



مينا لأك
MENALAC

مجلس الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا للترفيه والحداب السابح
Middle East and North Africa Leisure & Attractions Council

LET'S TALK SAFETY - DECEMBER 2021

RE-FOCUSING ON SAFETY AS WE CONTINUE TO MANAGE COVID



COVID continues to impact everyone – both at home and in work. We all had to introduce and learn new rules and new ways of living, working and playing - in safety language “new control measures”.

This article explores what the impact of COVID has been on existing safety as a result of having to implement entirely new working practices, operational stretches, supply chain pressures, new working patterns and for some an entirely new workplace environment.

For the leisure and entertainment industry, this included temporary periods of shutdown and phased re-opening as business cautiously returned.



This article recognises that, for a significant proportion of the MENA region, life and business is returning back to the “new normal”. This is driven by increased consumer confidence tied with regions that have reducing case rates, high levels of worker and general population vaccination and healthcare systems that have learnt and evolved and have good capacity to deal with the drop in the most serious COVID cases.



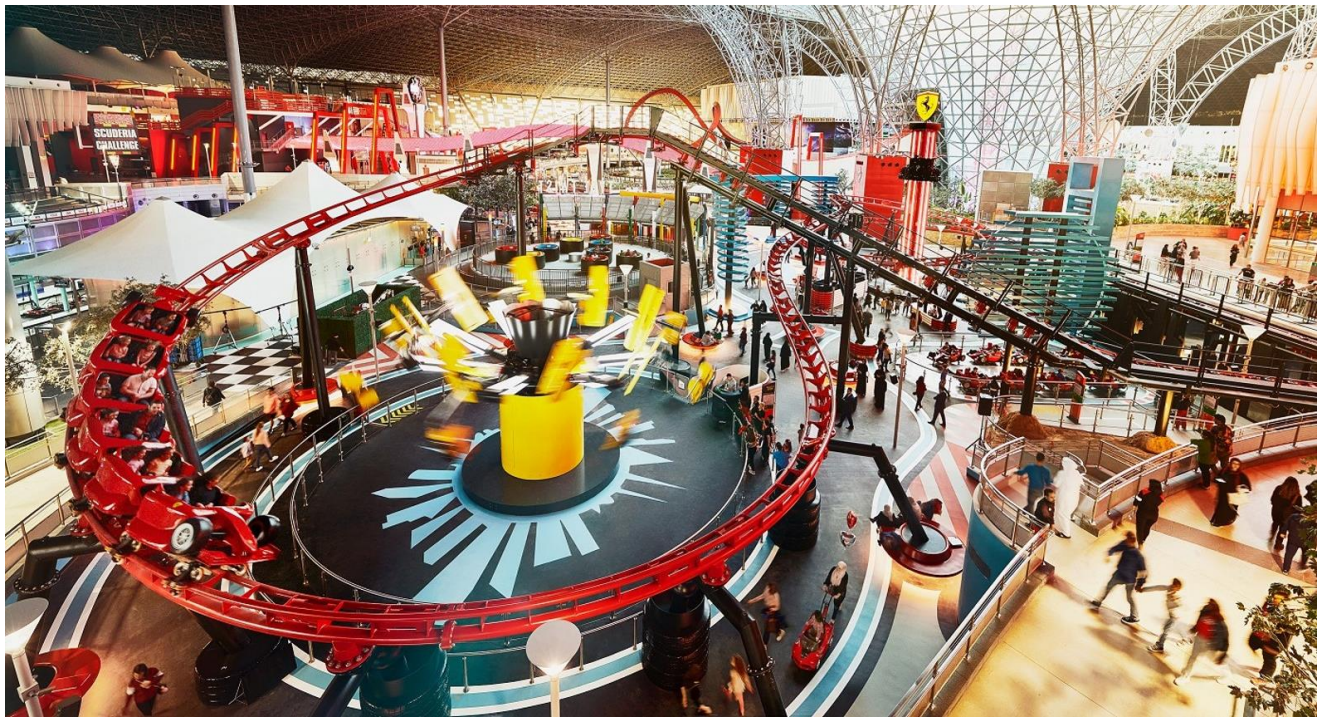
مينا لأك
MENALAC

مجلس الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا للترفيه والجذب السياحي
Middle East and North Africa Leisure & Attractions Council

LET'S TALK SAFETY - DECEMBER 2021

The emergence of variant COVID viruses is all too evident with Delta and more recently Omicron presenting new issues, risks and further challenges to our everyday lives and business environment. The need for continued vigilance is critical and organisations cannot afford to become complacent.

COVIDS IMPACT ON “TRADITIONAL” SAFETY WITHIN THE WORKPLACE.



HSE is a function that is driven by data. Time will allow us to numerically assess the impact that COVID has had on existing H&S metrics and accident rates in the years and months to follow.

As a simple example, many European government public transport bodies have already published data showing accident rates have significantly increased simply because people weren't prepared to hold the handrails and contact surfaces on stairs and escalator as a result of transmissions via contact surfaces. For the Healthcare and medical industries, COVID became the primary hazard with transmission clearly via the occupational route. These are clear and obvious impacts, but for the leisure and entertainment industry there were other examples that we had to deal with.



مينا لأك
MENALAC

مجلس الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا للترفيه والجذب السياحي
Middle East and North Africa Leisure & Attractions Council

LET'S TALK SAFETY - DECEMBER 2021

FOR LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT (L&E), AS WE CONTINUE TO EMERGE FROM COVID WHAT SHOULD WE BE LOOKING FOR AND HOW SHOULD WE RE-FOCUS ON KEY AREAS?

1. People

In any organization, in particular in L&E our people are our greatest asset. In a safety critical working environment where we rely on our teams making safety judgements and exercising high levels of focus, the “distraction” and impact of COVID must be carefully considered and addressed.

COVID put undoubted pressure on our health and wellness through concern for our own health, health of others and concern over the long-term impact of COVID on our personal and financial future.

In addition, COVID put pressure on the availability of some teams through illness or exclusions which led to a knock-on effect of relying on others to support and in some cases shortages in skills and knowledge drift through closures.

The most successful companies were able to address these concerns through support mechanisms, having a clear plan and (over) communicating to colleagues to provide information and direction on the future.



2. Asset and Equipment Safety

Many assets and pieces of equipment were closed for prolonged periods. Thankfully for many this is now not the case but during a period of under-usage it was critical that equipment remained serviceable, operated regularly, tested and certificated.



مينا لأك
MENALAC

مجلس الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا للترفيه والجذب السياحي
Middle East and North Africa Leisure & Attractions Council

LET'S TALK SAFETY - DECEMBER 2021

For built assets, periods of closure may contribute to faults, interruptions to the normal operation of systems, stagnation in water systems etc. and therefore closing assets properly, running them at minimum levels and then progressively re-opening then to full capacity was a critical.

Reliance on our Facilities Management and Technical Teams to manage this change in demand will remain critical to ensuring our equipment and built asset environment remains safe and fit for purpose.

3. Supply Chain Pressure

COVID stretched the supply chain availability for many industries including Leisure and Entertainment.

Travel restrictions led to an unavailability of key people with specialist skills to travel such as engineers, inspectors and operators. Organizations' found creative and sometimes "virtual" ways to get around this but this no doubt impacted organization who were unable to find a Plan B, or C.



Similarly, manufacturing of new equipment or parts compounded by pressures within the shipping and logistic industry which may have led to delays on critical equipment.

Understanding these risks and putting business continuity plans in place to address, mitigate and manage these are the key to success.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO ENSURE WE CONTINUE TO OPERATE A SAFE BUSINESS?

COVID is likely to affect our people, place and processes in the future and this will continue for some time. Our successful management of the safety issues will reply on:-



مينا لأك
MENALAC

مجلس الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا للترفيه والجذب السياحي
Middle East and North Africa Leisure & Attractions Council

LET'S TALK SAFETY - DECEMBER 2021

Recognising that COVID imposes pressures on people, our built assets and equipment and process.

Understanding those impacts and introducing controls and tactics to address them.

Adapting our controls and company responses to address the prevailing threat and risks from COVID.

Listening to our people and our customers and understanding their views so that we can respond and provide re-assurance correctly.

Communicate to provide guidance and re-assurance to be clear on safety rules and elevate stresses that maybe cause through lack of knowledge.

Leadership and governance. Organizations' to remain fully aware of the risks and impacts of COVID and addressing them in a transparent and safe manner.

The article was put together with advice and opinions from the MENALAC HSE Committee which is Chaired by Peter Stubbs, Director of HSE, Majid Al Futtaim Leisure, Entertainment and Cinemas.

The advice shared above is based on a high-level view of best practices when re-focusing on safety as we continue to manage covid. It is however important that you speak with and follow the recommendations of the local authorities and regulations in the countries that you operate. Their guidelines will help you to create your own best practices when re-focusing on safety as we continue to manage covid to ensure your Rules and Responsibilities outlined meet the requirements of your individual country, the regulations and recommendations of your local authorities.