

1 Background

- 1.1 Our priority remains the health of our paddling community and minimising the risk to members of contracting COVID-19. We also seek to ensure that the practices of Paddle Australia (PA), our affiliated organisations, including our State Paddle Associations (SPAs) and Paddle Clubs, do nothing to increase the likelihood of the spread of COVID-19 amongst the broader Australian community and those more vulnerable people in particular.
- 1.2 Paddlers and Paddle Clubs should always act in accordance with the general advice available from the Department of Health and any Federal, State or Local Government recommendations or requirements that are applicable. Links can be found on the [COVID-19 page on PA Website](#).
- 1.3 PA continues to liaise with Sport Australia (SA), the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) and Paralympics Australia as well as other National Sports Organisations (NSOs) to ensure a coordinated approach to the current risks.
- 1.4 The information and advice in this update is current as at 14th April and is in addition to the information and advice provided in our previous updates. PA again stresses this is general advice and that decisions need to be made by each Paddler and Paddle Club taking into account the different and unique circumstances in which they operate.

2 General Paddling Activity

- 2.1 Paddle Australia and the State Paddle Associations (SPAs) continue to work with the relevant authorities to confirm exactly what access members have to their Paddle Club facilities and under what circumstances. This advice has not changed substantially since Update 3.
- 2.2 However, since update 3, further restrictions have been placed on the movement of people, with some fined for what is deemed unnecessary travel. Our advice is that you should now only paddle for exercise close to home, ideally avoiding car journey's to and from a venue.
- 2.3 We note that the State Government of Victoria permits '*exercise in compliance with public gathering requirements*'. Paddling in Victoria is considered to be 'recreational boating'. So, whilst exercise is permitted, unfortunately paddling is not. See link to the [Better Boating Victoria](#) website for details.
- 2.4 There are obviously many paddlers that are not members of a Paddle Club and they will not be aware of the some of the current restrictions under which paddling as a form of exercise can take place. Widespread flaunting of these restrictions could see paddling banned altogether. Where you see people that are paddling but are doing contrary to the restrictions, please try to make them aware. A summary is provided in [update 3](#).
- 2.5 We again note that the requirements continue to change quickly. Please check the [PA website](#) where we will continue to update information as it becomes available.

3 Advice to Paddle Clubs

- 3.1 Sadly, most of our Paddle Clubs remain closed, although access has been maintained to boatsheds and storage areas in some cases. Clubs are strongly advised to familiarise themselves with their local situations through the links below:

State/Territory Governments

[New South Wales](#)
[Queensland](#)
[South Australia](#)
[Tasmania](#)
[Victoria](#)
[Western Australia](#)
[Australian Capital Territory](#)
[Northern Territory](#)

State Paddle Associations

[Paddle NSW](#)
[Paddle QLD](#)
[Paddle SA](#)
[Paddle TAS](#)
[Paddle VIC](#)
[Paddle WA](#)

- 3.2 If you are unsure based on the information available, PA recommends no access should be permitted to your Club premises, including boatshed and storage areas, under any circumstances.

4 Paddle Support Package

- 4.1 Sincere thanks to those 60 Paddle Clubs that returned our survey by the deadline on Wednesday night last week. We realise it was a quick turn-around, but we wanted to get a clearer picture of the concerns of clubs, both now and as the restrictions in place due to COVID-19 are lifted.
- 4.2 The main current issue for many was how Paddle Clubs could remain connected with their members through the period when they are closed. Beyond that, the question for most was how they re-engage when we can all get back on the water and what impact there will be on membership numbers, especially given that some will have limited means to pay.
- 4.3 Armed with the information provided, PA and our SPAs are working on 'Paddle Support Package' that aims to preserve the infrastructure of paddling, retain and support our SPAs, Paddle Clubs and members during the COVID-19 emergency and to ensure that we are all well positioned to emerge strongly as restrictions are lifted. We plan to launch details for the Paddle Support Package on or around 1st May.

5 Virtual Annual General Meetings

- 5.1 Whilst Clubs may be closed, governance and other issues still have to be addressed. For those with an AGM coming up and who are wondering how this might be managed, our lawyers have prepared the attached [Notes for Entities on Conducting Annual General Meetings](#)

6 Sport Recovery Grants for Clubs affected by Natural Disasters

- 6.1 In response to the catastrophic 2019-2020 Natural Disasters the Australian Olympic Committee, Commonwealth Games Australia, Paralympics Australia and the Australian Sports Foundation (ASF) have joined forces to restore grassroots sport to affected communities.
- 6.2 The [Sport Recovery Grants](#) will be focusing on the organisations and community members who have been impacted by these natural disasters and require assistance to resume their sport in their community.
- 6.3 A natural disaster is any catastrophic event that is caused by nature or the natural processes of the earth. Examples include earthquakes, bushfires, landslides, hurricanes, floods, heat waves, severe hailstorms and droughts. The current Covid-19 pandemic is not a “natural disaster” for these purposes, and a separate response is being planned to address this crisis.
- 6.4 You can [Find Out More](#) and make an application at this link. If you do apply, please let us know how you get on.

7 Contacting Paddle Australia and our State Paddle Associations

- 7.1 The PA Sydney office is closed with the administrative team working from home. The office phone system will automatically redirect your calls. Please be patient in these circumstances and try again later if you need to talk with one of our team.
- 7.2 During this period, it might be more convenient for you to contact our primary services via email. For all Membership Services use: membership@paddle.org.au and for Helpdesk/System enquiries use: helpdesk@paddle.org.au and for all other and general enquiries use: info@paddle.org.au. All these emails are monitored, and we will get back to you as promptly as we can.
- 7.3 All SPAs can be contacted via email and plan to remain available to provide support throughout this emergency. Again, if in doubt about any local restrictions or guidelines, please consult your SPA.

8 2020 ICF International Competition Calendar

- 8.1 The ICF have recently provided an update on the status of the 2020 ICF Competition Calendar. <https://www.canoeicf.com/coronavirus-COVID-19-updates-canoekayak-events>
- 8.2 As anticipated, many competitions have either been cancelled or postponed until later in the year. Whilst disappointing, Paddle Australia fully supports the ICF decision to cancel all competitions that were to be held in the next 3 months. Given the current levels of uncertainty and restrictions that remain in place across the globe, Paddle Australia considers it unlikely that any international competition will be held in the next 6 months.
- 8.3 Our priority is for the health, safety and wellbeing of our athletes, coaches and staff. Paddle Australia will make decisions on whether teams will travel to any overseas competitions based on this priority and on whether athletes can prepare adequately for the competition concerned.

8.4 This decision impacts the following teams and competitions:

Canoe Sprint and Paracanoe:

Asia Pacific Regatta (Japan, 15-17 May) – **POSTPONED (until 2021)**
World Cup 1 (Racice, CZE, 7-10 May) – **CANCELLED**
World Cup 2 (inc Paracanoe World Champs) (Duisburg, 21-24 May) - **CANCELLED**
Junior and U23 World Championships (Brandenburg, 16-19 July) - **CANCELLED**
Olympic Hopes Regatta (Szeged, 11-13 September) – **STATUS UNKNOWN but Paddle Australia will not be attending this Regatta**

Canoe Slalom:

World Cup 1 (Ivréa, ITA, 5-7 June) – **POSTPONED (date TBC)**
World Cup 2 (Pau, FRA, 12-14 June) – **POSTPONED (date TBC)**
Junior & U23 World Champs (Ljubljana, SLO, 7-12 July) – **POSTPONED (1-6 Sept)**
World Cup 3 (Liptovsky, 21-23 August) – **POSTPONED (date TBC)**
World Cup 4 (Prague, 18-20 September) – **AS SCHEDULED**
World Cup 5 (Markkleeberg, 25-27 September) – **AS SCHEDULED**

Canoe Polo

World Championships (Rome, ITA) – **POSTPONED (until April 2021)**

Canoe Marathon

World Championships (Baerum, NOR) – **CANCELLED**

9 General

- 9.1 If you need clarification on any of the advice above, please let us know via email at info@paddle.org.au. Whilst social media is helpful in getting information out there, we can't monitor all posts. We will provide more information as and when we can. Again, please check regularly for updates on the [COVID-19 page on PA Website](#).
- 9.2 This is a challenging time for everyone. A reminder to be supportive and check up on your fellow paddlers.
- 9.3 Enjoy your paddling, keep healthy and stay safe.

Phil Jones
CEO
Paddle Australia

14th April 2020