

Meat supply chain will remain open with workforce capacity restrictions

Thursday 6 August 2020

Today the Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews announced workforce restrictions for the meat industry in Victoria to achieve a reduction in the number of workers at any given time at a facility, which in turn reduces the number of workers moving within a community.

“The two key parts of these restrictions for our industry is reducing the daily peak capacity of our workforce by 33% and the overall daily workforce capacity by 33%, either from July 2020 or for a three-month period over the last 12 months,” said Patrick Hutchinson, AMIC CEO.

“Members have been working towards this and finally having clarification, prior to 11.59PM Friday night, 7 August 2020, on what this means to get on with the job.

“We acknowledge and appreciate that there is now a threshold on the workforce impacted, so that sites with 25 workers or less will be exempt from these workforce reduction requirements,” said Mr Hutchinson.

As AMIC has previously outlined, our industry remains a leader in utilisation of PPE, with minimum requirements including face masks; hair nets; snoods; aprons (heavy plastic or disposable); rubber and plastic gloves; sleeve protectors; dust coats; safety glasses; face shields; goggles and other specialist PPE depending on worker function.

However, at all times, work safety is paramount in our industry therefore AMIC will continue to work with its members, WorkSafe Victoria and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on where the most appropriate utilisation of PPE will occur, to ensure both safety of community in virus management and safety of workers in the workplace.

Finally, regarding the testing regime, AMIC remain committed to its members’ concerns, surrounding testing result turnaround, availability of tests, alignment with private providers of testing, and proactive asymptomatic testing and provision of results.

AMIC has created and delivered its own guidelines to industry members, we will update those with the information provided and as an industry we continue to stand by these guidelines for our members to meet the requirements as set by the VIC Premier at his press conference today.

“Regarding supply and prices of meat, it is still challenging to forecast,” said Mr Hutchinson.

“What is positive for the community is that the over 800 independent retail butchers across Victoria remain open and any change to that would severely impact the ability of the community to access product, especially within metro Melbourne noting the within 5km from home community restrictions on travel.

“AMIC continues to strenuously endorse independent butchers remaining open during stage 4 lockdown.



MEDIA RELEASE



“Our members stand ready to meet the key areas set out by the Premier, being reduction of movement within the community of Victoria.

“The time for supporting our industry in a positive manner, from the Premier through to Cabinet and DHHS is now. We remain grateful for the assistance from Ag Victoria.”

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