



Returning to Sailing in a COVIDSafe Environment

South Australia

This framework has been developed with guidance from The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Framework for rebooting sport in a COVID-19 Environment and Federal/ State Health Departments.

BACKGROUND

On 12 January 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported a cluster of 41 confirmed cases of viral severe acute respiratory syndrome in Wuhan, Hubei Province, People's Republic of China, following a novel coronavirus outbreak in December 2019. Coronaviruses, enveloped Ribonucleic acid (RNA) viruses with surface spikes, are a group of viruses that affect both animals and humans, and several are known to cause the common cold. Two strains of coronavirus namely Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) have been associated with epidemics in 2002-03 and 2012 respectively. The novel coronavirus is formally named SARS-CoV-2. The clinical disease state resulting from an infection with SARS-CoV-2 is known as COVID-19. Full-length genome sequencing has shown that SARS-CoV-2 is closely related to SARS-CoV. SARS-CoV-2 has been shown to enter cells via angiotensin converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) receptors.

TRANSMISSION

COVID-19 is highly transmissible from person-to-person and readily spreads to close contacts of infected individuals.

The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces (fomites), then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19.

The virus can persist in the air for up to three hours and on a variety of surfaces for up to 72 hours. Despite a small minority experiencing gastrointestinal symptoms, 67% of COVID-19 patients tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 RNA in faecal specimens. Viral shedding continues in faeces for 6–10 days after pharyngeal swabs became negative. SARS-CoV-2 has been successfully cultured from faecal samples confirming viable viral particles, indicating the possibility of faecal-oral route transmission.

PREVENTION

Pre-emptive low-cost interventions such as enhanced hygiene and social distancing measures reduce numbers of cases through several mechanisms. Social distancing decreases the risk of transmission by reducing incidence of contact while enhanced hygiene reduces disease transmission, if a contact occurs. Education of the public and enhanced medical resources have also been shown to reduce transmission.

The Australian Governor-General declared a 'human biosecurity emergency period' on 18 March 2020 in response to the risks posed by COVID-19. This empowered the Australian Government to make a series of decisions including prohibition of cruise ships, travel bans (domestic and international), limiting gatherings to two persons (with exceptions for people of the same household and other select groups), and closing a range of indoor and outdoor public facilities. After peaking in Australia in mid to late March 2020, the number of daily new cases of COVID-19 began to drop in response to strict containment interventions

FRAMEWORK FOR RESUMPTION OF COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SAILING

Sailing plays a vital role in the lives of Australians with 150,000 participants participating in the sport and enjoying the associated improvements in health and well-being. At a population level, there are financial, educational and social benefits. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted people in varying ways with many experiencing deteriorations in mental health. The resumption of community and individual sport can significantly contribute to the re-establishment of normality in Australian society.

All community and individual sailing participants, parents/ guardians of participants, coaches, spectators, officials and volunteers (collectively termed community sport members) and sport organisations must play a role help slow the spread of COVID-19. The safe reintroduction of community and individual sport requires thorough planning and safe implementation. Community and individual sport activities should be reintroduced in a cautious and methodical manner, based on the best available evidence to optimise both participant and community safety) is described below. Federal, State/ Territory and Local Public Health Authorities must be closely consulted in decisions regarding the resumption of community and individual sport activities. All individuals and community sport clubs must follow directions of the Local Public Health Authorities.

PREPARATION FOR COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SPORT RESUMPTION

Prior to the resumption of community sailing, it is important for sailing clubs/ groups to safely prepare the sporting environment. A thorough risk assessment must be carried out and preparation will be specific to the sporting environment. A resumption of sport activity should not occur until appropriate measures are implemented to ensure safety of community sport members.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Education of community sport members about COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies is crucial. Some established norms associated with community sport from sharing drink bottles, hugging and shaking hands to arenas packed with spectators are the antithesis of social distancing. Education will help to promote and set expectations for the required behaviours prior to recommencing activities. Improved health literacy including awareness of self-monitoring of respiratory symptoms (even if mild).

Australian Sailing have conducted a risk assessment in accordance with the requirements of AS/ NZS ISO 31000 (Risk Management Principles and Guidelines). In the context of Sailing, we believe that the CONSEQUENCES of infection from COVID-19 is MINOR to MODERATE. The LIKELIHOOD of infection is RARE based on the following rationale:

- Once afloat, boats are generally distanced from other boats in a safe manner more than 1.5m apart.
- Maintaining a cap on the number of boats will reduce the requirements for volunteers and reduce exposure to personnel in an emergency situation.
- Participants will be dressed in wetsuits or waterproof protective clothing and other applicable PPE.
- Physical contact within a boat would only be between two individuals and sharing of equipment would be minimal.
- Individual risk assessments should be conducted by clubs for activities and implement risk mitigation strategies which are in line with Health advice and Government recommendations to avoid the spread of Covid-19

EDUCATION

- Providing education material for club members to promote required behaviours (e.g. regular and thorough handwashing, covering mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve during coughing/ sneezing). Suggested Australian Government and WHO resources:
 - [Good hygiene for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
 - [Hand washing guidance](#)
 - [Keep that cough under cover](#)
 - [Self-isolation \(self-quarantine\) for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
 - [Advice for people at risk of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
 - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) resources](#)
- Displaying appropriate education material within sporting environments and facilities. Suggested Australian Government and WHO resources:
 - [Good hygiene practices poster for businesses](#)
 - [Good hygiene is in your hands](#)
 - [Hand washing guidance](#)
 - [Keep that cough under cover](#)
- Education of community sailing members on hygiene practices and promote required behaviours relevant to their environment.
 - No sharing of drink bottles, clothing, food and towels etc.
 - No sharing of equipment without an appropriate cleaning protocol, in between sessions – Lifejackets, winch handles, beach trolleys etc
 - Recommend community sport members download the Australian Government COVID-19 contact tracing app (COVIDSafe).
 - Recommend participants to get the flu shot
 - Ensure participants are regularly reminded not to take part if unwell
 - Ensure participants who become unwell are sent home and to follow SA Health Guidelines

PREPARATION OF CLUB ENVIRONMENTS

The specific considerations for safe resumption of community sailing will be dependent on the type of sailing and environment. Considerations include:

- Anticipated number of participants
 - What activities can still be adequately done from home?
 - How can activities be staggered to minimise numbers and reduce contact?
 - How can the numbers at training and competitions be managed to maintain some social distancing?
 - Modifying training and competition times so that there are less people present at one time.
- Cleaning
 - What sporting equipment will participants be sharing?
 - Sheets/ Halyards
 - Winch Handles
 - Beach trolleys
 - Wash down hoses
 - What are the shared facilities?
 - Bathrooms/ change rooms and kitchens
 - Doors, window handles and other hard surfaces
 - What is the protocol and frequency of cleaning shared facilities
 - Suggested Government resources for environmental cleaning and disinfection principles
 - [In a healthcare setting](#)
 - [Routine household cleaning Handwashing facilities](#)
 - Are there any facilities to allow regular washing of hands?
 - How many sanitising hand rub dispensers are required in prominent places around the facility/ event?
 - How often should they be refilled?

- 'Get in, sail and get out'. Strategies to limit time and person-to-person contact on site should be implemented
 - Arrive dressed and ready to sail
 - Minimise use of, bathrooms and communal areas (change rooms are to remain closed)
 - Sailors should shower / change at home
 - Participants should eat off site
 - Where possible, participants should maintain at least 1.5m distance apart.
 - Any tasks that can be done at home, should be done at home (e.g. stretching, debriefing, online meetings).
- Organisation of community sailing activities
 - What spaces can be used for isolation if a sailor or other personnel becomes unwell?
 - What activities are allowed to continue whilst maintaining a minimum of 1 person per 4m²?
 - What is the strategy to ensure that social distancing where possible of at least 1.5m is maintained by community sailing members attending training or competition?
 - What strategies can be used to communicate/ inform community sport members of preventive actions?
 - What is the strategy to reduce in-person contact between participants and other personnel? (i.e Electronic sign on/ off, no handling of cash)
 - What is the strategy to manage increased levels of staff/ volunteer absences?
 - What is the strategy to reduce risk to vulnerable groups?
 - What is the strategy to ensure a participant/ contact tracing record is kept by the club in the case of outbreak within the community sailing members?
 - What is the revised strategy in an emergency situation, in particular for marine rescue capabilities?

CRITERIA FOR RESUMPTION OF SPORTING ACTIVITY

Initial resumption of community and individual sport will be governed by public health policy and State/ Territory Government directives. It is worth noting that the different States/ Territories may permit the resumption of some sporting activities at different times, dependent on local COVID-19 transmission, resources and other variables influencing local policy. Even within a State/ Territory there could be geographical variability. All community sailing organisations must ensure that the activities undertaken in training and competition are consistent with the applicable guidance from Local Public Health Authorities. Resumption of sporting activity may not be linear. Relaxing/ increasing restrictions may be required in response to fluctuating numbers of COVID-19 cases.

An initial resumption of sporting activity is dependent on several factors:

- A sustained decrease in COVID-19 transmission
- Healthcare system capacity
- Community sailing clubs/ associations and individuals making their own risk assessment guided by their State or Territory Public Health Authorities (i.e. community sports clubs and individuals cannot restart sport before permitted by Local Public Health Authorities but may decide to delay a restart due to their own circumstances/ risk assessment).

From 11 May 2020, organised sailing In South Australia may recommence, provided that Clubs implement the following requirements:

- Conduct ALL activity outdoors (Indoor training rooms must stay closed)
- Only conduct Training or recreational activities (competition is NOT permitted)
- Have a maximum of 10 participants in any one group
 - (Multiple groups of up to 10 people may participate in activities at the same venue, for example, spread out on the beach provided the density requirements are met).
 - People employed, engaged to work, or undertaking official duties for the purposes of the relevant activity are excluded from the headcount. (i.e. 1 coach/ Instructor and 10 participants in a group is permitted under Government requirements, but it should be noted Australian Sailings ratios remain for accredited courses).
 - The overall number of people on site should be minimised. As such, no spectators should attend, except one parent or carer per child, where possible and if necessary. Non-participating attendees should adhere to social distancing principles at all times.
- Ensure change and shower facilities remain closed and are NOT to be used, but toilet facilities may be made available, as long as the number of people within the venue does not exceed 10 people and a management system is in place to ensure distancing and density requirements are met.

What is currently permitted in South Australia?

Activity (Training Only)	
Single handed	✓
Double handed Dinghies	✓
2 handed Yachts	✓
3-5 person skiffs/ keelboats/ sportsboats	✗
Crewed yachts	✗
Learn To Sail- Tackers	✓
Learn To Sail- Dinghy	✓
Learn To Sail- Keelboat	✗
Learn To Sail- Windsurf	✓
Powerboat Handling/ Safetyboat	✗
AST/ SISAS (single handed)	✓
AST/ SISAS (double handed)	✓

RETURN TO COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SPORT

Community sailing members and individuals should not return to sport if in the last 14 days they have been unwell or had close contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19. In an environment of community transmission of COVID-19, any individual with respiratory symptoms (cough, sore throat, fever or shortness of breath), even if mild, should be considered a possible case of COVID-19. All community sport members must be made aware not to attend sport environments if they are unwell and should use a cautious approach. Anyone who is unwell should be referred to a doctor in accordance with local Public Health Authority guidelines. Any participant with a possible case of COVID-19 should refrain from training (even at home) until they have been cleared to do so by a doctor, given the potential for worsening illness.

It should also be considered that anyone returning to sport and exercise after a period of social isolation and not exercising regularly may be at an increased risk of injury. Clubs and individuals should apply a graded return to mitigate injury risk, understanding that sudden increase in training load will predispose to injury.

VULNERABLE GROUPS

Vulnerable groups such as para-athletes and others with medical conditions may be at increased risk. Those with concomitant medical conditions need individualised management in consultation with their regular treating doctor(s) prior to return to training environments. Considerations include increased susceptibility to respiratory infections, unique equipment (e.g. wheelchairs) that requires cleaning, accessibility of medical resources, risk of medical sequelae from COVID-19, and access to alternate training options.

Participants/ other personnel with concurrent medical conditions including; respiratory or cardiac disease, hypertension, diabetes, obesity and immunosuppression due to disease or medication may be at increased risk. Other groups that require special consideration include; individuals over 70 years of age, carers for or a household contact of a vulnerable person, athletes with suboptimal access to medical care (e.g. remote) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.

Potential interventions for vulnerable athletes/ other personnel include:

- Delaying a return to sport
- Training scheduled at designated 'lower risk' times (i.e. with no one else around)
- Staff working off-site where possible
- Maintaining social distancing measures
- Exclusion of 'high risk' participants/ other personnel from the community sport environment.

The current level of permitted activity is based upon the [AIS Framework for rebooting sport in a Covid-19 Environment](#) as detailed below:

Three levels (Levels A, B, C) of sporting activities are recommended in the context of a COVID-19 environment. For each level, permitted activities, general hygiene measures, and spectators, additional personnel considerations are provided as recommendations for community and individuals sport before the resumption of community or individual sport. Australian Sailing has provided input and recommendations for sailing.

SAILING	LEVEL A (STEP 1)	LEVEL B (STEP 2)	LEVEL C (STEP 3)
GENERAL DESCRIPTION	AIS RECOMMENDATION FOR STEP 1, 2, 3 ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SPORT		
	Activity that can be conducted by a solo athlete or by pairs where at least 1.5m can always be maintained between participants. No contact between participants and/ or other personnel. Examples for all sports - general fitness aerobic and anaerobic (e.g. running, cycling sprints, hills). Strength and sport-specific training permitted if no equipment required, or have access to own equipment (e.g. ergometer, weights). Online coaching and resources (e.g. videos, play books).	As per Level A plus: Indoor/ outdoor activity that can be conducted in small groups (not more than 10 athletes and/ or other personnel in total) and with adequate spacing (not more than 1 person per 4m ²). Some sharing of sporting equipment permitted such as kicking a football, hitting a tennis ball, use of a skipping rope, weights, mats. Non-contact skills training. Accidental contact may occur but no deliberate body contact drills. No wrestling, holding, tackling or binding.	As per Level B plus: Full sporting activity that can be conducted in groups of any size including full contact (competition, tournaments, matches). Wrestling, holding, tackling and/ or binding (e.g. rugby scrums) permitted. For larger team sports, consider maintaining some small group separation at training. For some athletes full training will be restricted by commercial operation of facilities.
	AIS SAILING SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS		
	Solo and doubled handed sailing allowed	Full training allowed	Full training and competition allowed
	AUSTRALIAN SAILING INTERPRETATION BASED ON SA FRAMEWORK		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No competition allowed • *Training for single or double handed sailing allowed in small groups of not more than 10 participants and/ or other personnel in total and with adequate spacing (not more than 1 person per 4m²) • Social distancing of 1.5m required at all times whilst ashore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No competition allowed • In addition to Level A: • Training allowed in groups of not more than 10 participants and/ or other personnel in total 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions • Return to full training and competition.
	* Groups consisting of 1 Coach/ Instructor with up to 9 sailors (no greater than 10 individuals in total in an outdoor environment)		

REVERSAL OF LEVEL / STEPS

If required, Cub Sailing activities must be able to reverse plans to any level of activity ranging from the level prior, to complete lockdown and cessation of all activity, Australian Sailing would be guided on this by government and communicate to Clubs and stakeholders accordingly.