

## STATEMENT ON COVID-19 RESPONSE

VANCOUVER, BC - March 12, 2020 - 9:09 PM - As a result of COVID-19, many event producers and public authorities are reviewing the situation and potential impacts on their events and operations.

**At this time, Dragon Zone Youth Regatta, Oddball 2,000 Challenge, Vessi 500 Championship, Concord Pacific Dragon Boat Festival and the Steveston Dragon Boat Festival are scheduled to proceed as planned. Dragon Zone Paddling Club is also continuing operations.**

**Please read below for our rationale, plan of action, and enhanced disinfection and sanitation at our events and facilities to safeguard the safety of participants and teams.**

### Rationale

The health and safety of participants and spectators are paramount to the Society. The Government of Canada currently assesses the health risk from COVID-19 to Canadians as low. In British Columbia, there are currently a low number of affected individuals, and there are no known exposure cases in the Dragon Zone community at this point in time.

On March 12, the BC Minister of Health and the BC provincial health officer advised event organizers to cancel gatherings larger than 250 people. However, they also noted that the Government of British Columbia would continually assess conditions as COVID-19 evolves.

We have looked at other major events in the same time frame as our events, and have concluded that a postponement or outright cancellation at this time is premature. We do not know with certainty that the situation will improve, but neither do we know that the situation will not improve. As this advice has just been released, we also are seeking additional clarity from the Government and public health officials before we take additional steps.

### Plan of Action

We have prepared a number of scenarios to address potential eventualities. With our current plan of action, we are actively preparing to host all of our events as scheduled and planned. However, we will continue to regularly evaluate the situation to determine if another plan of action is appropriate.

Internally, we have prepared a number of different models to prepare for all possibilities. We do not intend to rely on these models; however, it would be inappropriate to be unprepared. We will keep all teams informed as the situation develops.

### Enhanced Disinfection and Sanitation

At our events, we will be regularly disinfecting common touch points such as tables, portable washroom handles and touch points, and marshalling point markers. We will also be looking to put additional hand sanitizer stations or hand wash stations, install showers, and increase medical services on-site.

At our facility, we will conduct a daily disinfection of all docks, sheds, boats, equipment, and common touch points daily. Practices are now also staggered to reduce the number of people on the docks at one time. These measures take effect starting March 13; however,

staff have already previously begun daily disinfections. We will continue to monitor the situation and take appropriate action as the situation develops.

### Preventing the Spread of COVID-19

We encourage everyone to find updates on best practices on how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 online through the Public Health Agency of Canada, BC Ministry of Health, and Vancouver Coastal Health. You can access public health information as well through the Province's health line at 811.

This includes measures such as regularly washing hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, not touching your face, coughing into your elbow, and disposing of used tissues into closed garbage cans. If you or other team members are feeling unwell for any reason, we advise you to stay at home until you feel better. In the interests of public safety and wellbeing, missing a practice or event is a necessary precaution.

During this time, our thoughts are with all individuals and communities that have been affected by COVID-19. Our thoughts and thanks go out to all first responders, medical staff and crews, and public health officials who are working hard to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public.

We urge all paddlers and teams to support all event organizers and paddling organizations. During this critical time, we hope all paddlers band together in the spirit of community, culture, and competition to protect and promote the community we have built together. This is especially important in light of the discrimination that members of the Asian community have experienced as COVID-19 has spread. Despite the negativity and racism that has surfaced, we know that by working together, our communities will recover stronger than ever from this pandemic.

As we prepare for summer, we will continue to actively monitor the effects of COVID-19 on public health and safety, and provide updates on our events and operations. Updates on our response will be posted on our website at [dragonboatbc.ca/media](http://dragonboatbc.ca/media), [dragonzone.ca/alerts](http://dragonzone.ca/alerts), [concorddragonboatfestival.ca/alerts](http://concorddragonboatfestival.ca/alerts), and [stevestondragonboatfestival.ca/alerts](http://stevestondragonboatfestival.ca/alerts). We look forward to welcoming all teams to Vancouver this coming season, and thank the paddling community for its continued support.

### About the Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society

Community, culture and competition, all in one boat, the Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society (dba Dragon Boat BC) is the non-profit operator of North America's flagship dragon boat festival - the Concord Pacific Dragon Boat Festival, and runs Dragon Zone Paddling Club - Canada's largest paddling club. Through their All Access and youth programs, supported by the Milton K. Wong Legacy Project, the Society makes the sport accessible regardless of barriers to participation.

### Media Contact

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