

**Member communiqué -**  
8 July 2020

### **Business for South Africa calls on business community to adopt contact tracing**

Business for South Africa (B4SA) welcomed President Ramaphosa's announcement of the enhanced level 3 regulations which will further ease restrictions on economic activities. With the easing of restrictions, the threat remains for infections to increase exponentially. Our goal remains to accelerate the opening of the economy in a way that manages the associated health risks, preserves lives and minimises the long-term economic impact.

Contact tracing is the process of identifying individuals who have come into contact with COVID-19 positive individuals and deploying measures to reduce the spread of infections. Adoption of this practice is critical for slowing the spread of the virus and enable quick identification of individuals to prevent further exposure.

The South African Government is considering the implementation of a national contact tracing and tracking solution and B4SA supports this initiative.

Given the threat of an exponential increase in infections, B4SA recommends that corporates urgently establish their own company-specific contact tracing protocols. These tools will contribute to the country's overall response to COVID-19 and provide the following benefits:

- Early detection of symptoms
- Effective tracing of close contacts and selectively isolating those exposed to minimise business impact and ensure business operations continuity
- Potentially reduce the number of tests required and both reduce the workload on health workers and associated costs, e.g. cost for quarantine facilities; and
- Single view of employee health

While both a manual or digital option of contact tracing can be adopted, B4SA recommends the adoption of a digital option where possible. Digital solutions provide a more accurate and real-time record of all close contact employees.

B4SA has identified several digital contact tracing solutions and should your business decide to adopt such a solution, companies can directly contact service providers who have created digital corporate contact tracing solutions that are ready for deployment (Fig 2).

We appreciate your continued support of the nation's efforts in the battle against COVID-19.

For more information, please find attached a Q&A or contact the B4SA Innovation Stream Digital Lead: Natalie Naidoo: [natalie.naidoo@sasol.com](mailto:natalie.naidoo@sasol.com)

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## Contact Tracing Q&A

### 1. Why is a digital contact tracing solution recommended vs a manual solution?

In the case of manual contact tracing solutions:

- The manual system relies on interviewing employees that test positive / show symptoms to determine who they have come into close contact with over the past two weeks. Even with perfect recollection, individuals could only ever remember having close contact with other employees they know and not necessarily those that are strangers to them. As a result, many people with whom they have come into contact with, would remain undetected and continue to unknowingly spread the virus; and
- The process will take time as each identified person would have to be contacted on an individual basis.

In the case of digital contact tracing solutions:

- Digital contact tracing provides a near-perfect record of all close contacts between all employees; and
- It also allows for faster identification of all people that have come into contact with an infected individual showing symptoms so that appropriate action can be taken to limit the business impact and further infections.

Figure 1 below highlights the enhanced effectiveness of digital contact tracing over manual contact tracing.

### 2. What is the most effective technology to do contact tracing?

The most effective technology used is mobile-assisted contact tracing solutions.



### 3. What are the health and economic benefits of contact tracing?

Health benefits include saving lives, limiting the strain on hospitals/ICUs and curbing the spread of the virus. Economic benefits include allowing the economy to restart quickly and safely, ensuring continued business operations and employees' safe return to work and potential reduction in COVID-19 testing cost (kits, lab work, etc.).

### 4. How have other countries dealt with contact tracing?

Countries that have successfully eased lockdown restrictions and moved to selective quarantine have done so with a holistic monitoring system that includes symptom screening, testing, tracking, tracing, further aided with the use of technology.

## 5. When will the government’s national solution be launched and how will it work?

The South African Government is considering the implementation of a national contact tracing and tracking solution. This solution will have to be downloaded on a voluntary basis by the public. Effective contact tracing will be dependent on the percentage of the population that downloads and uses the App. Based on best information available, -the data to be collected at a national level will only be used by the DoH solely for COVID-19 management and will not be shared with individual companies.

## 6. Why is it critical to trace and self-isolate all those that had close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual?

Recent experience and research\* indicate that the spread of COVID-19 takes place predominantly in the pre-symptomatic (45%) and symptomatic (40%) stages of infection, with lower transmission from environmental (10%) and asymptomatic (5%) vectors. The prevalence of pre-symptomatic transmission means that a person who tests positive for COVID-19 may have been transmitting the disease for as long as two weeks prior to experiencing symptoms.

\*Science2020/04/09/science.abb6936 “Quantifying SARS-COV-2 transmission suggests epidemic control with digital contact tracing”.

Source: StatsSA, Actuarial Society of South Africa –COVID outcomes 27 April 2020, FRB Epidemiological modelling; FRB and BSA Economic modelling



Figure 1: Example of the enhanced effectiveness of digital contact tracing

## 7. Who are the service providers that have already built digital solutions?

Figure 2 lists service providers that have created digital corporate contact tracing solutions that are ready for deployment. In rolling out these innovative solutions, it is imperative that businesses ensure that privacy protection is in place and these service providers work closely with corporates to ensure such privacy standards are upheld. This is a non-exhaustive list and does not imply that B4SA endorses these solutions. These solutions are presented to give member companies a view of what solutions exist. For more information on any of the solutions, please contact the relevant company representative.

	BT digital contact tracing	GPS location / beacons	Links to BT wearables	Mgmt. dashboard	Comms platform	Compliance checks	Congestion mgmt.	Employee self-reporting	Links to screening hardware	Int. apps	NOT EXHAUSTIVE Contact details
4 sight	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	<a href="mailto:info@actech.biz">info@actech.biz</a>
Accenture	✓	○	○	✓	✓	○	✗	✓	○	✓	<a href="mailto:eric_croeser@accenture.com">eric_croeser@accenture.com</a>
BCG	✓	○	✓	✓	✓	○	✓	✓	○	✓	<a href="mailto:Jacobson.Ivan@bcg.com">Jacobson.Ivan@bcg.com</a>
Boston Consulting Group	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	<a href="mailto:Glen.Rodger@bcs.co.za">Glen.Rodger@bcs.co.za</a>
FNB	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	<a href="mailto:GVirgilito@fnb.co.za">GVirgilito@fnb.co.za</a>
Vasconn	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	○	✗	✗	<a href="mailto:thinus@vasconn.co.za">thinus@vasconn.co.za</a>
Uhuru-hive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	<a href="mailto:ceo@eguru.co.za">ceo@eguru.co.za</a>
Vodacom	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<a href="mailto:Collin.Wembooi@vodacom.co.za">Collin.Wembooi@vodacom.co.za</a>

✓ Yes    ○ Optional    ✗ No

Figure 2: Collection of potential service providers have created digital corporate contact tracing solutions