TC TRANSFORMATION
DIGITAL BY DESIGN

Responding to COVID-19 and Working Remotely

Guidance to Departments on return to the workplace
- ADM meeting

June 17, 2020

Transport Canada · Transports Canada

RDIMS 16599431

Canada

Outline

1 — TC Transformation – laying the foundation

2 — Responding to the COVID-19 crisis

3 — Employees are keen on digital remote work

4 — Our path forward

Purpose

- To share information on TC's experience as part of the broader government effort in sustaining critical work during COVID-19.

- To outline issues that TC is dealing with to sustain remote work and a safe and gradual transition back to the worksite.

Context

- Over the weekend of March 14-15, the Public Service closed offices and transitioned to remote work and Business Continuity Plans to sustain critical services to Canadians. Organizations concurrently ramped up to deliver on a wide range of urgent measures to respond to COVID-19.

- While situations vary widely by organization, the pandemic has sparked innovation that is propelling digital capacity improvements and expansion of remote work arrangements that open up new issues and new opportunities for working digitally.

TC's recent experience in remote working is the product of 2 years of digital capacity building

TC's Transformation Plan has been driving major changes since 2018 with a focus on innovation through service design and digital tools to deliver improved and more cost effective services to support Canada's transportation system.

Building robust infrastructure
Working in collaboration with SSC to implement Wi-Fi, upgrade TC's technology infrastructure, such as increased bandwidth and improved remote network access.

Enabling a mobile workforce
Providing employees with mobile devices (tablets, laptops, smartphones), 'cutting the cord' to replace phone lines with smartphones, and equipping managers with the guidance and tools for managing employees from anywhere.

Adopting digital tools
Shifting work to use new tools like MS Teams and OneNote, and data visualization and analytics tools. Leveraging Robotics Process Automation to drive efficiencies in HR, finance back office.

Digital-first service delivery
Shifting the process for navigable waters permits and drone registrations to 100% online, digital delivery. Implementing *my*TC Account one-stop, single window for TC's regulatory services.

Responding to the COVID-19 crisis by moving the department online

Even with a strong digital base, the shift to remote working required really rapid responses by TC and SSC.

Over a single weekend, TC transitioned to remote working for over 90% of employees without invoking business continuity plans; it was an intense scramble in the early days, but it worked..

Strengthening technology infrastructure
Improved TC's network speed, doubled bandwidth capacity and increased remote access licences to accommodate all TC employees.

Enabling more staff to go mobile
Procured an additional 900 tablets and 1000 smartphones, and have started rolling them out to employees. Put in place a COVID-safe IT kiosk to allow employees to get devices, monitors, keyboards and other peripherals.

Increasing access to digital tools
Ensured all employees had MS Teams accounts, and established channels to deliver IT help desk services. Continuing to provide support and continuity as MS Teams has become TC's default meeting and collaboration.

SUPPORTING A REMOTE TC

Every day:
- **2,300-2,600** employees log in through GCSRA during peak times
- **2,400-3,400** employees log in through Citrix during peak times
- Employees participate in over **1000** meetings and **90,000** chats take place on MS Teams

Responding to the COVID-19 crisis by moving the department online

(continued)

Digitizing workflows and processes
Implemented 305 digital signatures for internal forms, found quick hacks to switch ATIP and compensation processes from paper to digital, and working on a remote digital fingerprinting solution.

Enhancing digital-first service delivery
Working to digitize processes at 49 Transport Canada Centres (TCCs) across the country which remain closed, e.g. scheduling and invigilating exams, submitting and validating documents.

FAST SERVICE DELIVERY BY SSC MADE THE SWITCH TO OPERATING ALL ON-LINE POSSIBLE

SSC worked very closely with TC on a daily basis, quickly delivered critical infrastructure and network upgrades and monitored the heavy use of our infrastructure to ensure we stayed operating.

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Employees are keen on digital remote work
and concerned about returning to the office

- TC recently conducted an employee survey (2371 responses) and held an all-staff town hall (3500 participants, nearly 700 comments).

- We heard staff are doing surprisingly well given the difficult circumstances and have shown general comfort with remote work.
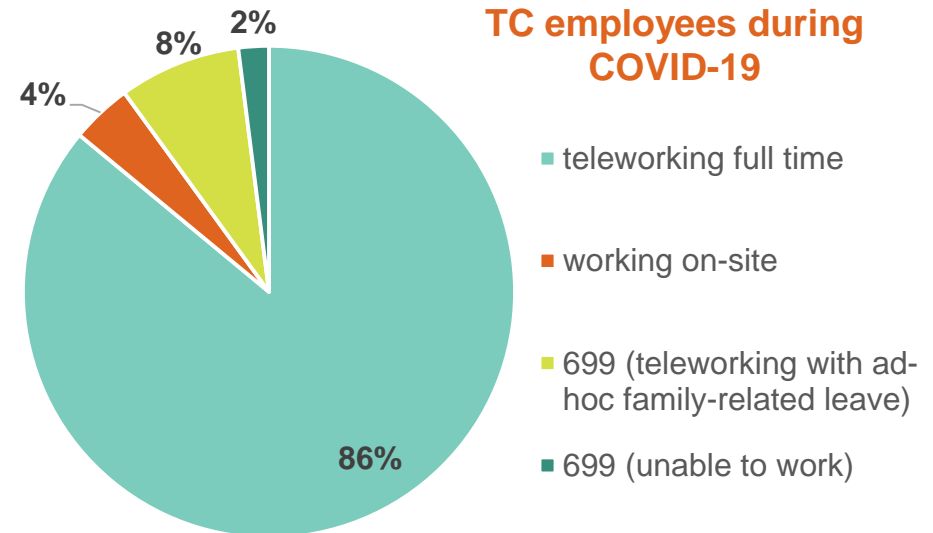
65% of employees are **feeling great or good**

74% of employees believe their **work-life balance is better** when they work remotely

81% of employees get a **sense of satisfaction** from their work

29% of employees say their **primary concern** right now is **returning to the workplace safely**

- Since April 1st, TC employees are making great use of **TC Works** which allows matching of employees to critical functions in overworked areas by using internal micro-mission assignments.

TC employees during COVID-19

8% 2%
4%
86%

- teleworking full time
- working on-site
- 699 (teleworking with ad-hoc family-related leave)
- 699 (unable to work)

ADAPTING TOGETHER

Employees are shifting to a digital mindset and adopting new behaviours and ways of working together as they adjust to the changes.

Planning for Gradual Resumption of Work at TC Worksites

Evaluating Work

- It is expected that **telework will continue** broadly until a vaccine is available

- Work will be **evaluated through a digital lens** to better evaluate the functions and types of work that lend themselves to telework, those that require face-to-face collaboration and those that are best performed in an office setting

- This examination will help support how tranches of workers **gradually return to the office** and continue to work virtually to fulfill business outcomes

- Establishing **policies, structures, and guidelines** related to schedules and behavior in the office will support bringing people back to the office in a safe manner aligned to Public Health Directives

Evaluating Worksites

- It is expected that **social and physical distancing** will continue until a vaccine is available and/or tools for contact tracing are widely implemented and used by workers.

- We will need to **build in learning time and space** as people adjust to the new normal with altered workflows, timelines for inclusive contribution of team members and learning opportunities for tools and platforms

- **Inclusiveness** and **virtual etiquette** will need to be top of mind for all employees as some employees return to the office while others remain at home.

- **Innovation** and **collaboration** will continue to feed and enhance resumption activities. These will also enhance the tools and platforms which facilitate information sharing, information access and virtual dialogues to enhance and bridge team building.

> ➢ Managers will engage individual employees in discussions to determine their interest/availability to attend the worksite on a regular basis, and will likewise assess the organizational requirement to have the work performed either remotely or at the worksite.

Planning

- To inform our preparations, an exercise will be launched shortly to determine the operational need/preference of each TC employee to return to the worksite

- Guidance and training for employees and managers is under development covering such areas as:

✓ Mental health ✓ Physical distancing protocols ✓ Non-medical face coverings ✓ Home office setup	✓ Performance management ✓ Training on managing teams remotely ✓ Workshops on managing stress

- TC has been consulting on elements of our guidance with the Bargaining Agents and will continue to do so.

- Facilities preparation is well underway including the analysis of floor plans to ensure physical distancing measures, installation of signage and implementation of an appropriate sanitation regime.

- Approaches will be tailored for facilities under different provincial conditions and with different occupancy circumstances (e.g. facilities wholly occupied by TC, shared tenants etc.)

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Tactical Plan

The following are a few key measures for safe return to the Workplace - will be flexible and adjusted as information and guidance from health authorities change.

Physical Distancing:
- 2m apart at all times
- Queues at entrances/elevators
- Single-direction stairwells and corridors
- Capacity limits for buildings and floors
- Capacity limits for small spaces - elevators, washrooms
- Closure of most kitchens, boardrooms

Communications and Change Management:
- Clear communications, training, tools, guidance for employees and managers.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):
- Controlled distribution of PPE for specific purposes as appropriate; face coverings recommended when moving about the office

Facility Management:
- Closure of some workstations to facilitate physical distancing
- Enhanced cleaning protocols for high-touch surfaces and common areas
- Clean before and after use principle for employees
- Increased access to hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes/spray
- Assigned workstations

Tools and Protocols:
- Application to coordinate employee entry times

Monitor, Assess and Adapt on an Ongoing Basis

Most meetings to continue by Teams/teleconference

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UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU MUST DO TO NAVIGATE SAFELY IN THE WORKPLACE

AVAILABILITY OF WORKPLACE RESOURCES MAY VARY BASED ON YOUR LOCATION

✓ YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY IS OUR TOP PRIORITY

✓ FOLLOW THESE NEW WORKPLACE RULES TO ENSURE YOUR SAFETY

BEFORE LEAVING HOME

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Please bring your warm/cold beverages and food to the office as there will be limited access to kitchenettes, water fountains and commercial food services.
- Remember that in the workplace you must:
  - Avoid touching your face.
  - Practice proper sanitation and hygiene.
  - Practice physical distancing of 2 meters from others.

ARRIVING AT THE WORKPLACE

- Face coverings are recommended.
- Follow directions on building doors marked as "**Entrance Only**" or "**Exit Only**".
- Follow instructions from on-site building management support staff.
- Respect **physical distancing** at building entrances/exits and lobbies.
- Follow **elevator occupancy limits of 1-2 people** at once. *(limit may vary depending on size of elevator)*
- Arrive to your assigned workstation by following all **new directional signage** throughout the workplace.
- **Clean** your assigned workstation and chair with available wipes before working.

THROUGHOUT THE DAY

- Practice proper hygiene by washing your hands often and keeping your assigned workstation clean.
- Practice physical distancing of 2 meters with others.
- Avoid touching other workstations.
- **All kitchens, water fountains, boardrooms and collaborative spaces will be closed** until further notice.
- Follow **washroom occupancy limit of 1 person** at once. Please respect the signage and knock before entering.
- Verify with your local corporate security and health and safety officers regarding any changes to the **emergency procedures**.

LEAVING THE WORKPLACE

- **Clean** your assigned workstation and chair with available wipes at the end of your day.
- Follow elevator occupancy limits of 1-2 people at once. *(limit may vary per building depending on size of elevator)*
- Follow the stairwell direction restrictions and physical distancing of 2 meters from others to exit the workplace.

Feeling Stressed or Anxious?

- Employee Assistance Program: 1-800-268-7708
- TC Take Care: Mental Health and Wellness
- LifeSpeak
- Centre of Expertise on Mental Health in the Workplace

BUILDING SPECIFIC

Address:	Additional Directions:
	Enter any additional directions or measures taken. *(i.e. special purpose space, areas open to the public, multi-tenant building decisions)*

RDIMS : 16546886/SGDDI : 16607045

Last Updated – June 15, 2020

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Charting a path forward

Within the frame being led by TBS, TC is scoping out a plan for a gradual, partial return to the worksite while maximizing the use of remote work for the time being.

The experience is increasing our ability to operate digitally, creating new opportunities and a need and opportunity to define a new approach for managing remote work. TC is looking at this in **three stages:**

1 **Maximizing use of remote work for the time being to support a safe, gradual return to the worksite**

- A gradual return to the worksite, limited to 20 - 30% of employees for now.

- Continuing to support and improve full- or part-time remote work.

- Addressing employee concerns and preferences about the return by:

  - Offering a three-week notice for employees being asked to return.

  - Developing a full toolset to help managers engage with each employee to determine best mix of who returns when and who continues to work remotely

> "The health and safety of all public servants remains an absolute priority for the Government of Canada."
> - **TBS,** May 2020

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Charting a path forward
(continued)

2 **Establishing a sustainable approach for both remote work and those who need to be on site**

- Addressing the issues that arise from more employees working remotely for a sustained period:
  - Maintaining a sense of team, addressing social isolation, and supporting mental health.
  - Meeting ergonomic needs working at home.
  - Policies skills and competencies to manage work and performance remotely.
- Phased Building re-occupancy approach

Plan
- Review guidelines
- Draft a plan

Prepare
- Prepare the workforce
- Prepare the workplace

Communicate
- Communicate the plan
- Signage in the workplace

Re-occupy
- Allow for initial adjustment period
- Monitor services

Review
- Meet with staff
- Adjust plan as needed

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Charting a path forward

3 **Defining a "new normal" of working remotely and digitally in the Public Service**

- While the situation varies across organizations, there are common challenges and strategies that need to be developed to manage more prevalent remote work.

- Some key factors to work through:
    - Keeping both next-generation and experienced employees engaged.
    - Building sufficiently robust digital tools and systems.
    - Developing organizational capacity to effectively manage remote teams.
    - Understanding and respecting the impacts on terms and conditions of employment.

Questions

ANNEX A: Gradual Resumption of Work at TC Worksites

Status Update: What We Are Doing

Resumption of Work at Federal Office Buildings

- Work is being led by senior leaders at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHO) and Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) to establish a *government-wide approach* to the resumption of work across all federal work places.
- *No timelines* for a return to the workplace have yet been determined; however, Transport Canada is working closely with the leading Central Agencies.
- With *personal safety and health* as the priority, Transport Canada (TC) will take a *phased approach* to re-occupying TC offices.

Support for Our Employees

- Continued *support for the mental and physical health* of all employees.
- Continued *communication* with employees and their *bargaining agent* representatives in support of transparency in *sharing information*.
- Review the impacts of working remotely on employees and build from the *lessons learned* to keep improving.

HR Tools and Resources Available

- Employee Assistance Program: 1-800-268-7708
- TC Take Care: Mental Health and Wellness
- LifeSpeak and the Centre of Expertise on Mental Health in the Workplace

Moving Forward

Management Next Steps

- Continue *assessing our organizational needs* and determine who should come back to the office on a priority basis, when the time comes, keeping in mind the health and safety of our workforce.
- Leverage *best practices* on teleworking, distancing and implement *lessons learned*.
- *Await direction from the Centre* (OCHRO, PCO, PSPC) before taking any decisions, and *implement their recommendations* based on the needs of TC's operations.
- Begin organizing a *phased approach* to returning to TC worksites, as required.
- Consider the impact of initiatives such as *staggered schedules* and *"buddy systems"* for employees.

Our Principles

Our Workforce

- TC has a very *mobile and effective workforce* as a result of a significant investment in our digital tools and infrastructure.
- *Local, municipal, regional, provincial and territorial* protocols will be taken into consideration, including school-board decisions and daycare availability.
- *Respecting individual needs* (e.g., family responsibilities, higher-risk/vulnerable conditions) will continue to be factored into decision making.
- Consider other external factors on employees, such as *public transportation, availability of food near the workplace*, etc.
- Continually consider the feelings of individuals and their *mental health*.

Our Work Place

- Remind employees to *self-assess when showing symptoms* of COVID-19 and refrain from coming into the workplace to *reduce the spread*.
- Continue to *respect physical/social distancing* guidelines, and clearly outline expectations and *best practices for common spaces* such as elevators, boardrooms, kitchens, stairwells, washrooms, etc.
- Review facilities and *make adjustments to accommodate social distancing* wherever possible (e.g., turnstiles, card-swipe points, etc.)
- Review and improve *cleaning practices and cleaning contracts* to increase frequency and thoroughness.
- Finalize *Task Hazard Analysis (THA)* including the use of *Personal Protective Equipment* (PPE) as required.

Leadership at TC

- Consider *employee safety* our highest priority and *implement protocols* to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Support *working from home* where operationally feasible.
- Leverage lessons learned to develop a *modern, digital workplace*.
- Remain *agile* and *flexible* to address organizational and individual needs.
- Lead with *empathy and compassion*.
- Ensure *collaboration* (Central Agencies, Bargaining Agents).
- Establish a *highly-responsive means of communicating* issues and concerns to employees.

Facility Management Considerations

- Before returning to federal office buildings, measures must be put in place to ensure required *physical/social distancing*. This could include a staggered approach to re-entry, reduced building occupancy, limited elevators usage, and controlled traffic flow in hallways and stairwells.
- *Hand washing stations* and *hand sanitizer* will need to be readily available, along with any other recommendations that may emerge.
- *Protocols for use of common spaces and amenities* (e.g. kitchens, printers and bathrooms) will need to be in place and communicated.
- Arrangements for *enhanced office cleaning* will need to be made.
- *Face coverings* may be required when moving within the building.
- *Signage* and distancing markers will be placed throughout the building to remind employees of mandatory practices.
- Base building *security measures* will be in place.

Digital Services and Information Technology Considerations

- Although most IM/IT Service Desk actions can be performed virtually, TC will continue to *provide in-person services across all regions* to assist employees with their devices and support the onboarding of new employees.
- Employees will have the *access and tools* required to continue working from home.
- *MS Teams* will continue to evolve to enhance our digital collaboration experience.
- The *"Cut the Cord"* initiative will be accelerated to quickly deploy Smart Phones to TC employees who do not have one.
- TC will continue to *implement Digital Signatures* for our internal and external forms and processes.
- *Guidance, tools and support* will continue to be provided to employees and managers to ensure that they have access to working-from-home best practices.

Additional Considerations

- The management of *work-related travel* (e.g., restrictions) and *employee leave* will impact how we work.

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