



**EMPLOYERS AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS THAT  
RESUMED TRAINING UNDER COVID-19 LEVEL 3- LOCKDOWN**

*“Saving the academic year whilst saving lives”*

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### **Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this report are that of the Author and not that of the HWSETA.

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## **ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ATR	Annual Training Report
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CET	Community Education and Training
HWSETA	Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety Act
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSET	Post School Education and Training
SDP	Skills Development Providers
SETA	Sector Education and Training
SMS	Short Message Service
WHO	World Health Organisation

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1. Introduction**

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2020) says that COVID-19 is expected to be the new normal as global cases surge past 10 million in June. This means that employers and training providers will have to resume or continue work and training while adhering to the regulations and requirements brought about by this transformation. Massive transformations have been witnessed in workplaces with the most recent shutdowns of different sectors except for the essential services. But the larger question was whether employers and the skills development providers (SDPs) in the health and social development sector, were able to resume training under Covid-19 level 3 lockdown regulations. This was the main purpose of this survey.

### **2. Research Methodology**

The research methodology used to collect the information for this survey involved both qualitative and quantitative methods, as the collection of secondary data used was qualitative methods and the collection of primary data used quantitative methods. The research design was cross-sectional, as data collected and recorded focused on the here and now. The type of research study is descriptive as it identified employers and SDPs that resumed training and described measures taken to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 in adherence to occupational health regulations.

With respect to the content of the survey, a survey questionnaire was designed to address the objectives that relate to;

- (a) establishing the number of employers and skills development providers that had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown.
- (b) establishing factors for the non-resumption of training by employers and skills development providers during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown.
- (c) determining the level of compliance to Covid-19 level 3 regulations by employers and skills development providers.

The survey questionnaire was sent from a platform called SurveyMonkey and emailed to employers and SDPs that entered into work-based learning programme agreements with unemployed learners during 2019-2020 financial year. The survey questionnaire

was emailed to approximately 1350 employers and 138 SDPs for primary data. The secondary database comprised of employers and SDPs that completed an institutional readiness planning template issued out by HWSETA. The purpose of this planning template was for employers and SDPs to confirm whether they were ready to resume training. This template was issued out prior the current survey and 168 employers, and 19 SDPs responded.

### 3. Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are discussed in line with the objectives of the study as follows:

#### **Objective 1: Establishing the number of employers and skills development providers that had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown.**

The findings yielded by the survey and the institutional readiness plans show that **75% (290/388)** of employers had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. While **82% (84/103)** of skills development providers had resume training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. This therefore meant that **25% (97/388)** of employers and **18% (19/103)** of skills development providers did not resume training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. As thus, **76% (374/491)** of all organisations (employers and SDPs combined) had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown, and **24% (116/491)** did not resume training. The table below presents the results as follows:

Size	Employers	SDPs	Total	
			No	Percentage
Resumed training during level 3	290	84	374	76%
Not resumed training during level 3	97	19	116	24%
Non-response	1	0	1	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **Objective 2: Establishing contributing factors to the non-resumption of training by employers and skills development providers during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown.**

The findings yielded by the survey and the institutional readiness plans show the causal factors for the 24% of organisations that did not resume training during level 3 lockdown were both internal and external. The table below summarises these factors.

Percentage	Factors
External Factors	
<b>6% (30/491)</b>	employers and skills development providers were still trying to meet level-3 lockdown regulations so as to be able to accommodate both workers and students
<b>14,5% (71/491)</b>	employers were not fully operational to accept both workers and students and therefore were not be ready to accept students back for training under level 3 lockdown
Internal Factors	
<b>3% (15/491)</b>	employers were waiting for skills development providers and lead employers to send students for workplace training

### **Objective 3: Determining the level of compliance to Level 3 Covid-19 regulations by employers and skills development providers**

This objective was tested through the survey study only. The institutional readiness plan was not designed to answer to this objective of the study. This therefore means that the discussion of results focuses on the **220** employers and **84** skills development providers. Compliance to the level 3 Covid-19 regulations required employers and skills development providers to put measures in place to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 in workplaces and training institutions. The results yielded by the survey are summarized in the following table:

Areas of compliance to Covid-19 level 3 regulations	Level of Compliance
Communication about Covid-19 to employees and learners	<b>100%</b>
Areas covered by employer's cleaning and disinfection plans	<b>75%</b>
Topics covered by the risk assessment plans of employers and SDPs	<b>70%</b>
Administrative control measures put in place by employers and skills development providers to adhere to Covid-19 level 3 lockdown regulations	<b>62%</b>
Submission of OHS Policies and Risk Assessment Plans by very large organisations	<b>60%</b>
Questions covered in screening processes of employers and skills development providers	<b>53%</b>
Preventative measures put in place by employers and skills development providers against the spread of COVID-19	<b>49%</b>
Measures put in place by employers and skills development providers to deal with suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19	<b>33%</b>

The level of compliance to Covid-19 level 3 regulations by all organisations therefore ranged from **33% to 100%**. The range between levels of compliance to Covid-19 regulations is therefore 67%. It can therefore be concluded that adherence to Covid-19 level 3 regulations was **67%**.

#### **4. Conclusion**

It is important to note that the results and conclusions drawn from the survey and institutional readiness plans can be generalised to the organisations that responded to these studies as they appear on appendix a, b, c, and d. In order to know whether more employers and SDPs had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown the survey questionnaire would have to be issued to additional organisations.

This survey has indicated that the return to training for learners required by all employers and SDPs to put in place a vast number of compliance measures before and during training. The critical issue therefore is compliance to Covid-19 level 3 lockdown regulations in order to limit the transmission of Covid-19 in the workplace and training institutions. The survey has shown based on the employers and skills development providers that responded to the survey that there is a high level of compliance.

#### **5. Recommendations**

To ensure continued compliance, it is recommended that the level of transmission among learners funded by the HWSETA be closely monitored. The HWSETA can do this by requesting employers and skills development providers to submit reports of all Covid-19 cases affecting its learners and also submitting reports explaining the measures that have been taken to reduce further transmission of the virus, such as quarantine of infected learners, tracking of learners that had contact with the infected learners and their self-isolation and testing, decontamination of the workplace and training institution etc.

Also, employers and skills development providers that have not submitted the institutional readiness plan need to be encouraged to do so. A register should then be created of all employers and skills development providers who submitted the institutional readiness plan and dates for the resumption of training should be captured on that register. This will assist the HWSETA to track the number of employers and skills development providers that have resumed training. The institutional readiness plan should require information on the new date of completion based on the revised programmes. This will provide the HWSETA with insight on when 2020 academic year will be completed across programmes.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE SURVEY**

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The advent of COVID-19 in South Africa brought the country into a COVID-19 National Lock-down resulting from the Declaration of a National State of Disaster by the President on 15 March 2020 through the Disaster Management Act, 57 of 2002. The COVID-19 National Lock-down was meant to be the best response to prevent the spread of this highly infectious disease as it enforced social distancing among people; self-isolation of those who had contact with infected persons; and quarantine of those infected. In respect of the National State of Disaster, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation placed Post School Educations and Training (PSET) institutions on early recess and suspended academic activity.

The period between 26 March to 30 April 2020, was categorised as level 5 of COVID-19 National Lock-down, which permitted only services classified as essential to operate. From 1 May 2020 to 30 May 2020, the country went into level 4 of National Lock-down, which lifted a ban on manufacturing services. All post-school education institutions were closed during level 5 and 4 of the COVID-19 National Lock-down. Level 3 of the COVID-19 National lock-down, which began on 1 June 2020, permitted PSET institutions to gradually re-open.

Furthermore, Minister Blade Nzimande, in his speech of the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020 outlined responsibilities of each of the PSET institutions, which included Universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges, Community Education and Training (CET) Colleges, and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). The responsibility of SETAs in phasing in the re-opening of PSET is to ensure that, “during May and June students return to workplaces and training institutions,” (Minister Blade Nzimande, 30 April 2020). These students referred to are students that have signed work-based learning programme agreements with employers and Skills Development Providers (SDPs), which includes, students in learnerships, apprenticeships, and graduate internships.

Additionally, every employer and SDP that is in operation is expected to adhere to the Covid-19 Regulations. The Department of Employment and Labour appealed to employers to use the prescriptions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)

in particular, the Hazardous Biological Agents Regulations governing workplaces in relation to COVID-19. The purpose of these directives is to stipulate measures that must be taken by employers in order to protect the health and safety of workers and members of the public who enter their workplaces or are exposed to their working activities (Gazette & Notice, 2020). All employers are expected to conduct daily screening; maintain social distancing at work which is 1.5 metres; issue out work permits for workers; practice hygiene through disinfecting and providing soap for hand washing; create awareness about COVID-19; make provision of PPEs and sanitizers (Jefferson, Monique. Kats, 2020).

There are specific measures that employers are required to take to protect their employees in the workplace from COVID-19. For instance, employers with more than 500 employees are expected to submit a record of its risk assessment together with a written policy regarding the protection of employees from COVID-19 to its health and safety committee and the Department of Employment and Labour. Employers with less than 10 employees are not expected to comply with all the measures in the directive, but only need to comply with a list of measures applicable to them as outlined in the regulations and clause 40 of the directive (Jefferson, Monique. Kats, 2020).

According to Alert Level 3 from the Disaster Management Act (Huang, Li, & Xu, 1996), employers with more than 100 workers must, where possible, make provision for minimising the number of employees at the workplace at any given time through stipulating the hours of work and how the rotational of staggering work will be achieved at 30%, shift systems, remote working arrangements or similar measures, in order to achieve social distancing and to limit congestion in public transport and at the workplace. Lastly employers must implement measures for employees who are over 60 years or those with comorbidities to facilitate their safe return to work, which may include special measures at the workplace to limit employees' exposure to COVID -19 infection and where possible that the employees work from home.

### **1.1 Rationale, aim and objectives**

Pursuant to the Minister's speech, the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology has been on the drive to identify PSET institutions that resumed training

under Covid-19 level 3 lockdown Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) regulations. Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) from SETAs were therefore requested to provide the Department with reports indicating training institutions and employers that had resumed training during level 3 lockdown.

The CEO of the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) therefore, on 29 May 2020, commissioned a survey into the resumption training by employers and skills development providers in the health and social development sector during the Covid-19 Level 3 National Lockdown.

This study, therefore, aims to identify employers and SDPs in the health and social development sector that resumed training during the Covid-19 Level 3 National Lockdown. These are employers and SDPs that signed work-based learning programme agreements with unemployed persons enrolled for learnerships, apprenticeships, and graduate internships. Employed persons were excluded from the study because their return to work was not subject to the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. As such, most of these students are part of essential services and were therefore obligated to work during level 5 and 4 COVID -19 National Lockdown. Skills Development Providers that are accredited to offer occupational education and training that is quality assured by the HWSETA were exposed to a separate survey and an independent report is issued separate from this one.

The following are the objectives pursued in this survey:

- Establishing the number of employers and skills development providers that resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown.
- Establishing factors contributing to the non-resumption of training by employers and skills development providers during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown.
- Determining the level of compliance to Covid-19 level 3 lockdown regulations by employers and skills development providers.

It is important to note that this report also includes the findings of the institutional readiness plan that was conducted by the HWSETA's Skills Development Unit on assessing the state of readiness for employers and SDPS in different levels of the lock down regulation. These findings will be analysed and reported as secondary data in chapter 3.

## **Report Overview**

Chapter 1 has provided a short introduction and rationale for conducting the survey. Chapter 2 provides the research methodology; while chapter 3 presents data analysis; chapter 4 interprets and discusses the data presented in chapter 3; and chapter concludes the report and makes recommendations.

## **CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

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This section highlights the research methods that have been used in this survey. To assist us in providing answers to the objectives of the study. The research methodology used to ensure the accuracy of results yielded by the survey involved the following:

- The research design was cross-sectional, as data collected and recorded focused on the here and now. The design is also, qualitative and quantitative, as secondary data collecting methods used were qualitative in nature and the primary data collecting methods used were quantitative.
- The type of research study is descriptive as it identified employers and SDPs that resumed training and described measures taken to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 in adherence to occupational health regulations.
- The data collecting process and methodology used are explained in section 2.1 below

### **2.1 Data Collecting Process and Methodology**

This sub-section provides details of the process that was followed to collect secondary and primary data that responded to the aim and objectives of the study. The process of data collection started with document analysis of secondary data and then moved on to data collection of primary data. The collection of primary data started by first identifying the target population and then the selecting a sample that would participate in the study. The data collecting tool was developed and then uploaded on an online data collecting platform called survey monkey. The data collecting tool was emailed to employers and SDPs that entered into work-based learning programme agreements with unemployed learners during 2019-2020 financial year. Details of this process are discussed below.

#### **2.1.1 Data Collecting Process**

The method of data collecting technique that was used is a survey. A survey is a research method used for collecting data from a predefined group of respondents to gain information and insights into various topics of interest. The process involves

asking people for information through a questionnaire, which can be either online or offline, (QuestionPro.com). The survey questionnaire was designed to provide a comprehensive assessment of employers and SDPs that resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. The questions asked were simple to understand and included a number of multiple-choice questions, where multiple answer options were given to a closed ended question, and the respondents were required to select only correct answers from the choice options.

An online questionnaire was developed on SurveyMonkey in order to collect primary data for the survey. SurveyMonkey is an online survey software that helps to create and run professional online surveys. Also, questionnaires are the most common method applied to diagnose the functioning of institutions, (Olivier, 2017). Moreover, the use of online questionnaires is relevant during this time of the pandemic where reaching participants face to face should be as minimal as possible. The online questionnaire was constructed in line with the Department of Employment and Labour Covid-19 workplace regulations which focused on reducing the risk of transmission of Covid-19 in the workplace. The online questionnaire was sent to participants electronically and structured to gather quantitative data.

### **2.1.3 Target Population, Sampling, and Response Rate**

The Sampling technique used for this survey is referred to as stratified sampling method. This method involves separating the target population into two groups called strata. Usually, a probability **sample** (often a simple random **sample**) is drawn from each group, however, no further selection from the target group was made as the intention was to reach all employers and SDPs in the sampling frame. The sampling frames for primary data comprised of two databases, one for employers and another for skills development providers. The details for each employer and SDP included amongst many variables, the names of employers and SDPs, contact details; type of programme offered and the financial year of agreement.

The online survey questionnaire was therefore emailed to **174 employers** who were on the sampling frame, and **57 (33%)** employers responded, which was very low. Consequently, a further request was sent to the Skills Development Programmes and

Projects division to email the questionnaire to all employers that submitted Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs) and Annual Training Reports (ATR) in 2020. The survey questionnaire was then emailed to approximately 1975 employers, however about 625 emails did not go through. As a result, the emails that went through were **1350 and 220 (16%) employers responded**. Although the percentage response rate was low, this was almost 3.9 times more employers than the 57 that initially responded.

The online survey questionnaire was emailed to 328 SDPs, however, only **138** went through. Responses were received from **84 (61%)** SDPs, which was a good response. As thus there was no need to ask for the re-issue of the survey questionnaire to SDPs.

The secondary database comprised of employers and SDPs that completed an institutional readiness planning template issued out by HWSETA with the purpose of finding out whether employers and SDPs participating in workplace-based education and training were making any plans to open up workplaces and training institutions for learners to return to training. **168 employers and 19 SDPs** completed the planning template and submitted it to the HWSETA.

Therefore, **220** employers and **84** skills development providers participated in the survey questionnaire which is the source of primary data, and **168** employers and **19** skills development providers (SDPs) participated in the institutional readiness plan which is the source of secondary data. Therefore, a total of **388 (29%)** from a population of **1350** employers and **103 (75%)** from a population of **138** SDPs participated in the study. The following table provides a breakdown of what makes these response rates as per employer and SDP.

Table 1: Target Population

Target Population	Target Population Size	Sample Size break down		
Employer	1 350	Primary data (Survey)	220	16%
		Institutional Readiness Plan	168	12%
		<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>29%</b>
Skills Development Provider	138	Primary data (Survey)	84	61%
		Institutional Readiness Plan	19	14%
		<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>75%</b>

Participation in the institutional readiness planning template issued by the HWSETA was characterised by **12% (168/1350)** employers and **14% (19/138)** skills development providers who completed and submitted the institutional readiness planning template to the HWSETA. A total of **187** organisations therefore completed and submitted institutional readiness plan.

## **CHAPTER 3: PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS**

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This chapter provides data analysis of secondary data which consisted of institutional readiness plans, and the analysis of primary data from the survey questionnaire, which was collected from employers and skills development providers.

### **3.1 SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS: INSTITUTIONAL READINESS PLAN**

On 29 May 2020, the HWSETA issued an institutional readiness planning template to employers and skills development providers to complete and report to the HWSETA. The purpose of the institutional readiness planning template issued by the HWSETA was to know whether employers and SDPs participating in workplace-based education and training were making any plans to open up workplaces and training institutions for learners to return to training. The HWSETA wanted employers and SDP to disclose the plans they were making and also declare whether they adhered to the National Disaster Regulations for Covid-19. Information that could be used as part of the readiness to resume workplace-based education and training survey covered:

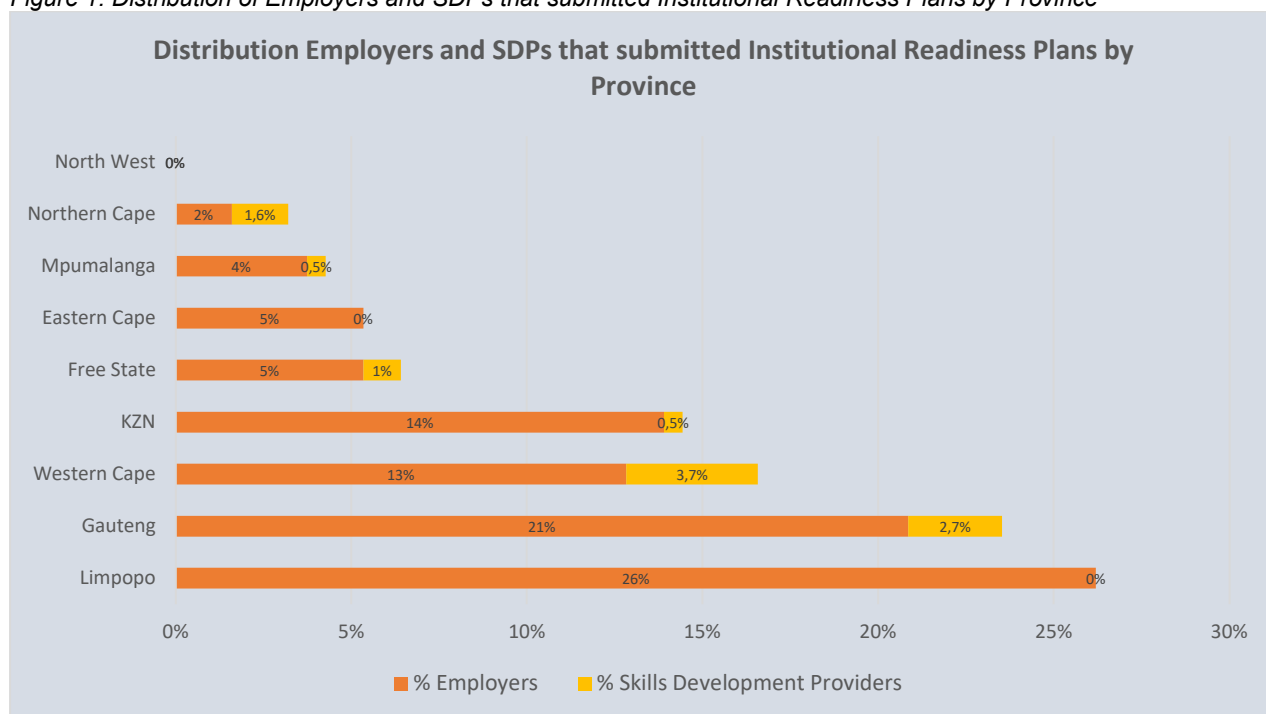
- Provincial spread of employers and SDPs that completed and submitted the institutional readiness Plans
- Confirmation of readiness of employers and SDPs to resume training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown.
- The date the employers and SDPs planned to open workplaces and training institutions for learners to return to training
- The applicable level of Covid-19 National Lock-down at which employers and SDPs planned to open workplaces and training institutions for learners to return to training.

#### **3.1.1 Submission of Institutional Readiness Plans by Employers and SDPs**

The provincial spread of organisations that completed and submitted institutional readiness plans to open-up workplaces and training institutions for the education and training of learners is presented in figure 1. The bar graph shows that from the 187 organisations that completed and submitted the self-assessment reports, these

organisations were mainly from Limpopo, **26% (49/187)**; Gauteng, **24% (44/187)**; Western Cape, **17% (31/187)**; and KwaZulu-Natal, **14.5% (27/184)**. It should be noted that organisations from the North West province did not submit the institutional readiness plans.

Figure 1: Distribution of Employers and SDPs that submitted Institutional Readiness Plans by Province



### 3.1.2 Confirmation of readiness of employers to and SDPs to resume training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown

Data drawn from the institutional readiness plans shows that **60% (112/187)** of the organisations (employers and SDPs) confirmed that they were ready to resume training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. (refer to figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Confirmation of readiness to resume training by employers and SDPs during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown

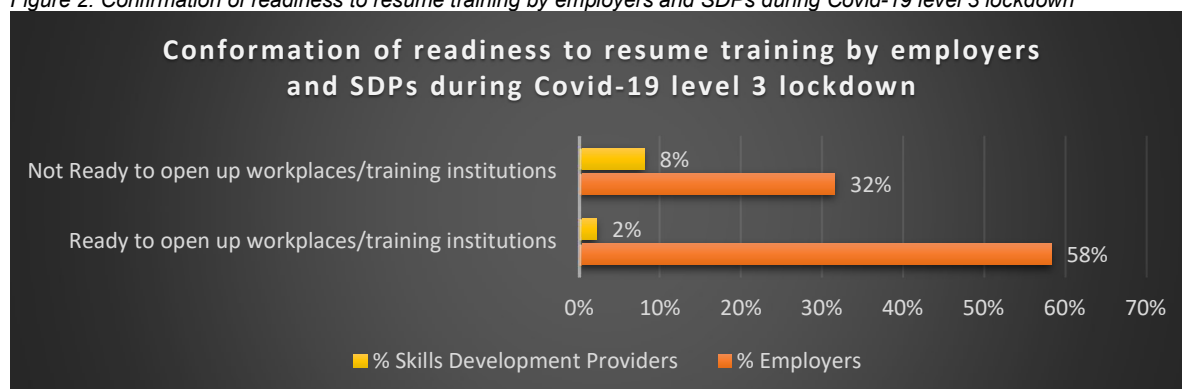
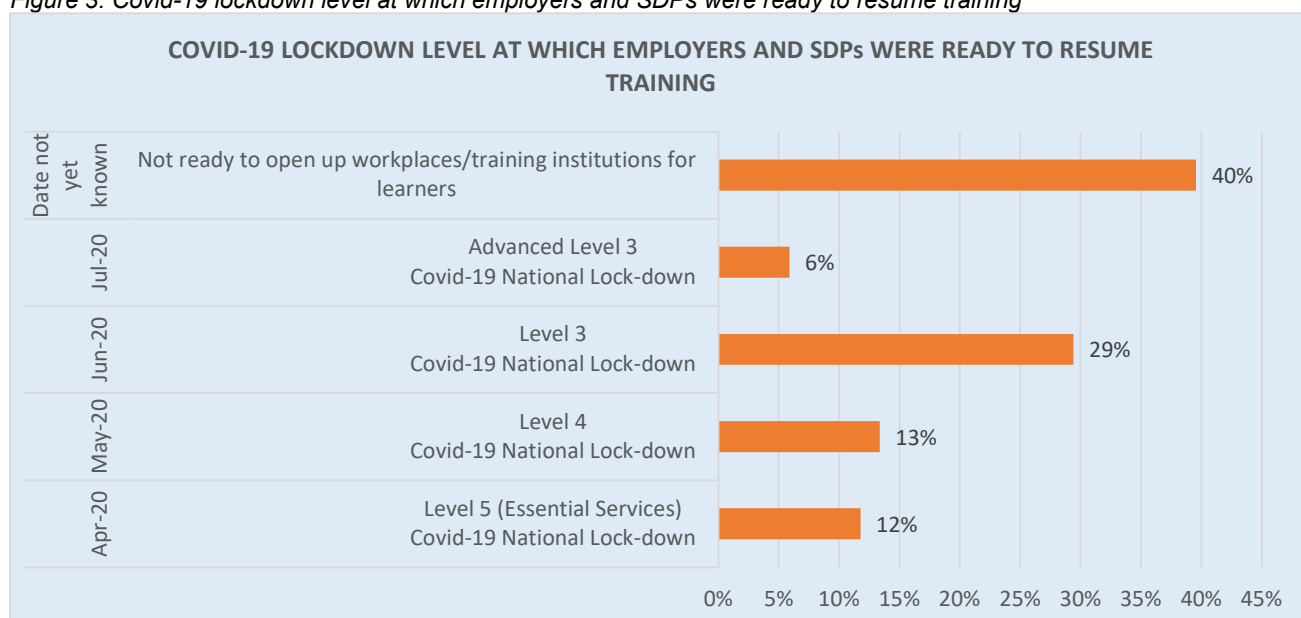


Figure 3, on the other hand, explores the lockdown level at which the 60% of organisations were ready to resume training:

- **35%** of these organisations were ready to resume training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown, of which 33% (**62/187**) were employers and 2% (4/187) were SDPs;
- **13% (25/187)** of employers resumed training during Covid-19 level 4 lockdown;
- **12% (22/187)** of employers never closed since level 5 because they are classified as essential services.
- **40%** of organisations, composed of **32% (59/187)** employers and **8% (15/187)** SDPs were not ready to open-up workplaces or training institutions and had no idea when they would be ready.

Figure 3: Covid-19 lockdown level at which employers and SDPs were ready to resume training



### 3.2 PRIMARY DATA ANALYSIS

This section is meant to map the results drawn from the responses to the survey provided by both employers and SDPs. The primary data is mapped in line with the structure of the survey questionnaire.

### 3.2.1 Data Analysis of Employer Responses to the Survey Questionnaire

The data analysis for the survey firstly presents responses from the employers and then responses from SDPs. As thus, a clear picture of the resumption of training is drawn for workplaces and training institutions.

#### (a) The company size of employers

This sub-section presents the size of companies that participated in the survey as employers. Table 2 shows that most employers that participated were small (had 0-49 employees), followed by the medium sized employers (had 50-149 employees), and the large employers (had 150 and more employees) had the least representation in the sample. Knowledge of the size of employers is crucial given that the level 3 lockdown regulations for workplaces do not apply the same to all employers.

Table 2: Company size of employers that participated in the survey

ORGANIZATION SIZE	EMPLOYER
Small (0-49 employees)	168 (76%)
Medium (50-149 employees)	27 (12%)
Large ( $\geq 150$ employees)	25 (11%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>220 (100%)</b>

#### (b) Resumption of training by employers

Table 3 shows that most **83% (182/220)** employers confirmed that they had resumed training. Only **17% (37/220)** employers had not resumed training in June, and 1 employer did not respond to the question.

Table 3: Resumption of training during level 3 lockdown by employers

RESUME TRAINING	EMPLOYER RESPONSES	
Yes	182	83%
No	37	17%
No response	1	0,5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

The **37** employers that said they had not resumed training were further requested to indicate reasons and this is discussed below.

Table 4: Reasons why employers have not resumed for training

Why has the employer not resumed for training	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Preparing workplace for compliance	6	3%
Minimise transmission	5	2%
No funds	4	2%
Business operation not in full capacity	4	2%
Dependent on the university to release the students	3	1%
No graduates or interns currently	2	1%
Not enough space to comply with COVID-19	1	0,5%
Processing application	1	0,5%
No contingency plan to allow for training	1	0,5%
Training occurring telephonically	1	0,5%
Fear of increasing COVID-19 numbers	1	0,5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13%</b>

Only **29 (13%)** from the **37 (17%)** employers provided reasons for not having resumed training. The reasons provided by these employers in the table above show that most of the reasons are internal ranging from issues of compliance, organizational capacity and resources. These are all indicators of compliance that include not having enough space to comply with the regulations of level 3 lockdown of maintaining 1.5m social distancing. The issue of resources and capacity such as lack of funds and business operation not in full capacity to support learners were identified by **4** employers for each variable. A few employers provided other reasons that were not internal, but had external influences, such as employers depending on universities to release students.

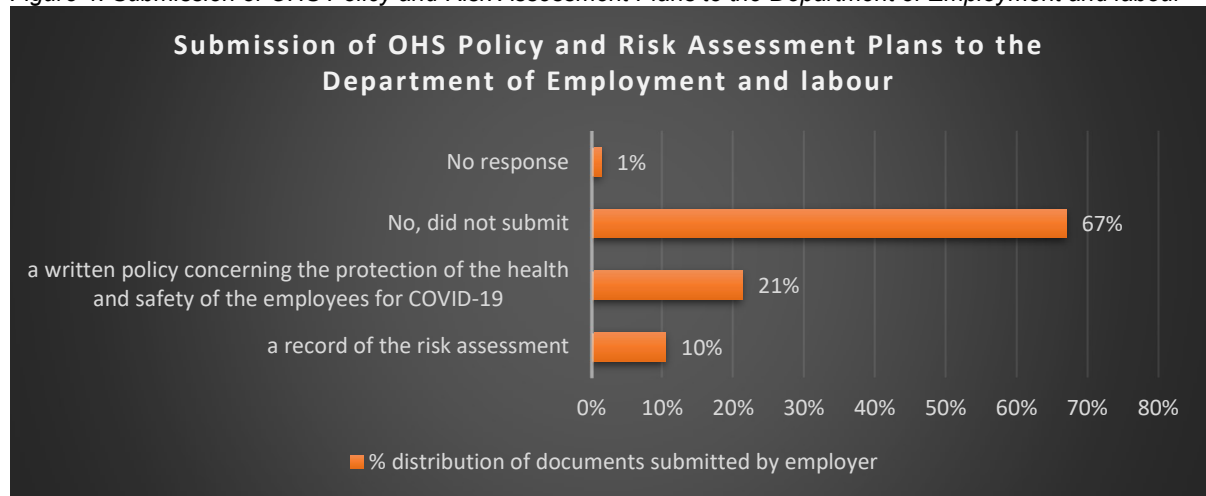
### (c) Measures put in place by employers to mitigate the spread of COVID-19

- (i) Documents submitted by employers to the Department of Labour and Employment in adherence to COVID-19 Regulations

According to the Directive issued by the Department of Employment and Labour (dated 28 April 2020) employers with more than 500 employees are expected to submit a record of risk assessment together with a written policy concerning the protection of the health and safety of its employees from COVID-19 as contemplated in section 7(1) of OHSA. It is based on this notion that this survey explored whether employers classified as large companies complied with these regulations. It should be, however, be noted that the large companies that participated in the study did not

necessarily have more than 500 employees. The results presented therefore are relative.

Figure 4: Submission of OHS Policy and Risk Assessment Plans to the Department of Employment and labour

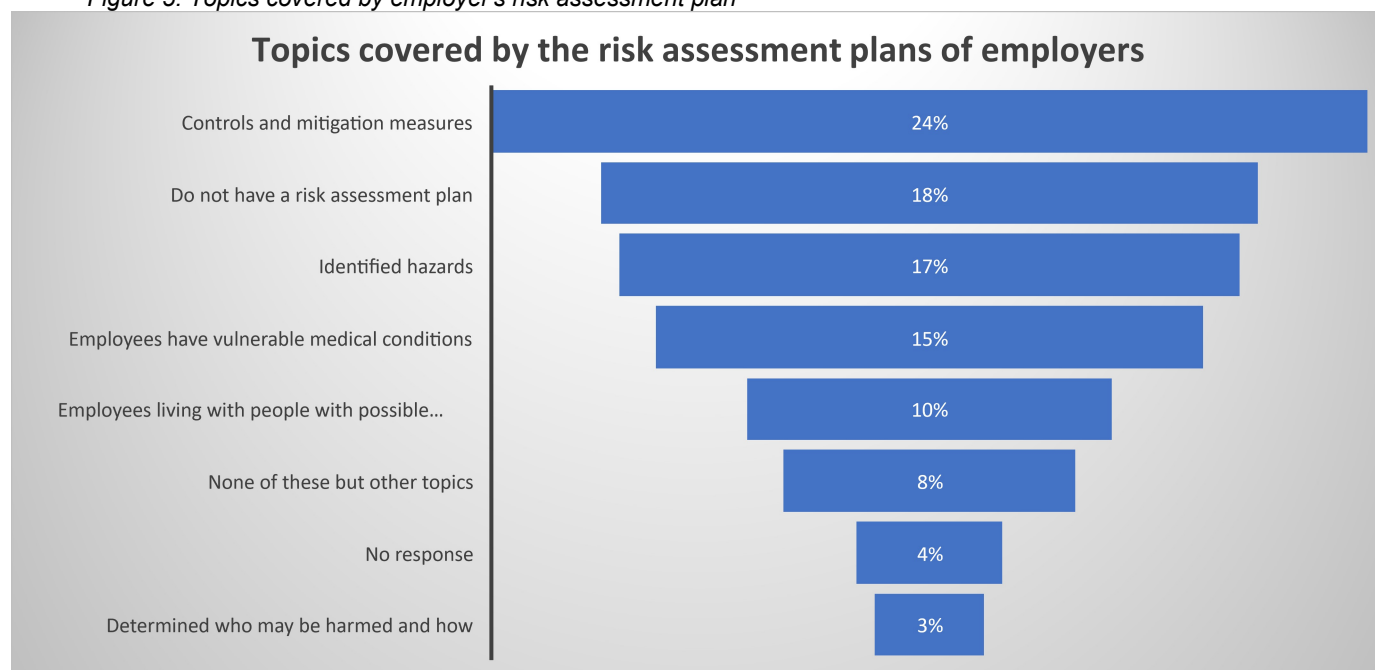


Large companies that participated in the study constituted **11% (25/220)** of employers. However, **21% (47/220)** of employers that participated in the study indicated that the submitted OHS policies for COVID-19 to the Department of Employment and Labour. From the **47** companies that submitted OHS policies for COVID-19, only **14 (6%)** were large companies. Employers that submitted risk assessment records to the Department of Employment and Labour constituted **10% (23/220)** of the participating employers. From the **23** employers, **22 (10%)** were large companies. This therefore means that large companies relatively complied more with the submission of the risk assessment records than the submission of OHS policies for COVID-19.

(ii) Topics covered in the risk assessment records

The OHSA expects employers' risk assessment records to stipulate measures that they must take to determine the risk of exposure of employees to COVID-19 in order to take steps to reduce the risk of coronavirus infection in workplace areas. This was a multiple-choice question. The survey questionnaire provided a list of topics that should be covered in the employer risk assessment plan. Employers were expected to choose topics they included in their plans, and the results are presented in figure 7 as follows:

Figure 5: Topics covered by employer's risk assessment plan



The above figure shows that employers cover different topics to assess the risk of exposure of employees to Covid-19:

- with majority of **24% (52/220)** employers putting in place infection controls measures
- followed by **18% (40/220)** employers that did not have a risk assessment plan
- followed by **17% (37/220)** of employers who covered topics that sought to identify hazards that could increase the spread of the virus at work
- also followed by **15% (34/220)** of employers who covered topics that sought to know employees who could have medical conditions that could cause them to be vulnerable to serious COVID-19 infections,
- also followed by **10% (23/220)** of employers who covered topics that sought to know employees living with people with possible increased risk of Covid-19 exposure,
- and **3% (7/220)** of employers who covered topics put in place measures to identify those that may have contracted the virus and also tracking their contacts

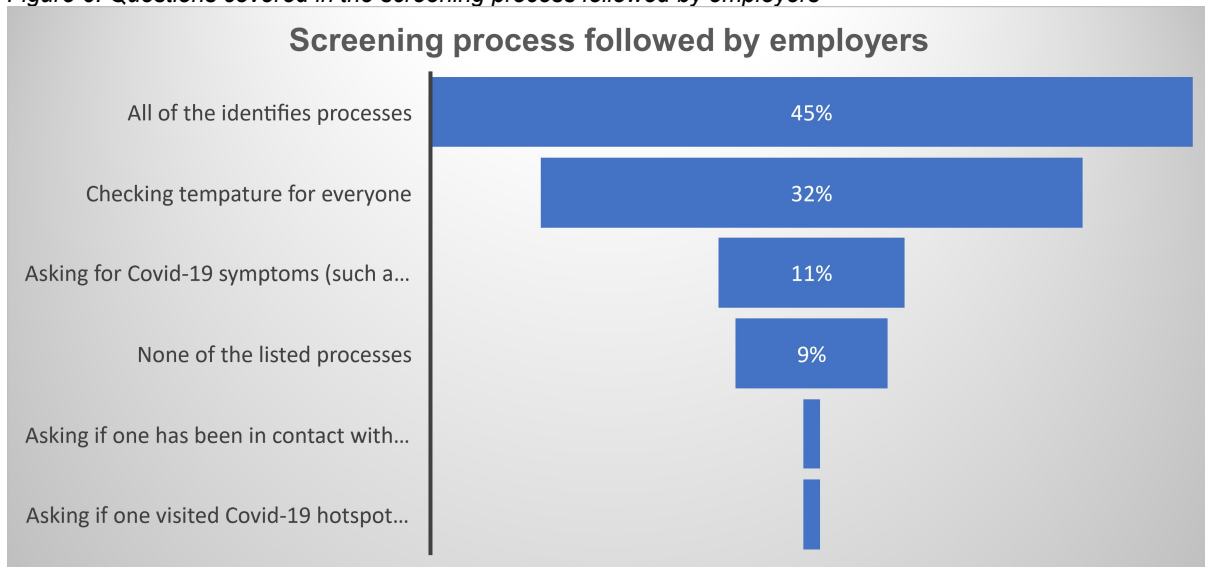
There are those employers **8% (17/220)** that selected none of the topics provided for in the questionnaire but indicated that they covered other topics; while **4% (9/220)** employers skipped this question altogether.

(iii) Screening Process for COVID-19 at the Workplace

Results presented on figure 8 show screening questions covered by employers in order to reduce the spread of Covid-19. From a total of 220 employers that participated in this question:

- A majority of employers, **45% (100/220)** ask all screening questions as prescribed
- **32% (71/220)** of employers only check for body temperature,
- **11% (25/220)** of employers asked for COVID-19 symptoms,
- **1% (3/220)** of employers asked employees whether they had visited or had any contact with a person with COVID-19 in the last 14 days,
- while **9% (19/220)** did not follow any screening process, and from the **9%**, **3** employers had opened for normal operations and mentioned that they were ready for training.

Figure 6: Questions covered in the screening process followed by employers



Nevertheless, it must be noted that some people are asymptomatic which implies that such underlying symptoms may not show although one has the virus. In such cases it means if such a person is allowed into the work premises, they bear the risk of spreading the virus unknowingly. It is therefore essential to put in place other control measures such as safe workplace practices which include providing resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. More to this, providing the relevant personal protective equipment (PPE) cannot be undermined as it directly prevents exposure to the virus.

(iv) Preventative measures against the spread of Covid-19

Results from Table 5 show that from a total of 220 employers participated in this question as follows:

Table 5: Employer preventative measures against the spread of COVID-19

Preventative measure	Employer participation	Employer distribution
All of the listed measures	92	42%
Supplying employees with the correct PPE	68	31%
Screening employees who enter the institution	20	9%
Encouraging employees and students to wash hands several times a day	8	4%
None of the listed measures	7	3%
No Response	6	3%
Limiting the number of people in the workplace	5	2%
Providing hand sanitizers for all employees	5	2%
Using one entrance in the workplace	2	1%
Displaying appropriate signage, such as hand washing signs at the canteen and bathrooms	3	1%
Maintain social distancing (maintaining 1.5m physical distancing)	3	1%
Usage of disposable towels for cleaning hands and work surfaces	1	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

The results yielded through this question show:

- a majority of employers, **42% (92/220)** put in place all preventative measures to combat the spread of COVID-19;
- followed by those that supplied employers with the correct PPE at **31% (68/220)**
- while screening of employees who enter the workplace follows at **9% (20/220)**

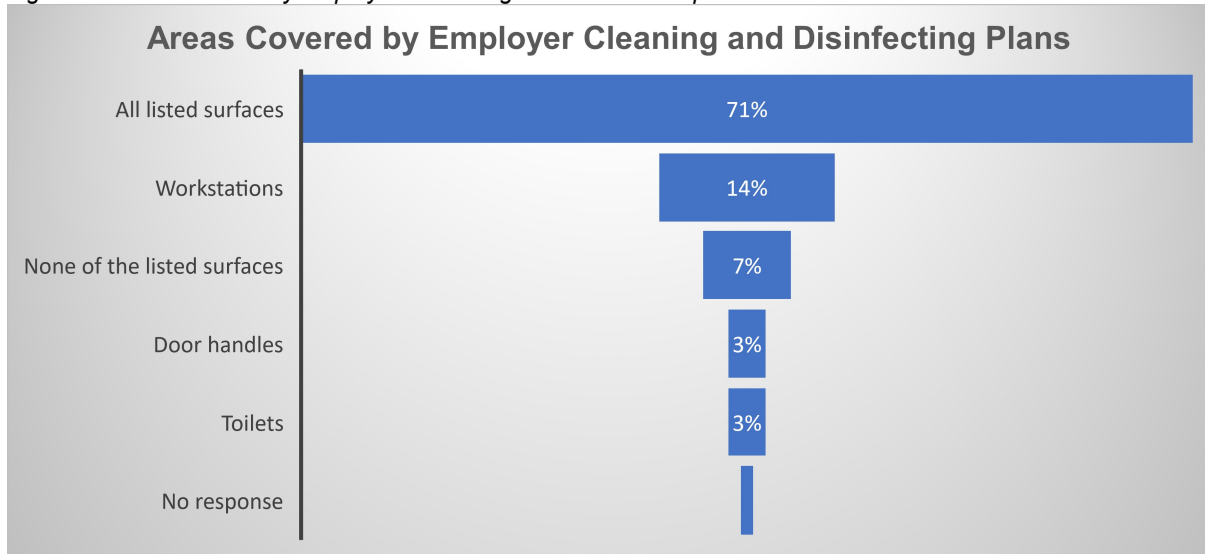
There are those employers **3% (7/220)** that do not have any of the preventative measures put in place and these had not resumed for work.

(v) Employer's cleaning and disinfection plans

As the Department of Health advises together with the World Health Organisation (WHO) ongoing cleaning and disinfecting surfaces to curb the spread of the virus. Figure 9 gets into the specifics of areas that employers focus on when it comes to deep cleaning and disinfection plans as part of preventative measures to combat the spread of Covid-19. The results indicate the following:

- **71% (156/220)** of employers' cleaning and disinfection plans involve all surfaces;
- employer's cleaning and disinfection plans that focus on specific areas include:
  - **14% (31/220)** that focus on workstations,
  - **3% (7/220)** that focus on door handles and
  - **3% (7/220)** that focus on toilets

Figure 7: Areas covered by employer's cleaning and disinfection plans



Lastly, the **7% (15/220)** employers that did not have any cleaning and disinfection plans were those employers that had not resumed training and hence these plans would not be applicable.

(vi) Measures put in place by employers to deal with suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19

Employers were provided with a list of measures that they are expected to put in place to deal with suspected or confirmed cases of employees and students that contract Covid-19. They were then requested to indicate the measures they had put in place in their institutions. Figure 10 presents the results.

Figure 8: Measures put in place to deal with suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19

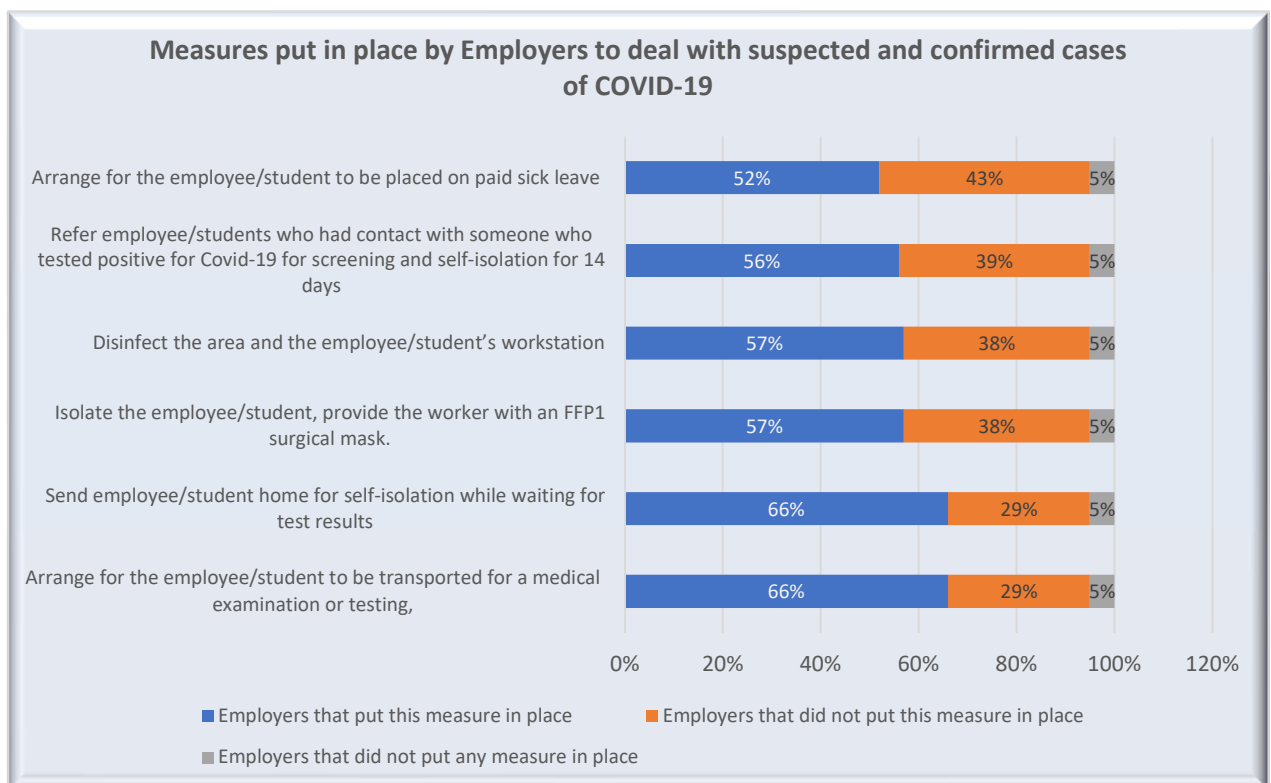


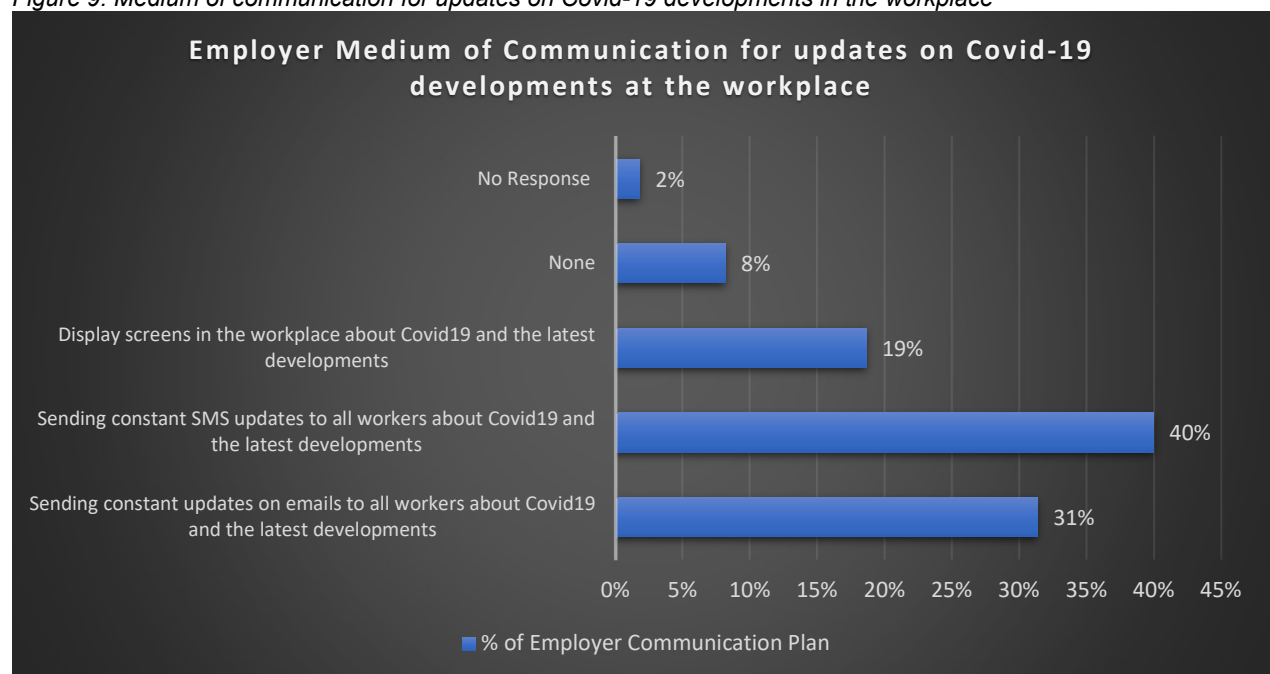
Figure 10 shows the following results:

- The most prevalent measures chosen by employers included:
  - Arranging for an employee or student with Covid-19 symptoms to be transported for a medical examination or testing, which was chosen by **66% (145/220)** employers.
  - Send employee or student home for self-isolation while waiting for test results. This was chosen by **66% (145/220)** employers.
- Other prevalent measures that were chosen by SDPs included;
  - Disinfecting the area and the employee's or student's workstation, which was chosen by **57% (125/220)** employers.
  - Isolating a student presenting with Covid-19 symptoms, and then provide a FFP1 surgical mask, which was chosen by **57% (125/220)** employers.
  - Referring employees or students who had contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19 for screening and self-isolation for 14 days. This was chosen by **56% (123/220)** employers.
- The least prevalent measure chosen by SDPs was;
  - Arranging for the employee or student to be placed on paid sick leave. This was chosen by **52% (114/220)** of SDPs.
- There were **11 (5%)** employers that did not put any measures in place

(vii) Employer's communication plans put in place

As highlighted in chapter 1 that the Department of Employment and Labour encourages organizations to have proper communication plans in place regarding COVID-19. Various researchers across the globe have also emphasised that since this virus is new and everyone is still learning about it, it is important to have a communication plan to continuously share new information. Figure 11 below shows that employers make use of at least one or more ways as communication methods in the form of displaying screens at work, sending constant SMSs or sending updates through email.

Figure 9: Medium of communication for updates on Covid-19 developments in the workplace



The results show that;

- **40% (88/220)** of employers use SMSs for constant updates about COVID-19 and the latest developments; **31% (69/220)** use emails; while **19% (41/220)** opted for displaying screens at work for communication.

Only **8% (18/220)** indicated that they do not use any method of communication while the remaining **2% (4/220)** did not respond to this question.

(viii) Employer's COVID-19 administrative control measures

Employers were provided with a list of administrative control measures that they are expected to put in place to phase in level 3 lock-down regulations. They were then requested to indicate the measures they had put in place. Figure 12 presents the results.

Figure 10: Administrative control measures put in place by the employer

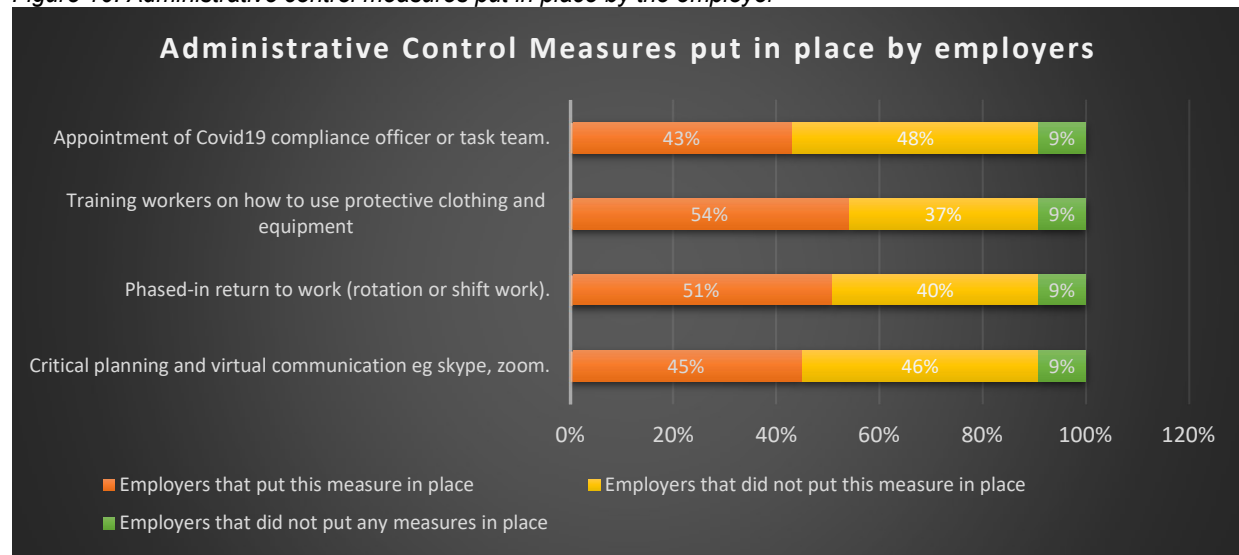


Figure 12 above shows the following results:

- The most prevalent measures chosen by employers included:
  - Training workers on how to use protective clothing and equipment, which was chosen by **54% (119/220)** employers.
  - Phased-in return to work (rotation and shift work), which was chosen by **51% (112/220)** employers.
- Other prevalent measures that were chosen by employers included;
  - Critical planning and virtual communication, which was chosen by **45% (99/220)** employers.
  - Appointment of Covid-19 compliance officer or task team, which was chosen by **43% (95/220)** employers.

### 3.2.2 Data Analysis of Skills Development Providers (SDP) Responses to Survey Questions

This section present responses of skills development providers to the survey questionnaire.

#### (a) The company size of employers

This sub-section firstly presents the breakdown of SDPs responses that participated according to size of organization. Table 6 below indicates that most SDPs that participated were small (with 0-49 employees), followed by the medium sized employers (with 50-149 employees), and the large employers (with 150 and more employees) had the least representation in the sample. Only one SDP did not indicate the size of the organization but participated in the questionnaire.

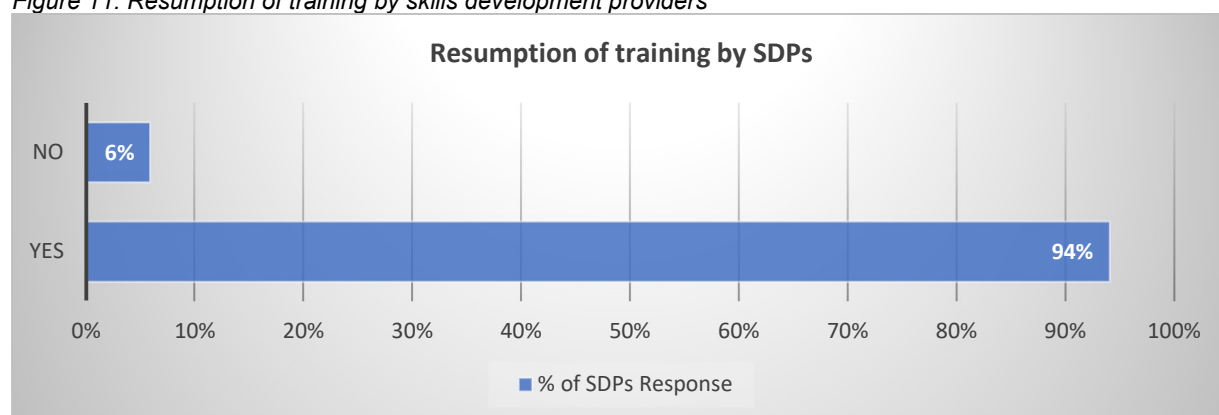
Table 6: Company size of SDPs that participated in the survey

ORGANIZATION SIZE	SDP
Small (0-49 employees)	65 (78%)
Medium (50-149 employees)	12 (14%)
Large (≥150 employees)	6 (7%)
No Response	1 (1%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>84 (100%)</b>

#### (b) Resumption of training by SDPs

Figure 13 shows that most **94% (80/84)** of SDPs confirmed that they had resumed training. Only **6% (4/84)** of SDPs had not resumed training in June.

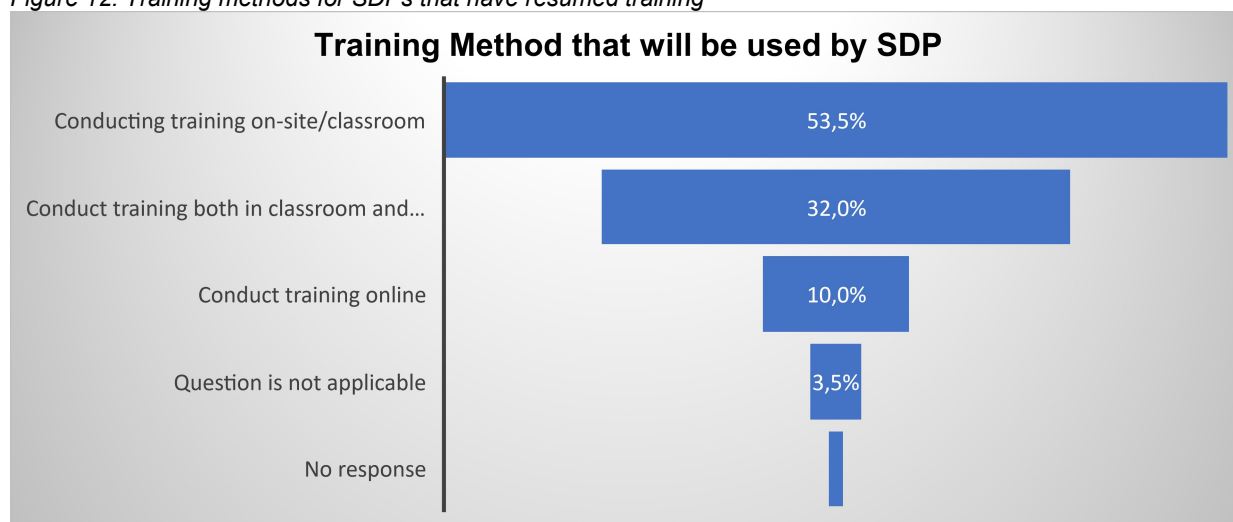
Figure 11: Resumption of training by skills development providers



It is essential to understand from the SDPs that has resumed training, which training mode they were utilizing between onsite (classroom) and virtual (online) training. Figure 14 shows the following results:

- Most SDPs, **53,5% (45/84)** indicated that they were conduct classroom training only
- While **32% (27/84)** SDPs will be conducting training using both classrooms and online training
- **10% (8/84)** of SDPs indicated that they would make use of virtual or online training only
- while **3,5% (3/84)** indicated that this question was not applicable to them
- **1% (1/84)** did not provide response

Figure 12: Training methods for SDPs that have resumed training



### (c) Measures put in place by SDPs to mitigate the spread of COVID-19

The SDPs were requested to indicate the measures put in place to ensure compliance with Disaster Management regulations and all applicable regulation during the level 3 lockdown restrictions, those of course who intended to continue with onsite or classroom training. This question was an open-ended question and the results yielded are presented in figure 15 and 16 below. The measures mentioned by SDPs formed a process that started with preparations done for the return of learners to training institutions and continued with rules adhered to during training to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19.

Figure 13: Preparations done by SDPs for the return of learners to training institutions

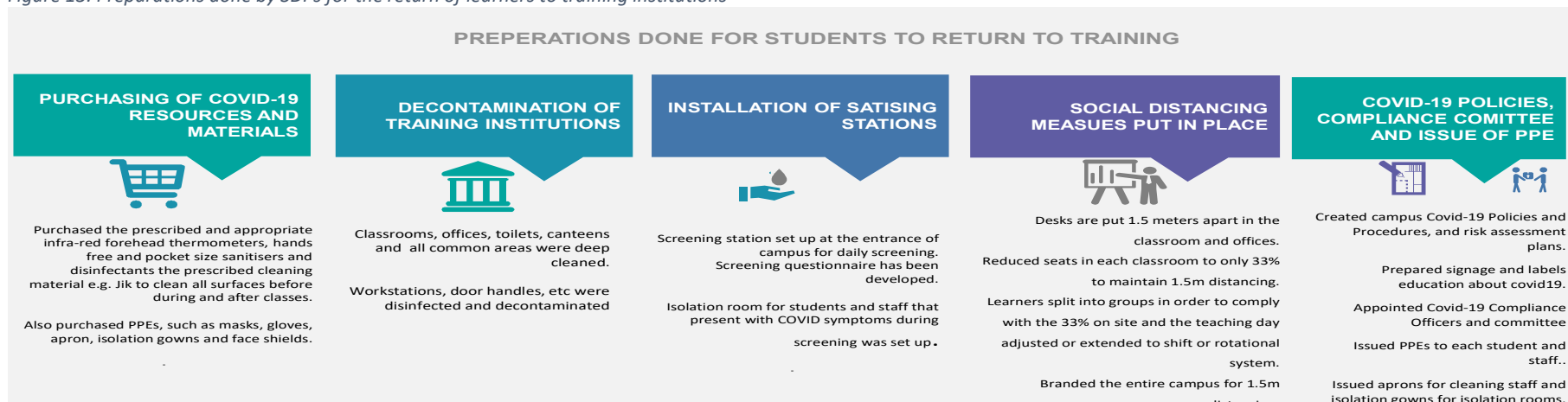
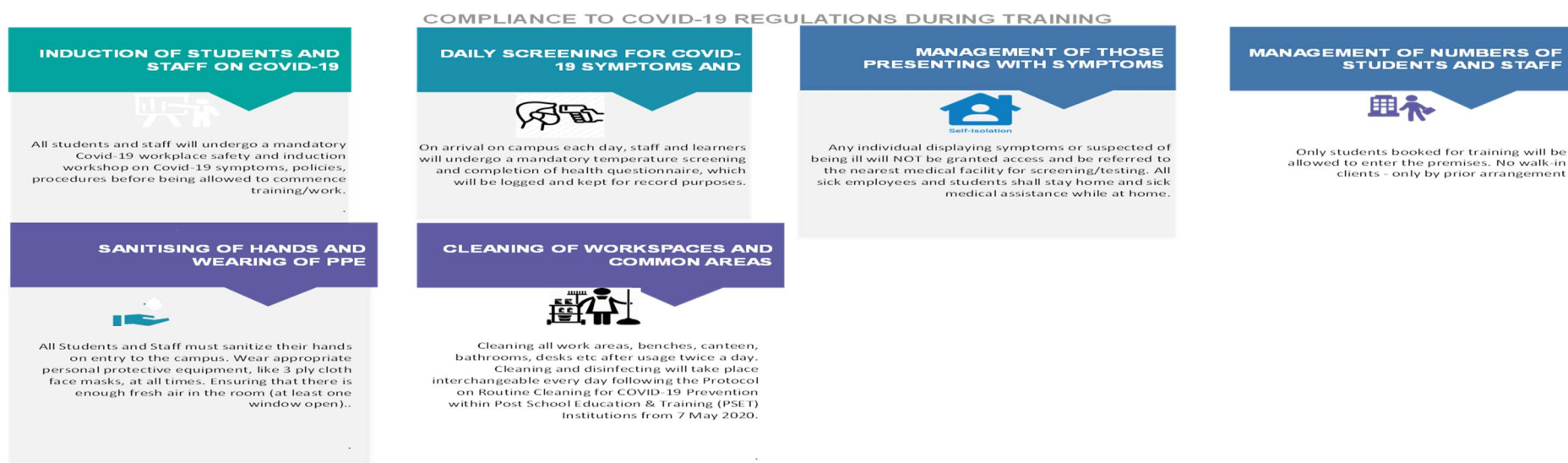


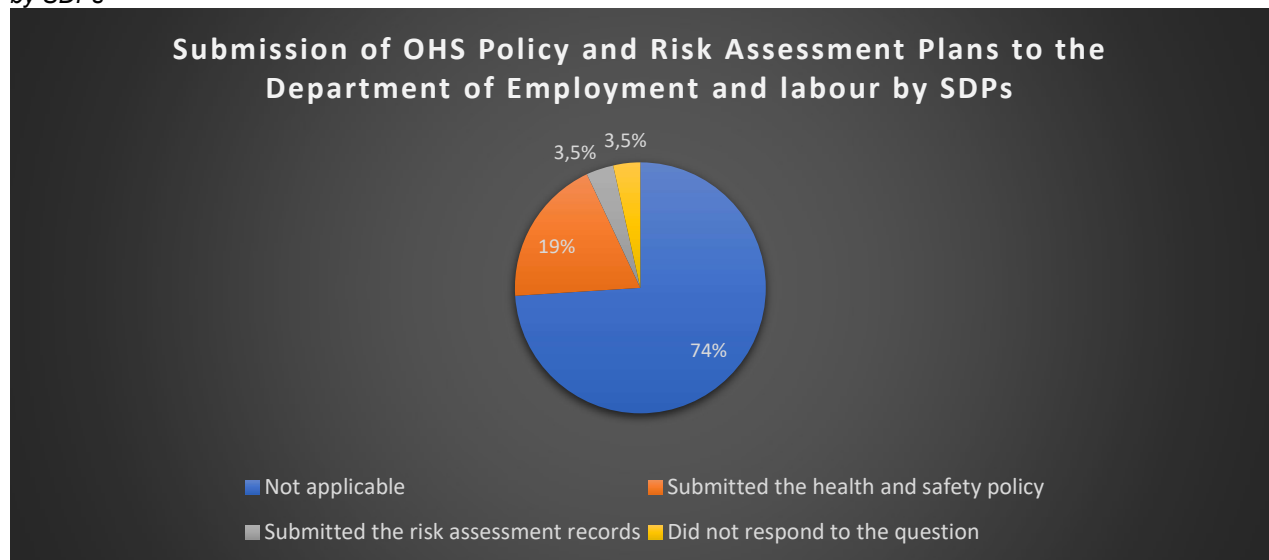
Figure 16: Compliance to Covid-19 Regulations during training



(i) Documents submitted by SDPs to the Department of Employment and Labour in adherence to COVID-19 Regulations

According to the Directive issued by the Department of Employment and Labour (dated 28 April 2020) employers with more than 500 employees are expected to submit a record of risk assessment together with a written policy concerning the protection of the health and safety of its employees from COVID-19 as contemplated in section 7(1) of OHSA. It is based on this notion that this survey explored whether SDPs classified as large companies complied with these regulations. It should be, however, be noted that the large companies that participated in the study did not necessarily have more than 500 employees. The results presented therefore are relative. Figure 17 presents the number of SDPs that submitted the risk assessment records and those that submitted a health and safety policy to the Department of Employment and Labour.

Figure 17: Submission of OHS Policy and Risk Assessment Plans to the Department of Employment and labour by SDPs



- **74% (62/84)** of SDPs indicated that the regulations did not apply to them
- **19% (16/84)** of SDPs submitted health and safety policies, of which **3,5% (3/84)** were large organisations; while
- **3,5% (3/84)** of the SDPs submitted risk assessment records, of which **1% (1/84)** was a large organization and **2% (2/84)** were small organisations.
- **3,5% (3/84)** of SDPs did not respond to the question.

The results signify that most of the SDPs complied with having health and safety policies irrespective of the size of the organisation. The results also imply that organisations that submitted the risk assessment records did so in compliance to the law.

(ii) Topics covered in the risk assessment plans of SDPs

According to version 1 of the Specialised health risk assessment for workplaces (by employers and self-employed persons), dated 1 May 2020, risk assessment plans should cover specific topics that consider the circumstances of a specific workplace and what can reasonably be done to protect workers and clients from exposure to COVID-19. Figure 18 presents the percentage of SDPs whose risk assessment plans cover specific topics from an array of topics that was given to them.

Figure 18: Topics covered by SDPs' risk assessment plan

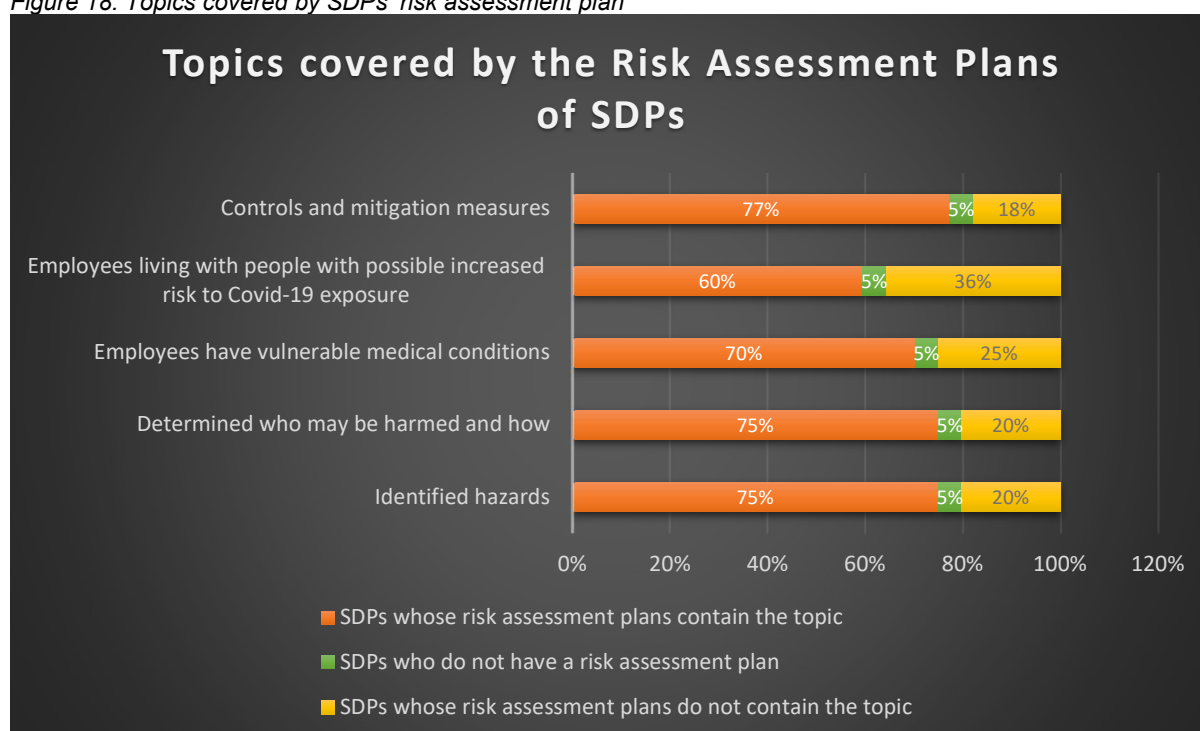


Figure 18 shows the following results:

- **Controls and mitigation** was a topic covered by 77% (65/84) of SDP's in the risk assessment plans, 5% (4/84) of SDPs did not have risk assessment plans, and 18% (15/84) of SDPs did not include this topic in the risk assessment plans.
- **Employees living with people with Possible increased risk to Covid-19 exposure** was a topic covered by 60% (50/84) of SDP's in the risk assessment

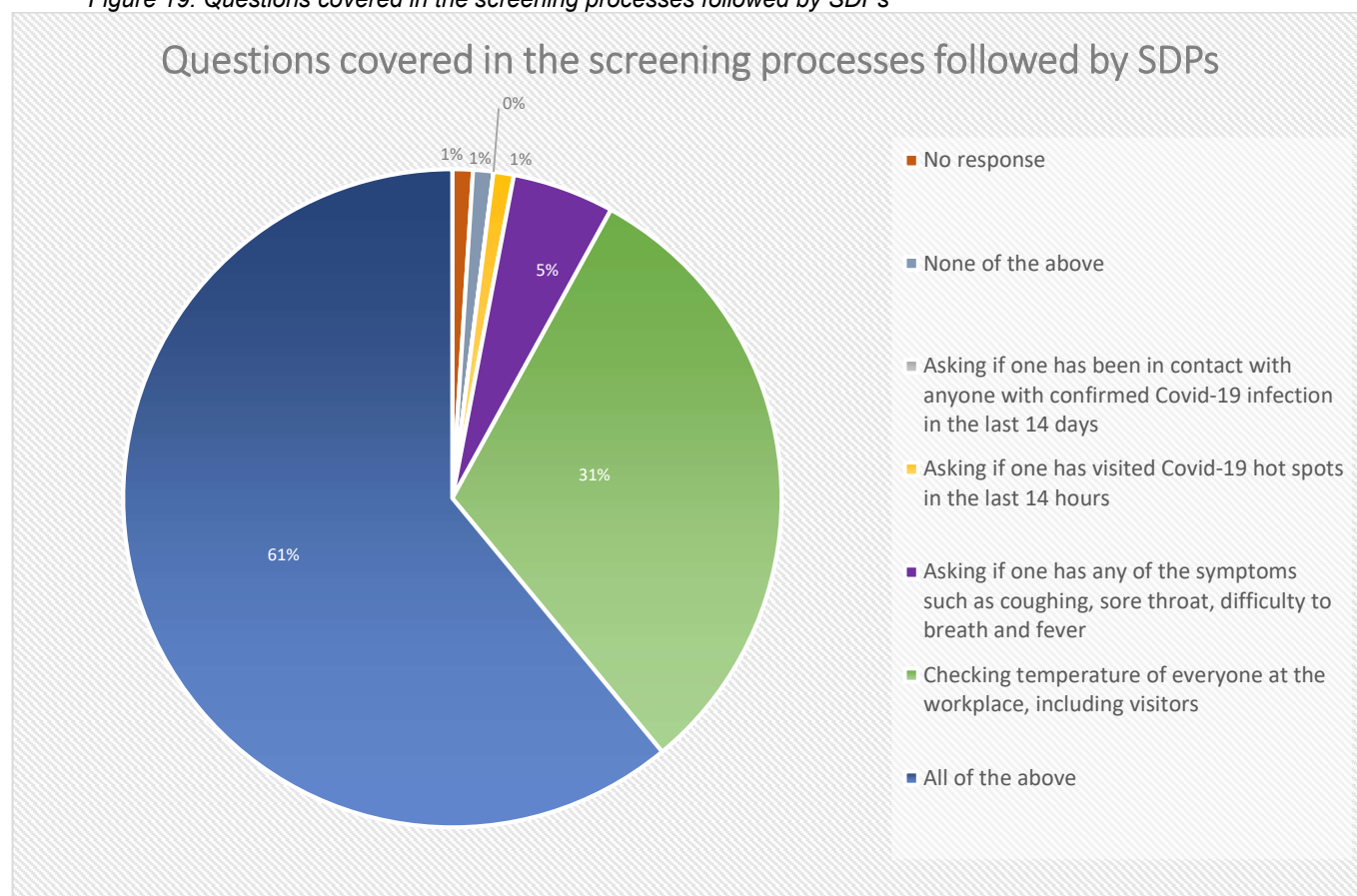
plans, 5% (4/84) of SDPs did not have risk assessment plans, and 36% (30/84) of SDPs did not include this topic in the risk assessment plans.

- **Employees have vulnerable medical conditions**, was a topic covered by 70% (59/84) of SDPs in the risk assessment plans, 5% (4/84) of SDPs did not have risk assessment plans, and 25% (21/84) of SDPs did not include this topic in the risk assessment plans.
- **Determine who may be harmed and why**, was a topic covered by 75% (63/84) of SDPs in the risk assessment plans, 5% (4/84) of SDPs did not have risk assessment plans, and 20% (17/84) of SDPs did not include this topic in the risk assessment plans.
- **Identified hazards**, was a topic covered by 75% (63/84) of SDPs in the risk assessment plans, 5% (4/84) of SDPs did not have risk assessment plans, and 20% (17/84) of SDPs did not include this topic in the risk assessment plans.

(iii) Questions covered in the screening processes followed by SDPs

SDPs were presented with a multiple-choice question where they had to choose the questions applicable to their screening processes, and the results are indicated in the figure 19 below.

Figure 19: Questions covered in the screening processes followed by SDPs



- **One (1%)** SDP did not respond to the question
- **One (1%)** SDP indicated that he did not ask any of the questions provided in the questionnaire
- None of the SDPs asked if one has been in contact with anyone with confirmed Covid-19 infection in the last 14 days.
- **One (1%)** SDP indicated that they asked if one has visited Covid-19 hotspots in the last 14 hours
- **5% (4/84)** of the SDPs indicated that they asked if one has any symptoms related to Covid-19 such as coughing, sore throat, difficulty to breathe and fever.
- **31% (26/84)** of the SDPs indicated that they checked the temperature of everyone including visitors
- **61% (51/84)** of SDPs indicated that they asked all of the questions provided.

(iv) Preventative measures put in place by SDPs against the spread of COVID-19

SDPs were provided with a multiple-choice question where they had choose measures that they put in place to prevent the spread of the virus within their institutions, and the results are indicated in table 7 below.

*Table 7: Preventative measures put in place by SDPs against the spread of COVID-19*

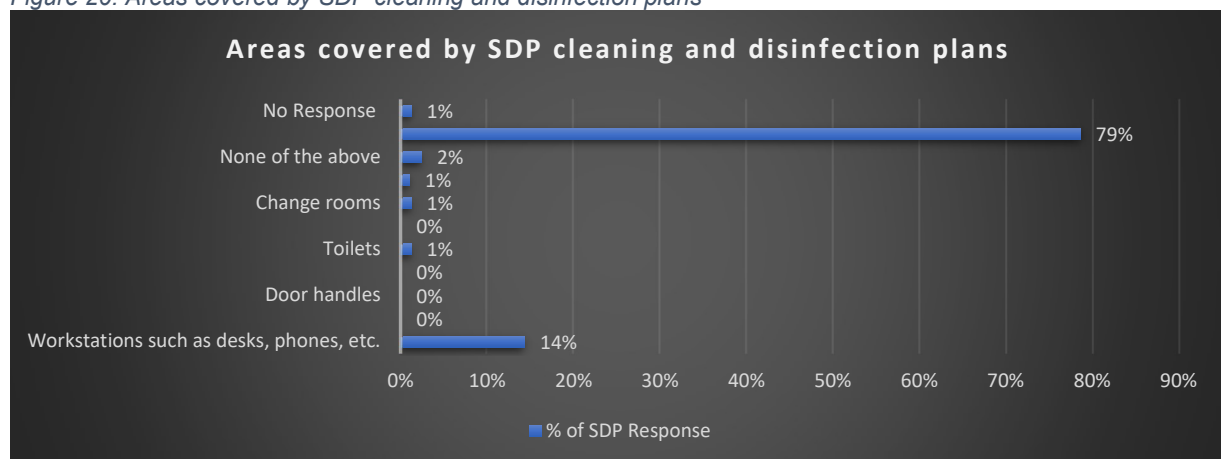
Preventative measure	SDP participation	SDP distribution
All of the listed measures	47	56%
Supplying employees with the correct PPE	14	17%
Screening employees who enter the institution	8	10%
Limiting the number of people in the workplace	5	6%
None of the listed measures	3	4%
Encouraging employees and students to wash hands several times a day	2	2%
Providing hand sanitizers for all employees	2	2%
Using one entrance in the workplace	2	2%
No Response	1	1%
Usage of disposable towels for cleaning hands and work surfaces	0	0%
Displaying appropriate signage, such as hand washing signs at the canteen and bathrooms	0	0%
Maintain social distancing (maintaining 1.5m physical distancing)	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>

- A majority (**56%**) of the SDPs had put in place all the preventative measures to combat the spread of COVID-19;
- One sixth (14/84) of the SDPs supplied their employees with the correct PPEs
- 10% of the SDPs screened employees who enter the workplace
- SDPs that placed the screening of employees on entry to the workplace as a preventative measure were 10%, and those that limited the number of people at the workplace as a preventative measure were 6%.
- 4% of SDPs did not put any measures in place
- A limited number of SDPs encouraged employees and students to wash hands several times a day (2%), provided hand sanitizers for all employees (2%), and used one entrance in the workplace (2%) as preventative measures
- One SDP did not respond to this question all together
- None of the SDPs chose the usage of disposable towels for cleaning hands and work surfaces; displaying of appropriate signage, such as hand washing signs at the canteen and bathrooms; maintenance of social distancing (maintaining 1.5m physical distancing) as preventive measures against the spread of Covid-19.

(v) SDPs Cleaning and disinfection plans

SDPs were provided with a multiple-choice question where they had to select areas they identified as requiring frequent cleaning and disinfection in order to limit the likelihood of the spread of the virus through surface contamination. This question yielded the following results as presented in Figure 20 below:

Figure 20: Areas covered by SDP cleaning and disinfection plans



- A majority **79% (66/84)** of SDP's cleaning and disinfection plans involved all the identified areas of concern as areas requiring frequent cleaning and disinfection
- One seventh (12/84) of the SDPs identified workstations as areas requiring frequent cleaning and disinfection
- 2% (**2/84**) of SDPs did not identify any areas requiring frequent cleaning and disinfection
- A limited number of SDPs identified countertops (1%), change rooms (1%), and toilets (1%) as areas requiring frequent cleaning and disinfection
- None of the SDPs chose waiting areas, handrails, door handles, and the canteen as areas requiring frequent cleaning and disinfection
- A very low percentage of SDPs **2% (2/84)** do not make use of any of the cleaning and disinfection plans
- While **14% (12/84)** SDPs focus on specific areas such as workstations such as desks for their cleaning and disinfection plans

(vi) Measures put in place to deal with suspected and confirmed cases of student that contract COVID-19

SDPs were provided with a multiple-choice question where they had to select measures that they put in place to deal with suspected or confirmed cases of students that contract Covid-19. Figure 21 presents the results.

Figure 21: Measures put in place by SDPs to deal with suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19

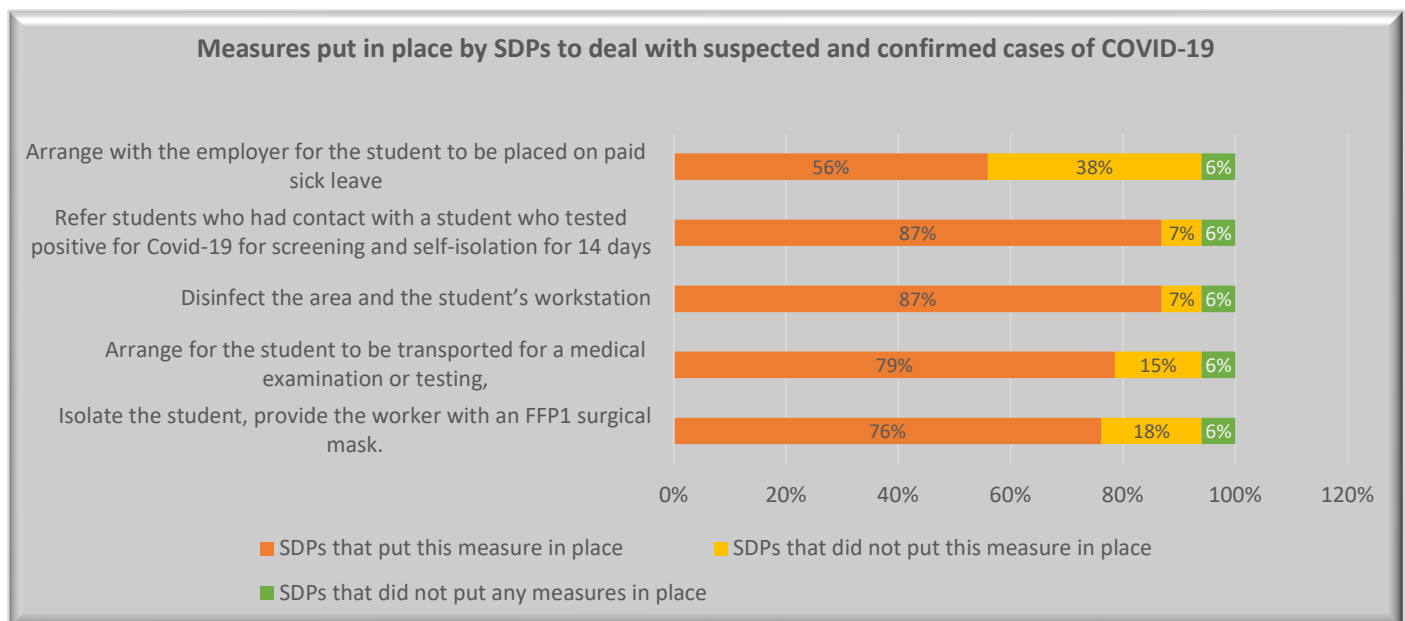


Figure 21 shows the following results:

- The most prevalent measures chosen by SDPs included:
  - Disinfecting the area and the student's workstation, which was chosen by **87% (73/84)** of SDPs.
  - Referring students who had contact with a student who tested positive for Covid-19 for screening and self-isolation for 14 days, which was chosen by **87% (73/84)** of SDPs.
- Other prevalent measures that were chosen by SDPs included;
  - Arranging for a student with Covid-19 symptoms to be transported for a medical examination or testing, which was chosen by **79% (66/84)** of SDPs.
  - Isolating a student presenting with Covid-19 symptoms, and then provide a FFP1 surgical mask, which was chosen by **76% (64/84)** of SDPs.
- The least prevalent measure chosen by SDPs was;
  - Arranging with the employer for the student to be placed on paid sick leave, which was chosen by **56% (47/84)** of SDPs.
- There were **5 (6%)** SDPs that did not put any measures in place

(vii) Communication measures put in place by SDPs under Level 3 COVID-19

Maintaining consistent communication between SDP and the students is crucial during the Covid-19 pandemic. This communication includes updates about the epidemiology (incidence, distribution and control of the spread of Covid-19 within training institutions. Mediums of communicating these updates may vary from email bulletins, cell phone text messaging (sms), usage of billboards to publish posters (display screens), etc. These were the communication mediums that the SDPs were required to indicate the ones they are using to send communication about Covid-19 to students. Figure 22 below presents the results.

Figure 22: Mediums of Communication of Epidemiology of Covid-19 to students

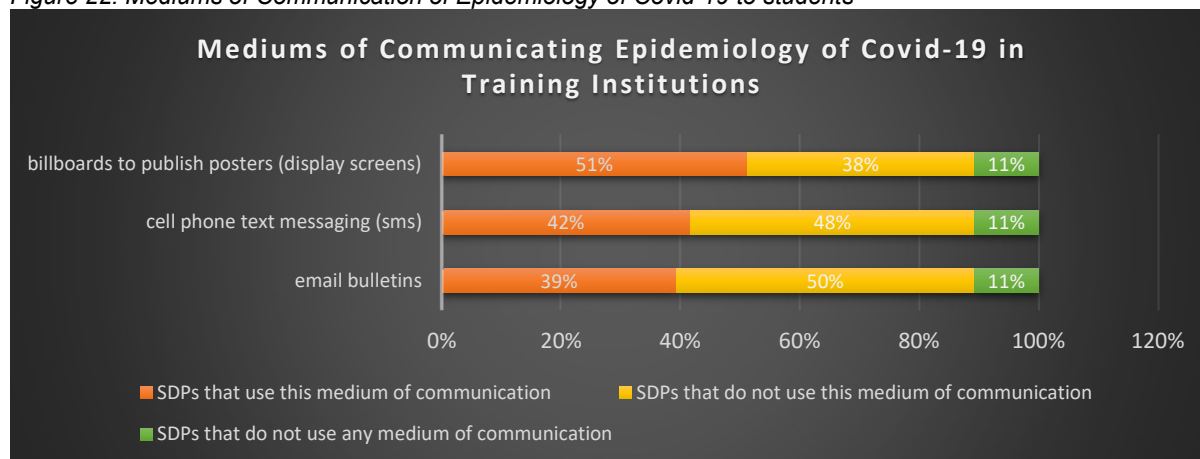


Figure 22 shows the most popular medium of communicating Covid-19 epidemiology in training institutions was billboards, as **51% (43/84)** of SDPs chose this medium, followed by cell phone text messaging (sms) as **42%(35/84)** of SDPs chose this medium; and the least popular medium were email bulletins as **39% (33/84)** of SDPs chose this medium. There were also **9 (11%)** SDPs who did not use any of these mediums of communication to update students on the epidemiology of Covid-19 in training institutions.

(viii) Administrative control measures put in place by SDPs under Level 3

SDPs were provided with a multiple-choice question where they had to choose administrative control measures that they had put in place to phase in level 3 lock-down regulations in training institutions. Figure 23 presents the results.

Figure 23: SDP administrative measures put in place by SDPs

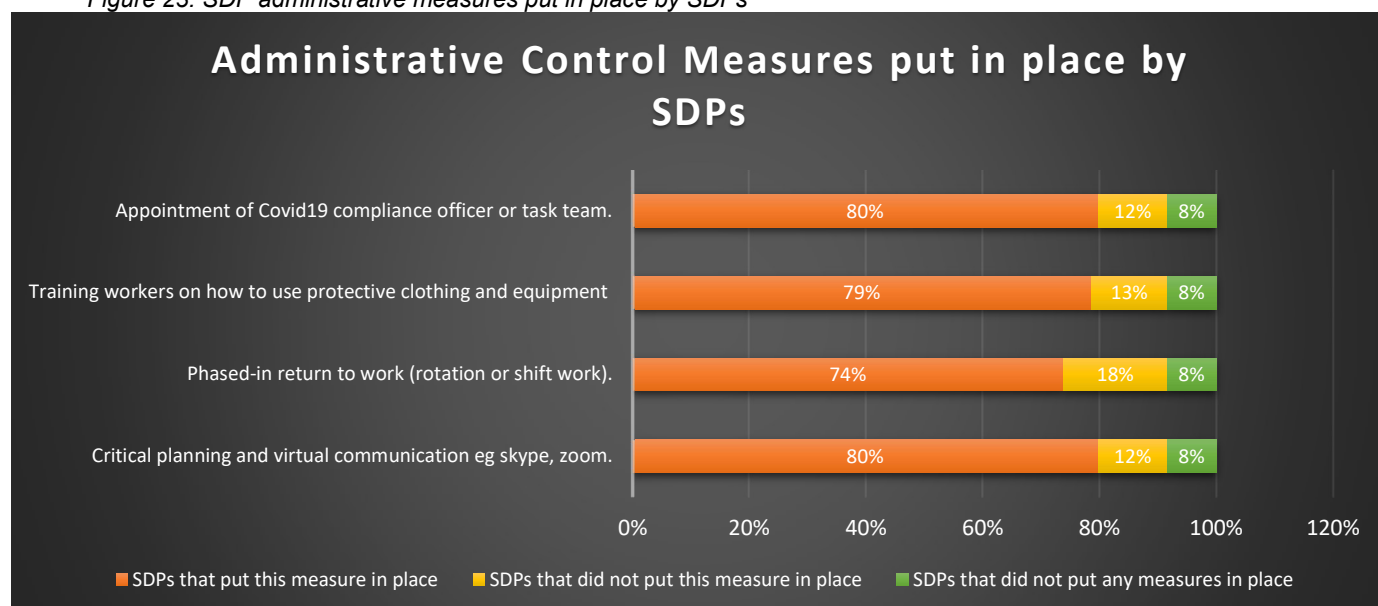


Figure 23 shows the following results:

- The most prevalent measures chosen by SDPs included:
  - Appointment of Covid-19 compliance officer or task team, which was chosen by **80% (67/84)** of SDPs.
  - Critical planning and virtual communication, which was chosen by **80% (67/84)** of SDPs.
- Other prevalent measures that were chosen by SDPs included;
  - Training workers on how to use protective clothing and equipment, which was chosen by **79% (66/84)** of SDPs
  - Phased-in return to work (rotation and shift work), which was chosen by **74% (62/84)** of SDPs
- There were **7 (8%)** SDPs that did not put any measures in place.

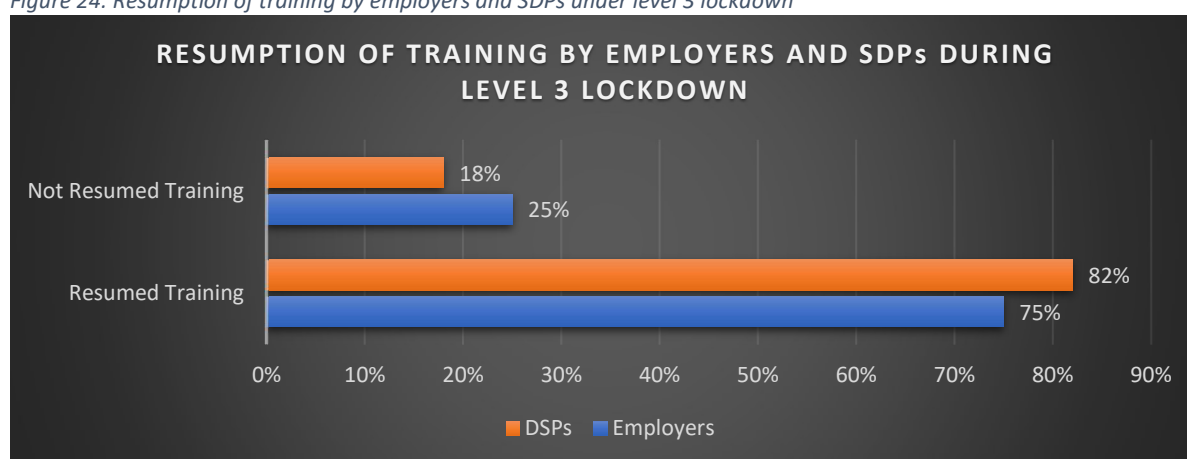
## CHAPTER 4: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This survey was meant to determine the number of employers and SDPs who had resumed work-based learning and training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. This was done by establishing the number of employers and skills development providers that had resumed training under level 3 COVID-19 lockdown; identifying the factors that contributed to the non-resumption of training; and then determining the level of compliance to level 3 lockdown regulations by employers and skills development providers.

### Objective 1: Establishing the number of employers and skills development providers that had resumed training under level 3 COVID-19 Lockdown

The findings yielded by the survey and the institutional readiness plans show that **75% (290/388)** of employers had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. While **82% (84/103)** of skills development providers had resume training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. This therefore meant that **25% (97/388)** of employers and **18% (19/103)** of skills development providers did not resume training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown. Figure 24 presents the overall findings on the resumption of training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown.

Figure 24: Resumption of training by employers and SDPs under level 3 lockdown



Therefore, **76% (374/491)** of all organisations (employers and SDPs combined) had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown, and **24% (116/491)** did not resume training.

More SDPs therefore had resumed training under level 3 lockdown in percentage proportion than employers. This can be attributed to two factors. First, training is the

core business of skills development providers, while it is secondary to employers. Second, skills development providers offer theory classes, which can be offered online. As such, **34% (35/103)** of skills development providers offered a hybrid of training involving classroom and online training. Of these skills development providers **8% (8/103)** offered training solely online. Employers do not have the advantage of offering workplace exposure online. The experience has to be obtained from a real life setting under supervision. Resumption of training for employers therefore meant being ready to accept learners back to the workplace while meeting level 3 lockdown regulations.

### **Objective 2: Establishing factors contributing to the non-resumption of training by employers and skills development providers under level 3 lockdown.**

The findings yielded by the survey and the institutional readiness plans show the causal factors for the 24% of organisations that did not resume training during level 3 lockdown were both internal and external. Table 8 summarises these factors.

*Table 8: Factors contributing to employers not to resume training under level 3 lockdown*

Percentage	Factors
External Factors	
<b>6% (30/491)</b>	employers and skills development providers were still trying to meet level-3 lockdown regulations so as to be able to accommodate both workers and students
<b>14,5% (71/491)</b>	employers were not fully operational to accept both workers and students and therefore were not be ready to accept students back for training under level 3 lockdown
Internal Factors	
<b>3% (15/491)</b>	employers were waiting for skills development providers and lead employers to send students for workplace training

### **Objective 3: Determining the level of compliance to Covid-19 level 3 lockdown regulations by employers and skills development providers**

This objective was tested through the survey study only. The institutional readiness plan was not designed to answer to this objective of the study. This therefore means that the discussion of results focuses on the 220 employers and 84 skills development providers.

Compliance to the level 3 Covid-19 regulations required employers and skills development providers to put measures in place to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 in

workplaces and also training institutions. The discussion of the results yielded by the survey will be discussed under the following sub-headings:

(a) Submission of OHS Policies and Risk Assessment Plans by very large organisations

According to the Directive issued by the Department of Employment and Labour (dated 28 April 2020) employers with more than 500 employees are expected to submit a record of risk assessment together with a written policy concerning the protection of the health and safety of its employees from COVID-19 as contemplated in section 7(1) of OHSA. It is based on this notion that this survey explored whether employers classified as large companies complied with these regulations. It should, however, be noted that the large organisations that participated in the study did not necessarily have more than 500 employees.

It is therefore essential to understand the size of organisations (employers and skills development providers) that responded to the survey. Table 9 presents the cross tabulation of the size of all organisations that responded to the survey, which includes 220 employers and 84 skills development providers.

*Table 9: Cross tabulation of the size of all organisations that participated in the survey*

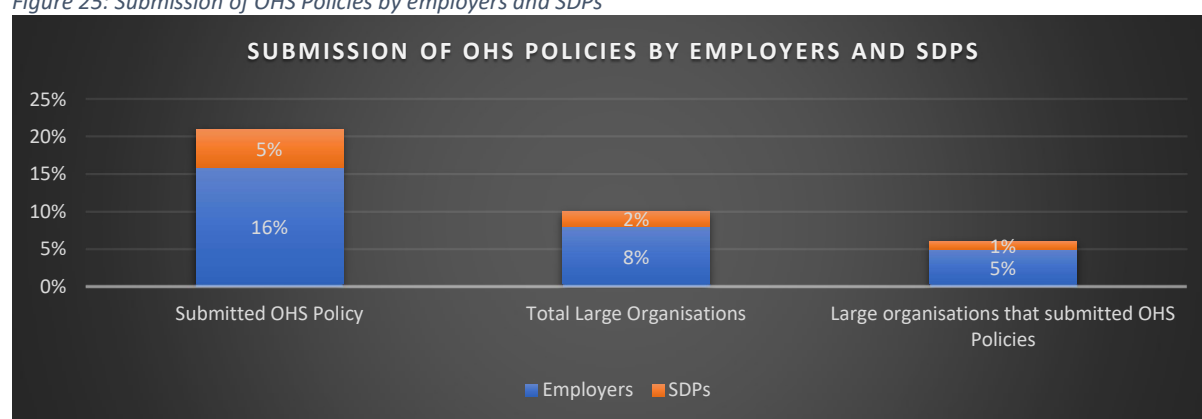
Size	Employers	SDPs	Total	
			No	Percentage
Small (0-49 employees)	168	65	233	77%
Medium (50 – 149 employees)	27	12	39	13%
Large (>150 employees)	25	6	31	10%
Non-response	0	1	1	0%
Total	220	84	304	100%

Therefore, **77%** of organisations that responded to the survey were small organisations, **13%** were medium organisations, and **10%** were large organisations.

Employers and skills development providers with 500 employees and more should be a portion of the large organizations, such organisations however were not established by the study that is why the study cannot conclusively state the number of these organisations.

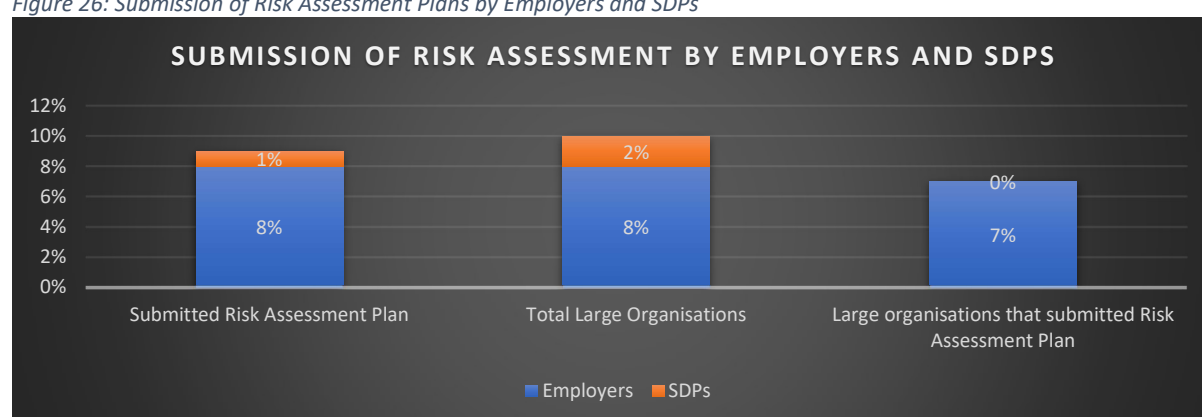
Therefore, results yielded by the survey about the submission of OHS policies and risk assessment plans were peculiar in that both employers and skills development providers complied with the submission of OHS policies irrespective of the size of their companies. Organisations that submitted OHS policies constituted **21% (63/304)**, of which **16% (47/304)** were employers, with **5% (14/304)** being large organisations, and **5% (16/304)** were skills development providers, with **1% (3/304)** being large organisations. Figure 25 below presents these results as follows:

Figure 25: Submission of OHS Policies by employers and SDPs



Organisations that submitted the risk assessment plans constituted **9% (26/304)**, of which **8% (23/304)** were employers with **7% (22/3014)** being large organisations, and **1% (3/304)** were skills development providers with **0% (1/304)** being large organisations. Figure 26 presents these results.

Figure 26: Submission of Risk Assessment Plans by Employers and SDPs



#### (a) Topics covered by the risk assessment plans of employers and SDPs

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) expects employers' risk assessment records to stipulate measures that they must take to determine the risk of exposure of employees to COVID-19 in order to take steps to reduce the risk of coronavirus

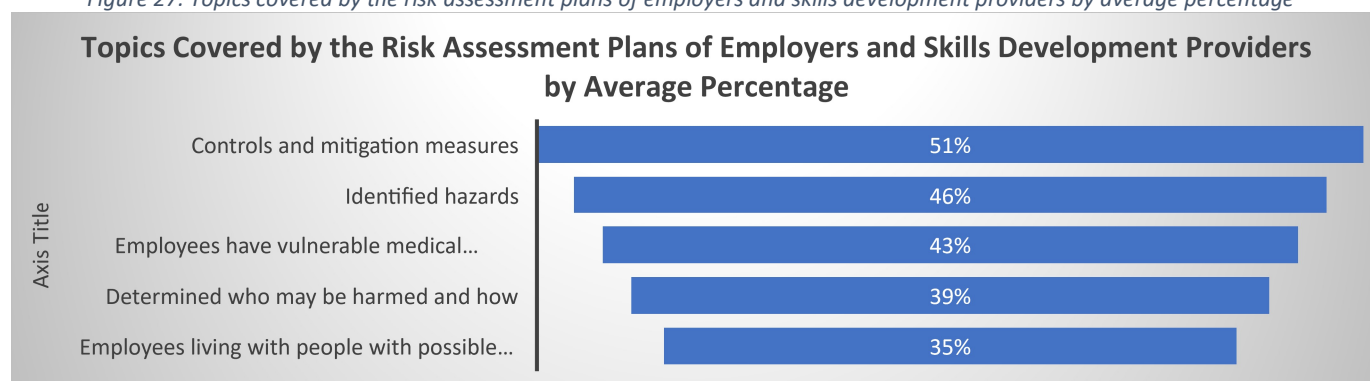
infection in workplace areas. The survey questionnaire provided a list of topics that should be covered in the employer risk assessment plan.

Topics covered in the risk assessment plans of employers and skills development providers, in terms of prevalence, included an average of **51%** of both employers and skills development providers who covered the topic, controls and mitigation measures. Also, an average of:

- 46% covered the topic, identification of hazards;
- 43% covered the topic, employees with underlying conditions;
- 39% covered the topic, determination of employees that may be at risk of infection;
- 35% covered the topic, employees living with people with possible Covid-19 infection.

Figure 27 presents the results as follows:

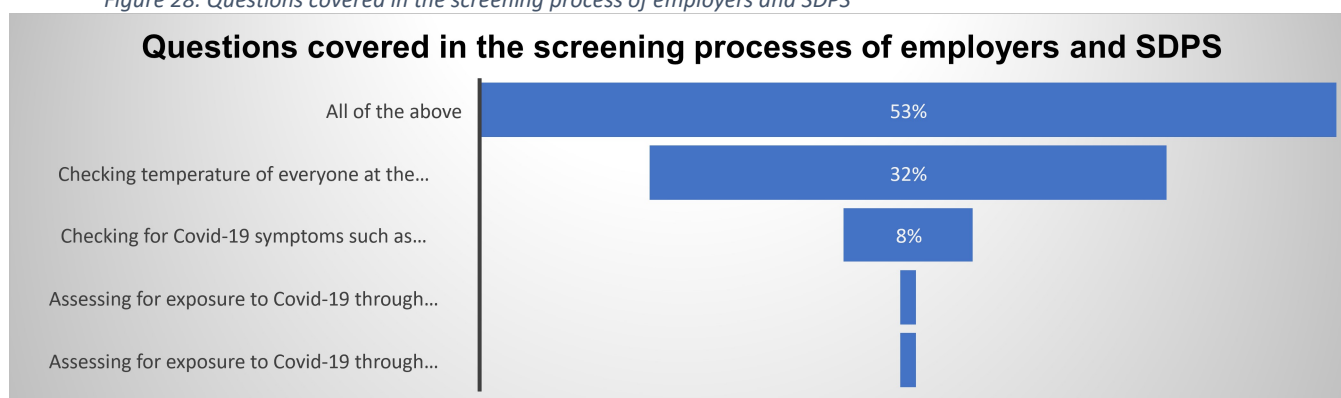
*Figure 27: Topics covered by the risk assessment plans of employers and skills development providers by average percentage*



(b) Questions covered in screening processes of employers and skills development providers

An average **53%** of employers and skills development providers covered all questions provided by the survey in their processes for screening for Covid-19. This was followed by an average of 32% of employers and skills development providers who checked the temperature of every person in their premises to screen for Covid-19. An average of 8% of employers and skills development providers checked for Covid-19 symptoms. A very small number of employers and skills development providers, 1% average, assessed for exposure to Covid-19 through visitation of areas classified as hot spots for Covid-19; and also through contact with anyone with confirmed Covid-19 infection in the last 14 days. Figure 28 below presents these results.

Figure 28: Questions covered in the screening process of employers and SDPS



(c) Preventative measures put in place by employers and skills development providers against the spread of COVID-19

In order to prevent the spread of Covid-19 a majority of employers and skills development providers, with an average of **49%**, had put in place all measures which were listed in the survey. An average of **24%** of employers and skills development providers supplied employees with the correct PPE; an **average** of **9.5%** screened employees who entered their premises; and **4% average** of employers and SDPs limited the number of people in the workplace or training institution. An **average** of **8.2%** encourages employees to wash hands regularly, provided hand sanitisers, used one entrance, displayed appropriate signage, maintained social distancing, and used disposal towels as means to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Table 10 illustrates this as follows.

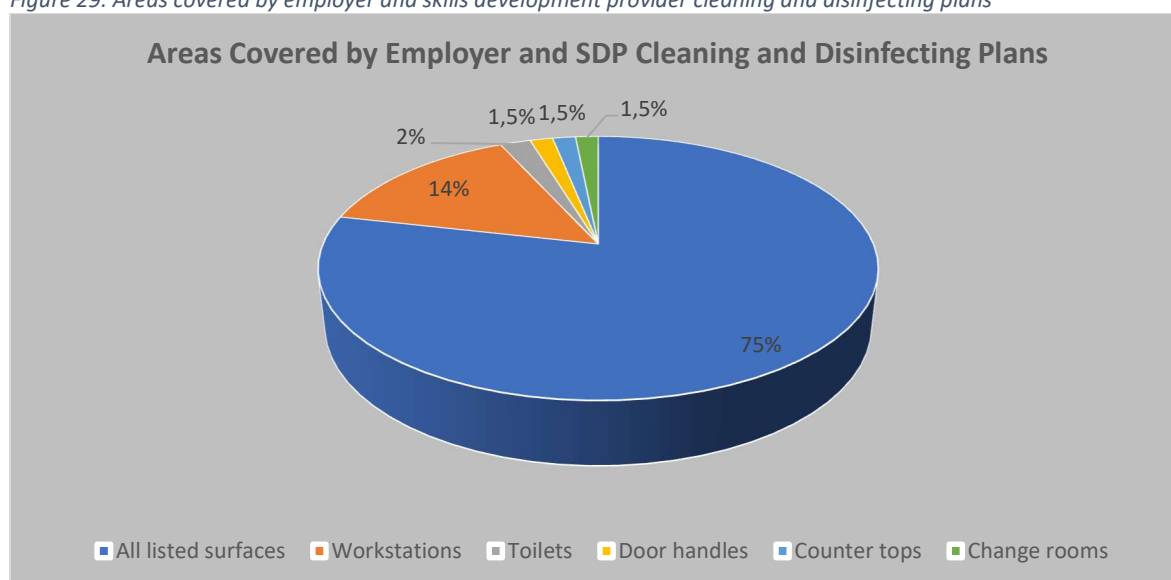
Table 10: Employer and skills development provider preventative measures against the spread of COVID-19

Preventative measure	Average
All of the measures listed below	49%
Supplying employees with the correct PPE	24%
Screening employees who enter the institution	9.5%
Limiting the number of people in the workplace	4%
Encouraging employees and students to wash hands several times a day	3%
Providing hand sanitizers for all employees	2%
Using one entrance in the workplace	1.5%
Displaying appropriate signage, such as hand washing signs at the canteen and bathrooms	0.5%
Maintain social distancing (maintaining 1.5m physical distancing)	0.5%
Usage of disposable towels for cleaning hands and work surfaces	0.25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

(d) Areas covered by employer's cleaning and disinfection plans

Areas identified by the survey as requiring frequent cleaning and disinfection in order to limit the likelihood of the spread of the virus through surface contamination included counter tops, changerooms, toilets, handrails, door handles, canteens, and workstations (including desks, phone, etc). A majority of employers and skills development providers, **75% in average**, indicated that all identified areas were included in their cleaning and disinfecting plans. Those that did not select all areas identified by the survey indicated that working station (**14% average**), toilets (**2% average**), door handles (**1,5% average**), counter tops (**1.5% average**), and change rooms (**1.5% average**) were the specific areas included in their cleaning and disinfection plans.

Figure 29: Areas covered by employer and skills development provider cleaning and disinfecting plans



(e) Measures put in place by employers and skills development providers to deal with suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19

Measures put in place to deal with suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 yielded the following overall results:

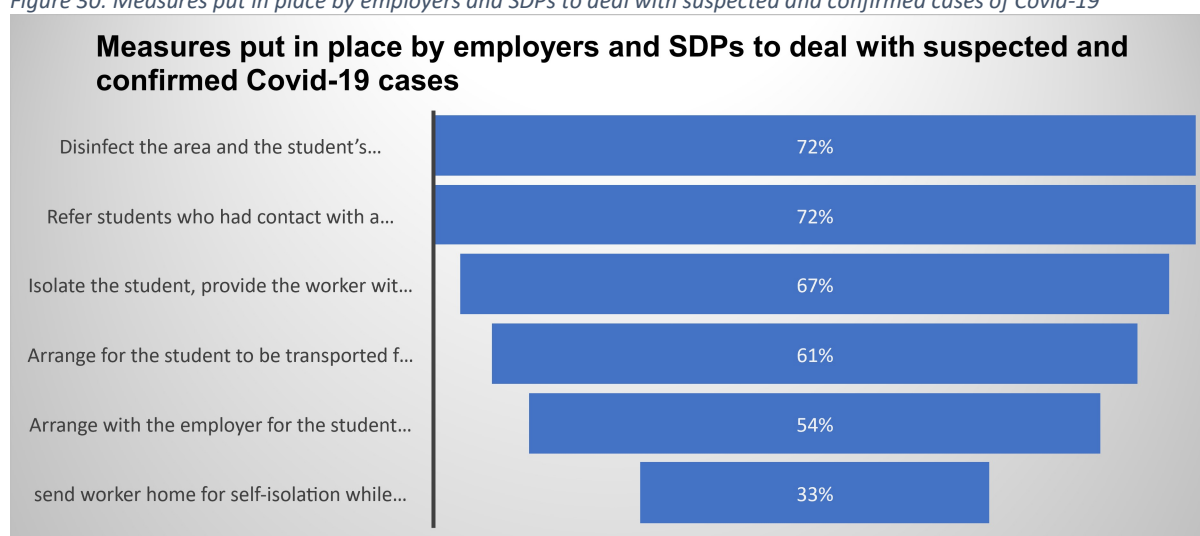
- The most prevalent measure was, *“the disinfection the area and the employee/student’s workstation”*, as **72% average** of employers and skills development providers chose this measure. Also, the measure, *“referral of employee/students who had contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19 for screening and self-isolation for 14 days”*, was also equally

prevalent as **72% average** of employers and skills development providers chose this measure.

- The measure, *“isolate the employee/student, and provide the worker with an FFP1 surgical mask”*, was chosen by an **average of 67%** employers and skills development providers.
- The measure, *“arrange for the employee/student to be transported for a medical examination or testing”*, was chosen by an **average of 61%** employers and skills development providers.
- The measure, *“arrange for the employee/student to be placed on paid sick leave”*, was chosen by an **average of 54%** employers and skills development providers.
- The measure, *“send worker home for self-isolation while waiting for test results”*, was chosen by an **average of 33%** employers and skills development providers.

Figure 30 below presents the results as follows:

Figure 30: Measures put in place by employers and SDPs to deal with suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19



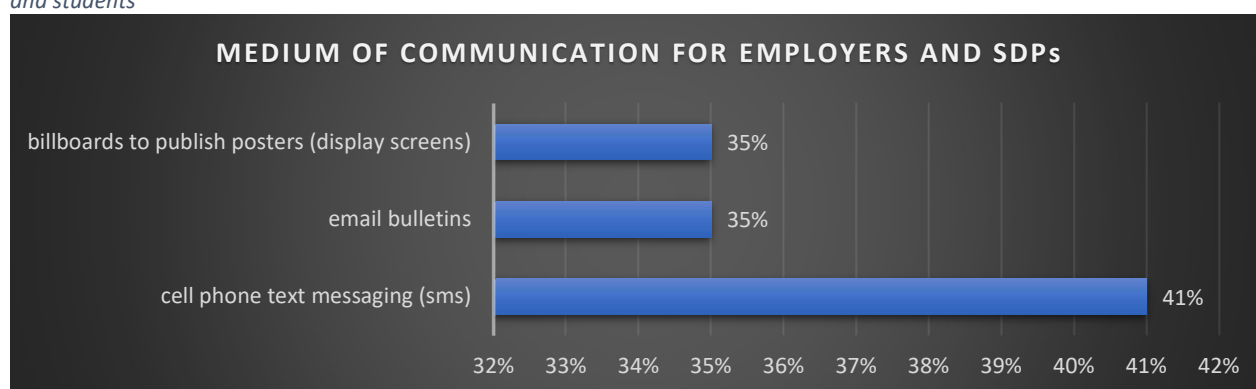
#### (f) Communication about Covid-19 employees and learners

Maintaining consistent communication between the employer, employee and students, and also between the skills development provider and students is crucial during the Covid-19 pandemic. This communication includes updates about the epidemiology (incidence, distribution and control of the spread of Covid-19) of Covid-

19 in workplaces and also within training institutions. Results show that all organisations (**100%**) maintained communication with employees and learners.

Mediums of communicating these updates may vary from email bulletins, cell phone text messaging (sms), usage of billboards to publish posters (display screens), etc. The results of the yielded by the survey show that the most commonly used medium of communication by employers and skills development providers is cell-phone text messaging (sms), as **41% average** made use of this medium. Billboards and emails were used by the same number of employers and skills development providers as **35% average** used both mediums.

Figure 31: Medium of communication used by employers and skills development providers to communicate with employees and students



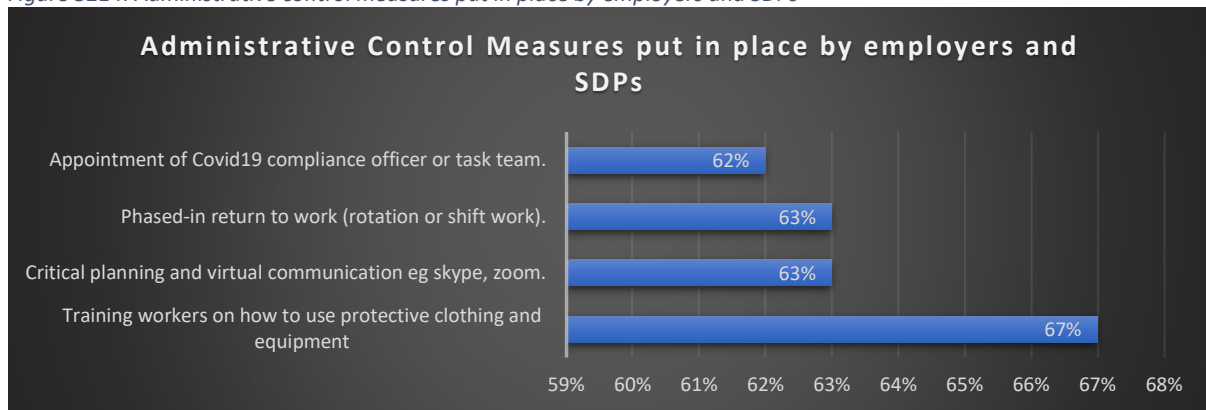
(g) Administrative control measures put in place by employers and skills development providers to adhere to Covid-19 level 3 lockdown regulations

Employers and skills development providers were provided with a list of administrative control measures that they are expected to put in place to phase in level 3 lock-down regulations. These measures include the appointment of a compliance officer or committee, training of employees and students on how to use personal protective equipment, phased-in return to work or training (rotation or shift work), and critical planning and virtual communication eg skype, zoom.

The results yielded by the survey indicate that the most prevalent measure is the training of workers on how to use personal protective equipment, as **67% average** of employers and skills development providers chose this measure. The second most prevalent measure was the phasing in of return to work or training and the critical

planning and virtual communication, as **63% average** of employers and skills development providers chose this measure. The appointment of a compliance officer or committee was also prevalent as **62% average** of employers and skills development providers chose this measure.

Figure 3214: Administrative control measures put in place by employers and SDPs



## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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The analysis presented in this survey was dependent on responses received from employers and skills development providers. It can be concluded that the sample for employers and SDPs improved after several attempts of including a bigger population. This made provision for a better and more insightful findings regarding the readiness to resume for training under Level 3 Lockdown.

Based on the findings that were analysed, interpreted and discussed in the previous chapters it can be concluded that **76%** of all organisations that responded to the survey and institutional planning template had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown, and **24%** had not resumed training.

The contributing factors to those that did not resume training included **6%** of these both employers and skills development providers not being able to meet Covid-19 level 3 lockdown regulations, **14,5%** of employers not being fully operational, and **3%** of employers waiting for skills development providers and lead employers to release learners for workplace training.

To determine the level of compliance to Covid-19 level 3 regulations by all organisations the following conclusions can be drawn:

- There was **100%** adherence to communication about Covid-19 to learners and employees. The main mode of communication was text messaging (sms) as 41% of the organisations used this mode of communication.
- There was adherence to the areas that should be covered in the cleaning and disinfecting plans, as **75%** of organisations covered all the required areas in their plans.
- There was adherence to the submission of risk assessment plans as **9%** of all organisations submitted these plans, of which **2%** were small and medium organisations, and **7%** were large organisations (this constituted **70%** of all large organisations that responded to the survey). As adherence to this requirement was with large organisations, it can be concluded that **70%** of large organisations submitted the risk assessment plans.

- There was just above moderate adherence to administrative measures that should be put in place to prevent the transmission of the virus, as **62%** of the organisations covered all control measures to adhere to Covid-19 level 3 regulations.
- There was adherence to the submission of OHS policies as **21%** of all organisations submitted these policies irrespective of the size of the organisation. **15%** of these organisations were small and medium, and **6%** were large organisations (this constituted **60%** of all large organisations that responded to the survey). As adherence to this requirement was with large organisations, it can be concluded that **60%** of large organisations submitted the OHS policies.
- There was moderate adherence to screening process measures that should be covered to monitor symptoms of Covid-19 on learners and employees, as **53%** of organisation covered all the required topics of the screening process.
- There was a reasonable adherence to putting measures in place against the spread of Covid-19 as **49%** of organisations put in place all required measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the workplace and training institutions.
- There was low adherence to the coverage of topics that should be in the risk assessment plan as **35%** of organisations covered all topics required in their risk assessment plans.
- There was low adherence to measures that should be put in place to manage suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the workplace and training institutions as only **33%** of organisations put in place all the required measures to deal with suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19.

The level of compliance to Covid-19 level 3 regulations by all organisations therefore ranged from **33% to 100%**. The range between levels of compliance to Covid-19 regulations is therefore 67%. It can therefore be concluded that adherence to Covid-19 level 3 regulations was **67%**.

It is important to note that the results and conclusions drawn from the survey and institutional readiness plans can be generalised to the organisations that responded to these studies as they appear on appendix a, b, c, and d. In order to know whether more employers and SDPs had resumed training during Covid-19 level 3 lockdown the survey questionnaire would have to be issued to additional organisations.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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This survey has indicated that the return to training for learners required by all employers and SDPs to put in place a vast number of compliance measures before and during training. The critical issue therefore is compliance to Covid-19 level 3 lockdown regulations in order to limit the transmission of Covid-19 in the workplace and training institutions. The survey has shown based on the employers and skills development providers that responded to the survey that there is a high level of compliance.

To ensure continued compliance, it is recommended that the level of transmission among learners funded by the HWSETA be closely monitored. The HWSETA can do this by requesting employers and skills development providers to submit reports of all Covid-19 cases affecting its learners and also submitting reports explaining the measures that have been taken to reduce further transmission of the virus, such as quarantine of infected learners, tracking of learners that had contact with the infected learners and their self-isolation and testing, decontamination of the workplace and training institution etc.

Also, employers and skills development providers that have not submitted the institutional readiness plan need to be encouraged to do so. A register should then be created of all employers and skills development providers who submitted the institutional readiness plan and dates for the resumption of training should be captured on that register. This will assist the HWSETA to track the number of employers and skills development providers that have resumed training. The institutional readiness plan should require information on the new date of completion based on the revised programmes. This will provide the HWSETA with insight on when 2020 academic year will be completed across programmes.

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