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31 May 2020

From: President
TO: Affiliate Presidents
Affiliate Secretaries
CC: SSA Executive Committee Members
Committee Convenors

RE: SWIMMING SOUTH AFRICA COVID - 19 UPDATE 3: RESUMPTION OF NON CONTACT SPORT, LOCKDOWN ALERT LEVEL 3

With reference to the media briefing by the Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture, Mr Nkosinathi Emmanuel 'Nathi' Mthethwa, presented on 30 May 2020 on the Draft Directives for the resumption of sport activities during VOVID-19 Lockdown Alert Level 3.

The briefing by the Minister included three fundamentals aspects that we have to take cognisance of:

- Who is a Professional athlete
- COVID Safety regulations
- Submission on the state of readiness of Swimming South Africa to be submitted for approval by the Minister, within Fourteen (14) days after publication of the Directives in the Government Gazette.

It is important to note that the Directives from the Minister of Sport Arts and culture has not been published. One the final Directives have been published, we will review our approach.

The Draft Directives define a Professional Athlete and Professional Non-Contact Sport as;

“professional athletes” means an athlete/player who is registered with his or her federation or code of sport for a particular sporting event.

In the case of Swimming South Africa, this means all athletes that that are registered members of Swimming South Africa.

“professional non-contact sport means an elite sport whereby athletes/players are physically separated such as to make it near impossible for them to make physical contact during the course of the game or training in preparation Olympics’ International championships, national qualifying championships, local professional leagues, provincial or national level excluding combat sport.

The draft Directives as provided by the Minister at the Brief included the resumption of non-contact sport and training as follows:

- Sports Grounds, fields and swimming pools for non-contact sport and training for professional athletes may resume in compliance with health protocols without any spectators.
- All sporting bodies (*including Swimming South Africa*) must within fourteen (14) days after the publication of these Direction inform the Ministry in writing as to the date of resumption and further provide with the guarantee in the form of Affidavits relating to the testing of all officials before the resumption of training and matches. In our case galas and or Swimming events.
- Swimming South Africa and professional affiliates (Club, Districts and Provinces of SSA) must ensure that athletes and their support staff be subjected to quarantine for fourteen (14) days pending the test results.
- All Sporting bodies (SSA, Provinces, Districts and clubs) must develop and implement policies and for workforce contact tracing following employee COVID-19 test.

President: A. Fritz Vice Presidents: Z. Molusi , J. Naidoo
P. Thompson Treasurer: J. Ellis
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(We will seek further clarity from the Ministry on the application of this requirement as we understand that during the Level 4 lockdown we have had limited contact with others. In addition from the press statements from various government departments there is a shortage of testing kits and long delays in the obtaining the results)

- Only determined non-contact professional sport (like swimming) may resume activities/events after compliance with all provisions of directions/ regulations as per provision of these Directions.
- Only determined sports code (like Swimming South Africa) where professional athletes may resume training after compliance with all provisions of the issued Directions from the department
- Transportation of athletes and support staff particularly in and out of hotspots must comply with transport Directions from the Minister of Transport.

Testing and Screening of SSA Athletes and Support Staff

- All athletes and their support staff shall be tested before resumption of training and SSA sanctioned events. We will engage with the Ministry on the screening and testing requirement as the new requirements from NCID protocols say only symptomatic persons must be tested. The backlog and limited availability of kits will have a major impact on our back to play plan.
- Any athlete or support staff who has tested positive may not be allowed to enter the facility or training venue.
- All persons entering a training or competition venue will be required to be screened. Any person screening positive (a positive response to persistent cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, and additional questions as determined by the Department of Health) will not be allowed entry

- Very important to note the draft requirements for resumption of swimming, as a non-contact sport may not have events and training of athletes in areas declared as hotspots by the department of health. We are engaging with the Department of Sport on this matter and we will send an updated schedule of hotspots, as well as the application of this requirement as soon as these are available.

Sanitisation of the training and event venue

- All facilities at the training or event venue must be sanitised before any resumption of training and or events
- Any chosen venue/facility for training or event purpose must be subjected to a thorough cleaning and disinfecting process prior to the arrival of any support staff and athletes, following the advice and guidelines issued by the health authorities and the relevant professionals.
- The facility/venue owner must ensure that specific areas and equipment that come into frequent direct contact with individuals (for example, door knobs, door bars, door key pads, chairs, armrests, table tops, light switches, handrails, toilet flush mechanisms, water taps, elevator buttons, medical treatment beds, and surfaces, gym equipment, all other equipment, machines, balls, key boards, mice, touch screen monitors, tablets and track pads, timing equipment) are thoroughly cleaned even more frequently, where reasonably practical after each contact.

Appointment of Compliance Officer

- Swimming South Africa its provinces, districts and clubs must appoint a compliance officer in writing before any resumption of training and events to mitigate on the compliance with this regulation and the spread of COVID 19.

- The fundamental principle of social distancing and cross contamination can mean the death for many and this must be complied with at all times.

The issue of tracing with a break out is very important and all protocols here must be complied with.

Swimming South Africa through its affiliates will issue every registered member with a permit confirming registration with the national federation. I urge all to ensure that you register through your district and province both as members and the club.

Based on the current comments by the Minister in his speech we CANNOT start with any swimming activities including training until we have submitted the relevant documentation the Ministry of Sport and Recreation. This we will only be able to do once the Directives are published. In addition, the directives above are all in draft and might change after publication of the final Directives in the government gazette.

Please remember we have not seen the peak of the virus yet and the expert advice is that we are still on an upward trajectory so our enthusiastic return to training and galas events should equally be met by the huge responsibility on each and every one of the aquatics family. Identify your compliance officers, plan health protocol measures and we await the regulation so to respond within fourteen days.

Where ever you are please do promote the wearing of a mask, wash your hands as frequently as possible and maintain social distancing.

Yours in Aquatics



A.F. Fritz

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