



Dear WMH Members,

30th November 2020

The WMH Executive Board (EB) monitored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020. A risk management framework, created to facilitate assessment of the potential impact of the developing situation on the postponed 2020 World Cups, was continually updated to inform the EB's decision making. To enable Hosts and participants to plan ahead, the EB set a deadline of November 2020 for a final decision on the viability of the 4 World Cups. Decisions could only be made on assumptions rather than certainties and the range of scenarios considered were:

- COVID-19 being an ongoing risk throughout 2021.
- A vaccine penetration rate of 75% (WHO assessment) not being achieved before the end of 2021 and most vaccines not being ready for world wide distribution before the summer of 2021.
- The impact of reductions in the number of participating teams and an appreciable lack of the shared social activities which contribute to the character and ambience associated with Masters Hockey Events.
- The difficulties of managing Health & Safety procedures such as virus screening, testing and quarantining and the financial liabilities for these having to be met by participants.
- Travel insurance being very expensive in the circumstances, the high cost of hospital treatment in Japan and South Africa and the possibility that treatment would be very basic or unavailable for the uninsured.
- The difficulty of predicting the actions of local authorities if there was a viral outbreak at an Event and the uncertainties of being able to maintain overall risks for all concerned at an acceptable level.
- Participants not being able to self / team isolate and the higher infection risks of commercial travel.

As a result of lengthy considerations of the above assessments, regretfully, the EB unanimously decided to cancel the Nottingham, Cape Town & Tokyo World Cups due to be held in 2021.

The EB will work with the three Hosts to determine financial liabilities, arrange team entry refunds on a pro rata basis and support Hosts in their negotiations with travel / accommodation providers regarding deposits already paid by teams. Unfortunately, refunds will incur bank transfer and currency exchange fees.

The EB views its duty of care for the well-being of its members as paramount. Whilst this decision will be extremely disappointing, the EB wishes to assure the membership that it intends to run World Cups in 2022 and will offer these Events to the Hosts of the cancelled World Cups. If they accept this offer the EB aims to confirm the venues and dates in January 2021. Should any decline the offer, the EB will consider its options and inform the membership. The EB will also meet with the Host of the 2022 Indoor World Cup to discuss associated risk factors.

The EB recognises that the underlying desire of our members is to "just play Hockey" and so the EB is keen to promote lower risk re-engagement through local and / or regional competitions.

To those who have experienced the tragic loss of a loved one during this pandemic, the EB wishes to express sincere condolences and best wishes. The worst should soon be over and we can hope to meet again on the field of play!

Kindest Regards

Glenn Paton
WMH President