



# Stanwell Park Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club (SPHGPC)

## *COVID-19 Management Plan*

### Document Revision History

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## Description

This management plan is conceived to help manage the challenges around COVID-19 and mitigate the potential risks that it poses to both pilots and the community during flight operations at our regular flying sites. This is with the understanding that our paragliding and hang gliding flying operations provides significant and genuine benefit to both physical and mental health of not only those who undertake it as exercise, but also to those of the public whose vantage point allows them to vicariously share in awe, its beauty. This especially is true at such a spectacular site as Stanwell Park. Given this positive impact of flying on mental and physical health during challenging times, this is an important contribution within the context of complying with the gazetted public health orders.

**Note:** This plan is subject to change from time to time and all Stakeholders will be notified accordingly.

## Purpose

The purpose of the SPHGPC COVID-19 Management Plan is to provide:

- 1) A clear and concise management plan that enables this club and its member pilots to participate in this sport in a manner that is fully compliant with the NSW Public Health Orders of 2020.
- 2) A means to identify, engage with and manage relevant stakeholders.

The SPHGPC aim to do this in a way that not only manages and mitigates the normal risks associated with the sports, but also those of the COVID-19 health crisis in a professional and effective manner, that ensures the best outcomes for all stakeholders.

## Period

This plan is applicable upon acceptance and duration is until rescinded by the SPHGPC.

## Compliance with Public Health Orders

The SPHGPC sought and received clarification of the status and compliance of our sports with regard to the current NSW Public Health orders from two government bodies. These were:

- 1) The NSW Department of Sport<sup>1</sup>, who as part of their response, replied in writing **“Therefore, individual sports and activities can continue, provided the Public Health Orders are complied with.”***{bold emphasis is theirs}*.  
The Department went on to say “Maintaining the public’s physical and mental well-being is now as important as ever. Where possible, it is important sporting clubs and organisations continue to allow people to exercise, so long as social distancing is practised and rules around public gatherings of no more than two people are complied with.”
- 2) The Office of The Hon. David Elliott, BA, MA, MP - Member for Police & Emergency Services. Their verbal advice was consistent with the above, plus the additional emphasis on complying with the requirements for the travel to be reasonable. They were unwilling to be specific on what range would be considered reasonable, only to say that travelling to Broken Hill would certainly not be considered appropriate.

Current NSW Government Health Orders and Restrictions can be [located here](#).

## Stakeholders

The primary Stakeholders identified for this plan include:

- 1) The Stanwell Park Hang Gliding & Paragliding Club (SPHGPC) and all its member components – executive, private pilots, commercial operators & manufacturers
- 2) Wollongong City Council (WCC)
- 3) NSW Police via Local Area Command
- 4) Sports Aviation Federation of Australia (SAFA) [National Governing Body]
- 5) NSW Hang Gliding & Paragliding Association (NSWHPA) [State Body]
- 6) General SAFA membership – non club members.
- 7) The Public

## Stakeholder Engagement

The SPHGPC remain committed to engaging with all Stakeholders to ensure the successful creation, implementation and management of the SPHGPC COVID-19 Management Plan. The engagement framework sets out the SPHGPC’s approach to engaging with its stakeholders to deepen its understanding of evolving expectations, priorities and concerns, to help ensure the Club is delivering an appropriate solution that meets the needs of its stakeholders. Effective communication with all Stakeholders is an important aspect of the ongoing success of this plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Email included under Appendix A – Item 1

## **The SPHGPC commits to:**

- 1) Proactively engage all stakeholders through existing channels with a view to establish dialogue, and ensure their active participation in the creation and ongoing management of the COVID-19 Management Plan;
- 2) Establish a schedule of regular communication to maintain effective engagement, to ensure that Stakeholders remain engaged, informed and managed on an ongoing basis;
- 3) Enable Stakeholders to provide feedback to facilitate regular improvements and updates to the Management Plan and Club operations to ensure they continue to deliver the best outcomes for all.

## **Site Locations**

The sites covered by this COVID-19 Management Plan are:

- 1) Bald Hill, Stanwell Park;
- 2) Sandon Point, Bulli;
- 3) Sharkies Beach, Coledale;
- 4) Hill 60, Port Kembla;

## **Alignment with Stanwell Procedures Manual**

This COVID-19 Management Plan is to be read, and delivered in conjunction with the standard [Stanwell Park Operational Procedures](#) of the Club.

## **All Participants' Responsibility COVID-19**

No participant in any flight operations coincident with this plan will be allowed to participate in any capacity if they are physically unwell and showing any of the known Covid-19 symptoms (such as fever, sore throat, chesty cough, headache and running nose).

## **Pilot Eligibility**

Flight operations under this plan are restricted to only those pilots who are financial members of this club, so as to ensure regular communication as the situation unfolds.

## **Duty Pilot**

Duty Pilots are critical in ensuring the effective execution of the Management Plan – ensuring the safety of both pilots and the public. A Duty Pilot must be appointed for all flight operations to manage the site and communications. The Duty Pilot is a recognised official as per the SAFA Operations Manual. A Duty Pilot will normally be situated in the active Operational Area at all times the sites are open for flying.

## Responsibilities of Duty Pilot

The Duty Pilot is responsible for:

- 1) Determining whether the conditions are unsuitable to fly; NOTE: it is still the individual pilots responsibility to determine whether the conditions are suitable for their skill level;
- 2) Determining the flight durations from time to time with due regard to numbers of pilots wishing to fly at any particular moment, and suitability of the conditions;
- 3) Ensure Pilots adhere to current [Public Health Orders](#), and to all requirements of the COVID-19 Management Plan, the [Club Operational Procedures](#) or [SAFA Operations Manual](#);
- 4) Notify the Committee of Management (CoM) of breaches to any requirements under the COVID-19 Management Plan, the [Club Operational Procedures](#) or [SAFA Operations Manual](#);
- 5) Monitor WhatsApp groups – “FlyStanwell DutyPilots”, “FlyStanwell Ready 2 Fly”;
- 6) Manage pilots whilst on launch;
- 7) Managing communications with Pilots through UHF radio;
- 8) Managing communications onsite with Stakeholders as the need arises e.g. Council Rangers, Police, Public etc.;
- 9) Ensure Public strictly do not enter any operational areas, as listed below;
- 10) Maintaining all other standard responsibilities of a Duty Pilot referred to within the SAFA Operations Manual.

## Roster

Duty Pilots will nominate themselves, and once accepted will be placed on a roster which is located within the WhatsApp group – “**FlyStanwell DutyPilots**”. This group will also be used for communication between Duty Pilots and the CoM.

## Communications

### Requirement for UHF radio

A pilot may only fly at a SPHGPC site with a functional / operational UHF radio tuned to the SAFA channel designated by SPHGPC. This channel will be communicated to the pilot by the Duty Pilot. Periodic radio calls may be put out to confirm radio contact. Pilots will respond as soon as safe to do so. Non-communication is a breach of the COVID-19 Management Plan and is potential grounds for denying future permission to fly. All communications are to be short & direct. No long chat as this blocks the airwaves and prevents use by other users.

### WhatsApp Groups

Two WhatsApp groups will be utilised to facilitate flight operation logistics. These are:

- 1) “**FlyStanwell DutyPilots**” for use by Duty Pilots and CoM to facilitate Duty Pilot logistics;
- 2) “**FlyStanwell Ready 2 Fly**” for general logistics of flight operations. Flight intention will be managed via our designated WhatsApp group (FlyStanwell Ready 2 Fly). Pilots are to use this channel to notify their intention to fly by ‘posting’ their ETA and either HG or PG (designating their wing type as HG - Hang Glider or PG – Paraglider, as

these different wing types require different setup times). This means that pilots can self-manage their times of arrival to launch to comply with Public Health orders. Communication is made with the Duty Pilot upon arrival.

## **Operational Areas**

In order to clearly manage the operations under this SPHGPC COVID-19 Management Plan, and ensure compliance with Public Health Orders, clear, designated areas will need to be assigned to ensure the safety of the Duty Pilot, Pilots and the Public. There will be discrete areas designated for Setup, Launching, Landing, Control Operations and public thoroughfare. No more than two pilots, each separated by at least 1.5m, should gather in any of the separated areas:

### **Designated Public Area**

These areas are all areas outside of site operational areas. Distancing signage will be displayed to assist compliance by all with COVID-19 Public Health Orders.

The designated Public Area will be delineated by the existing stone blocks and augmented by signage and witches' hats to create a clear path separating the areas used for flight operations from public thoroughfare.

Signage is to be placed at the launch area. For Bald Hill, this will be at the windsock on the top South landing and the East launch. Signage will also be placed at the bottom Landing Zone notifying the public of the 1.5m separation.

### **Set Up Areas**

The set up areas will be demarcated by a row of witches' hats. No more than two pilots, each separated by at least 1.5m, should gather in each area.

### **Launch Areas**

Launch areas area will be demarcated by a row of witches' hats, and no more than two pilots, each separated by at least 1.5m, should gather in this area.

Launches are not permitted from the Top Landing area located at Bald Hill, Stanwell Tops (The Strip).

### **Landing Zones (LZ)**

Landing Zones (LZ) will be demarcated by a row of witches' hats, and no more than two pilots, each separated by at least 1.5m, should gather in this area.

Cones will be arranged as per normal flight operations. There will be additional signage as previously described.

After landing in the Top Landing Area, pilots are to pack up as quickly as possible and vacate the landing area as soon as possible. There is to be no launching from the Top Landing Area located at Bald Hill, Stanwell Tops (The Strip).

## **Operational Area**

Operational areas will be demarcated by a row of witches' hats, and no more than two pilots, each separated by at least 1.5m, should gather in this area. A duty pilot to be placed in the Operational Area to supervise all launches. There is to be no more than two (2) pilots at a time adhering to the 1.5m Social Distancing rule.

Crosses (X) are to be placed in this area indicating the 1.5m separational requirements.

## **Flight Operations**

### **Limitation on Pilot numbers**

The number of pilots allowed into the air at any one time will be determined by the Duty Pilot on a case-by-case basis and monitored during flying operations. Please note – this may change mid-flight depending upon the numbers of pilots wishing to fly at any one time, changes to conditions etc.

### **Flight Duration**

Flights will be of a limited duration. This duration will be determined beforehand and conveyed to the pilot prior to flight by the Duty Pilot. This is used to help manage the expected number of pilots that wish to fly. This flight duration may change mid-flight and, in such cases, will be communicated via radio. This will be determined by the Duty Pilot depending upon numbers wishing to fly as situational circumstances change.

### **Top Landing**

Any top landings are to be carried out after requesting (via the designated radio channel) and receiving subsequent authorisation from the Duty Pilot. This authorisation will be given on an individual basis for one pilot at a time.

### **Re-flying**

Pilots are to request to be added to the Duty Pilot launch list and await approval to fly under the conditions as determined by the Duty Pilot as appropriate for the conditions prevalent at that time, including the numbers of pilots waiting to fly. Please note, Re-Flying permission is not necessarily a given. Duty Pilots may restrict re-flights, depending on pilot traffic and conditions, and will communicate this through available channels (UHF radio and WhatsApp group "FlyStanwell Ready 2 Fly").

### **Flight Plans**

Flight intention will be managed via our designated WhatsApp group (**FlyStanwell Ready 2 Fly**). Pilots are to use this App to notify their intention to fly by 'posting' their ETA + HG or PG. Being their wing type HG- Hang Glider; PG – Paraglider, as these different wing types require vastly different setup times. This should go a long way to self-manage their times of arrival at launch to comply with Public Health orders. Communication is made with the Duty Pilot upon arrival.

## **Tandem Operations**

Tandem operations will only be allowed where the pilot and passenger are legally exempt from social distancing rules. It is responsibility of the tandem pilot to determine whether their flight operation is compliant with current SAFA regulations.

## **Returning from the Bottom Landing Zone**

Where applicable, Pilots are encouraged to walk up from the Landing Zone back to Launch. Any carpooling back to launch must comply with relevant sections of Public Health Orders, especially regarding 1.5m separation whilst in the car, where relevant.

## **Pilot Responsibilities**

### **Compliance**

The pilot must comply with all 'lawful' direction of the Duty Pilot, Committee of Management, Senior Safety Officer (SSO), Safety Officer (SO), Police Officers and Council Rangers. Pilots must demonstrate conservative flying behaviour, which includes no proximity flying close to any terrain, particularly near launch.

### **Preparation and Communication**

Pilots must adhere with all communication requirements identified in the Communications section of this Management Plan, which includes flying with a UHF radio and notifying their intention to fly through the designated WhatsApp group (with ETA and wing type – i.e. HG or PG) prior to arriving at the launch site to assist with managing flight operations.

### **Contribution**

All pilots wishing to fly agree to contribute by making themselves available from time to time to assist the management of flight operations at the site in the form of volunteering for responsibilities and activities such as being Duty Pilot (where appropriate), crowd control etc.

### **Travel**

It is the sole responsibility of every individual pilot to comply with the Governments' regulations and recommendations regarding justification for their travel. The Club has advice that suggests travelling some distance purely to fly is not justifiable and potentially jeopardises all pilots' opportunities to fly. *Please refer to 'Compliance with Public Health Orders' Point 2.*

### **Supervised Pilots (e.g. PG2 licenced pilots)**

It is your responsibility to have arranged prior to arrival on launch the services of an appropriately qualified supervising pilot committed to your supervision for the duration of your flight. This supervision will need to be done on a clear communication radio channel separate from the designated Club channel. This information will need to be conveyed to the Duty Pilot prior to you launching, including the plan of how your supervision is to be carried out compliant with all the relevant Public Health Orders (particularly relating to social distancing if your supervisor is to be ground-based).

## **Commercial Pilots / CFI / FI / AFI [Chief Flight Instructor / Flight Instructor / Apprentice Flight Instructor]**

It is your responsibility to comply with all current Government Health Orders applicable to your workplace requirements, as well as requirements of the SPHGPC.

### **Club Responsibilities**

The SPHGPC is responsible for:

- 1) Ensuring that the SPHGPC COVID-19 Management Plan is maintained and managed to remain current in a rapidly changing context;
- 2) Ensuring active Stakeholder engagement and management;
- 3) Communicating the COVID-19 Management Plan to its members through current channels;
- 4) Ensuring that the latest information is always available on the Club website in a central location, and communicated more broadly through its channels;
- 5) Ensure Pilots adhere to current [Public Health Orders](#), and to all requirements of the COVID-19 Management Plan, the [Club Operational Procedures](#) or [SAFA Operations Manual](#) at applicable Sites;
- 6) Enact disciplinary measures as necessary;
- 7) Maintain WhatsApp groups – “FlyStanwell DutyPilots” and “FlyStanwell Ready 2 Fly”.

### **Non-Compliance**

Pilot non-compliance with any ‘lawful’ direction consistent with the SPHGPC COVID-19 Management Plan or any other ordinary requirements as member of this club may be referred to Committee of Management (CoM) for direction and possible referral to SAFA for disciplinary intervention. This may include suspension from flying.

## Appendix A

### Item 1 Email

Response to Mr Taylor regarding specific request to NSW Office of Sport for clarification regarding whether Hang Gliding and Paragliding is regarded as allowable exercise for the purposes of the current Public Health Orders.

From: **Sport & Recreation** <[sportrec@sport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sportrec@sport.nsw.gov.au)>

Date: Fri, Apr 3, 2020 at 2:13 PM

Subject: RE: Clarification of what is considered exercise Basic - general enquiry

To: <[REDACTED](#)>

Dear Mr Taylor

Thank you for your enquiry in relation to COVID-19.

There are now restrictions around public gatherings and rules around leaving your home. These new measures are in place to keep the community safe during the COVID-19 outbreak.

It is important to note that people can leave their homes for the purpose of exercise. Any form of exercise is to be undertaken in compliance with the Public Health Orders, meaning that people must not participate in groups greater than two persons at any point in time. **Therefore, individual sports and activities can continue, provided the Public Health Orders are complied with.**

Maintaining the public's physical and mental well-being is now as important as ever. Where possible, it is important sporting clubs and organisations continue to allow people to exercise, so long as social distancing is practised and rules around public gatherings of no more than two people are complied with.

For more information on the new restrictions, please visit <https://preview.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/public-health-orders>.

Further updates will be provided on the Office of Sport website. We encourage you to keep up to date on COVID-19 information at <https://preview.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>

Kind Regards  
Office of Sport