



MEMORANDUM

Date:	10 February 2020		
To:	CEOs	From:	Shane Daw
Matter:	Novel Coronavirus Guidelines and Information		

1. Overview

Health authorities have identified cases of novel coronavirus in Australia in January 2020.

The novel coronavirus originated in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. The majority of cases are there. There is evidence of person-to-person spread particularly in Hubei Province.

Health authorities have also identified novel coronavirus cases in several other countries.

Currently in Australia, people most at risk of contracting the virus are people who have:

- been in mainland China recently
- been in close contact with someone who has a confirmed case of coronavirus

What is novel coronavirus

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can make humans and animals sick. They cause illnesses that can range from the common cold to more severe diseases. Severe diseases have included:

- Middle East respiratory syndrome ([MERS](#))
- Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome ([SARS](#))

The novel coronavirus is called 'novel' because it is new. It had not been detected before this outbreak.

Symptoms of novel coronavirus

Symptoms can range from mild illness to pneumonia. Some people will recover easily, and others may get very sick very quickly. Affected people may experience:

- fever
- flu like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue
- shortness of breath

What to do if you become unwell

If you become unwell and suspect you may have symptoms of coronavirus, you must seek medical attention.

2. What you need to do

The Australian Government, Department of Health advises

You **need to** isolate yourself in the following circumstances:

- if you have travelled from Hubei Province within the past 14 days, you must isolate yourself until 14 days have elapsed after leaving Hubei Province
- if you have left, or transited through, mainland China **on or after 1 February 2020** you must isolate yourself until 14 days after leaving China
- if you have been in close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, you must isolate yourself for 14 days after last contact with the confirmed case

You **do not** need to self-isolate in the following circumstances:

- if you have travelled from other provinces in mainland China prior to 1 February 2020 AND have not been in Hubei Province
- if you have only travelled in Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan

For example:

- if someone left the city of Wuhan in Hubei Province on 22 January 2020, they would need to isolate themselves until 6 February 2020
- if someone left Shanghai on 28 January 2020 and came to Australia via another country on 3 February 2020, they would not need to isolate (as they left mainland China before 1 February 2020)
- if someone left Beijing on 3 February 2020 and arrived in Australia on the same day, they would be need to self-isolate for 14 days until 17 February 2020

The World Health Organization's International Health Regulations Emergency Committee has now declared the outbreak of 2019-nCoV a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

3. How you can help prevent the spread of the virus

Everyone should practice good hygiene and other measures to protect against infections.

Good hygiene includes:

- washing your hands often with soap and water
- using a tissue and covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze

The coronavirus is most likely spread from person to person through:

- direct close contact with a person while they are infectious
- contact with droplets when a person with a confirmed infection coughs or sneezes
- touching objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables) that has droplets from a cough or sneeze by an infected person, and then touching your mouth or face

Should I wear a facemask?

Facemasks are not recommended for use by healthy members of the public. A facemask will not protect you against becoming infected.

If you are unwell or are in isolation and you need to go outside, you should wear a facemask if available to protect others.

What does isolate yourself in your home mean?

You should not attend public places, in particular work, school, childcare or university.

Only people who usually live in the household should be in the home. Do not allow visitors into the home.

There is no need to wear masks in the home.

If you must leave the home to seek medical attention, wear a surgical mask if you have one.

Where possible, have other people get food and other necessities for you.

4. Within Surf Life Saving

Individuals

Any persons who have recently travelled to the identified areas are to follow the guidelines and directions as detailed earlier in this resource. If they are not feeling well, no matter the specific diagnosis they should not be participating in strenuous activities.

If you have visited the above areas over the December 2019 and January 2020 period or have come into contact with any people diagnosed with the virus, please ensure you do not access the Club or undertake Club activities, including patrol, competition or training squads for a period of 14 days from either the time you left the areas or came into contact with the person.

Anyone who has or develops flu like symptoms and has recently travelled to these areas or been in contact with people diagnosed with the virus is being advised to seek medical attention immediately. If this precludes you from performing a rostered patrol please advise your patrol captain.

First Responder | Emergency Care

Everyone should practice good hygiene and other measures to protect against infections. This includes gloves and other PPE as required.

There is a duty of care to help those who are sick, injured or distressed. This will be balanced against risks. The risks of contacting the virus are currently identified as quite low. However, PPE is stressed as vital at all times.

When patrolling, during your “danger to self” checks, if feasible please ask the patient or people accompanying patient if they have travelled to China in the last 2 months and if so, increase personal protection, minimise treating staff, and isolate patient until paramedics arrive.

Other activity

SLS members and clubs are to be conscious that if any member has been exposed to the Novel Coronavirus it is in the individuals and clubs best interest that they not expose anyone else. As such flexibility is recommended around patrol and sport activities. This may include excusing persons impacted from patrol duties; and for sporting activity if there is a requirement to attend a carnival to gain entry to Branch or State Championships looking at other ways around this. Should a member be in this situation they should contact their State/Branch for assistance.

5. Further information

This information has been prepared in consultation from advice available from:

- The Australian Government, Department of Health

SLSA Medical Advisor Representatives

- Dr Natalie Hood
- Dr Ned Douglas
- Dr Lucinda Remilton
- Dr Paul Hotton

Links:

- [Australian Government, Department of Health](#)
- [World Health Organisation](#)
- [Health NSW](#)
- [Victoria Health and Human Services](#)