

1 Introduction

The Covid-19 outbreak continues to be a rapidly evolving situation that presents a number of complex challenges and decisions. Hitherto, during the period of lockdown, the Solo Offshore Racing Club Ltd (SORC) has implemented a rolling program of postponements and cancellations to the season schedule. All racing up to 16 May 2020 is abandoned. Now, as government regulations permit some tentative steps towards relaxing the lockdown, SORC is exploring a safe return to sailing activities in line with evolving government, port authority and RYA restrictions and guidance. At the same time, members are reminded of their own individual responsibilities.

2 SORC Covid-19 Task Group

SORC has established a Covid-19 task group comprising the Director of Racing, Series Race Directors, Race Officers, and Safety Officer. Contact details are shown.

Director of Racing	Nigel Colley	email	sorcsolo@gmail.com
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3 Overview of SORC Events

SORC organises single-handed inshore, coastal and long distance yacht races in the Solent, English Channel, North & West Coast of France, Western Approaches and the Celtic Sea. No more than one person is allowed on board when racing (except as required by RRS1.1). All boats are responsible for their own management and safety and for deciding whether to start or to continue in any race. All are self-sufficient keelboats or multihulls with cabins, equipped to meet Category 2, 3 or 4 World Sailing Offshore Special Regulations as prescribed by the race or series concerned. Typically, 10 to 20 boats compete, with up to 40 for the most popular events such as RIOW (round the Isle of Wight) Solo. Races are outdoors. The overwhelming majority of competitors are UK (England)-based adults aged less than 65 years. Competitors with underlying health conditions are not excluded, but competitors are required to be sufficiently physically fit to handle 9 to 13 m yachts single-handed. Race management is conducted by not more than 2 race officers, normally on land; a committee boat is rarely used. Course marks are naturally occurring, existing navigation marks, or virtual waypoints; no mark-laying boats are used. Communications within the race team and between race management and competitors are primarily by email or SMS when ashore and by VHF when on the water; there are few face-to-face communications and these can be avoided entirely. Procedures

are available for self-starting and self-finishing, without requiring an on-site race officer. Safety boats are not provided. SORC has no clubhouse / shared premises.

Accordingly, the principal risks in terms of the Covid-19 pandemic are:

- To competitors, before setting sail and after completing sailing, including any shore-based pre- and post-race activities (e.g., assistance berthing; prize-giving; shared social activities) and travel to and from the home port
- To the emergency services, if called out to attend an incident.

4 Principles, Applicable Regulations, Guidelines

The health and safety of SORC's members and volunteers are the highest priority at all times. SORC will take any necessary measures in accordance with current Government guidance to be Covid-secure and reduce the risk of infection to members, volunteers, and others. In these times of increased strain on UK emergency services, SORC will ensure that the risk of an incident leading to support from emergency services is minimal.

Activities are currently restricted by regulations and guidelines emanating from the government, port authorities and marinas. Key links are provided below.

- Government: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Port authorities:
 - Cowes: https://www.cowesharbourcommission.co.uk/local_notices_to_mariners
 - Portsmouth: <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/qhm/portsmouth/local-notices>
 - Southampton: http://www.southamptonvts.co.uk/Yachting_and_Leisure/Notices_to_Mariners/

Websites advising regulations and restrictions for other countries (Ireland, France, Channel Islands), ports and marinas should be consulted as applicable.

5 Current Situation

At the time of writing, limited access to marinas is permitted. However, not all marinas are allowing boats to go out. In addition, people are required to return to their primary residence overnight. Of relevance to the published SORC event schedule (see NoR), France is currently restricting activities, including sailing, to within 50 km of one's main residence; pubs and restaurants in Ireland will not open before September; and 14 days quarantine is compulsory on entering the Bailiwicks of Guernsey and Jersey. Quarantine requirements may be mandated between other countries.

6 Process

Since the situation, regulations and guidance remain fluid, no attempt is made in this assessment to describe rigid procedures, but rather the process that will be used to determine which events may be run, and any modifications to planned events that will be applied to enhance Covid security.

- The SORC Covid-19 Task Group will check the latest regulations, guidelines and advice (see Section 4), reflect on what activity may be appropriate within given guidelines and what future options may be possible, and produce an amended outline programme.
- In the lead-in to any event, close attention will be paid to emerging regulations and guidelines that may impact on the event; if appropriate, additional measures will be applied or the event may be abandoned.
- Additional control measures will be applied as listed in Section 7.

7 Considerations and controls

Areas	Controls Currently in Place	Extra Controls Required	Review Point
General; reducing the risk of virus transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than one person is allowed on board when racing except as required by RRS1.1 (NoR 2c) • Race management is conducted by not more than 2 race officers, normally on land; a committee boat is rarely used. Procedures are available for self-starting and self-finishing, without requiring an on-site race officer (NoR 15 and appendix) • SORC has no clubhouse / shared premises 	<p>In communications about the event, remind competitors of their individual responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with current guidelines with respect to social distancing at all times, including before and after racing • apply appropriate hygiene measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ wash hands after touching common surfaces, and always after coughing, sneezing ○ cover mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing ○ avoid touching face, nose and eyes ○ avoid being face to face with people outside their household • avoid participating in the event (as competitor or race officer) if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ have any symptoms of Covid-19 ○ have been in contact with any person who has symptoms of Covid-19 within the past 14 days <p>Race Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If more than one race officer (who are not members of the same household), government guidance with respect to social distancing and, if applicable, face coverings, will apply • If the Race Officer(s) requires public transport to the race area (e.g., high-speed to Cowes), check current guidelines. If necessary, use self-start and self-finish procedures to avoid risk to the Race Officer 	<p>Within 2 weeks before each event, and ongoing up to the event</p>
Facilities	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Launching & mooring facilities, services & support	Not applicable	Not applicable	

Areas	Controls Currently in Place	Extra Controls Required	Review Point
Pontoons & slipways	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In communications about the event, remind competitors of their individual responsibility to adhere to requirements of their home ports before and after racing • If racing starts or finishes at another port <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ check local requirements and notify competitors of their responsibility to adhere to these ○ remind competitors to adhere to social distancing and hand washing guidelines if assisting others with berthing 	Within 2 weeks before each event, and ongoing up to the event
Activities	See current risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the planned range of activity (see NoR) and whether it can fit with current Government guidelines to decide which can proceed as planned or in a modified way • Re-check the current advice of the emergency services and any local authorities / landlords responsible for the boating area • Check the new ways of working are realistic, safe, minimize impact on the emergency services, and are considerate and conservative 	Within 2 weeks before each event, and ongoing up to the event
On the water safety	See current risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In deciding whether to run the event, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ forecast, temperature, wind speed, direction, sea state, tide, visibility ○ restricting the sailing area; reducing maximum wind limits • In communications about the event, remind competitors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to be conservative, stay within the limits of their ability ○ of the importance of having a plan, letting someone know what they are doing, and being in communication - use RYA SafeTrx, mobile phones, or VHF radios 	Within 2 weeks before each event, and ongoing up to the event
Bar and Catering	None	Pre- and post-race social get-togethers will be arranged only when they can comply with government regulations	Within 2 weeks before each event, and ongoing up to the event

Areas	Controls Currently in Place	Extra Controls Required	Review Point
Responding to a potential Covid-19 exposure	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure everyone's contact numbers and emergency contact details are up to date • Anyone who displays or develops symptoms of Covid-19 should be sent home • Competitors will be advised that any who develop symptoms of Covid-19 within 14 days after the event should inform the Race Officer • Follow public health advice, including any advice about contact tracing 	Within 2 weeks before each event, and ongoing up to the event

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8 Covid-19 SORC Event Check-list

Action	Check	Date	Comment
Are you aware of all relevant, current Government guidance, statutory requirements and checked with your insurers?			
Are you confident you can offer an appropriately 'Covid-secure' environment for your members?			
Have you carried out a satisfactory risk assessment for any proposed activities?			
Have you taken appropriate steps to mitigate the risk of infection amongst competitors and others?			
Have you taken appropriate actions to mitigate the risk of requiring the emergency services?			
Have you effectively communicated any new operating procedures with competitors and others?			
How will you manage a contact or suspected contact with Covid-19?			
How will you handle situations where club rules and guidance in relation to Covid-19 are not followed?			