EXPO 2020 DUBAI – WORKER WELFARE

Expo 2020 Dubai puts the welfare of those working on our site first. World class policies, standards and processes are in place to protect and support their health, safety and wellbeing as the organisation works to build this spectacular event. In collaboration with partners and contractors, Expo 2020 has successfully fostered a positive culture of worker welfare over the years; empowering employees — the people at the heart of the region’s very first World Expo — to work to the best of their abilities in a safe and healthy environment.

POLICIES AND STANDARDS
Expo 2020’s world class standards protect the health, safety, and welfare of the workers on the Expo 2020 Dubai site. The commitments set down in the Worker Welfare Policy and Assurance Standards have been designed to make sure the contractors who work with Expo 2020 take responsibility for making sure workers are properly protected and cared for. They set down both UAE law and requirements formulated from international best practice as required by Expo 2020.

Expo 2020 Worker Welfare Policy
The Policy includes ten key principles that are in line with international guidance on workers’ rights including the International Labour Organisation and United Nations:

- Ensuring fair and free recruitment
- Ensuring employees understand the terms and conditions of employment
- Treating employees equally and without discrimination
- Protecting and preserving the dignity of employees, and not tolerating harassment or abuse of any kind
- Respecting the right of employees to retain their personal documents
- Paying employees’ wages and benefits on time and in full
- Allowing employees freedom to exercise their in-country legal rights without fear of reprisal
- Providing a safe and healthy working and living environment
- Providing access to grievance mechanisms and remediation
- Ensuring that bonded, indentured, forced or child labour is not used.

Expo 2020 Assurance Standards
Expo 2020’s Assurance Standards are bound in to every contract. Areas covered include:

- Procurement qualifications
- Wages and working hours
- Accommodation facilities
- Free and fair recruitment
- Quality of transportation
**Focus: Free & Fair Recruitment**

The Expo 2020 Worker Welfare Policy is in line with International Labour Organization Convention 181 and requires that zero fees are paid by employees. The stipulation to ensure the free and fair recruitment of workers is clearly stated in both the Policy and Assurance Standards.

The responsibility for following Expo 2020’s recruitment practices rests with the employer of the worker and employers undergo checks to see if they comply with Expo 2020 requirements. If, during monitoring, Expo 2020 discovers recruitment fees have been paid by the worker to a UAE or overseas registered recruitment agency, these will be reimbursed by the employer in one amount before or during their next salary payment.

Employers must ensure that the recruitment practices of their subcontractors are adhered to and that the employer covers all recruitment fees including – but not limited to – the following:

- In country processing costs
- Recruitment agency administrative costs
- Visas & airline tickets

The employer is also responsible for assessing whether workers recruited from an existing pool of talent on the Expo 2020 site are currently repaying debts incurred from recruitment related fees.

**Expo 2020 Better Together Strategy**

Expo 2020’s Better Together Strategy is the organisation’s programme for driving continual improvement and delivering a lasting legacy through effective collaboration with partners. It reiterates the organisation’s vision for protecting the wellbeing of workers today and in the future, and vindicates the belief that working together achieves better health and safety, worker welfare, environmental and quality outcomes.

Based on core values of Care, Respect and Pride, ‘Better Together’ has helped Expo 2020 to ensure world-class health and safety, quality and environmental performance and worker welfare – which is celebrated in an annual awards ceremony that commends partners’ achievements in improving worker welfare in the region.

**GOVERNANCE & OVERSIGHT**

Expo 2020’s 18-strong Worker Welfare team is made up of sector, regional and international specialists who are committed to the welfare of the workforce by regularly monitoring and auditing contractors and third parties.

**Oversight**

The following internationally renowned bodies support oversight:

- UK Health and Safety Executive
- Control Risks
- PwC
Government Collaboration

Expo 2020 Dubai works closely with UAE government bodies such as Dubai Police, Dubai Civil Defence, Dubai Municipality and the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MOHRE) to coordinate on inspections.

- The Worker Welfare Authorities Steering Group is a sub-committee to the Government Human Rights Committee. It was established in 2017 for Expo 2020 to table concerns that require government-level intervention
- Expo 2020’s Worker Welfare team is deployed at the office of Permanent Committee of Labour Affairs in Dubai
- The team works with MOHRE to suggest enhancements to some articles in UAE law
- In collaboration with the Roads & Transport Authority, the team also conducts early morning and evening bus inspections focused on adherence to COVID-19 precautionary measures such as social distancing and vehicle capacity.

Audit & Review

Worker Welfare Forums are attended every two months by senior leaders and Worker Welfare, HSE and HR managers from main contractors. The purpose of these forums is to knowledge-share and openly discuss issues and areas for improvement. Quarterly leadership meetings are also held with the CEOs of main contractors. Under supervision:

- All contractors invited to tender undergo audits and inspection
- All contractors are audited within three months of being on site followed by monthly review
- All contractors are subject to in-depth audits every six months
- All contractors submit Improvement Action Plans to address areas of non-compliance
- Contracts are not awarded to companies who cannot commit to Expo 2020’s policies and standards.

International Participant Requirements

All International Participants (IP) are required to work in collaboration with Expo 2020’s Worker Welfare team and relevant Dubai government authorities to comply with the organisation’s Policy and Assurance Standards. This includes:

- Ensuring a Worker Welfare representative is appointed to put in place effective monitoring systems and conduct timely audits to ensure that Expo 2020 Worker Welfare Policy and Assurance standards are complied with.
- Providing monthly auditing reports
- Establishing a Worker Welfare Committee and Outreach Programme for all staff
- Attending Expo 2020 worker welfare sessions, forums, and free auditor training
- Compiling an event-specific worker welfare management plan

Training & Learning
Expo 2020 led programmes are available for contractors, third party developers and consultants. They include:

- Self-auditing and education on UAE and international guidelines
- Workforce-related awareness campaigns, e.g.
  - Mental health and wellbeing
  - Overtime payments
  - Working hours
  - Transportation
  - Injury or illness
  - Working at height

**HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT**

The organisation’s Health, Safety, Quality and Environment Policy sets down a risk-based approach to compliance for on-site working practices. Expo 2020 continues to deliver on objectives to set a high standard of service excellence. The organisation’s Accident Frequency Rate is 0.03. For comparison, the UK HSE Accident Frequency Rate in the construction sector is 0.07.

**Construction Progress**

- There are around 20,000 workers currently on site
- The number of workers on site peaked in January 2020 at 44,569 people
- More than 235 million work hours have been completed on site
- The construction element of Expo 2020 has encompassed 50 main contractors, over 2,000 subcontractors, more than 50 supervising consultants, and 40,000-plus workers.

**COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES**

The health, safety, and wellbeing of everyone working at Expo 2020 is the organisation’s number one priority and it has implemented a number of precautionary measures in line with guidance from the UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention and Dubai Health Authority, and the latest information and advice from the World Health Organisation to meet the challenges of COVID-19. This includes:

- The opening of a vaccination hub on site in collaboration with Al Tadawi Healthcare Group at the beginning 2021
- The launch of an online COVID-19 Information Hub accessible to all staff, a COVID-19 helpline, and an online counselling service
- An on site COVID-19 testing centre run by Expo 2020 staff volunteers
- An ongoing awareness programme led by Expo 2020’s Worker Welfare team to generate awareness and action plans related to labour accommodations and COVID precautions.

**RECOGNITION & WELLBEING INITIATIVES**

Expo 2020 is committed to the happiness and wellbeing of our workers, and to helping contractors create a home away from home for workers living in the UAE while they help build Expo 2020.
Worker Wellness Programme
Launched in October 2017, the programme was created to lead the global conversation on how technology could be used to create a safer working environment on constructions sites across the world.

- More than 5,000 Expo 2020 workers have worn Whoop wearable devices, collecting more than 13TB of data across 30 months
- The data has been used to enhance preventative healthcare by providing personalised reports on areas such as cardiovascular health and sleep patterns.

Worker Outreach Programme
Expo 2020’s Worker Outreach Programme has helped to cultivate an excellent working culture at the organisation.

- The Worker Welfare team has interviewed thousands of workers, and will continue to conduct these interviews on an ongoing basis. Interviews are conducted with confidentiality and anonymity with any concerns detected escalated as appropriate.
- Over 60 questions are asked consistently, and topics covered include:
  - Recruitment and employment
  - Remuneration and benefits
  - Working hours, accommodation, and transportation.

Better Together Cricket Tournament

- During the 2019/20 tournament, 32 teams took part and a crowd of 12,000 people were joined by international cricket stars Yuvraj Singh and Shahid Afridi for the final held at the world-famous International Cricket Council stadium in Dubai Sports City.

Worker Portrait Programme
Expo 2020 conducted the Worker Portrait Programme from April to September 2020. As part of this rewarding initiative:

- Over 6,000 workers were photographed
- Workers were asked about their views on Expo 2020 and their plans for their future and their families
- The portraits were shared with contractors and will be showcased in exhibitions in the run up to and during the event.

Worker’s Colonnade
Construction is underway for a permanent monument recording the name of every site worker who contributed to the delivery of Expo 2020.

- The monument is being designed as a visual testament to the contributions of Expo 2020 workers
- These hard-working men and women have set an incredible example of UAE excellence, demonstrating what the region is capable of, even in the most testing of times
- Their collective achievement will be celebrated, with a monumental colonnade and beautifully designed columns being engraved with their names.
WORKER VOICE
Listening and empowering the people at the heart of Expo 2020 Dubai is of paramount importance.

Worker Connect
Worker Connect is a multi-language mobile app designed to improve the day-to-day lives of workers. It:
- Enables early identification of issues and swift resolution
- Acts as a one-stop-shop for educating workers on their rights
- Ensures issues can be reported anonymously
- Features interactive voting and polling, as well as push notification.

Worker Hotline
Any worker on our site can call the freephone hotline (800 WORKER) and report issues or concerns anonymously in eight different languages.
- 800 WORKER is manned by a specialist call centre for workers to report issues directly to Expo 2020
- It features a human interface, real-time translator, actionable intelligence, and the option to be given valuable feedback.

Worker Welfare Committees & Forums
Elected Expo 2020 worker representatives attend Worker Welfare Committees held every two months. The forums:
- Are attended by Worker welfare managers from contractors and third-party developers
- The Executive Leadership Forum convenes every three months and is chaired by Expo 2020’s Chief Site Delivery Officer. It is attended by executives from third-party developers, main contractors and governmental entities.

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