COVID-19 and Data Centres
Notes and actions from call 17th April

1   Update from DCMS

DCMS were still focusing on core areas of interest: key workers, supply chain issues, identifying typical faults, monitoring questions and problems. They were also keen to know whether operators or their customers were experiencing financial distress and whether there were economic scenarios developing that might require policy intervention. They would be interested to hear the PPE discussion.

2   Typical Faults

DCMS had asked the sector to provide an indicative list of typical faults that might occur in data centres - and how they were rectified. A simple format was tabled, where common faults could be listed, together with comments on the impact of COVID-19. DCMS felt the format suited their requirements. The form would be circulated to members to provide input. The table is on the website here: https://www.techuk.org/insights/news/item/17338-data-centres-and-covid-19-impacts-on-faults

3   Data Centre Services Landscape

With the help of CBRE, techUK had set out a simplified spectrum of data centre services and mapped a sample of UK operators against it. The chart was indicative and not intended to be comprehensive. In response to comments from members, it was agreed that the slide would be published with notes that made it clear that some provided a wider range of services, that the landscape was subject to change and that large cloud providers might run operations from a third party data centre or might operate their own facilities.

4   Interdependencies

Operators discussed interdependencies with the aid of some preliminary diagrams. Data centres depend primarily on power and connectivity but also on transport and usually water. Multiple sectors depend on data centres.   Members suggested additional categories and some refinements to the model, in which the dependency was not shown as absolute and where data centre might better be represented as a cluster of interconnects. An updated draft would be circulated when ready.

5   PPE: operator discussion

Operators had submitted feedback on questions responded to PPE and compared notes. Some were implementing temperature sensors; most if not all were screening visitors. Masks and gloves were issued where social distancing could not be maintained. Some operators were planning to mandate

the wearing of non-surgical grade masks, once supplies were in place. No visitors had yet failed temperature checks but many operators had refused access on the basis of screening. Operators were following government guidance but also trying to prepare for changes in policy. Operators were also implementing cleaning routines after contractor visits.   Visors were being manufactured in the UK – unlike medical grade masks they did not depend on the supply of specialist fabric so they were available from multiple suppliers. An overview based on feedback was being prepared.

On a separate safety issue, communications engineers in the field were being issued with body cameras.

6   Next call: Friday 24ᵗʰ April

Business recovery planning post COVID-19 would be discussed

7   ACTIONS
- Typical fault request to be circulated to members, and members to provide input
- Members to review DC services landscape chart
- An overview of PPE deployment by operators to be produced from the feedback received.
- Clarifications to be added to DC services landscape schematic
- Interdependency (bullseye) diagram to explain how customers manage risk
- Link to visor supplier to be provided to members – see https://www.networkmedical.co.uk/ophthalmic/product-type/innovia-face-visor/

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