



## Covid 19 Update Zoom Meetings

9 April 2021 – 1300 and 1700

Host : Harry Hermon, Irish Sailing Chief Executive  
Attendees: 75 attendees from Irish Sailing clubs, classes and centres  
Dave Garvey, Gail MacAllister, Ciarán Murphy, Harry Hermon from Irish Sailing  
David O'Brien, Vera Quinlan and Sue Colcannon of Irish Sailing Board

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### Introduction from Harry Hermon

As with previous restriction changes I wanted the opportunity to share our interpretation of the latest restrictions to ensure it sits comfortably with you, and get your feedback before we publish.

Before we go through the plan, I might take the opportunity to update you on some of the work going on in the background.

We have been fortunate in that we have been one of only a handful of sports along with running and cycling that have been allowed to continue on an individual basis throughout the current lockdown. If you think back to this time last year during the first lockdown when we were specifically told we could not take our boats out. This time round, because we have been going about our business in a quiet, compliant and responsible manner we have been allowed to continue.

It is really due to the reputation we have as a responsible and compliant sport that we have been able to continue sailing throughout and that is a credit to the clubs and centres.

So where are we now?

Last week's announcement was intended to lift our mood and give us all hope that the end is in sight. But when you drill down into the detail of what was announced – with the exception of schools reopening, there is little change in what we're actually being allowed to do.

The one question though that everyone wants the answer to is

When?

When can we go sailing? Racing? Know that we can run events? Socialise etc....

Unfortunately, this is the crystal ball question that I can't answer – mainly because Government doesn't yet know.

Government takes recommendations from all of the advisory groups – in our case the sport expert group, they then weigh that up against NPHET advice, the progress of vaccine roll out, new variants coming in, and the public mood at the time to inform their decisions.

The next announcement is on May 4<sup>th</sup> – at the moment we have little indication of what that looks like.

One thing we do know is that we have to get the daily case numbers down before any restrictions will be lifted in a meaningful way. The current trajectory is slowly going in the right way, lets hope there isn't a significant spike next week when the Easter holiday figures will come on stream.

See the current plan on sailing.ie - [HERE](#)

We are in the category of low impact, low contact, outdoor sport.

Reminder of the fundamental principals

1. Compliance with current covid 19 restrictions
2. Personal responsibility
3. Self Help
4. Risk Assessment

Distance sport is socially distanced sports or can take place socially distanced. Laser and a rib for example. It is not possible to truly socially distance on a multi handed boat, but we are in the outdoors in an exposed environment, and people should adopt a certain amount of personal responsibility and common sense in their decision making for sailing with others.

Next Government announcement expected 1 week before 4 May.

### **Harry Hermon met with the Minister for Sport on Friday 9 April.**

Main points presented by the Minister:

- Submissions received from sports post christmas are being used to inform future restrictions
- Recent outdoor transmission research narrative reported in the media – Govt taking seriously and are taking note of it
- Resilience funding for sport – being considered for this year

My main points raised:

- Training vs Competition -no difference in activity for outdoor non-contact sports
- Outdoor sport presents less of a risk then current personal exercise taking place in congested parks and public amenities - is safer to be out on the water then walking Dun Laoghaire Pier.

### **Questions and Answers from the meeting attendees as follows ...**

- 1. Government didn't refer to the Levels. Are there changes proposed to the different levels of the plan to allow for racing in L3 and even possibly L4?**
  - Government are being cautious in suggesting that gatherings are allowed. Whether they continue with Level 5 with continued enhancements, or move through the Levels again is unknown at this point. The one message that has gone up to the government advisory group for sport, is that non-contact sport competition is the same level of activity as training and we are now working to promote this message with Government.
- 2. Which sport do the Government associate sailing with?**
  - We are considered a non-contact, outdoor sport along with athletics, canoeing, archery, rowing, tennis, golf and others (20 of them currently).
- 3. With Training for school children from 26<sup>th</sup>, can we host courses? Do we need to define between adults and youths. e.g. instructor training.**

- The intention of this is skills training for kids within their locality. This does not encompass instructor training as it involves people from a wider area and for a longer contact time. Short sessions would be advised and would be in keeping with the intent of the restrictions .
    - Pre entry could take place as it is a practical on the water session.
    - From 26<sup>th</sup> we recommend the focus is on outdoor only, half day sessions.
- 4. We have a backlog of adults wanting 1:1 Coaching. Can this happen from the 26<sup>th</sup>?**
    - Yes, social distancing should be maintained where the coach is included in the two the two households.
  - 5. There will be a backlog of instructor courses etc. Do we envisage more to be organised in late May or June?**
    - Yes. The backlog from Oct 2020 is being rescheduled first and we will try and schedule in as many as possible. Instructor trainers have been asked to schedule courses in May and June.
  - 6. Adult training is scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> May, should we postpone this?**
    - We have asked government to give announcements a little earlier and give us more notice. We would hope to get a week's notice on announcement in May.
  - 7. Can we increase the instructor course numbers from 8 to 10 for this year to allow the numbers get qualified this year?**
    - The course is already a lot to cover in the space of time for 8, so it will be difficult to run a quality course with more trainees. We may be able to do double courses with 2 trainers if the pod size is increased to allow for 18 participants however this is not possible with current pods of 15.
    - We are also working with the Instructor Trainers to co-ordinate dates and schedule as many instructor courses as possible during this time.
  - 8. Can you Clarify the dates?**
    - 12<sup>th</sup> April - 2 people from different households can go sailing in a boat together for personal exercise
      - 26<sup>th</sup> April - allows for training / coaching for school age children in pods of 15,
    - 1:1 coaching for Adults with two people from different households where the coach is included in the two the two households.
  - 9. Can same household powerboat training happen?**
    - Only school aged powerboat training from 26<sup>th</sup> April.
    - Only for Adults from the 26<sup>th</sup> if social distance can be maintained and where the instructor is included in the two the two households.
  - 10. What is the best guess for racing again?**
    - It is hoped it will be possible when adult training is allowed. This has been a recommendation, however this has not been confirmed.

**11. Cross channel racing ISORA**

- Hard to know currently with international travel restrictions changing frequently.

**12. What does 'clubs remain open' mean in the update of 31<sup>st</sup> March mean?**

- Many Sailings clubs have allowed people access to their boats over the winter, where other sports clubs have been closed. Internal facilities however should remain closed, with the exception of toilets.

**13. Last year a club used wind speeds as a factor to inform their decision making for allowing members to go afloat in dinghies. Any advise from other clubs for this year?**

- Risk assessment is key – safety boats should not be used for convenience.
- One club requires individual risk assessment to be completed by sailors before going afloat.

**14. Can people that have been vaccinated join activities?**

- There is no provision in the current restrictions to facilitate an increase in numbers with people who have been vaccinated. Suspect it is because it is hard to prove. This is something we are pursuing with the Sport Expert Group.

**15. Can adults from 2 households sail a double hander.**

- Yes, be aware of your distancing and positioning on the boat.

**16. Can training with a double hander and a coach happen after 26<sup>th</sup>?**

- Yes if school age also if adults in dinghy from same household and the coach is from a different household then yes. If 3 households in total, including coach, then no.

**17. Can school age children race.**

- Not currently

**18. Craning in early May with volunteers and skippers?**

- Yes if you are using all protocols to social distance and carefully manage.

**19. Can we clarify if we can have under 18 school age youths do powerboat courses ?**

- Yes from 26<sup>th</sup> April

**20. Can you give some guidance around safety cover operating when sailing activities resume?**

- Initially mitigate against needing safety cover vs rescue cover. Same household crewing a powerboat, if 2 then a reasonable distance on board.

**21. When do you think we will resume adult training?**

- It is hoped after May 4<sup>th</sup>, but will depend on case numbers at the time

**22. Does pod of 15 include the coaches?**

- Yes a pod includes coaches and assistants. You can have multiple pods if you have space for that.

**23. As 0.01% of covid cases have been transmitted outdoors, was this point pressed home to the Minister of State?**

- Yes, they are very aware of that.

**24. Have we any hope of being mentioned in gove.ie/covid as a safe sport?**

- We are considered a low risk sport. It is not necessarily an advantage to be in the public eye with our interpretations being scrutinised.

**25. Can we run Start Sailing courses now?**

- From the 26<sup>th</sup> April for juniors in pods of up to 15.

**26. Should safety cover be in place for junior training activity from April 26<sup>th</sup>?**

- Yes, all normal training course procedures including safety cover must be in place for training / coaching activity to take place.