

Databuild survey: Builders taking a break this festive season

According to a survey carried out by Databuild, construction industry stakeholders are opting to close their doors over the coming holiday period. While not mandated by legislation, the traditional builders' break is strongly observed by the entire construction industry and usually starts around mid-December and continues into the first and sometimes second week of the New Year.



Source: Supplied

CEO Morag Evans explains: "As part of keeping the industry informed about activities over the December period, we sent a questionnaire to contractors and professionals, including engineers, architects and quantity surveyors, asking whether they intend working during December.

"Unlike last year, where a significant portion stated their intention to use the December period as an opportunity to catch up on work delayed by the five-week compulsory shutdown brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, this year the overwhelming consensus among respondents was that they would be closing for the holidays."

63% plan on closing for builders' break

According to Evans, of the contractors surveyed, 63% said they intend closing for the builders' break period (compared to 36% last year), while 27% said they would close between Christmas and New Year only (down from last year's 40%). A further 6% plan to remain open throughout December, a decrease of 3% from last year.

Among the professionals surveyed, 65% indicated they will be closing for the builders' break (up from 55% last year), while 22% plan to close between the Christmas and New Year holidays only – a slight increase from last year's 20%. 8% intend to continue working throughout December, compared to 12% last year.

"While the survey sample is small and the results obtained anecdotal, it is clear from the responses received that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a marked impact on numerous construction role players," says Evans. "However, the fact that most intend closing for the builders' break – or even a part of it – seems to indicate that the industry is starting to show pocket-sized signs of recovery, despite the bearish economic climate.

"While this certainly bodes well for 2022, the ever-looming threat of a fourth wave of infection outbreak must not be overlooked, as this can easily slam the breaks on recovery, which the industry simply cannot afford," she adds.



The case for compulsory vaccination in the construction industry

Mbrag Evans 29 Sep 2021



Endorsing vaccine adoption

"Consequently, in an industry where social distancing and other hygiene protocols can be difficult to implement and manage on site, construction stakeholders have an integral role to play in endorsing vaccine adoption.

"It cannot be denied that the vaccine plays a significant role in preventing hospitalisation and death related to Covid-19. Whether employers are in favour of or against a mandatory vaccination policy, they have a moral and ethical responsibility to actively encourage their employees to have the vaccination.

"Vaccine hesitancy among South Africans remains a serious concern and is negatively impacting the recovery of our country's economy. Consequently, the education of employees on the benefits of the vaccine and the risks of not being vaccinated cannot be ignored and should be regarded as an economic imperative," Evans concludes.

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