as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak.

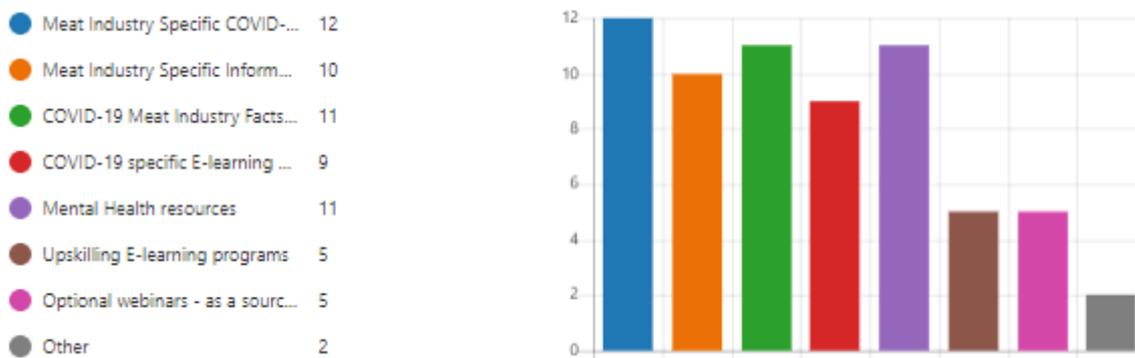


Upon the conclusion of a preliminary literature review conducted by MINTRAC it was identified that Covid-19 has a significant impact on employees. Many meat industry employees live in single person household or may be isolated from family members who live overseas, these additional pressures can impact employee mental health and wellbeing. This is reflected in the respondents answers to the question “How has Covid-19 impacted your employees?”. Aside from forced closures and absences due to Covid-19 the next two key issues identified by industry included isolation from peers and mental health tolls.



The purpose of this project was to assess currently available resources and to identify gaps in resources needed by industry. Respondents were asked, “Which of the following resources would aid you in educating your employees, upskilling your employees and providing your employees with options for social interactions during periods of isolation?”. The industry stakeholders identified a need for meat industry specific Covid-19 resources

including posters, factsheets and e-learning programs. Additionally, stakeholders identified a need for industry specific mental health resources.



Additional suggestions for resources included:

- Proactive programs to encourage vaccination uptake in the industry
- Communication pathways for employees and engagement through regular social media communications
- Clear and concise information on Covid-19 (as government information and online resources can be contradictory of each other)

Finally, MINTRAC investigated whether the translation of resources into alternative languages would benefit industry employees. Stakeholders identified that the five top languages spoken across the industry includes:

- Mandarin
- English
- Arabic
- Korean
- Vietnamese

80% of respondents identified that their workplaces would benefit from translated resources in their workplaces.



Overall, the survey highlighted some key industry insights into what the industry is lacking and provided suggestions for the development of industry resources. This survey also showed the impact of Covid-19 not only on the workplace but also on industry employees. From these findings MINTRAC has gone on to produce a range of new resources including the development on an online portal to house relevant meat industry resources.