COVID-19 and Data Centres
Thinking about Risk Scenarios

24 March 2020

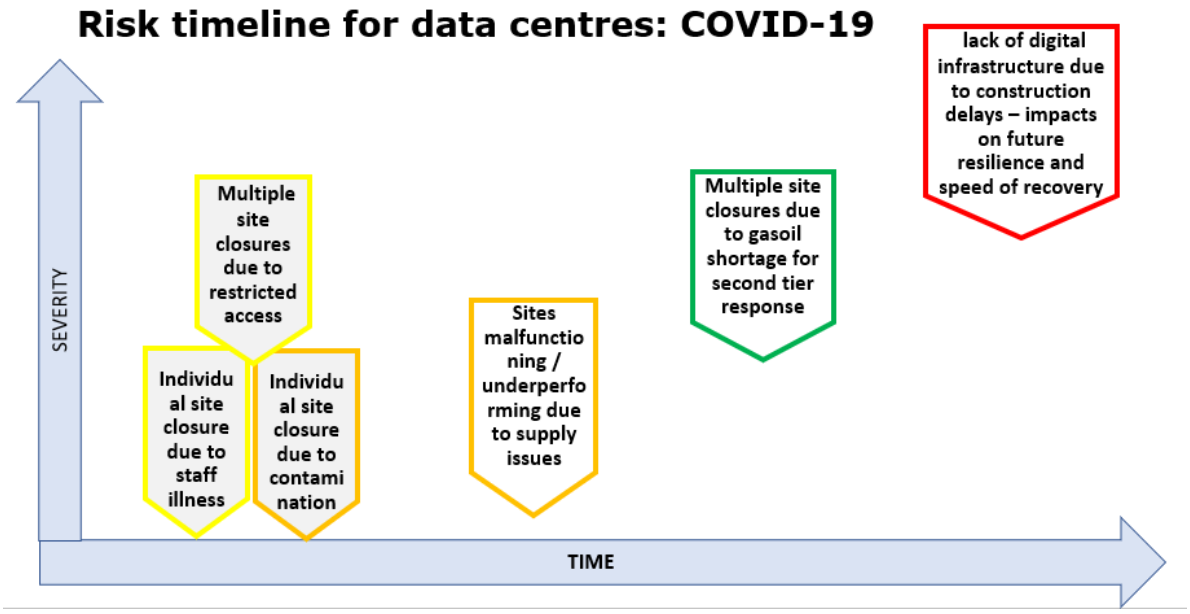
We have been asked to consider/ set out a risk timeline

We need to try and provide a timeline of risks graduating from immediate to longer term, and also identify which of these are sector specific and which are not. immediate risks include staff access for critical functions. Short to medium term risks may involve supply chain, replacement parts etc. Then there are second tier risks like availability of gasoil if operators need to run on standby for long periods.

This question was discussed on our last call and we are thinking about how to present risks, what timelines to use. Here are a couple of starters for ten: I've done one looking at point risks over time and Tim Martin from IBM has very kindly done one on operational risk flows in the data centre. These are just to start us thinking. So please let us have your thoughts.

Risk timeline # 1: point risks.

Here risks are arranged by time on the X axis and by severity on the Y axis. Colour indicates likelihood (green = low, red = high).



Risk timeline #2: Risk flows

Infections: Assumed the classic bell curve of infections

Staff Reductions: Unavailability rates will precede the infection rate as people self isolate and take on caring responsibilities. As the Infection rate reduces the return to work will lag behind. This will be of particular significance to the industry sub-contractors and therefore have a knock on effect to the majority of providers

Maintenance Deferral: Due to staff availability, the need to reduce contacts and unavailability/risk of bringing Sub-contractors to site maintenance will be deferred. This will leave a bow-wave of maintenance putting pressure on the sub-contractors who perform the bulk of the work - will take months/years to catch up. Sub-Contractors are critical to the industry in this area - most Providers rely on a small group of specialist

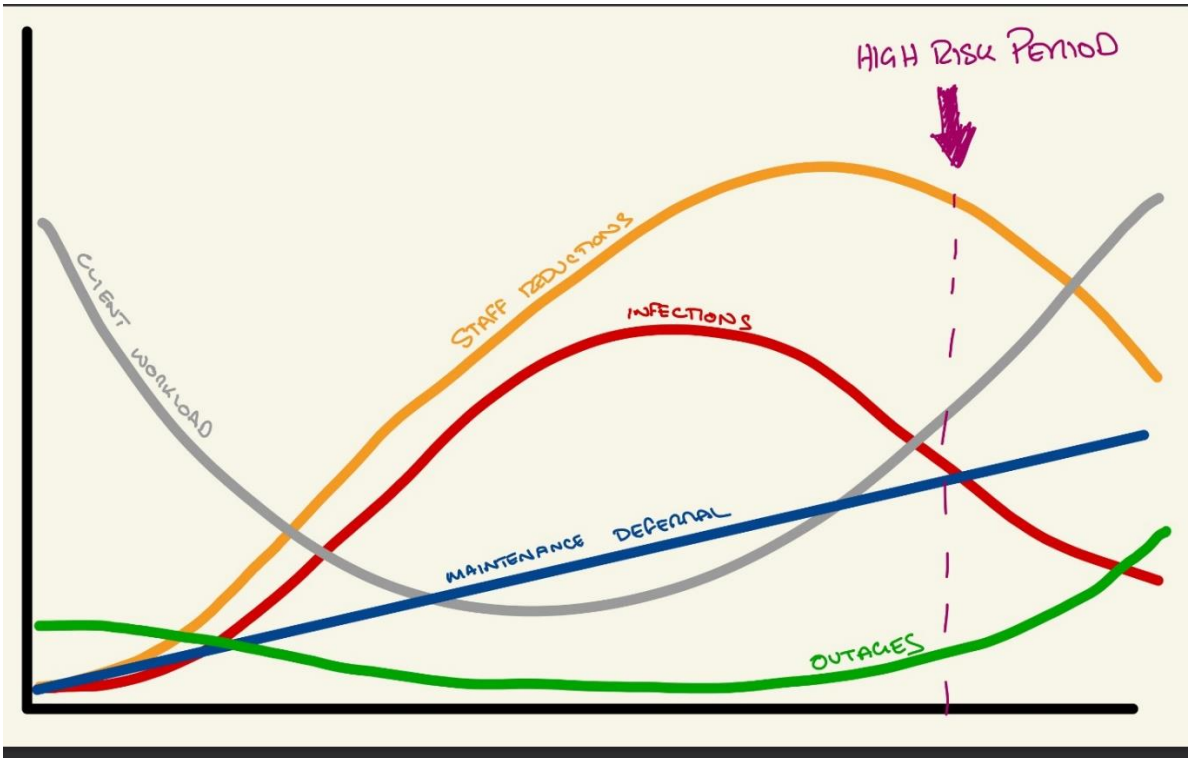
companies to perform maintenance and repair. Fuel delivery needs to be maintained but becomes an issue for the facility only when we have seen repeat issues with the utility supply - a lowering of demand on the utility system should reduce the risk of major utility outage

Outage: The immediate effect will be a drop in outages as humans interact with the infrastructure less. This will change over time as the lack of maintenance starts to tell - this at a time when staffing numbers will not have returned to normal. Underlying problems within the infrastructure that come to light as part of post outage Root Cause Analysis will be missed as specialists are not able to perform. We will recover but those unidentified problems will impact again in the future. Response times to outages are likely to be slower - so the duration of disruption will increase.

Client Workload: Early impact has been to see a workload reduction but as clients settle and begin to work remotely the workload will increase - most likely during a time when the facilities are still in lockdown

Construction: Not covered here - this is an operational view

Observation: As we are all hunkered down and with plans in place we have a settled period but the risks to the performance of the industry come post the infection peak when the economy and the industry will be trying to get 'back to business as usual' but dealing with high levels of staff absenteeism, a high degree of deferred maintenance and a constricted supply of specialist subcontractors.



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