

# Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## Addendum to

# Guidance for Event Organisers of Offshore Yacht Races

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# **Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

## **Addendum to Guidance for Event Organisers of Offshore Yacht Races**

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### **Disclaimer**

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World Sailing (WS) is the world governing body for the sport of sailing recognized by the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC).

The creation of the International Yacht Racing Union (IYRU) began in 1904, This group went on to adopt a formal Constitution after a meeting at the Yacht Club de France in Paris on 14 October 1907 which is seen as the formation date of the International Yacht Racing Union.

On 5 August 1996, the IYRU changed its name to the International Sailing Federation (ISAF).

On 14 November 2015, ISAF changed its name to World Sailing.

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# 1. Introduction

In response to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, this Guidance document has been produced by the World Sailing (WS) to support and guide Race Organisers of offshore races. These guidelines are addendum to *WS Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for Event Organisers for the Protection of the Health of Sailing Communities (CVGEO)* at: [https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/WorldSailingGuidancetoEventOrganizersfortheProtectionoftheHealthofSailingCommunitiesVer3.120200901MD-\[26253\].pdf](https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/WorldSailingGuidancetoEventOrganizersfortheProtectionoftheHealthofSailingCommunitiesVer3.120200901MD-[26253].pdf)

**These guidelines for offshore racing must be interpreted and used in conjunction with the guidance provided in the main document.**

The postponement or significant curtailment of all international mass gatherings has been undertaken in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, to limit the spread of the virus and the associated pressure on health services. As part of this process, World Sailing has a responsibility to assist sailing organisations in planning and potentially delivering sailing events, in as safe a manner as possible, considering all risks involved.

**There are implications of unnecessary risk-taking for an individual crew member, other crew on the same vessel, rescue crew and medical personnel that may be involved, and also the general public in the various ports, if applicable.**

**Race Organisers have an unavoidable and serious responsibility to comply with intent of these guidelines, in order to properly control and reduce these risks.**

World Sailing provides information to sailing athletes, sailing federations and race organisers to keep them abreast of the latest developments of the COVID-19 pandemic. This information is available on the WS website as the documents *World Sailing Medical Action Plan (MAP)*, at: [www.sailing.org/tools/documents/MedicalActionPlanMLDV2-\[26247\].pdf](http://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/MedicalActionPlanMLDV2-[26247].pdf) and *World Sailing Medical Response for Event Organisers Recommendation* at: [www.sailing.org/tools/documents/WorldSailingRaceCourseMedicalSupport-\[26250\].pdf](http://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/WorldSailingRaceCourseMedicalSupport-[26250].pdf)

The World Sailing Medical Commission is grateful for all support received from International organizations, agencies, and other various parties in preparation of these Guidelines.

## 2. Summary of WS Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for Event Organisers (CVGEO)

Race organisers have multiple responsibilities when planning offshore race events, primarily to follow the many guidelines from a variety of authorities, including:

- Governments – rules on public health and social protection measures;
- Local authorities, including Public Health and Port Authorities – rules on local movement and gatherings;
- World Health Organisation – key considerations for public health and mass gatherings (MG), risk assessments and risk mitigation actions involved in MG, travel restrictions and other public health and social measures (Available at: [www.who.int/publications/i/item/overview-of-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19](http://www.who.int/publications/i/item/overview-of-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19) ).

The main responsibility for Race Organisers is to ensure, as far as possible, all aspects of safety of participants, support crew and local workers, including minimising inadvertent person-to-person transmission of COVID-19. The Race Organisers also have a responsibility for the health and safety of the visiting public, who may come to the shore venues to watch both preparations and race events.

The Race Organisers have responsibility for the immediate management of both confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19, and to ensure close integration and coordination with the local host Public Health Authorities. The aim is to ensure continuity of care, and minimising transmission risk to others.

There are implications for the management of a sailing event, in the face of the pandemic, if the event meets the WHO definition of a '*Mass Gathering*'.

There is no universal threshold, in terms of number of attendees, that alone defines a mass gathering. The overall definition includes other associated risks (e.g. amplification of transmission of COVID-19) and the context in which the event takes place (e.g. the capacity

of the local Public Health Authorities to respond to escalation in virus spread, and the public health and social measures that can be implemented by the host country).

The WHO Definition for mass gatherings during COVID-19 is as follows:

**In the context of COVID-19, mass gatherings are events that could amplify the transmission of the virus and potentially disrupt the host country's response capacity**

(Available at: [www.who.int/publications-detail/key-planning-recommendations-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-the-current-covid-19-outbreak](http://www.who.int/publications-detail/key-planning-recommendations-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-the-current-covid-19-outbreak) ).

International sport events such as major sailing regattas, meet the WHO definition of a *mass gathering*. However, lower profile sailing events may also be deemed to be a mass gathering, depending on local resources, number of participants, and other factors.

### 3. Assessment and Mitigation of Risks for Offshore Races

The process for assessing and mitigating risks for a sailing event is a continuous process and should be an integral part of planning the event, from the early stages. It should persist through the event itself, and only conclude after the completion of the event, with implementation of post-event actions and review.

*For further information on the risk assessment process, consult CVGEO Chapter 5 pp13.*

In order to produce an overall risk assessment for an event, all risks inherent to the event need to be identified, and then balanced against all possible mitigation measures that can be reasonably put in place.

To conduct risk assessment, it is recommended to use the **WHO Mass Gathering COVID-19 Risk Assessment – Sport Events (v.2., 10 July 2020)** tool; Excel file with decision matrix for final determination of risk available at: <https://www.sailing.org/medi – Sport Events/Eventscal/index.php>. It includes six tabs: 1. Instructions; 2. Decision Tree; 3. Risk Evaluation; 4. Risk Mitigation; 5. Decision Matrix; 6. Risk Communication.

That tool can be used to produce an ‘Overall Risk Score’ for the event, balancing the inherent risk of the event itself, against risk mitigation measures that should be put in place. Assessment of the **overall risk score** for a sailing event has implications for whether World Sailing recommends the event should go ahead, or whether it should be modified in some way to reduce risk.

**World Sailing advises that a sailing event should only be held if the event falls in to the Very Low or Low Overall Risk Categories.**

**All necessary risk mitigation measures must be in place to achieve the required acceptable overall risk score.**



## 4. Risk Assessment for Offshore Races

Offshore racing covers a wide spectrum of events, and whilst shorter, 'nearshore' events may be evaluated as *low risk* (according to the WHO guidance on the overall risk score), longer, offshore events may be classified as *Moderate*, *High* or *Very High* risk events, if comprehensive risk mitigation measures are not put in place.

The Offshore Special Regulations (OSR) classification of offshore races is as follows:

- Category 0** MoMu 0\* - Trans-oceanic races, including races which pass through areas in which air or sea temperatures are likely to be less than 5°C (41°F) other than temporarily, where boats must be completely self-sufficient for very extended periods of time, capable of withstanding heavy storms and prepared to meet serious emergencies without the expectation of outside assistance.
- Category 1** MoMu1 - Races of long distance and well offshore, where boats must be completely self-sufficient for extended periods of time, capable of withstanding heavy storms and prepared to meet serious emergencies without the expectation of outside assistance.
- Category 2** MoMu2 - Races of extended duration along or not far removed from shorelines or in large unprotected bays or lakes, where a high degree of self-sufficiency is required of the boats.
- Category 3** MoMu3- Races across open water, most of which is relatively protected or close to shorelines.
- Category 4** MoMu4 - Short races, close to shore in relatively warm or protected waters normally held in daylight.

*\*Monohull/ Multihull*

There are a number of inherent factors in the various categories of offshore racing events, which increase the risk of transmission of infection. Not every risk factor listed below is incurred in all categories of offshore race.

- Inability for effective social distancing pre-race, and during the race;
- Difficulty in effective use of personal protective equipment (PPE) offshore;
- Difficulty in preserving effective personal and boat hygiene routines offshore;
- Difficulty in properly isolating a suspected COVID-19 case offshore whilst racing;
- Remote distance and time from immediate medical help during longer races;
- Logistical limitations of required quarantine periods and obtaining timely COVID-19 testing;
- Arduous conditions offshore, limiting feasibility and effectiveness of continuous health monitoring;
- Crew and support team personnel from many international destinations (with varying degrees of incidence of COVID-19) congregating in one place for a period of time;
- International travel of participants, especially air travel, to the assembly port.

However, there are several natural event-specific risk mitigation factors:

- Generally, an outdoor field of activity;
- Absence of direct contact of participants with spectators and referees;
- Widespread layout of the meeting venue / assembly ports and marinas;
- Access to only registered participants;
- Possibility to establish low density or no-crowd policies;
- Possibility for travel to the assembly port by motor vehicle or by boat (possibly directly to and from start and finishing lines), avoiding wide contact with the general public en-route;
- Provision of individual catering for teams;
- Separate housing where teams rent their own accommodation.

All these factors (and more as appropriate) require consideration and quantification (if possible). For factors which are incorporated in the WHO Risk Assessment Matrix, these should be entered into the matrix, as part of the structured guidance as to the level of risk inherent in the event. Some additional factors will be specific to sailing events alone, and these should also be considered as part of the overall assessment of risk.

The COVID-19 risk assessment for the event must be coordinated and integrated with the host country's national and local COVID-19 risk assessment policy and should include input from the local Public Health Authorities and Port Authorities if relevant. A review should take place in adherence with the WHO's updated technical guidance, to ensure there is up-to-date evaluation of the epidemiological situation.

## 5. Medical Response Plan for Offshore Races

The Medical Response Plan should address all risks identified by the event risk assessment exercise. Actions to mitigate these risks should be developed in a pragmatic manner, to ensure the greatest degree of compliance possible.

**All risk mitigation requirements for participants must be clearly described in the Notice of Race (NOR) and be clearly communicated to all participants in good time prior to the commencement of the assembly period before the race start.**

The NOR should also define in detail the circumstances where it becomes necessary to exclude a competitor or entire vessel from the race, at any point before, or after the start.

Responsibility for putting into practice risk mitigation actions may rest with different people or organisations, depending on the action, and may include:

- Individual participants
- Sailing team
- Support/Shore team
- Race Organisers
- Local Public Health Authorities
- Local Port Authorities
- Race Medical Advisors
- Race Telemedical Advice service (TMAS)

The Medical Response Plan must specify:

- Which entity is responsible for implementing each risk mitigation action;
- Timescale for delivery or completion of the risk mitigation action;
- By whom fulfilment of the risk mitigation action will be coordinated and reported.

Guidance for developing the Medical Response Plan, is provided in the following WS document:

- *WS Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for Event Organisers for the Protection of the Health of Sailing Communities (CVGEO)*

The Race Organisers should also take into consideration the following World Sailing guidance documents:

- *World Sailing Medical Action Plan*
- *World Sailing Guidance for Medical Support at Designated Regattas*

These three documents may be found at [www.sailing.org/medical/index.php](http://www.sailing.org/medical/index.php).

A variety of risk mitigation actions are described in the *WS COVID-19 Medical Response Plan (Chapter 6 pp18 CVGEO)*, and some of these are appropriate to the Medical Response Plan for Offshore Races. However, there are **additional risk mitigation actions specific to Offshore Racing**, which should be considered when developing the Medical Response Plan. These actions are described below.

Risk mitigation actions		OSR Category				
		0	1	2	3	4
A	Adjustment of racecourse	X	X	-	-	-
B	Management of assembly port and ports-of-call	X	X	X	X	X
C	Limit number of crew	-	-	X	X	X
D	Age limitation	X	X	X*	X <sup>+</sup>	X <sup>+</sup>
E	Socially distanced method of travel to and from assembly port/start-finish line	X	X	X	X	X
F	Period of self-isolation prior to race start	X	X	X <sup>x</sup>	-	-
G	Pre-race COVID-19 PCR testing	X	X	X	-	-
H	Pre-race health questionnaire	X	X	X	X	X
I	Pre-race health screen	X	X	X	X <sup>o</sup>	X <sup>o</sup>
J	Health surveillance during race	X	X	X	X	-
K	Medical support during race	X	X	X	X	X
L	Participant Athlete Location Form (PLF)	X	X	X	X	X

\* If all vessel crew are tested, age limitation according to local/national guidelines on social distancing for older people

+ Age limitation according to local/national guidelines on social distancing for older people

x If all vessel crew are tested, no requirement for period of self-isolation

<sup>0</sup> Pre-race health screen may be completed at location of boat on morning of race

## **A. Adjustment of Racecourse**

Consideration must be given by the Race Organisers to the Ports-of-Call involved in the race. Coordination with local Public Health Authorities and Port Authorities in every Port-of-Call is mandatory. Avoidance of Ports-of-Call where there is limited local healthcare capacity, and limited possibility for social distancing from the local population is strongly advised.

## **B. Management of the Assembly Port and Ports-of-Call**

Consideration must be given by the Race Organisers how the various Ports are managed. This includes:

- Management of public areas, with the aim of highlighting social distancing to the visiting public;
- Limitation of number of competitor vessels in the race, to avoid over-crowding of Port mooring spaces and facilities;
- Management of vessel servicing areas, to ensure adequate social distancing, hygiene measures, health screening, crew health and well-being;
- Oversight of boat crew and shore team accommodation, to ensure suitability and social distancing;
- Minimising crew changeovers, which incurs an added risk of introducing COVID-19 into a team.
- Provision of PPE supplies should be managed by the Race Organisers, for visiting public, for race officials, and also for participant teams. The requirement of type of PPE will be defined by local regulations, the local Public Health Authorities or local Port Authorities.

### C. Limit number of crew

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 declines linearly with number of crew on board. Thus, it is sensible to limit number of crew to a safe minimum for races held during the present pandemic, and this should be given due consideration by the Race Organisers. The Race Organisers **must** be familiar with the various classes of boat in the race and **must** make appropriate judgements regarding allowable crew numbers. Various other factors (such as use of an autopilot, limit of sail size, use of roller furling to reduce work required for sail changes) should be considered as mechanisms to reduce crew numbers.

### D. Age limitation

Special protection measures aim to protect vulnerable groups at risk of more serious illness from COVID-19, such as older people and people with underlying medical conditions (at [www.who.int/publications/i/item/overview-of-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19](http://www.who.int/publications/i/item/overview-of-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19)).

There is clear evidence that age, irrespective of any other health factor, is a determinant of a worse outcome if COVID-19 is contracted.

Internationally, the age taken as the threshold for social distancing, to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19, varies between 60 and 70 years old.

For Category 3 and 4 races, it is reasonable to follow national guidelines for social distancing, as the age limit for races.

Category 2 races are more isolated and thus incur increased risk of contracting COVID-19. However, if all crew undergo COVID-19 PCR testing and are negative, this mitigates the potential infection risk, and thus it would then be reasonable to follow the age limit according to the national guidelines for self-isolation. Otherwise, an age limit of 65 years would be appropriate.

Category 0 and 1 races are prolonged and isolated, and incur greater risk of contracting COVID-19, with a potentially much longer period for evacuation to an appropriate medical facility. An age limit of 60 years would be appropriate for these categories of race.

To be clear, this is the age of the crew member on the start day of the race, as defined in the NOR.

#### **E. Socially distanced method of travel to assembly port**

Firm advice should be given to all race participants to avoid air travel, or other forms of travel where social distancing cannot be achieved, in the 14 days prior to race start. Travel by boat and motor vehicles, with other crew members and/or support team members is acceptable, but all members of the extended (boat and shore) team always need to observe social distancing, from other people outside the extended team.

For Category 3 and 4 races, it may well be possible for participating vessels to travel directly to and from the start and finish lines, thus avoiding congregating in local ports and marinas.

#### **F. Period of self-isolation prior to race start**

Participants in Category 0 and 1 race should self-isolate for a period of 14 days prior to race start. However, if PCR testing is undertaken, this period of self-isolation may be reasonably reduced to 5 days (see Section G: Pre-race COVID-19 PCR testing).

However, the crew should stay strictly self-isolated in their extended team (including boat and shore team members) avoiding all outside contact. Attention must be paid to required activities such as re-provisioning, health checks, team logistics, to ensure these are undertaken in the safest manner possible.

The same degree of self-isolation should take place in all ports of call.

Participants in Category 2 races may avoid a formal period of self-isolation prior to race start, if they undertake a COVID-19 PCR test within the two or three days prior to race start. The reasoning for this advice is that a participant may contract the virus and be asymptomatic prior to race start, whereas a PCR test may be positive, reducing risk of transmission on board the vessel. This approach does not reduce risk to zero, but is a pragmatic, achievable approach to controlling risk.



Participants in Categories 3 and 4 races need to observe social distancing rules according to local/national guidance as always, but do not need to self-isolate. Travel directly to and from start and finish lines will reduce risk of inadvertent infection risk.

#### **G. Pre-race COVID-19 PCR testing**

A single PCR testing may have a false negative rate of about 30%, but this is heavily dependent on the skill of the person taking the throat and nasal swabs, amongst other factors. Thus, the actual false negative rate may be somewhat above this value (reducing the accuracy of the test), dependant on testing circumstances.

All tests should be taken in the immediate pre-race period, and all test results should be officially obtained prior to race start.

For Category 0 and 1 race, there is very good reason to perform two PCR tests, five days apart, in order to reduce the false negative rate, and to avoid participants becoming symptomatic offshore, with all the attendant risks that would entail.

For Category 2 races, a single PCR test may be performed during the two or three days prior to race start, thus avoiding the requirement for an extended period of isolation.

It is also recommended that antibody testing be undertaken at the same time as PCR testing, as this may provide evidence for possible previous COVID-19 exposure and degree of immunity. This may be a medically pertinent diagnostic factor if a race participant becomes symptomatic offshore.

For Category 3 and 4 races, due to the short duration of races, it is not recommended that PCR or antibody testing is undertaken. However, the Race Organisers should follow the advice of the Race Medical Advisors, should they recommend testing for these categories of race be undertaken.

The NOR must be unequivocally clear that if a PCR test is positive for COVID-19, under no circumstances should the affected individual take part in the race and should also be immediately isolated. The local Public Health Authorities should be notified immediately to follow up with contact tracing.

## **H. Pre-race health questionnaire**

All participants should complete a health questionnaire between 7 and 14 days prior to race start. The reason for this time period is that the details in the questionnaire need to be up-to-date, and also give the Race Organisers time to be able to consult on any health issues revealed by the questionnaire. Certain health conditions increase the risk of contracting COVID-19 and incur a worse outcome. The Race Organisers should be aware of potential participants with such health conditions and discuss the magnitude of risk with the individual and the Race Medical Advisors.

In making a decision as to whether the person can participate or not, it must be considered that the risk is not just for the participant themselves, but their fellow crew, and also rescue crews who may be called upon to undertake long-distant emergency medical evacuation.

## **I. Pre-race health screen**

All race participants in all categories of race should undergo a health screen on the day of the race start at the port of assembly. The Race Organisers should arrange who has the responsibility for performing the health screen checks, with an exception for Category 3 and 4 races, as below.

For Category 3 and 4 races, where participant vessels may well go direct to and from the start/finish line and their home port, the pre-race health screen could be undertaken at the location of the vessel on the morning of the race. The vessel captain or responsible medical person has the responsibility to ensure the checks are performed correctly.

For all categories of race, the results should be communicated to the Race Organisers in good time prior to the start of the race, to allow time for discussion of any problems identified. The results could be noted on the Personnel Location Form (see Section L below) and transmitted electronically to the Race Organisers as one document for each participant.

The format of the health screen should be agreed with the Race Medical Advisors, but it is recommended that, at a minimum, the health screen should comprise:

- Temperature check – preferably by infra-red thermometer aimed at mid-forehead, in a sheltered environment to achieve an accurate result;
- Pulse oximeter reading taken on a finger;
- A brief survey of possible symptoms, specifically shortness of breath during normal activities, dry cough, myalgia, general malaise.

All results should be documented, and the Race Medical Advisors notified immediately, before race start, of any abnormal or worrying results.

The NOR must be unequivocally clear that if the Race Medical Advisors are of the opinion that there is a real risk of a participant being infected with COVID-19, under no circumstances should the affected individual take part in the race, and should also be immediately isolated. The local Public Health Authority should be notified immediately.

#### **J. Health surveillance during race**

The Race Organisers should make it a requirement in the NOR for the vessel Captain or responsible medical person, to report daily health checks from all crew. The scope of daily health checks is as for the pre-race health screen.

Further details on health surveillance are included in Section 5 below.

#### **K. Medical support during the race**

The Race Organisers should provide a dedicated Telemedical Advice Service (TMAS), for the duration of the race. The TMAS should coordinate closely with the Race Organisers. The service should also have the capability to interact and coordinate with Rescue Coordination Centres (such as MRCCs, JRCCs, etc.) or the SOLAS regionally responsible TMAS service, and also with the local public health authorities. Further guidelines for TMAS are included in Section 5.

#### **L. Participant Athlete Location Form (PLF)**

All participants should provide a completed pre-event Athlete Location Form (PLF). The purpose of the PLF is to identify incoming participants who may need to have their participation deferred, to ensure proper case management by health authorities.

The form may also incorporate the results of the Pre-Race Health Screen, so that both sets of information are sent to the Race Organisers as one form.

An example of an appropriate PLF is at: [https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/PLF-\[26355\].pdf](https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/PLF-[26355].pdf)

## 6. Medical management on board vessels in Offshore Races

Race Organisers should provide clear guidance regarding medical management of crew on board all participating vessels. This guidance should cover the 'normal' medical matters that occur on board racing yachts, and in addition, the particular concerns raised by COVID-19.

When formulating these guidelines, the Race Organisers should take into consideration the following World Sailing guidance documents regarding measures relating to COVID-19:

- *World Sailing Medical Action Plan*
- *World Sailing Medical Response for Event Organisers Recommendation and*

These documents may be found at the following links:

[www.sailing.org/tools/documents/MedicalActionPlanMLDV2-\[26247\].pdf](http://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/MedicalActionPlanMLDV2-[26247].pdf)

[www.sailing.org/tools/documents/WorldSailingRaceCourseMedicalSupport-\[26250\].pdf](http://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/WorldSailingRaceCourseMedicalSupport-[26250].pdf) .

In addition, World Sailing have produced three guidance documents addressing medical support in general for offshore racing yachts:

- Medical Kit Inventory  
[https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/FinaldescriptiveATCformat-\[26352\].pdf](https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/FinaldescriptiveATCformat-[26352].pdf)  
[https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/FinalWHOATCformat-\[26353\].pdf](https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/FinalWHOATCformat-[26353].pdf)
- Medical Training  
[https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/Trainingoutcomes-\[26354\].pdf](https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/Trainingoutcomes-[26354].pdf)
- Telemedical Advice Service (TMAS)  
[https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/TelemedicalAdviceTMAS-\[26356\].pdf](https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/TelemedicalAdviceTMAS-[26356].pdf)

There are various aspects of on-board medical management that should be addressed by the Race Organisers, as follows:

### **Telemedical Advice Service**

The Race Organisers should provide a dedicated Telemedical Advice Service (TMAS), for the duration of the race. The TMAS should coordinate closely with the Race Organisers. The service should also have the capability to interact and coordinate with Rescue Coordination Centres (such as MRCCs, JRCCs, etc.) or the SOLAS regionally responsible TMAS service, and also with the local Public Health Authorities.

In addition, to properly support the race crew, the TMAS should have good knowledge of, and coordinate with:

- The medical inventory on-board all vessels in the race. Pre-race, TMAS should be made aware of the medical inventory, and advise if any aspect of the inventory can be augmented pragmatically;
- Medical training received by the crew, so TMAS is aware of what they are capable, and thus provide achievable advice;
- The medical manual used by the crew, so that any treatments advised are covered by the manual, in the event of loss of communication with the vessel;
- Knowledge of the specific risks to the crew of COVID-19, and the risk mitigation measures put in to place onboard by the Race Organisers.

### **Health surveillance on board during the race**

There is no doubt that this may prove a challenge, particularly during periods of inclement weather or hard racing. However, the Race Organisers should provide clear guidance to all race crew to make sure all are aware of the risks of an undetected COVID-19 case on-board.

The NoR must be unequivocally clear that if the Race Medical Advisors are of the opinion that there is a real risk of a participant being infected with COVID-19, the vessel may have to cease racing and divert to the nearest port, or arrange urgent evacuation of the participant. The Port Authority of the intended evacuation port should be duly advised of the possibility that the participant has a suspected COVID-19 infection.

The Race Organisers must also make it unequivocally clear to all participants that there is clear responsibility on their part to report health concerns on-board, including concerns regarding suspected COVID-19 infections. There should be a clear pathway of communication the TMAS for the crew to discuss any concerns at any time.

The format for the health surveillance would be as for the pre-race health screen:

- Temperature check – preferably by infra-red thermometer aimed at mid-forehead, in a sheltered environment to achieve an accurate result;
- Pulse oximeter reading taken on a finger;
- A brief survey of possible symptoms, specifically shortness of breath during normal activities, dry cough, myalgia, general malaise.

All results should be documented, and the Race Medical Advisors notified immediately, of any abnormal or worrying results or symptoms.

The Race Organisers should ensure that the necessary equipment for health screening is provided on board, either by the Race Organisers, or the race participants. The equipment should comprise, as a minimum:

- Pulse oximeter;
- Thermometer – preferably infra-red.

Consideration should be paid to carrying spares for the above items, as it is quite likely that they may be dropped, mislaid, or malfunction on occasion in the extreme environments. Longer races will require more spares.

## **Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and vessel hygiene equipment**

The Race Organisers should make it a requirement in the NOR that adequate supplies of PPE and vessel hygiene equipment should be on-board the vessel, commensurate with the expected length of race and number of crew members. Supply of this equipment can be either by the Race Organisers or the individual participant teams. The PPE must be of acceptable quality.

The purpose of the PPE and hygiene equipment on-board the vessel is for use in maintaining personal hygiene and general use in cleaning, to reduce contamination of the commonly touched surfaces of the boat. The equipment also has a specific role to reduce the risk of transmission to other crew members from a participant with respiratory symptoms or suspected COVID-19 infection.

The PPE should comprise, as a minimum:

- Face masks for general use, if requested by the crew, and also FFP2/FFP3 masks for use by any suspected COVID-19 case whilst they remain on the vessel, to reduce the risk of transmission to other crew members;
- Surface wipes, preferably chlorhexidine-based or alcohol-based (check for allergies to chlorhexidine and alcohol amongst the crew);
- Non-sterile single use gloves;
- Hand sanitiser to be positioned around the vessel for easy accessible use.

## **Boat and personal hygiene strategy**

It is fully recognised that maintaining boat and personal hygiene on a racing yacht, during periods of inclement weather and hard racing, will be a challenge at times. However, the Race Organisers must make it clear to all participants of their responsibility to maintain the best conditions possible on-board the yacht, to minimise transmission of COVID-19 (and other infections) between crew. It is worth noting that many cases of COVID-19 are entirely asymptomatic, and the best defence against transmission in such a close working and living environment as a racing yacht, is to keep it clean and disinfected.



The general approach that should be recommended by the Race Organisers is as follows:

- Cleaning of all common surface areas, such as grab handles, galley surfaces, heads surfaces, chart table etc twice daily, with disinfectant surface wipes;
- Positioning of hand sanitiser dispensers around the vessel, at the companionway, at the galley, and all heads, to encourage frequent usage;
- No sharing of eating utensils or other personal equipment;
- Use of personal water bottles only;
- No hotbunking if possible, or at least no sharing of sleeping bags.

### **Management of a suspected case of COVID-19**

The Race Organisers should make it clear in the NOR that there is clear and serious responsibility by all crew to report suspected cases of COVID-19 with both the race Organisers and TMAS.

Management of a participant with a suspected COVID-19 infection includes the following actions:

- Isolation in their own cabin if that is possible, or certainly in their own bunk;
- Wearing of a FFP2 or FFP3 mask as much as possible;
- All surfaces cleaned after visits to the heads;
- Frequent handwashing, especially after coughing;
- All coughing or sneezing, especially below decks, to be into a tissue, which is then safely disposed of in a designated waste bag;
- Maintenance of a 1m distance from other crew at all times if possible, although it is acknowledged this will be difficult to achieve at all times.

TMAS should be consulted about the medical care of suspected infected cases, and this usually comprises regular use of paracetamol and other analgesics, reasonable hydration and general supportive care.

There should be put in place a schedule for periodic monitoring of the participant, according to severity of clinical symptoms. TMAS should guide this and be regularly updated by the Captain or responsible medical person on-board. The results of the monitoring process may guide decision-making regarding the need for evacuation.

### **Evacuation of a participant with suspected COVID-19 infection**

The decision to evacuate a participant with suspected COVID-19 infection will involve:

- The Race Organisers;
- TMAS;
- The Captain or responsible medical person on-board;
- The participant with the suspected infection.

The route and means of evacuation will be determined by the severity of clinical symptoms, and also the location of the yacht.

Evacuation may involve diversion of the yacht to the nearest port, or more urgent evacuation by helicopter, or on to a nearby vessel capable of providing increased medical support.

The MRCC covering the area where the yacht is located should be alerted by the Race Organisers at an early stage and will guide offshore arrangements for evacuation.

The Race Organisers should also alert the Port Authority to where the participant may be transferred.

The Race Organisers should make it very clear in the NOR, that diversion of the vessel to the nearest port of call may be requested by the Race Organisers if:

- There is a suspected case of COVID-19 infection on-board;
- There is more than one suspected case on-board, even if the symptoms are not immediately serious or life-threatening;

- There is a suspected COVID-19 infection on-board, with symptoms that are not immediately serious or life-threatening, where the route of the race becomes increasingly isolated, and timely rescue would not be possible, and would put rescue crew at risk.

After either diversion or evacuation at sea, the yacht may be able to continue racing, according to the criteria defined in *COVID-19 Medical Response Plan (Chapter 6 pp18 CVGEO)*, once the Public Health Authorities have determined that all relevant public health measures have been completed successfully. The Race Organisers should advise the yacht accordingly.

*The World Sailing continues to be in close communication with the World Health Organisation (WHO) COVID-19 Mass Gathering Cell and the IOC Medical and Scientific Commission Games Group public health experts in order to closely monitor the dynamic of this pandemic and advised countermeasures. Please also do not hesitate to let us know if you would like to arrange any direct discussions between event Organisers or our medical officials. We also believe it is very important to provide the latest medical advice to athletes and their teams which we have loaded onto the World Sailing website: [www.sailing.org/medical/index.php](http://www.sailing.org/medical/index.php)*