Guidance on major events and COVID-19

Version Control

Scope	Guidance to RYA Affiliated Clubs & Classes considering restarting major events
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Author	Racing Services Manager
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Version	Date	Ref	Change Description
1	19/06/20	All	None – first issue
1.1	08/07/20	Sec 1	Minor wording amendment
		Sec 2	Amendment to RYA Guiding Principles
		Sec 7	Removal of temperature screening from table in line with guidance from MHRA – https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dont-rely-on-temperature-screening-products-for-detection-of-coronavirus-covid-19-says-mhra
1.2	22/07/20	Sec 7	Addition of recommended wordings for NoR
		Sec 8	Minor amendments to recommended considerations
2.0	10/09/20	Sec 6	Further details on variables of transmission to be considered during risk assessments and information on event delivery plans
		Sec 7	Amendment to COVID Statement in line with World Sailing Q&A2020.010

1. Executive Summary

When considering a major event in the current climate, event organisers should consider the following key points:

- Appointing a COVID Officer as part of the event organising committee
- Is the intent of the event able to be delivered within the restrictions?
- What classes & fleets will be part of the event?
  - Do restrictions impact some classes more than others?
- Does COVID change the size of event that the venue can realistically handle?
- What size of event is currently permitted?
- Prepare some scenarios on what the event may look like with different restrictions in place
- Develop a timeline identifying key dates where go / no-go decisions can be made

The larger the event the harder it is to manage. Consideration should be given to each area of the event and within each area what operations are involved that may involve interaction between people giving rise to the possibility of transmission. Suitable control measures should then be put in place to mitigate the risk of transmission.

2. Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak continues to be a rapidly evolving situation. This document has been provided by the RYA Racing Department to assist those currently considering or planning for major events which may become possible when eased restrictions allow.

For ease of reference, a major event is taken to mean, in the context of this document, any regatta or race which could be expected to bring in participants from outwith the host venue. It will likely be larger than regular racing. This may include an open meeting, traveller regatta, regatta week, national championship or an international competition.

We invite any queries or feedback on this document to be sent to racing@rya.org.uk.

Guiding Principles

The RYA's guiding principles will underpin all guidance across the boating community.

1. Our guidance

   Covid-19 preventative measures are vital in keeping you, your family and others safe and to minimise pressure on frontline services. The RYA will continue to support the National effort to control the spread of Covid-19 and assist members of the RYA family with any variations that might develop at a local level. We support the Government's desire to return to normality in a measured way and we recognise that we have a role to play by providing guidance to the RYA community on the application of the 2020 Regulations

2. Our approach is considerate and conservative

   Considerate: be mindful of the potential impact that you could have on other water users and do not place unnecessary extra strain on the RNLI and emergency services

   Conservative: help to minimise risk by taking an extra conservative approach to your boating

Other Guidance

In addition to this document, the RYA has produced the following guidance documents which may be relevant and are available through the RYA Return to Boating Hub.

- Club Guidance on Restarting Boating Activity and Managing Covid-19
  - Guidance for clubs on all aspects of restarting boating activity
- Guidance on restarting racing and COVID-19
  - Primarily aimed at club racing and specific to racing issues

Both of these documents have also been adapted by RYA Cymru Wales, RYA Northern Ireland & RYA Scotland for the specific set of scenarios that arise in each of the home countries. These can be found here:

- RYA Cymru Wales
- RYA Northern Ireland
- RYA Scotland

World Sailing has provided advice on the specific risks associated with running sailing events and Covid-19. This includes a document titled Guidance for Event Organizers for the Protection of the Health of Sailing Communities.

This can be accessed via their Medical page.

3. Event Organising Committee

The following plan, taken from the RYA Race Management Guide, includes sub-committees suggested as a basis from which a good management structure for the event organising committee can be evolved:

Figure 3-1 Event Management Structure
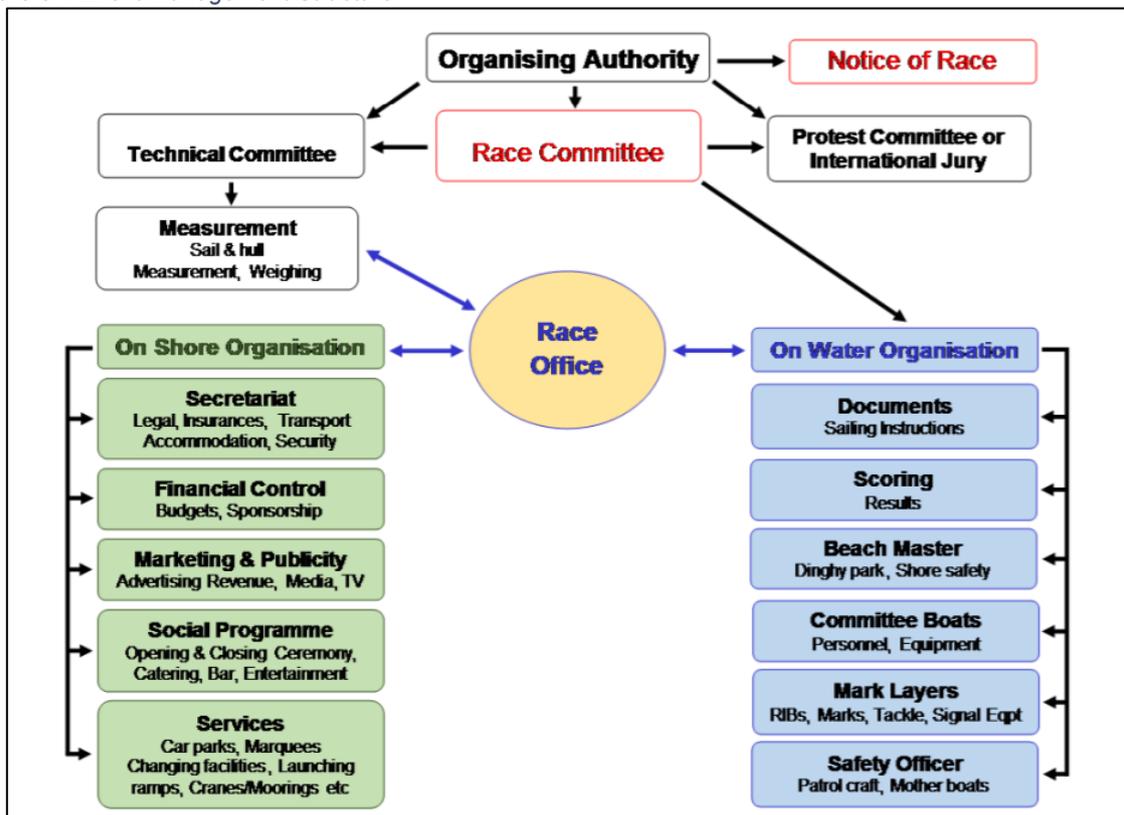
It is recommended that the Event Organising Committee appoints a COVID-19 Officer (CO) to be responsible for oversight of the risk and mitigation planning, communicating information to all stakeholders and ensuring that the necessary standards are met.

The CO does not necessarily have to be medically trained and, dependent on the size of the event, this role can be combined with other roles. Someone with experience in risk assessment and risk mitigation processes may be well suited to the role. The CO should work with each of the various sub-committees shown in Figure 3-1 to ensure that the mitigations being put in place in each area are appropriate and consistent.

4. Scenario Planning

Whilst we cannot know for sure what restrictions are going to be eased and when, event organising committees can review the road maps outlined by the various governments to understand what possible restrictions may be lifted during each phase.

It is suggested that the event be mapped against each step or phase, and the alert levels from the Joint Biosecurity Centre, to see at which point the event is possible to run and how it may be scaled up or down dependent on the alert level.

Level	Description	What it means for the event
1	Covid-19 is not known to be present in the UK	*i.e. event can run as normal*
2	Covid-19 is present in the UK, but the number of cases and transmission is low	
3	a Covid-19 epidemic is in general circulation	
4	a Covid-19 epidemic is in general circulation; transmission is high or rising exponentially	*i.e. event cannot run in any form*

5. Timeline

The event organising committee should prepare a timeline working back from the date of the event. The timeline should highlight the key milestones at which certain actions are required to have been taken. Go/no-go decision points should be built into the timeline at which point the event organising committee should review the situation, assess if restrictions have been eased sufficiently or may be sufficiently eased to allow the event to proceed.

If the event is unlikely to be able to proceed it should be scaled down or cancelled. Organising Authorities should ensure they have appropriate cancellation policies within their Notice of Race.

6. Risk Assessments

Event organisers should consider the COVID specific risks to their event in addition to their normal risk assessment points. This means assessing how transmission could occur for each operation undertaken as part of the event and considering how the risk may be mitigated.

When considering the COVID specific risks, event organisers should be aware of the three variables of transmission.

- Droplet transmission and aerosol generation: this risk associated with each action in an activity based on duration and proximity of participants

- Fomite transmission: the risk associated with the handling and transfer of equipment in the activity
- Population: the number of participants likely to take part in the proposed activity plus known risk factors of participants with underlying health conditions or high-risk groups, who wish to participate
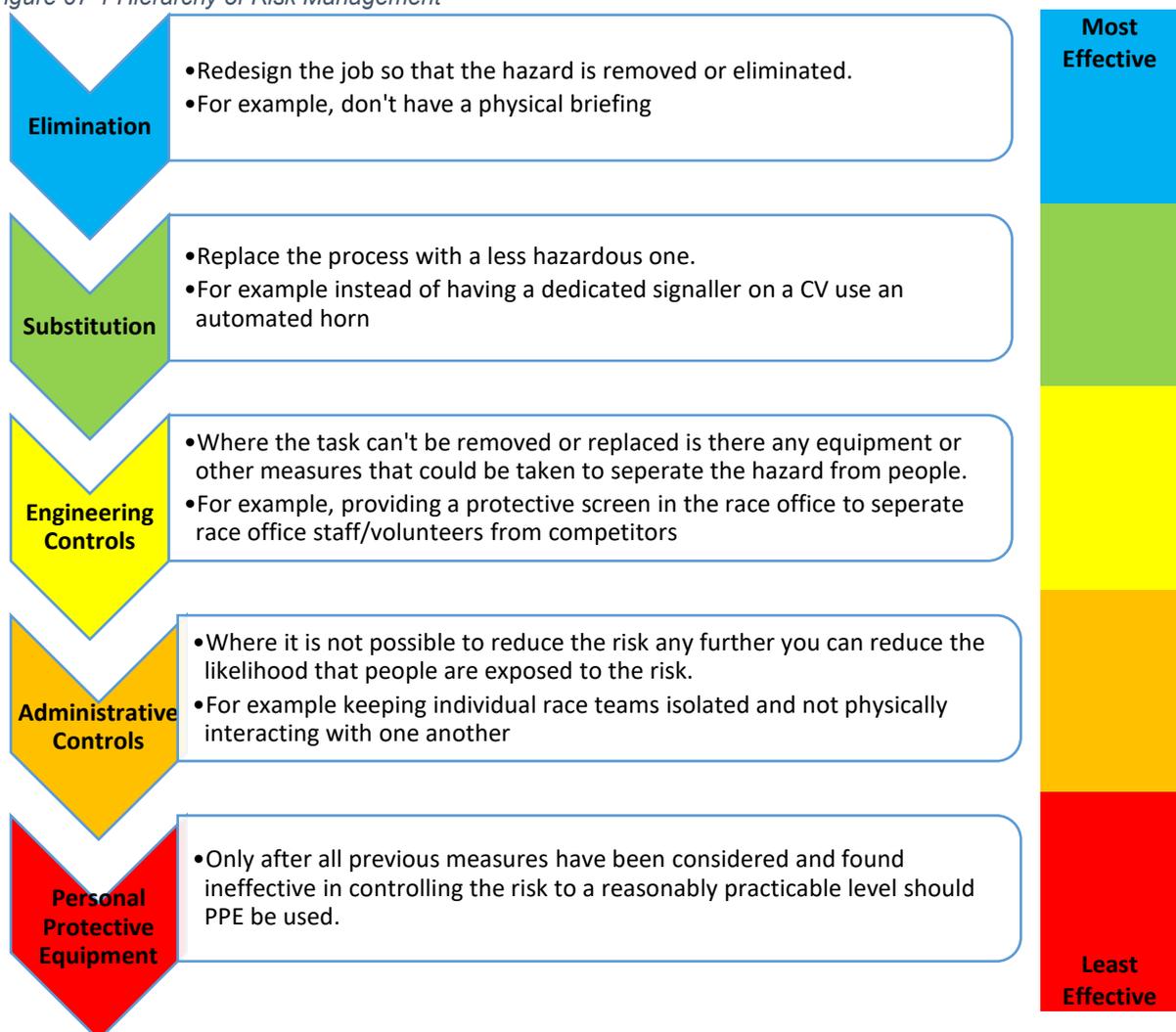
Once the risk assessment has been prepared, event organisers should produce a written delivery plan and any related guidance, demonstrating the mitigations put in place, how the event will be run and any changes to how the event may normally be run. This should be made available to all participants.

Hierarchy of Risk Management

When considering the mitigations to be put in place to reduce risk to a level that is as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP), it should be borne in mind that some control measures will be more effective than others. This is known as the hierarchy of risk management.

Wherever practicable a mitigation measure in a higher tier should be chosen rather than simply selecting the easiest to implement. In some cases it will be appropriate to combine multiple control measures from different tiers.

Figure 67-1 Hierarchy of Risk Management

Elimination
- Redesign the job so that the hazard is removed or eliminated.
- For example, don't have a physical briefing

Substitution
- Replace the process with a less hazardous one.
- For example instead of having a dedicated signaller on a CV use an automated horn

Engineering Controls
- Where the task can't be removed or replaced is there any equipment or other measures that could be taken to seperate the hazard from people.
- For example, providing a protective screen in the race office to seperate race office staff/volunteers from competitors

Administrative Controls
- Where it is not possible to reduce the risk any further you can reduce the likelihood that people are exposed to the risk.
- For example keeping individual race teams isolated and not physically interacting with one another

Personal Protective Equipment
- Only after all previous measures have been considered and found ineffective in controlling the risk to a reasonably practicable level should PPE be used.

Most Effective

Least Effective

7. Recommended Notice of Race Wordings

It is recommended that organising authorities include the following within their Notice of Race to account for any possible changes or additional requirements which may be needed due to COVID-19.

The wordings provided are examples and Organising Authorities should review them and amend as appropriate to suit their circumstances.

It is recommended that the COVID statement should be made non-protestable by other boats and should be subject to a discretionary penalty by the protest committee.

Cancellation

1.1. The Organising Authority may cancel the event, cancel classes and reject or cancel entries in its absolute discretion, subject to RRS 76.

1.2. Should the Organising Authority cancel a class or reject an entry they shall refund the entry fee in full.

1.3. Should the Organising Authority cancel the event at least 36 hours prior to the scheduled start of race 1 the entry fee will be refunded less any costs incurred.

1.4. Should the Organising Authority cancel the event within 36 hours of the scheduled start of race 1 any refunds will be at the sole discretion of the Organising Authority.

1.5. If an entry is cancelled by a competitor, the entry fee will be refunded as follows:

Cancellation Date	Entry Fee Refund
Up to xx xxx 2020 12pm (noon)	xx%
After xx xxx 2020 2020 12pm (noon)	0%

COVID Statement

By taking part in any of the events covered by this notice of race, each competitor agrees and acknowledges that they are responsible for complying with any regulations in force from time to time in respect of COVID-19 and for complying with the [venue/OA/sailing club] COVID-19 procedures. Competitors and support persons shall comply with any reasonable request from an event official. Failure to comply may be misconduct. Reasonable actions by event officials to implement COVID-19 guidance, protocols or legislation, even if they later prove to have been unnecessary, are not improper actions or omissions.

8. Considerations and Controls

Consideration should be given to each area of the event and within which area what operations are involved that may involve interaction between people giving rise to the possibility of transmission.

This section aims to highlight some of the areas and operations involved with a major event and to discuss how they may present a risk of transmission and what possible control measures there may be. The control measures presented are suggestions and ideas of what may be considered. Different control measures will be suitable depending on the event and the current phase of the country's recovery from the pandemic.

Whilst not explicitly stated below, it is expected that good hygiene measures will underpin all elements in each area.

Pre-event

Areas	Considerations
Notice of Race	- Include event cancellation & refund policy - State quotas for each class to manage event capacity - Consider including COVID statement on additional venue requirements and expectations for personal responsibility
Entry & Registration	- Utilise online entry & registration system if possible - Keep a record of all attendees (for track and trace) - Require those feeling unwell, who have recently been unwell or who have had contact with someone who has been unwell to not attend - Require participants to perform self symptom check prior to attending - Perform registration in open area - Provide screens at registration desk - Limit number of people entering race office - Use one way systems - Reinforce government guidance on those who are clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable suggesting individuals should consider whether their personal circumstances are conducive to taking part in the event
Volunteer Briefings	- Distribute written briefing notes electronically - Hold briefing online via Zoom, Skype or similar - Only hold individual team briefings rather than all volunteers
Competitor Briefing	- Don't hold a traditional competitors' briefing - Pre-record and deliver briefing via social media channels - If physical briefing hold in open area with PA system - Hold separate & smaller briefings per class / groups
Accommodation	- Consider if reduced volunteer numbers is feasible - Use local volunteers to avoid requirement for accommodation - Use household groups for volunteer roles - Provide single room accommodation
Venue	- Capacity of various rooms and boat park dependent on level of social distancing

Race Office

Areas	Considerations
Queries	- Utilise online event management system that allows submission and reply to queries online - Provide email address & telephone number for queries with race office team support provided remotely - Locate race office in open area - Provide competitor contact point with limited race office staff on 'front-line' - Provide screens at race office desk to separate race office team members & competitors - Limit number of people entering race office - Use one way systems - Provide signage reinforcing social distancing requirements
Results	- Provide results service remotely - Finish records can be transmitted from CV to results sec directly via WhatsApp or similar for input to results software

	- Resolve any queries via telephone or video call
Notice board	- Provide online noticeboard only - Use WhatsApp or similar to promulgate notices
Paperwork	- Consider if paperwork can be completed electronically - Where paper is required consider how to reduce number of people who handle it - If necessary quarantine items between being handled by different people

Boat Park & Launch / Recovery

Areas	Considerations
Arrival at event	- Pre-booked arrival times to avoid crowding - Limit entries to ensure adequate boat parking space
Rigging / de-rigging	- Assign boat park spaces to ensure social distancing can be maintained between boats - Use one way system for people moving from club house to areas of boat park
Manoeuvring to slipway	- Stagger launch times for classes and fleets to avoid crowding around slipways - Use one way system
Launch / recovery	- Consider self-launching policy - Beachmaster to ensure compliance with guidelines and to offer advice - Can trolleys be recovered by family members? - If not, provide gloves for trolley volunteers and ensure regular hand washing - Provide visible and accessible disinfection station in the launch/recovery area

Race Management

Areas	Considerations
Equipment Collection	- Schedule times for equipment collection by race teams - Have small equipment team responsible for equipment distribution to relevant areas - Clean all equipment after handling
Committee Vessel Management	- Consider if a Committee Vessel is required - Consider how many people are required to undertake tasks - Can any tasks be automated through use of technology i.e. use of automatic timer and sounder - Can household groups be used
Mark Laying	- Can fixed marks be used, reducing or eliminating the need for mark layers - Can household groups be used for crewing - Ensure each crew only handles their allocated marks
Fleet Management	- Flight classes to reduce numbers to manageable levels - Consider how course size, type & location may help or hinder

Event Safety

Areas	Considerations
Bridge	- Limit number of people in bridge to radio operators & ESO - Use one radio operator to cover multiple channels

Patrol boat operations	- Can household groups be used for crewing - Access to and from boats. (Marina guidelines etc.) - Cleaning procedures at end of day - Provide PPE for use if close contact with sailor required
Food & spares boat operations	- Remove provision - Require boats to carry their own food & some spares
Tally	- Utilise electronic tally systems* - Open tally stations earlier than normal to avoid crowding - Allow tally collection in stages - Put in place cleaning protocol for tally bands
Medical	- Consider incident plan in case a participant develops symptoms
* Note that tallies are often used to also provide a means of identification for individual sailors during emergency situations in addition to being an indication of which sailors remain afloat	

Technical

Areas	Considerations
Pre-event Equipment Inspection	- Remove pre-event inspection in favour of post-race inspection - Conduct random pre-event inspection rather than all competitors
Equipment Limitation	- Require competitors to fit event limitation marks rather than officials
Post-race Equipment Inspection	- Utilise quarantine areas onshore - Limit inspection to visual checks only with no requirement to handle equipment

Jury

Areas	Considerations
Hearings	- Conduct virtual hearings with all parties, witnesses and PC members connecting from home via their own devices (see RYA Guidance on hearings Conducted by Remote PCs) - Conduct hybrid hearings with parties and witnesses onsite but remote PC - Prepare disposable models for each party / witness to use
Protest submission	- Utilise event management system which allows for online protest submission and notification - Provide protest form download and accept submission by email - Provide paper forms and allow competitors to photograph and send for submission
Notices	- Provide online noticeboard - Use WhatsApp or similar to promulgate notices
On-water Operations	- Limit on water judging where appropriate - Only provide single judge per RIB where skills and safety allow

Social

Areas	Considerations
Catering	- Consider taking pre-orders to avoid queuing - Volunteers to arrange their own subsistence
Prize giving	- Don't hold - Hold post-event via social media channels - Hold in open area with social distancing