

Health and Safety Forum meeting: 9 August 2021

Summary of key decisions and actions.

Introductory remarks

1. The Deputy Minister for Social Partnership and the Counsel General welcomed members to the extraordinary meeting of the Forum, arranged at short notice to discuss the move to Alert Level 0.

Key Points

2. Ministers explained the move to Alert Level 0 and emphasised the retention of the legal requirement for businesses and premises to undertake a specific Covid risk assessment, involve their workforce in that process and act upon that risk assessment by taking reasonable measures.

3. Ministers set out how Alert Level 0 entails an important change in emphasis in moving from prescription of specific reasonable measures. Ministers explained while the requirement to carry out a specific Covid risk assessment and to take reasonable measures has not changed, Alert Level 0 means the regulations are less prescriptive on specific measures and so there is greater room for flexibility in determining appropriate action based upon a risk assessment.

4. The Forum noted the changes and provided views from each of their perspectives. This included feedback on how accompanying guidance and the communication of that guidance could be improved with the support of the Forum.

5. Ministers emphasised the importance of feedback from social partners on how the regulations are operating on the ground and asked the Forum to continue to provide feedback from their members and networks.