



FACTUAL FILM & TV SOUND PROPOSED CONTROL MEASURES WORKING UNDER COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Draft Version 2

The scope of this document includes all factual programme and film making. Scripted drama and feature films are dealt with separately in a separate document.

The aim of this document is to provide guidance for safe working practices, specifically within the Sound Department, in relation to limiting the spread of Covid-19 and continuing work under Government restrictions and distancing measures

Background Assumptions

In terms of production, Factual TV is a very different to that of drama, with smaller crews, fewer resources, and an operational need for individuals to mix between departments. A mixed audio feed to camera is often vital for camera operators to operate to as well as being the primary source for the sound edit of the finished programme. There is also a greater use and reliance on radiomics.

These requirements, coupled with the shooting of actuality in public spaces and fast daily turnaround, gives rise to the possibility of cross contamination of both personnel and equipment.

It is vital that safe practices be implemented to minimise the possibility of Coronavirus transmission. These should include increased general and specific Covid-19 planning prior to the shoot, and certain working practices during the shoot. These should minimise exposure of any crew members to coronavirus, as well as any production to health and safety litigation based on unsafe working practices.

New practices must therefore be implemented before, during and after the shoot to minimise these risks.

This can be achieved by the use of controlled spaces on filming locations as well as limiting access to these spaces to designated personnel. If possible, when away from controlled spaces, and when in public spaces, protocols of social distancing should be in place.

The following practices should be considered and implemented where appropriate.

1 Prior planning

- 1.1 Production should aim to make all crew aware, well in advance, of the Coronavirus procedures and practices of any organisation where working will take place.

- 1.2 Production should aim to minimise the number of personnel on location as much as possible, though this might slow productivity down. If this is unacceptable then appropriate staffing levels should be implemented.
- 1.3 Production Managers should aim to nominate a safe zone for kit at every location, which should be free from public access, and have good ventilation. This could be the private transport to the location so long as it provides crew members a with safe space to perform kit maintenance and cleaning. Access to this space should be limited to certain personnel from each department. If practicable it should also have a high ventilation rate and allow personnel to use it in a separate linear fashion to minimise aerosol cross-contamination.
- 1.3 Sound Dept should sanitise all equipment, such as personal Lavalier mics, transmitter packs, IEM's and headphones prior to shoot day. TX packs should be pre-packed in small plastic bags. These bags should be kept in a decontaminated box or container kept separate from other equipment. Where possible, equipment will be specifically assigned to cast and/or crew members. Disposable gloves should be used and 70% IPA or 5% sodium hypochlorite can be used for all sanitation procedures within this area, and all waste should be treated as contaminated.
- 1.4 No crew member should be working longer hours in order to implement the necessary safety measures. Production might consider use of staggered call times, shift patterns and job shares within the sound department. The physical and mental wellbeing of the crew should be of paramount importance and an overriding factor when setting crewing levels and shooting schedules. Specific consideration should be given to the length of every working day.
- 1.5 Production should ascertain if crew are working with anyone in the vulnerable category, and check before the start of the shoot day if anyone is self-isolating and if this status has changed.
- 1.6 Some contributors might require equipment dedicated to and used exclusively by themselves for the length of a production, i.e. radio mic transmitter packs and lavalier mics. Additional equipment may need to be hired as a consequence.
- 1.7 Venues with security should be allowed as much as possible to leave equipment rigged and secured.

2 Shoot day protocols

- 2.1 A dedicated space at each location should be set up as a safe radio mic rigging area, with access by only one person from sound. Personal lavalier mic capsules should be rigged onto only one contributor for the whole day if possible. Prepacked sanitised consumables should be available for each contributor...If necessary radiomics could be self-fitted under the supervision of a sound person at a safe distance. Adjustments to radio mics could be carried out by a designated sound person using appropriate PPE.
- 2.2 For rigging in a shoot area such as sit-down Interviews, access should be linear i.e. lighting, then camera, then sound etc.

- 2.3 Appropriate PPE to be worn whilst shooting. No cross contamination of kit between depts. Equipment from each dept to be handled only by a dedicated person from that department.
- 2.4 Appropriate resources and time to be given each day for breaks to include hand washing and personal corona virus hygiene/ decontamination.
- 2.5 If working in private homes, appropriate PPE should be worn and the activity time involved should be kept as short as possible. Once inside: Care must be taken to avoid any hand and mouth to surface and surface to hand cross contamination. A “wet paint “ or “precious antique” approach should be applied to all surfaces inside the location. Any furniture or props that need to be moved should be done with freshly cleaned hands and a facemask to prevent contamination. Anything the crew touches in the filming location should be sanitized after use.

3 Post shoot

- 3.1 Any non-essential equipment should be quarantined for a minimum of 72 hours.
- 3.2 All essential equipment should be thoroughly decontaminated before reuse and identified as such.

Disclaimer.

The information in this document is for general guidance and does not constitute professional legal, health and safety, or medical advice. If you need advice on the legal, health and safety, or medical consequences of any course of action, please contact professional advisors in the relevant field. As government guidance and laws are under constant review, we do not guarantee that any course of action will necessarily be appropriate at any given time.

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