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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Minimising the risks of COVID-19 has been an immense challenge, requiring all levels of government to move quickly and frequently. The messaging provided to the public is complex and can be confusing. The objective of these Guidelines is to distil all the information provided by authorities and give practical advice as to how your Club can comply with its responsibilities as sport resumes over the coming months.
- 1.2 These guidelines provide a framework. Paddle Australia (PA) and our State Paddle Associations (SPAs) will work to provide further information and tools to support Clubs over the coming days and weeks.

## 2 The current situation

- 2.1 The past three months have been an incredibly difficult for many people in our community. We have seen federal and state governments impose a variety of restrictions to minimise the risks posed by COVID-19 and, on behalf of our six State Paddle Associations, Paddle Australia thanks you for your efforts in helping to 'flatten the curve'.
- 2.2 While paddlers are have been able to enjoy the very real physical and mental benefits of paddling on an individual basis, and in compliance with physical distancing requirements, the events and competitions of Paddle Australia as well as our Clubs and SPAs have been suspended.
- 2.3 We are now beginning to see a roadmap for the relaxation of the restrictions imposed on sport. This recognises the important health, economic, social and cultural contributions that sport and recreation will make as we emerge from some of restrictions that have been imposed to limit the spread of COVID-19.
- 2.4 Fundamental in any consideration of relaxing restrictions is the acknowledgement that the risk posed by COVID-19 is far from over. While the resumption of sport and recreation activities is important, it cannot take place in a manner which potentially compromises the health of individuals or the community.
- 2.5 The Federal Government has launched two major documents recently being:
  - 2.5.1 The '[National Principles for the Resumption of Sport and Recreation Activities](#)' (**'Principles'**), referencing the '*AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment*', all announced after the National Cabinet meeting on 30 April; and
  - 2.5.2 The '[3-Step Framework for a COVIDSafe Australia](#)' (**'Plan'**) to gradually remove restrictions on Australian society, including the sports sector, announced after the National Cabinet meeting of 8 May
- 2.6 Integrating the **Principles** and the **Plan** is not straight forward: The **Principles** refer to Levels A, B and C while the **Plan** lays out Steps 1, 2 and 3. Unfortunately, Level A does not align with Step 1. Similarly, Levels B and C do not align with Steps 2 and 3, respectively.

- 2.7 Although the **Principles** and the **Plan** were announced by the Federal Government, it is clear that decisions around how quickly different communities will move through these phases will be determined locally, led by the State Governments. It is also clear from the plans launched by the State Governments since 8 May that there will considerable divergence from both the **Principles** and the **Plan**, depending on the jurisdiction.
- 2.8 While Paddle Australia and our SPAs provide the attached Guidelines on how Clubs can comply with the '**Principles**', the most important step that a Club can take is to ensure that is aware of its local situation. Accordingly, all Clubs are asked to keep themselves continually updated regarding State Government announcements, guidelines and requirements. For further information on the current status in your Club's location, please consult the following:

State/Territory Government Links	State Roadmaps or Updates
<a href="#">New South Wales</a>	<a href="#">NSW Update</a>
<a href="#">Queensland</a>	<a href="#">QLD Roadmap</a>
<a href="#">South Australia</a>	<a href="#">SA Roadmap</a>
<a href="#">Tasmania</a>	<a href="#">TAS Roadmap</a>
<a href="#">Victoria</a>	<a href="#">VIC Update</a>
<a href="#">Western Australia</a>	<a href="#">WA Roadmap</a>
<a href="#">Australian Capital Territory</a>	<a href="#">ACT Update</a>
<a href="#">Northern Territory</a>	<a href="#">NT Roadmap</a>

- 2.9 All SPAs can be contacted via email and remain available to provide support throughout this pandemic. If in doubt about any local restrictions or guidelines, please consult your SPA.
- 2.10 As a part of mitigating the risk around COVID-19, Paddle Australia supports the use of the COVIDSafe app that can be downloaded [here](#). All members of the community are requested to download this app.

### 3 National Principles for the Resumption of Sport and Recreation Activities

- 3.1 The **Principles** aim to provide a pathway for the staged return of community and high performance sport. They are guided by the Australian Institute of Sport's '[Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment](#)' (**AIS Framework**), which was developed in consultation with sporting stakeholders. Paddle Australia is pleased to have played a role in this consultation process.
- 3.2 The **Principles** and the **AIS Framework** consider all individuals who participate in sport and recreation, irrespective of whether the sporting activities are community level or professional.
- 3.3 A staged approach will be taken to the resumption of community sport and recreation, taking into account factors such as the local presence of COVID-19; the capacity of local health facilities; and various risk mitigation strategies.
- 3.4 The **Principles** set out three broad phases of this staged resumption. At Level A the restrictions will be tightest. Level A broadly reflects the position that we have been in for the past eight to 10 weeks when paddling for exercise. Additional activities are permitted under Levels B and C.

- 3.5 The type of activities that can take place in each of the three phases are laid out, as are the general hygiene measures that must be in place, and finally the levels of access to sport for spectators and additional personnel.
- 3.6 Although canoeing is specifically referenced within the **AIS Framework**, Paddle Australia and our SPAs appreciate that Clubs will have many additional questions as to what their activities might look like under each of the three phases. To this end, Paddle Australia and our SPAs have developed the further guidance for Paddle Organisations. This will be supplemented with further information in due course.
- 3.7 Any resumption of paddling activities must be within the context of social distancing and the overarching aim of minimising the risk of the transmissions of COVID-19.
- 3.8 If a Club sees that something may be permissible according to a strict reading of the Guidelines yet recognises that undertaking the activity cannot practically happen without breaching the intentions of social distancing, it should not proceed with that activity.
- 3.9 Similarly, exceptions to social distancing should also be considered. For example, while paddling in a two-seat boat may not be allowed at various phases within these Guidelines, social distancing is not required for members of the same family who are already in contact with each other.
- 3.10 Clubs are therefore requested to take a common-sense approach in applying the Guidelines provided below at **Appendix A**.
- 3.11 The Guidelines at **Appendix A** require Clubs to undertake a Risk Management and Mitigation Process prior to re-commencing Club Operations. A Clubs Checklist is also provided as a part of this Update, which is based on a modified version of Sport Australia's draft Return to Play Protocol and which fulfils a Club's obligations under the Guidelines.
- 3.12 This Clubs Checklist is a broad ranging and thorough document: It is appreciated that sections of the Clubs Checklist will not be applicable or relevant to every Club. Clubs are required to complete all sections of the Clubs Checklist which have application to the Club's operations.

#### 4 3-Step Plan

- 4.1 Announced a week after the **Principles**, the **Plan** provides a [3-step Framework for a COVIDSafe Australia](#). It is not specific to sport however 'Sport and Recreation' is included as one of the ten sectors of society specifically referenced.
- 4.2 Under the Plan:
  - Step 1, outdoor sport involving up to 10 people is permitted;
  - Step 2, this limit of 10 people is increased to 20 people; and
  - Step 3, up to 100 people are allowed to gather at venues and the resumption of community sport can be considered.
- 4.3 In terms of reconciling the **Plan** with the **Principles**, it is not possible to simply state that 'Step 1 is the same as Level A'. The graphic at **Appendix B** represents PA's current understanding of how these two documents relate to each other, with the red line symbolising the position at the date this guidance is provided.

- 4.4 Since the launch of the **Plan**, each of the States and Territories has provided further guidance as to its current position and its intentions for the coming weeks. Links to the current guidance from each State and Territory government is provided earlier in this Update.
- 4.5 Each State is starting from a different position and all States are moving at different paces. For this reason, it is not possible to provide blanket advice to the paddling community as to what is currently permissible. Again, for further advice on their local situation Clubs should consult their SPA.
- 4.6 The government has advised that National Cabinet will review progress against the **Plan** every three weeks, meaning that the next review should take place on or around 29 May.

## 5 General

- 5.1 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 our Paddle Organisations do nothing to increase the likelihood of the spread of COVID-19 amongst the broader Australian community and those more vulnerable people in particular.
- 5.2 PA and each of the SPAs will continue to liaise with the relevant authorities to represent the interests of the Australian paddling community.
- 5.3 If you need clarification on any of the advice above, please let us know via email at [info@paddle.org.au](mailto:info@paddle.org.au). Again, please check regularly for updates on the [COVID-19 page on PA Website](#).
- 5.4 This is a challenging time for everyone. A reminder to be supportive and check up on your fellow paddling community members.
- 5.5 Enjoy your paddling, keep healthy and stay safe.

Phil Jones  
CEO  
Paddle Australia

15<sup>th</sup> May 2020

## Guidelines to Paddle Clubs based on the AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment – Appendix A

	LEVEL A	LEVEL B	LEVEL C
Description of Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 1.5m distance is required between participants, whether athletes, coaches or officials.</li> <li>• No physical contact between participants is permitted.</li> <li>• Activity is limited to a maximum of two people at a time (eg two athletes, or one athlete and one coach).</li> <li>• Craft with multiple seats may be used, however no more than two people may use the craft at any time.</li> <li>• Strength and other types of non-paddling training is permitted if no equipment is required or if an athlete has access to own equipment (eg running, cycling).</li> <li>• On water and off water training is permitted in accordance with the above.</li> <li>• Competitions which can be conducted in accordance with the above (eg individual time trial) are permitted.</li> <li>• Extended travel to take part in a competition is not permitted.</li> <li>• Paddle Organisations can organise or facilitate training or events in accordance with above.</li> </ul>	<p><b>As Level A plus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The limit of two people is raised to a maximum of 10 participants (eg 1 coach and 9 athletes) provided that there is not more than one person per 4m<sup>2</sup>, or one group per 40m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Clubs can operate multiple groups if the above space requirements can be adhered to.</li> <li>• Activity which occasions accidental physical contact is permitted however deliberate physical contact is not.</li> <li>• Modified Canoe Polo training may take place, in which neither tackling nor jostling is permitted, in accordance with the above. The ball and other equipment must be sanitised strictly pre and post activity.</li> <li>• Some sharing of training equipment is permitted (eg weights).</li> <li>• Strength and other types of non-paddling training is permitted in accordance with the above.</li> <li>• Training/competitions are permitted in accordance with above</li> <li>• Officials handling papers during competitions must be provided with disposable gloves.</li> </ul>	<p><b>As Level B plus:</b></p> <p>Full training and competition is permitted.</p>
Hygiene Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No equipment is to be shared. This includes boats, paddle and PFDs.</li> <li>• Clubs are not permitted to operate shared use facilities such as change rooms or a gymnasium.</li> <li>• Clubs which store equipment on behalf of members may allow access provided that only one person is allowed access to the storage facility at one time and hand sanitiser is provided both pre and post access.</li> <li>• Club premises should otherwise be closed.</li> <li>• Participants to observe personal hygiene guidelines at all times, even when paddling individually - washing of hands regularly during participation plus strictly pre and post paddling.</li> <li>• No sharing of personal equipment such as towels or water bottles.</li> <li>• Do not participate if unwell (contact doctor).</li> </ul>	<p><b>As Level A plus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Club facilities may be opened provided that a sport specific structured risk management assessment and mitigation process has been undertaken.</li> <li>• Any equipment which may be used by others at a later date must be cleaned with soap pre and post activity.</li> <li>• Activity is on a 'get in, participate, get out' basis (eg get changed into paddle gear prior to arrival) to minimise the use of bathrooms or change facilities.</li> <li>• Participants should undertake full body shower with soap prior to and after activity, preferably at home.</li> <li>• Clubs must have established cleaning protocols in place prior to the opening of communal facilities. Hand sanitiser must be used pre and post use of Club facilities.</li> <li>• No socialising or group meals.</li> </ul>	<p><b>As Level B plus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full use of Club and other sporting facilities is permitted while maintaining the hygiene requirements of Level B.</li> <li>• Massage or physical therapy is permitted as long as equipment is cleaned after each athlete, all towels etc are single use and then washed, and practitioner observes strict hand sanitising pre and post each athlete.</li> <li>• Limit social gatherings.</li> </ul>
Spectators and Additional Personnel	<p>No spectators are permitted at training or events unless required as a parent or carer of a participant.</p>	<p>Spectators must be separated from participants. Spectators must maintain social distancing of at least 1.5m.</p>	<p>Separate spectators from participants. Non-essential contact should be discouraged.</p>

# 3-step Framework for a COVIDSafe Australia and AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment – Appendix B

