

## FUEDI Update Covid-19

The global outbreak of Covid-19 has led to considerable cooperation amongst the Insurance industry, Trade Bodies and Professional associations across the globe. FUEDI is playing its part by gathering information and sharing this in this paper. We are indebted to our volunteers across Europe for setting time aside to provide assistance at this most difficult time.

For the preservation of life across Europe increasing numbers of countries are moving toward partial or full lock down. This means that everyone must stay in their home other than those given specific permission for essential matters. The Loss Adjusting profession fully supports all efforts to reduce the threat of the Covid-19 and in response has created and initiated inventive means of continuing to support individuals and businesses who are suffering from the effects of fires, burglaries, flooding etc. whilst maintaining social distancing.

There are certain circumstances where it is not possible to provide sufficient support to victims of insured perils without visiting the site. This can arise from of a variety of factors such as the nature of the affected property, the need to address safety concerns such as a structurally unsafe building or where the policyholder has particular vulnerabilities and needs that require to be addressed with direct intervention.

The following is an insight to a number of countries across Europe.

### **Netherlands**

In the Netherlands they have an organisation called "Salvage", the organisation has a connection to the "Union of Insurers", and they work with "coordinators" who are all NIVRE registered experts (NIVRE being the Dutch Loss Adjuster Association.) In case of fire, collapse of buildings, etc. these "coordinators" can be authorised to go to locations where they are required to attend to urgent issues and they hold a "pass" that will be recognised so as to allow this travel in the event of a lockdown.

This is a means by which there is a potential for Loss Adjusters to go onto site at the time of absolute necessity in the event of a tighter lockdown.

### **France**

The French parliament passed a new law called "Sanitary State of Emergency". The article 7 of this law states that the government is allowed to create an emergency fund (E250 billion), to lessen the effects of the French labour Code this will affect employees' holiday arrangements and will increase payments in the event of unemployment of partial unemployment.

With regard to the Insurance industry, the FFA (French Federation of Insurers) have stated that insurers will be more flexible on insurance premium collection rules but highlighted at the same time that most of the insurance contracts do not cover the business interruptions resulting from an epidemic or a pandemic.

### **United Kingdom**

The UK is close to total lockdown. The population has been divided between those to be "shielded", "vulnerable" and the others. The Government has arrange delivery of food to those "shielded" and has asked for volunteers to support the work.

There has been a huge response to this. Vulnerable persons are advised not to mix with anyone but these people will have support from family, neighbours etc. This group includes all persons who are entitled to the influenza vaccination each year.

The UK Loss Adjusting Association the CILA have been in close liaison with Government departments, the regulator and other insurance bodies such as the Association of British Insurers, the British Insurance Brokers Association and the British Damage Management Association.

The result of which is that we have a clear route to gain appropriate permission to attend sites in exceptional circumstances in the event of a total lock down. In addition the CILA have highlighted the necessity to ensure just and fair settlements in the midst of this situation.

The CILA are promoting the concept of prioritising claims for health workers and other essential services to support them in their needs allowing these vital people to focus on the pandemic.

There has been close liaison with both the Association of British Insurers and the British Insurance Brokers Association.

### **Sweden**

In Sweden the borders remain open but Swedish people are encouraged not to carry out any unnecessary trips abroad to any country.

Social distancing is promoted in particular this advice is aimed at those over 70 years of age. The partial close down of industry has led to massive layoffs of staff –and unemployment expected.

### **Italy**

In Italy the population is in complete lockdown and around 60% of business activities have ceased. The only business remaining open are those in the medical chain, food chain basic insurance and the banking system.

The Italian Loss Adjuster Association AIPAI are providing their members with guidance and advice on regulations that are in place.

### **Ireland**

The situation in Ireland is that there has been a lockdown and schools closed initially until the end of March. This closure of schools has been extend for a further two weeks.

There is very wide discussion and debate about the coverage afforded by Business Interruption policies. In particular the debate centres on the definition of notifiable diseases and the intention around the terms of cover around notifiable diseases within 25km of the insured premises.

### **FUEDI**

Overall FUEDI are therefore seeking recognition of the essential work undertaken by our members so that in exceptional circumstances we may have authority to travel. It is stressed that the request is for exceptional circumstances and the whole profession recognises the need to act responsibly, ethically and to support fully the determined effort to rid the world of Covid-19.

FUEDI will continue to monitor and inform members of developments. In the meantime please observe social distancing and STAY SAFE.

27th March 2020