**School Sport NZ – Resumption of National Calendar of Sanctioned Events (Covid-19).**

**DISCUSSION PAPER.** Please refer to the matrix School Sport NZ Events – Alert Levels

1. Schools, NSOs and other event organisers require accurate and timely information in regard to the status and future of the sanctioned School Sport NZ national calendar of events. In conjunction with our NSO partners, events on the calendar have currently been suspended until May 5th.
2. School Sport NZ sanctioned events, more so than local or regional school sport, carry heightened risk in relation to Covid-19 with students coming from and returning to communities throughout NZ. The events are generally characterised by significant travel, often involving air travel and airports, and communal living in motels / marae.
3. Under the government guidelines to the sport sector (see matrix School Sport NZ Events – Alert Levels), events on the School Sport NZ Calendar of national events could not take place above Alert Level 1. It may be that the most appropriate focus for school sport in 2020 in on intra-school, local and possibly regional approaches, rather than inter-regional or national events.
4. With schools currently out, the country in lockdown until April 23rd and movement through Government Alert Levels beyond that date remaining uncertain, providing this information continues to present challenges.
5. Decision making processes need to be mindful of a number of factors but importantly early notification to schools who need to plan well ahead for events in terms of raising funds, travel and accommodation. It is important that planning is ongoing as new information is made available so that schools and event organisers are kept well informed while recognising that decisions are being considered in an environment of uncertainty and will be impacted by many factors.

These factors include but are not limited to:

* Covid-19 national (or regional) Alert Status and prescribed restrictions,
* This includes ability to provide accurate data of attendees for rapid contact tracing,
* NSO readiness and capacity to resume play, particularly at national level with focus likely to be on local then regional delivery,
* Lead-in confirmation time required by schools and event organisers,
* MoE statement in regard to moving upcoming school holidays,
* Winter sport looking to extend season to create a viable grassroots competition, likely overlapping WTW and pressure on hosts and venues,
* Schools focus on core business given a period of significant disruption,
* Appetite of parents and schools to have students travel away from their region, use airports and planes, stay in communal accommodation,
* Financial pressure on families in sending students to national tournaments,
* Availability of volunteers for WTW events given many will have used annual leave during disruption,
* Availability / affordability of air travel,
* Ability to complete qualification processes,
* Availability of funding to support events – Trust Funding unlikely to be available before October and likely to focus on salaries and rebuilding the sport system.
* Nature of the sport / event – shared use of equipment, indoor / outdoor, ability to maintain physical distancing, availability of hygiene / handwashing facilities, ability to track all participants, officials, spectators, availability and vulnerability of volunteer groups.
* Ability to put mitigations in place to address risk – consider modifications to how the event is delivered, COVID-19 risk plan in place, put measures in place to minimise/eliminate close body contact/shared equipment, implement/manage a strong hygiene plan for staff and players
1. In any resumption of the sanctioned national calendar of events it is imperative that there is alignment between School Sport NZ guidelines and decisions that are being made by NSOs for their own sport including school sports events.
2. Where some sports have deemed it appropriate for play to resume when others haven’t and where some regions may be in different alert status, we will see confusion for schools and students. As such the resumption of the calendar needs to be aligned, understood and with clear messaging for schools and care givers.

To best achieve this alignment, the intention is to:

i Consult with NSOs and event organisers to determine proposed resumption of their sport and their ability, readiness and capacity to deliver safe, quality events on the School Sport NZ calendar. This will take place in the week of 13 April via Zoom workshops.

ii School Sport NZ board to consider the matter in the week of 20 April

iii Seek input from schools in the week of 27 April

iv Provide further information to schools on 3 May

The aim is to provide schools with clear messaging in regard to the national calendar that avoids confusion for them and ensures a successful resumption for sport for our NSOs and other event partners in the national space.