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# NRCan Return to the Workplace Strategy

June 2020

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# RTW Governance

**Deputy Minister**

**Executive Committee** – Corporate Management Sector/Linda Hurdle, Lead



**NRCan Director General Committee**

Guiding the development of the Strategy and informing sound decisions



**Corporate/Communications/Science Integrated Operations Committee**

Developing the tools, guides, strategies and plans to prepare the safe RTW



**Sectors, Senior Building Officers, various communities** (see key stakeholders in annex 1)

Apply the tools, guides and strategies and disseminate information



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# Key Considerations

- Ensure flexibility and **understanding the needs of employees and their circumstances** to support **well-being and mental health**
- NRCan will proceed with a **gradual phased and controlled approach**
  - There is no set date for a RTW or for implementation of any of the phases
- Decisions related to a RTW will be **based on the guidance of PHAC, central agencies (OCHRO/TBS), and departmental centers of expertise (OHS, LR, EM, etc.)**
- The RTW strategy will guide **a structured implementation throughout the department**, all the while being consistent, **adaptable** to unique building, regional, and sector considerations.
- Implementation will not be linear; **controls, monitoring and reporting will be important to inform (1) advancing to subsequent phases or (2) slowing/ceasing return activities.**
- NRCan will **provide guidance, information and tools** to help sectors and managers make informed decisions



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# The NRCan Approach

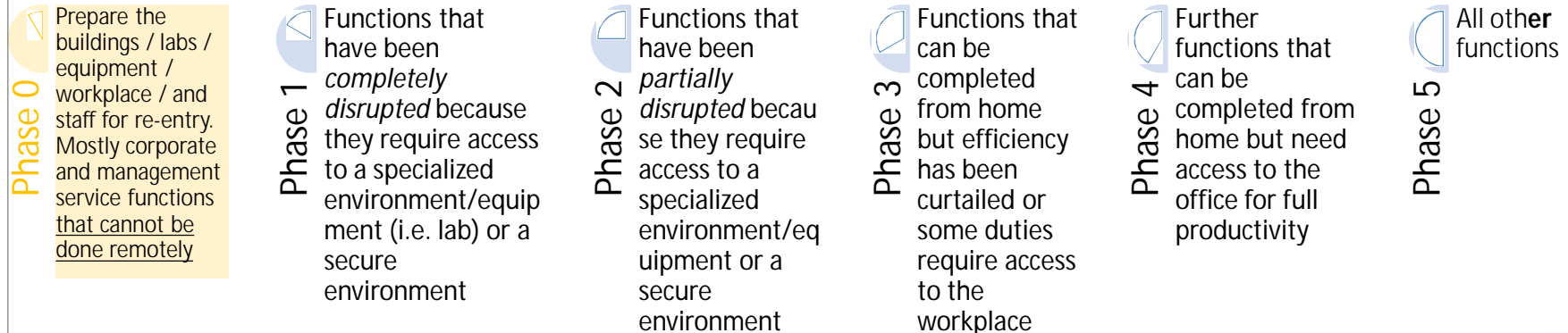
## Guiding Principles

**Health and safety of employees** is the main consideration in all decisions regarding a return to the workplace (RTW)

**Accommodating the needs of individuals and families:** consideration for employees particular personal circumstances

**Transparency: Preparing and informing managers and employees** for a RTW is as essential as preparing the physical space

## Gradual, Phased and Controlled Re-entry



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# Preparing buildings for safe occupancy

- Working with OGDs and PSPC to have a coordinated return approach for both office and laboratory space.
- Completed tools to inform risk hazard assessment of various environments, will guide protocols and Senior Building Officer decisions
- Considerations for planning office occupancy while maintaining physical distancing:
  - Workstation occupation, circulation routes on the floors and in stairwells, use of common areas including elevators, kitchens and boardrooms, signage, employee awareness .
- Working with Science sectors to identify best space planning for special purpose space and low risk science/field activities
  - Considerations similar as office space though many areas would be considered shared space and might require enhanced protocols, and must be looked at individually
- Reviewing laboratory equipment requirements to restart operations
- Potable water and air testing



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# New or Adapted Protocols

- Work is well underway, and will be adapted, if needed, when guidance is received:
  - Physical distancing requirements in various environments: office, GC workplace, laboratory, in the field, common areas (kitchens, boardrooms, elevators, stairwells, washrooms)
  - In-person services (such as commissionaires, IT service desk, library)
  - Field work will need particular attention due to travel requirements and risk of contact with communities
  - Enhanced cleaning: on a day-to-day basis and for when cases are reported
  - Screening employees entering buildings - NRCan is reviewing the requirement for screening of employees
  - Steps to take in the event of potential, presumptive and confirmed COVID-19 cases



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# Preparing Managers and supporting employees

- Regular, frequent communications. Tools and resources available on intranet page
- Training on Managing Remotely is being developed and launched that covers:
  - Managing work and setting expectations
  - Managing relationships and staying connected
  - Managing your own physical and psychological health
- Managers' guide for discussions with employees on challenges around re-entry to workplace, including
  - Guidance on applying flexibilities, using leave code 699 during reintegration to the workplace
  - Guidance and tools on dealing with employees' fears, anxiety and stress



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# Communications

- As employees begin transitioning back to the office, we are preparing a robust, modern internal communications strategy.
- Working with CMSS, the Communication Sector will ensure communications are aligned with their subject matter expertise, direction from the centre and the five phases of NRCan's re-entry to the workplace plan.
- Ensure messages are in place physically through posters, signage and our TV network, especially ones pertaining to OSH and the built environment, including hand-washing, capacity issues and physical distancing measures.
- Disseminate NRCan messages on social media, while amplifying messages and information from authoritative sources across jurisdictions, such as TBS.
- Remain open to adopting further avant-garde tactics, learning from best practices in other organizations or feedback from employees (videos, "ask me anythings," etc.).



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# Reporting, Monitoring & Controls

- Monitoring of preparation activities is key to inform RTW readiness
  - RTW Operations team is tracking progress of work
  - Corporate Management Services Sector will continue to report regularly on progress and on relevant data such as Covid cases
- Monitoring and reporting will also inform (1) advancing to subsequent phases or (2) slowing/ceasing return activities
  - Implementation will not be linear
  - Need to plan to respond to second wave



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# Conclusion

- Keys to a successful implementation
  - Collaborating horizontally
  - Frequent communication
  - Listening and reacting to employee concerns
  - Being flexible and adapt
  - Leveraging NRCan RTW governance to help ensure alignment across the department
  - Leveraging what other Departments are doing



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# Annex 1 :Key Partners and Stakeholders

- Work and engagement activities have already started with :
  - RTW DG Committee
  - Integrated Operations Team
  - Senior Building Officers
  - Policy OHS Committee
  - OHS Advisory Group
  - Workplace Health and Safety Committees
  - Other government departments
  - Bargaining Agents

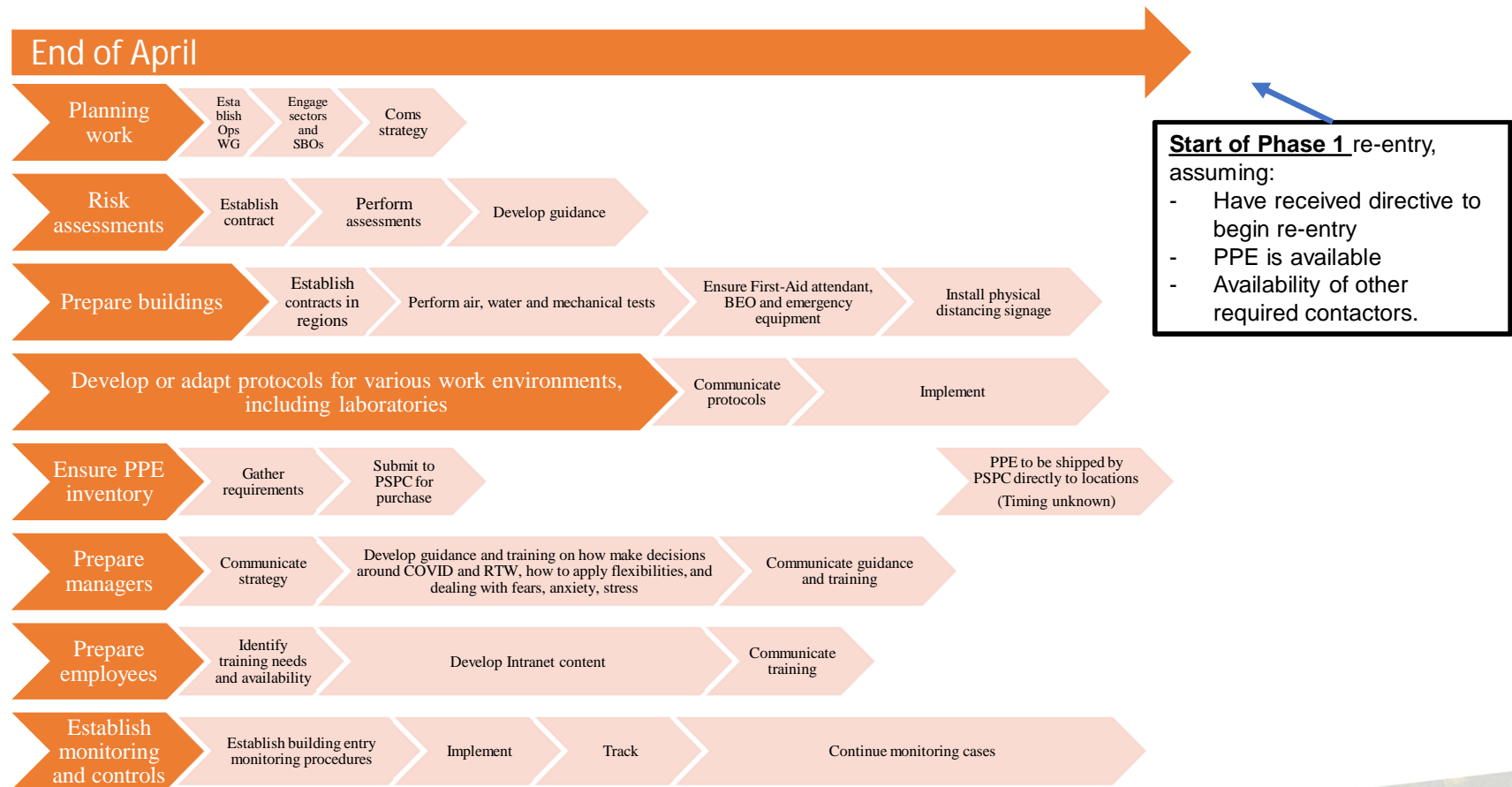


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# Annex 2: Phase 0 - Critical Path



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