

# The critical 5 per cent

Understanding – and responding to – COVID-19’s specific impact on your business, people, and operations

No matter where your employees are working – on-site, in the office, at home or a combination – business leaders are reconsidering what it means to keep their people healthy and safe in a world affected by COVID-19. It’s more than a health issue; it’s a business risk one too. The knock-on effect of a seemingly localised outbreak or the signs of a new wave coming are significant and, in many cases, business-stopping.

For the most part, business leaders are staying across COVID-19 news and updates, and have 95 per cent of the picture. But it’s the remaining 5 per cent where even the best continuity plans come undone. This can make or break a business. For instance, the sudden emergence of cluster zones that impact the communities in which you operate, or an employee or their extended personal network becoming infected.



## Take the 5 per cent test for your business

Do you have access to real-time localised data of COVID-19 cases affecting your location/s – and that of the communities in which your people live?

Can you communicate to your people changes to workplace protocols as they happen – and in the ways (languages and platforms) in which they consume news and business messages?

Have you divided your workforce into separate and distinct teams with a comprehensive cleaning and disinfection program to ensure a barrier between them is maintained at all times?

- Has this teaming been built on factors that go beyond business continuity, but include external factors that may affect your employees – ie do some live in hot spots, do they travel on public transport, are they at higher risk due to personal circumstances?
- Is your teaming safeguarded against outbreaks outside your workplace?
- If both teams are affected, how will you manage business continuity?

Can your business successfully contact trace your employees and visitors to support and assist Public Health efforts?

Are you across the COVIDsafe procedures and plans of your suppliers or third-party stakeholders? Are you confident their approach supports your business continuity?

Does the 1.5m social distancing rule apply to your operations? Is it undermined by the nature of your operations (i.e. loud environments where droplets can spread much further) or impractical to maintain as the nature of your business requires small workspaces?

Have you revised your organisation’s business continuity plans, OH&S practices and risk management profile, against the backdrop of COVID-19?

Do you have the internal controls in place – or amended ones to reflect your new ways of working – to ensure all current (and new as a result of COVID-19) risk areas and compliance obligations are identified and managed? Have your internal controls been impacted by remote working, and are controls operating as effectively as before?

Have you learned where your vulnerabilities lie and do you have a plan in place to improve accordingly?

Would you pass a government or third party COVIDsafe audit?

## Contacts

To learn more about how you can safeguard your organisation against the health and business risks COVID-19 could have on your people and operations, or better understand your obligations as leaders, get in touch with Greg and Ian.



**Greg Keith**  
Grant Thornton Australia  
Chief Executive Officer  
greg.keith@au.gt.com

 [Connect with Greg](#)



**Dr Ian Norton**  
Respond Global  
Global Health Emergency Response Expert  
ian.norton@respondglobal.com

 [Connect with Ian](#)

## About Grant Thornton

Grant Thornton is one of the world's leading organisations of independent assurance, tax and advisory firms. COVID-19 has created a new terrain for many organisations and it remains unclear what the next few months will bring. We are working alongside our clients, helping them to keep their businesses running in a time of crisis – from helping to unlock cash and focus on cash flow, developing robust financial forecasts and meeting all compliance and tax obligations, to assessing and revising business continuity and incident responses, and spotting, evaluating and improving areas of risk exposure or weakness.

[Visit our website](#), where we regularly update you with stimulus, concessions and strategies to help you respond to COVID-19.

[Subscribe to Grant Thornton](#)

## About Respond Global

Respond Global was established as a social enterprise to provide emergency management assistance and support to those organisations seeking to improve their localised response in times of emergencies in health.

Boards, managers, and staff are being currently being inundated with COVID-19 public health information and the subsequent interpretation by the media. This information is often confusing, ambiguous, and at times alarmist.

Respond Global's [COVID-Ready portal](#) provides access to current and actionable intelligence that is translated into practical business-specific language. It also includes pragmatic risk mitigation strategies, specific to each jurisdiction.

Respond Global can assist businesses by developing a company-specific "traffic light" alert system that embeds public health risk management into their wider risk management approach. Advice is provided in advance about when they need to change risk level and increase their prevention strategies to keep their people and their business safe.

[Request a Call-Back](#)



[grantthornton.com.au](http://grantthornton.com.au)

Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 ACN 127 556 389 'Grant Thornton' refers to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms provide assurance, tax and advisory services to their clients and/or refers to one or more member firms, as the context requires. Grant Thornton Australia Limited is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL). GTIL and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. GTIL and each member firm is a separate legal entity. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL does not provide services to clients. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions. In the Australian context only, the use of the term 'Grant Thornton' may refer to Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 and its Australian subsidiaries and related entities. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.