



Fire Industry Association



Paul Scully MP
Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

23/07/2021

RE: Exemption from isolating for fire and security professionals

Dear Minister,

We are writing to you on behalf of the fire and security industry regarding the increase in key workers from our industries who are isolating as a result of the NHS COVID-19 App or the NHS Test and Trace. The Government guidance provided on ‘NHS Test and Trace in the workplace’ states that there are *‘situations where the self-isolation of close contacts would result in serious disruption to critical services, a limited number of named workers may be able to leave self-isolation under specific controls for the purpose of undertaking critical work only.’* We appreciate that this process is *‘only intended to run until 16 August 2021, when fully vaccinated close contacts will be exempt from self-isolation’*; whilst that is only 24 days, as of writing this letter, this is a significant period of time for business and buildings whose fire and security systems are left vulnerable as a result of key workers from our industries having to isolate.

On 14th April 2020, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, Minister of State for Security, stated in a letter to the FIA that *‘the fire and security industry provide vital support to critical services’*, the minister recognised that the *‘businesses and organisations encompassed by the FIA provide products and services which provide essential safety to people as they go about their daily lives’* and concluded by saying *‘such employees engaged in this critical task will need to continue to perform their work.’*

The Government guidance on critical services states the above exemption from isolating for those whom provide a critical service applies to those who have received a named letter from the government department. This requires individual business to apply to the relevant department. We believe that is a lengthy and time-consuming process which is failing to ensure that the life safety in thousands of buildings and businesses is maintained. Professionals from the fire and security industries work on critical elements of national infrastructure. Their absence from work due to isolation would likely lead to the loss or compromise of this infrastructure which could result in a major detrimental impact on the availability, integrity or delivery of essential services which could potentially lead to a significant loss of life or casualties.

We request that the Government considers an exemption (with caveats such as no symptoms, double jabbed, PPE etc) for field-based service and maintenance engineers from the fire and security sector, from having to isolate when “pinged” or notified by track and trace to isolate.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Executive FIA

Chief Executive BSIA

About the FIA

The largest fire protection trade association in Europe with 900+ members. For more information about the FIA please visit www.fia.uk.com

About the BSIA

The trade association for the professional security industry in the UK. For more information about BSIA please visit <https://www.bsia.co.uk/>