

13<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear AKR members,

As you are aware the coronavirus (COVID-19) virus has caused immense disruption to events worldwide.

As of March 12<sup>th</sup>, the World Health Organisation characterised the outbreak as a pandemic.

There have been many questions from you regarding the Australian Kendo Championships and the Australian Iaido Jodo Seminar and Championships. The AKR at present has decided to go ahead with these national events. However, this position may change as government (state or federal) may decide to put a moratorium on public events and gatherings. At present, there are no indications of this.

The AKR is monitoring government advice on a daily basis, and will continue to do so as the situation unfolds. It will make necessary decisions for the best interests of our members. Periodically, we will provide advice to States and Territories to pass on to clubs and members as necessary. Our primary considerations are the health, safety and wellbeing of our members (notwithstanding our obligation to society at large to make every attempt to contain the spread of the infection) and I encourage you all to keep vigilant, follow government advice, and look after yourselves and each other. **Please regularly monitor your emails, the AKR website or Facebook page for updates.**

The AKR will take all necessary steps to protect members and reduce potential risks from COVID-19 because:

- There is a risk that people attending an event might be unwittingly bringing the COVID-19 virus to the event. Others might be unknowingly exposed to COVID-19.
- While COVID-19 is a mild disease for most people, it can make some very ill. Around 1 in every 5 people who catch COVID-19 needs hospital treatment.

## National Events

The AKR (Executive, relevant Board and selected members from each affiliate) will decide on cancellation or postponement based on government advice and other considerations and will consult the organising State/Board as well as the State and Territory affiliates.

### At the events the AKR will:

- **Establish** direct links with local health authorities including the local provider of health services for the event.
- **Work** with the venue provider to ensure a clean and hygienic venue with adequate amenities is provided.
- **Provide** information or briefing at the event (orally and in writing) on COVID-19 and measures to make the event safe for participants.
- **Promote** good hygiene at the event.
- **Provide** sanitizing hand rub dispensers and tissues for use by all participants (competitors, volunteers, officials and visitors) and spectators, who do not supply their own. These will be placed at strategic places at each venue. We will not supply small personal-size hand-sanitisers.
- **Procure** a number of surgical face-masks (based on availability), to be used by anyone who shows symptoms of clinical criteria infection (see below).

- **Isolate** anyone who shows/reports of feeling unwell (including mild symptoms\*) and will take steps to have the person monitored and sent to a testing clinic as soon as possible.
- **Advise** all participants if further action is required.

**What participants are expected to do:**

- **Do not attend** the event if you are feeling unwell - even if you have just mild symptoms\*. **Isolate** yourself at home and seek medical advice.
- **Do not attend** the event if you have been exposed to known infected persons. **Isolate** yourself at home.
- **Consider not attending** if you are in the high-risk category (people over 65 and people with pre-existing medical conditions such as heart and lung disease are more at risk of experiencing severe symptoms). Please be aware that smokers are at higher risk than others.
- **Practice good hygiene** prior to and during the event. *See attachment – ‘How do I reduce my risk of contracting COVID-19?’.*
- **Agree** that your details (mobile telephone number, email and address where they are staying) will be shared with local public health authorities if you become ill or show symptoms of clinical criteria of COVID-19 infection.
- **Bring** your own hand personal hand sanitiser and tissues, and prescribed medication.
- **Practice** greeting people without using physical contact – Greet people with a wave, a nod or bow instead.
- **Consider** the possibility of a change of plans on a short notice, and prepare accordingly.

**Additionally, leading up to the event:**

- If you take medication ensure you have adequate supplies.
- Understand how COVID-19 spreads. *See attachment – ‘How does COVID-19 spread?’.*
- Understand how to reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19. *See attachment – ‘How does COVID-19 spread?’.*

**\* What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

Many people will suffer only mild symptoms. Those most at risk may experience severe symptoms. The most common symptoms include:

- Fever
- Breathing difficulties such as breathlessness
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fatigue or tiredness.

**Further information can be found at:**

- **For the Victorian public - coronavirus disease (COVID-19)**  
<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
- **Health.Vic - 2019 Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)**  
<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/news-and-events/healthalerts/2019-Coronavirus-disease--COVID-19>

- **World Health Organisation - Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public**  
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

## **Clubs, States and Territories - management of coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Kendo is a close-contact activity, and the possibility of heightened transmission risks of COVID-19 through Kendo activity is undocumented. I encourage you to keep abreast of advice and updates from your State or Territory government and health authorities.

While Iaido and Jodo are not a close-contact activity there is still a risk of infection. **All** AKR members are strongly advised to take heed of these recommendations.

The World Health Organisation document "Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19" is a useful document for Clubs, State and Territories, and I encourage you to review this document and consider the advice for your events and activities. Please go to:

[https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=359a81e7\\_6](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=359a81e7_6)

### **Measures we recommend are:**

- Ensure your training/event venues provide adequate hygiene facilities, well ventilated and are clean. If you cannot provide a clean and safe venue, consider alternatives or cancel the training or event.
- Record and retain the names and contact details of all participants at each training or event for at least one month. This will help public health authorities trace people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 if one or more participants become ill shortly after the event.
- Actively monitor where COVID-19 is circulating. Advise participants in advance that if they show any symptoms or feel unwell, they should not attend.
- Develop and agree on a response plan in case someone at the training/event becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19 (dry cough, fever, feeling unwell). This plan should include at least:
  - identifying a room or area where someone who is feeling unwell or has symptoms can be safely isolated,
  - having a plan for how they can be safely transferred from there to a health facility,
  - knowing what to do if a participant, or a venue user tests positive for COVID-19,
  - having a plan in advance so you can contact a healthcare provider or health department without delay if required.
- Instruct anyone with COVID-19 symptoms to self-isolate, seek medical advice and not to attend training/events until symptoms have cleared and they have been given the all clear by a medical practitioner.

- Instruct anyone who has been in close contact\* with known infected persons or have arrived from overseas (in particular China, South Korea, Iran or Italy) 14 days or less before the training/event that they do not attend.
- Advise people to consider not attending training/events if they are in the high-risk category (people over 65 and people with pre-existing medical conditions such as heart and lung disease are more at risk of experiencing severe symptoms).
- Communicate safety precautions you are taking and provide information and guidance to members to reduce risk of infections and transmissions. Information is available in the attached and at <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

\* A close contact could include any person meeting any of the following criteria:

- *living in the same household or household-like setting (for example, a boarding school or hostel)*
- *direct contact with the body fluids or laboratory specimens of a confirmed case*
- *a person who spent two hours or longer in the same room*
- *face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes with the case in any other setting not listed above.*

If you have any questions, or anything is unclear please do not hesitate to contact the AKR directly at the email below with the subject line **COVID-19**. (If the subject line is not there your query may go unanswered.)

[covid-19@kendoaustralia.asn.au](mailto:covid-19@kendoaustralia.asn.au)

Regards,

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