

COVID-19 virus | Latest from Water Polo Australia

The Water Polo Australia Board met on the weekend to discuss how the current recommendations presented to national sporting organisations in relation to COVID-19 virus, should be addressed by the sport.

With the current threat of coronavirus impacting the health and welfare of Australians, Water Polo Australia has taken guidance from the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), Australian Institute of Sport and other health authorities, to amend the national events calendar and national team training programs.

Effective from Monday March 16, 2020 the OVO Australian Waterpolo League (AWL) will be terminated for 2020, the 2020 WPA National Championships due to be held in Adelaide in May will be cancelled and the Open Championships (Country and Masters) due to be held on the Gold Coast in May will be postponed (date to be confirmed).

While the AWL finals are only weeks away from being completed the rate of change in the CoVid19 situation means that a suspension of the event is not an option. It would not be reasonable to expect Clubs to continue to train indefinitely waiting for the situation to abate. While the AWL crowds are unlikely to exceed 500 people, the requirement to travel through airports to and from games, and the broader connection our players and officials have into their respective communities, creates a significant risk to all.

All Age Group national team preparation programs will also be suspended until further notice. WPA will await FINA decisions around the FINA World Championships events and make decisions in due course re preparation for them, if they are to go ahead

Water Polo Australia CEO Richard McInnes said: "Following the Council of Australian Governments recommendations and in consultation with our expert medical advisors, Water Polo Australia must put the health and safety of our athletes, officials, staff, volunteers and spectators at the forefront of all decision making.

"These are difficult decisions and we certainly appreciate our community have invested a lot of time, effort and resources into preparing their teams and that coaches and players will have been looking forward to participating or continuing to participate in these events, however we feel that it is important that we play our part, as the water polo community, in reducing the spread of COVID-19 out of respect for all Australians and the health care system.

"We have been in close communication with our key stakeholders around this decision including our State Associations, AWL Clubs as well as major bodies, including the Australian Institute of Sport and the Australian Olympic Committee," he said.

[FINA](#) late last week postponed the World League competitions until September/October and have also postponed the Olympic Games Qualifications Tournament.

The [Australian Olympic Committee](#) are already putting additional measures in place to protect athlete and Team official's health and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 virus. The AOC reinforced that the Tokyo Olympic Games are going ahead.

"We are in constant contact with the AOC and AIS regarding Tokyo 2020 and will continue to follow the advice of them and the IOC," said McInnes.

"This is an extremely important year for our elite athletes and coaches and our priority is to have them fit and healthy for selection and for the Olympic Games. Our teams are training and preparing hard despite the changes to their program.

"With no non-essential overseas travel recommended by the Federal Government and postponed international competition outlined by [FINA](#), our high performance team are working on a revised Olympic Games preparation schedule that ensures we are looking after the health and wellbeing of our athletes and support staff," he said.

Information for Water Polo Clubs

If your State Association or Club is considering whether or not to continue to hold competitions or looking for advice regarding how the COVID19 virus might impact your teams, we recommend reviewing the latest information of the [Australian Institute of Sport](#) site as well as consult with you State Association and State Health care advice (see below).

Further information on the COVID19 virus can be found here:

National/International Information

Australian Government

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

World Health Organisation

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Centers for Disease Control and Infection

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Australian Institute of Sport

<https://ais.gov.au/health-wellbeing/covid-19>

State/Territory Information

Australian Capital Territory

<https://health.act.gov.au/public-health-alert/updated-information-about-covid-19>

New South Wales

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

Northern Territory

<https://health.nt.gov.au/news/coronavirus>

Queensland

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/coronavirus>

South Australia

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+topics/health+topics+a--+z/COVID+2019>

Tasmania

https://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/news/2020/coronavirus_update

Victoria

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

Western Australia

<https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/coronavirus>

To contact your State Water Polo Association - [click here](#).