



COVID-19 Information Pack & Return to Sport Plan

28 August 2020 (Version 4.0)



Sport

Effective 28 August 2020 (Version 1.0)

COVID-19 – Impact on SLS Activities

SLSNSW is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our members.

We continue to monitor the latest information aligned to official sources including the Australian Government Department of Health, NSW Health and NSW Sport, and the impact of this information on Surf Life Saving activities.

For the most up to date information, resources and tools related to conducting club activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit the SLSNSW website.

Given the high frequency of changes that are occurring throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the guidance within this document is effective as of the date indicated above and is considered out of date once downloaded or printed. This document will be updated as restrictions change from time to time and/or greater clarity around events and event structures is determined.

The following information packs are also available:

- Junior Activities
- Training and Education
- Lifesaving

The information in this pack has been designed to complement the [SLSNSW COVID-19 Activity Matrix](#). Please ensure you are familiar with the information in the matrix before reviewing this pack.

SLSNSW is represented on the NSW Office of Sport - Sport Recovery Group where key decisions and directives related to the sport sector are considered and disseminated. This information is reflective of this top-level advice.

COVID-19 Checklist (Sport)

- If your event will exceed 500 people (inclusive of SLS personnel, spectators and competitors) explore options for running a modified event this season – do not reduce water safety or first aid requirements to meet the limit.
- Ensure your event does not include participants from other branches. Where possible group travel/car-pooling and over-night stays should be avoided (note this restriction is scheduled to be reviewed in early October 2020).
- Overnight stays including training camps should not be conducted (note this restriction is scheduled to be reviewed in early October 2020).
- Seek your usual approvals from branch or state to conduct the event (including special events).
- Liaise with your local council to ensure they are aware and supportive of your structure and approach and have a plan for non-event public in and around your event.
- Appoint a COVID-19 Safety Coordinator for each event, who must be represented on the Event Safety Committee.
- Ensure that each attending club has nominated a COVID-19 Safety Marshal for their club's participants who will be onsite at the event. A template attendance register can be found [here](#).
- Complete a COVID-19 Safety Plan for each event – use the [Sport COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) template developed by SLSNSW – keep this available for inspection if required. Plans should be comprehensive, as failure to comply may result in [penalties](#) or similar action. As part of this plan, you will need to consider how you will monitor event attendees, separation from non-event general public and hygiene control (see [Infection Control Guidelines for Sport](#)).
- Check that your club has registered as a COVID Safe Business.
- Work with your club to ensure a COVID-19 safe environment for areas of the clubhouse that may be used (e.g. allocated facilities, bathroom signage, sanitiser stations and cleaning schedules).
- Communicate changes to competitors to ensure that expectations are managed.
- Training can take place and the general requirement of participant record keeping, hygiene, social distancing etc all apply as per sports participation. The Club COVID-19 Safety Plan should either incorporate surf sports training within the plan OR have a separate one developed specifically for training.

When not to attend SLS activities

Do not attend any SLS activities if you:

- a. have any symptoms (i.e. fever, coughing, sore/scratchy throat, shortness of breath or loss of taste or smell)
- b. have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19
- c. have tested positive for COVID-19 – wait until you have been given medical clearance to attend again
- d. have travelled overseas, to Victoria, or to a [designated hotspot](#) in the 14 days prior to any of your training dates.

If you are diagnosed with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within 14 days after attending any SLS activity, you must contact SLSNSW immediately on 02 9471 8000.

The Australian Department of Health recommends using the [Healthdirect Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Symptom Checker](#) to answer questions about symptoms to see if you or someone needs to seek medical help or get tested.

The above should be communicated to all members participating in SLS activities.

FAQs

What does success in Surf Sports look like this season?

Each club and branch should define what surf sports success looks like this season. Examples may include:

- Providing skill development opportunities for members this season.
- Delivering a branch/club event or Championships of sorts, regardless of modifications that may be required.
- Being able to present all individual Branch Medals.
- Prioritising the development of coaches so the club is ready for next season.
- Separating events into different categories or disciplines at different times.

Are there any events/disciplines we can't run?

No. All events/disciplines can be conducted regardless of the proximity of the competitors to each other. Cleaning protocols should be considered where equipment is shared (e.g. relays & flags surf boat oars etc).

Can we still train?

Yes. Members are advised to maintain physical distancing and equipment cleaning protocols where possible. COVID-19 safety measures for training activities should be covered by your club's General COVID-19 Safety Plan.

How is the group size of 500 being calculated?

The group size of up to 500 includes SLS officials, spectators and participants. Clubs and branches should liaise with their local councils however to ensure a shared understanding of this requirement for their local beach.

Are we restricted to 20 people only for training?

No. As a community sport, training for Surf Life Saving activities can include up to 500 people (as with competitions). Clubs **must** have a COVID-19

Safety Plan available however for all training activities which involve more than 20 people. The plan must be available for inspection if required, as

failure to comply may result in penalties or similar action.

What does 'Turn up, Participate, Leave' mean in practice?

Competitors should be advised to avoid arriving early and encouraged to leave immediately after the conclusion of the event/their event(s).

What measures can we put in place for members in higher risk categories?

Specific provisions for those in higher risk categories (e.g. older officials) such as face masks, distancing from competitors and barriers around registration and results desks should be considered.

Can change rooms and shower facilities still be used?

Yes. Sporting events however must have their own allocated common facilities (i.e. those not participating in the event should not use the facilities during the event to avoid unnecessary interaction).

Can we open the Club Gym?

Yes, club gyms can be open and used, but they require a dedicated COVID Marshal in place at all times and must be registered as COVID Safe. The Facility Management COVID safety Plan can be located here

Can we still run our club BBQ/canteen at events?

You are advised to work with your club's COVID-19 Safety Coordinator to work through the measures you will need to put in place if you wish to run your club's BBQ or canteen. Measures may include using disposable cups, having a limited menu, marking waiting lines on the floor/sand etc.

Current Event Status

What is happening with state events?

The priority for SLSNSW “state events” is to seek to stage the events in some form, but acknowledging they will also look different. SLSNSW is considering the following structures to ensure events are held:

- Pre-qualification to reduce numbers.
- Regional championships.
- Altering the days certain events are staged.
- Altering the location of different events or age categories.
- Block racing.
- Cancellation for this year only of some specific events from championships.

The following State & National events have been cancelled for this season:

- Sharkskin SLSNSW IRB Series and Sharkskin IRB State Championships
- Australian IRB Championships
- SLS NSW State Pool Rescue Championships
- Australian Pool Rescue Championships
- Coolangatta Gold

SLSNSW and the respective Branch Directors of Surf Sports are currently considering what modifications are required to conduct the following state events this season:

- Interbranch Championships
- Interbranch Surf Boat Championships
- Country Championships
- State Championships

It is intended to seek to proceed with each of these events, but there will likely be modifications and changes to these events. The nature of these modifications that are under consideration include:

- Change/extension of event windows
- Multiple event locations
- Pre-qualification events
- Reduction in categories and/or disciplines

There is a potential of event cancellation based on the suitability of the required modifications to make the event COVID compliant.

Branches and Club’s are encouraged to restructure events and schedules to ensure a viable and engaging surf sports season occurs this coming year, albiet it will look different to previous years. This creates opportunities to consider shorter, sharper event structures as well as small teams based events which members have indicated they are keen to engage with.

Considerations for Event Planning Working Groups

It is recommended that clubs and branches form a working group to brainstorm key strategies to deliver a COVID-19 Safe event. In planning your event/carnival, considerations should include, but are not limited to the below.

Cancellation

- What are the go/no go dates should restrictions change?
- What is the back-up plan?
- Consider a refund policy.

Maximum occupancy

- How will the event be managed to ensure that the mass gathering limit of 500 is not exceeded (inclusive of competitors, officials, handlers, water safety and spectators)?
- How will you ensure attendance numbers are accurately estimated?
- Is your local council comfortable with the numbers attending your event – will they consider general beach attendance as part of their approval considerations?

Physical distancing

- How will you ensure attendees remain 1.5m apart, including under tents?
- Consider requiring attendees to bring their own shade/protection.

Entries

- Will you require participants to restrict their entries only to events they wish to compete in rather than all events on offer to better manage overall numbers?
- Will you need to set entry closing dates earlier than usual to enable sufficient time for planning?
- Consider alpha draws to avoid marshalling.

Pre-Event Documentation

- Appoint an event COVID Coordinator who sits on the Carnival Organising Committee and Safety Committee.
- Advise clubs in the entry circular that they will also need to appoint a COVID Marshal to represent each club in attendance. They are briefed by the event COVID Coordinator.

- Create your COVID-19 Safety Plan for the event.
- Update the event Safety Operations Manual (SOM) to accommodate for biosafety (COVID Safe) measures.

Event Communication

- Be clear and concise in all event communication around the expectations and responsibilities of all in attendance.
- Engage in frequent and open communication with local Council around any specific requirements they may have.
- Strongly encourage all in attendance to download the [COVIDSafe App](#).
- Advise and remind attendees that they should not attend if they are showing any COVID-19 symptoms or have been at designated hotspots.

Record Keeping

- It is a legal requirement to record all attendees at your event/carnival by capturing ALL attendees names and phone number. This information is to be stored securely for no less than 28 days.
- What method will be adopted to record attendance? Will a QR code be used? Do all attendees need to register at a dedicated location and if so, should they be issued with a clearance band once they have checked into your event? All options to consider.

Programming and Format Options

Break the program down into specific age groups

Consider breaking age groups up into two age groups rather than all age groups on the beach at any one time to reduce numbers e.g. U9 and U11 (AM) or U10 & U12 (PM) etc. This may vary depending on the size of age groups. Consider that many families often have children 2 years apart.

Block racing

Run 1 age group alongside another age group and run each event through to finals alternating males and females. This is replicated for the duration of the program of events. These age groups will then

leave the beach at a dedicated time and the next group will be in holding ready to enter the competition area once the previous ages have departed.

Venue selection

Select venues where racing can be achieved in a sensible turn around time that enables you to plan your carnival timeline e.g. locations that are less likely to attract difficult conditions). Younger age groups may be held on flat water to better manage time and transition on and off the beach.

Division racing

Based on results from the previous season, break age groups into divisions based on ability to enhance the racing experience for all in attendance and allow for programming to be scheduled at dedicated times.

Modified events

Decide on the limited events you may offer such as:

- Individual events only
- Swim, board, ski, iron, sprints
- Iron only
- Beach only
- Discipline specific carnivals – reduces the need to re-set the areas
- Younger age groups may also need to be accommodated at a club level if required.

Weekend of surf

Hold the senior events on the Saturday and junior events on the Sunday to make use of the beach set up. Larger branches may need to restrict entries per club.

Single age competition

To reduce numbers and to manage member opportunities, members may only compete in their own age group for all events e.g. U19 chooses to compete in U19 or Open - not both, or U13 competitor may not be eligible compete in the U14 team event.

Restricted entries

Establish a mechanism to cut off event entries once predetermined capacities have been achieved e.g. entries via Jotform and individuals must enter (rather than clubs). Once the limit has been achieved in each age, the form is automatically closed.

Programme Example

U9 & U10 Block Racing Allocated finish time for all events regardless of completion

30 minute transition time to clear the beach and welcome the next age groups

U13 & U14 Block Racing Allocated finish time for all events regardless of completion

30 minute transition time to clear the beach and welcome the next age groups

U11 & U12 Block Racing Largest numbers allocated at the end of the day.

Onsite COVID Considerations

Cleaning

- Ensure that sanitiser is readily accessible throughout the event set up.
- Ensure that bathrooms are well stocked with hand soap and display posters to support effective hand washing.
- Encourage all in attendance to bring their own food and drinks if catering cannot be sealed (officials included).
- Frequently clean any indoor surfaces or outdoor shared surfaces within the admin tents etc.
- Clean frequently touched areas, such as crowd control barriers, course markers etc.
- Clean flags, relay batons etc after each use with detergent or disinfectant. (Suggest a bucket of detergent to be allocated in each competition area).

Tents and Sun Smart Options

Attendees at events/carnivals need to remain vigilant when it comes to being sun smart. Under team tents, attendees are required to physical distance and remain 1.5m apart. Perhaps consider encouraging attendees to bring along umbrellas or other shade options to provide that personal shade. As always encourage attendees to slip, slop, slap and slide.

COVID Marshals

- COVID Marshals are required to wear a fluorescent vest with 'COVID Marshal' across the back. SLSNSW will supply 1 vest to each club which will be contained in the PPE Starter pack.

- A COVID Marshal Position Description template will be available soon.
- The COVID Marshal is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that all members of their club are maintaining 1.5m social distancing for the duration of the carnival.
- Beach access ramps may be restricted to entry only or exit only to manage one way traffic and assist with physical distancing.

Officials/Water Safety

- Officials and water safety are a critical, valued and necessary contributor to any SLS carnival.
- Officials and water safety are encouraged to nominate for a role only if they feel comfortable to do so. No official will be alienated or felt to feel any other way than supported by their decision to nominate or not nominate for a position at an event or carnival.

Member Wellness

Many SLS members invest immense amounts of time and effort to improve their performance each season in surf sports. This new season is likely to deliver some cancelled events, cancelled carnivals, cancelled representative opportunities etc.

Please consider the support structures your club and branch will have in place to deal with disappointment this season and be up front with members that disappointment is likely but the organisation is doing the best it can to navigate the environment to deliver safe surf sports.

Please ensure that members are reminded that it is ok to sit out some events. All members have the ability to decide to withdraw from an event, carnival or activity should they feel unsure about the situation. Please encourage all members to have that voice and support them in their decision.

During these difficult times, it is important to take care of yourself and others. Some may be finding the unknown a little challenging, so please be alert and sensitive to your needs and those around you.

Beyond Blue – 1800 51 23 48

Lifeline Australia 13 11 14

[Headspace](#)

Useful Resources

Listed below are links to some useful resources from the NSW, Australian Government, and other authorities to assist during this time.

[SLSNSW COVID 19 Updates](#)

[NSW Office of Sport COVID-19 Update](#)

[COVID-19 Safety Plan Community Sporting Competitions and Full Training Activities](#)

[Generic and Cobranded Posters and Signage for your Surf Club](#)

[AIS Return to Sport Toolkit](#)

[Effective hand washing during COVID 19](#)

[Good Hygiene During COVID-19](#)

[Cough Under Cover](#)