



INGENUITY BUILT™

Is A-SAFE Essential? How we support essential industries

Many companies are facing substantial challenges during the Coronavirus crisis. We look at the role of essential industries in maintaining the production of vital supplies and what A-SAFE is doing to support them

The current COVID-19 pandemic has seen a substantial shift in working situations. While many companies are experiencing a prolonged period of downtime, others have seen a dramatic increase in demand for their products and services. Essential industries such as food and drink, health and hygiene, logistics and ecommerce, have substantially increased output in response to the crisis. In some cases, they have even adapted production lines to manufacture vital supplies and equipment for frontline healthcare. And yet, given the infectiousness of the Coronavirus and the severity of the symptoms, many companies have given careful consideration to whether their operations are essential during the pandemic, and if so, how they can best protect their employees from the risk of infection.

The UK government has compiled a list of what it considers essential workers, which has helped bring some clarity; however, some companies can fall between the cracks of “essential” and “non-essential”. During the pandemic, A-SAFE has remained fully operational; providing much-needed safety advice and solutions to customers around the world as they adapt to the new situation. Therefore, we thought it was important to clarify the position of A-SAFE within the essential industries debate.



Is A-SAFE Essential? | Supporting essential services

At A-SAFE, we pride ourselves on serving many customers across a broad spectrum of industries and sectors – those that are essential to the crisis response, as well as those that have seen a substantial drop in demand. In the case of the former, the right protection for employees and infrastructure is as important now as it always has been. Indeed, more so, as the operational disruption of a workplace accident can have a significant knock-on effect for critical supply lines and those who depend on them.

As providers of safety systems to many of the world's top manufacturers, it is important we help these companies to safeguard their people, equipment, stock and buildings from the many risks that come with work environments operating at or near to capacity. This is why A-SAFE is committed to staying open. It is undoubtedly true that many companies do not have the luxury of time or capital to improve site safety during the current crisis; however, for many others, access to the right safety advice and equipment is fundamental to remaining operational during these challenging times.

Is A-SAFE Essential? | Customer demand

In response to our commitment to keep operations going, many of our customers have in turn been reaching out to us to say how much they are depending on our products and expertise – despite the numerous challenges facing us all.

In the early days of the virus and subsequently, when restrictions were introduced on workplaces, several high-profile companies identified us as a key element of their supply chain. Manufacturers of food and drink packaging, medical supply packaging and suppliers of fabrics and ventilation technology used in the production of PPE have all contacted us to assert their essential industry status, as well as their urgent ongoing need for proper workplace safety solutions during this time.

These requests have come not just from the UK, but from across the globe, including Australia and the United States. We are incredibly fortunate to operate in many countries. Our international subsidiaries are also working tirelessly to provide safety systems to essential industries – and the COVID-19 response – in their respective countries.

Is A-SAFE Essential? | Increased demand

Our customers are clearly as committed to workplace safety as we are here at A-SAFE. While we are seeing a decrease in demand from certain areas, other sectors are keen to implement quick and efficient safety solutions to protect their people and operations.

One of the most common applications for our products has been in the implementation of new COVID-19 safety measures within manufacturing and warehouse facilities. As we discussed in our previous blog, there are many ways to support governmental guidelines around social distancing, even in busy work environments. Measures such as one-way systems and properly signposted handwash stations are important ways to improve hygiene and segregate employees to minimise day-to-day direct contact.

Recently, we installed a new barrier system for a food and drink manufacturer that supplies a popular UK supermarket chain. These new safety barriers were installed to create a one-way system in their facility, so that staff and site vehicles could move around safely without the need for passing one another. Not only is this reducing the risk of infection passing between employees, it is also helping to increase efficiency on site.

Even in cases where customers are facing down time, we have supported them with implementing new safety measures in preparation for a return to normal operations. For example, two major UK airports recently enlisted our help to finish work on new safety measures around their baggage halls and bus terminals.



Is A-SAFE Essential? | Operating within the government guidelines

While we continue to operate 24/7, we have also gone above and beyond to observe the government guidelines around COVID-19. Our factory and warehouse have implemented all the recommended measures to keep our workforce safe while production continues. Likewise, every member of staff for whom it is not essential to be on site is currently working from home to provide a range of remote services for our customers, including site surveys, training and guidance.

Our adherence to these rules also extends beyond our own teams to the needs and requirements of our customers. Although stock is available and ready to dispatch immediately, we are also keen to respect the needs of any customers limiting the number of visitors to their sites. In this respect, our installation teams are available to get your safety systems up and running; however, only if this conforms fully with the hygiene and distancing procedures in place on site. Such restrictions can create challenges for working together with customers; however, we can find solutions that keep all teams protected and still ensure that essential site safety improvements can be made.

A-SAFE is not directly on the frontline of the global pandemic response; however, we are extremely proud to be doing everything we can to support the essential industries who are. Nothing is more important than protecting the many workers who are putting themselves at risk every day to keep us all supplied with food, medical equipment and life's essentials. Our helpline is available for any customers who are concerned about their current safety systems and our team is only too happy to help identify areas that can be improved through our remote services.

The current crisis has placed a strain on every business, but it is important that, where possible, we should all support each other through the challenges ahead. By remaining fully operational and adhering to the government guidelines, A-SAFE can continue to provide essential safety systems safely.

Further reading:

Here are some additional links to articles and information we have discussed in this piece.

A-SAFE Blog: Maximising safety during downtime [Click here](#)

A-SAFE Blog: Adapting safety to meet new demand [Click here](#)

A-SAFE Blog: Changing production lines and improving safety [Click here](#)

UK Government's essential worker list [Click here](#)

A-SAFE Blog: Safety and Hygiene in the Workplace #1: Pedestrian Segregation [Click here](#)