

Dear Golfers,

On behalf of the golf industry delegation engaging with government, which comprises GolfRSA, the PGA of SA and the Club Management Association of South Africa, we wanted to provide an update since the last communication of a week ago.

Today we received a formal response from Minister of Sports, Arts & Culture, Mr Nathi Mthethwa, regarding the presentation made to government on behalf of golf. The Minister informed us that our proposal has been taken to the National Coronavirus Command Council (NCC) and we will immediately be informed of any outcome once a final decision has been made. In written communication, the Minister acknowledged that golf “lends itself to social distancing” and that we presented a case worth taking to the National Command Council.

This is a positive step, and we urge clubs and golfers to remain patient as the decision on when to reopen golf facilities ultimately remains in the hands of the NCC. We empathise with those who are frustrated and desperate to get back out on the fairways. We understand the urgency for our clubs to resume operations in order to save the jobs of their staff, as well as caddies and coaches attached to their facilities. We are receiving feedback daily on the dire situation that many of our clubs are in and would like to assure all clubs and golfers that your respective associations are working tirelessly for the safe return of golf.

This week, a collaborative Steering Committee, including several of our most recognised industry experts from across the country, helped enhance and refine our Risk Mitigation Strategy. This will ensure that when golf is given the go ahead, our clubs will be well prepared to open up and operate in a safe environment. This process has carefully considered all clubs from various risk profiles, including estates, large and small clubs. The contribution of our experts has been invaluable and we would like to thank them for their efforts.

We have prepared a Risk Mitigation Strategy that can be adapted for various scenarios, depending on the status level of the country. We have also prepared a “Good Golf Practice Guideline”, which is aligned with International Best Practice. These documents have been put together in preparation for a return to golf, but will only be sent to all clubs once we have received communication back from the NCC. The documents will be adapted to the guidelines and regulations that we receive from the NCC before they are forwarded to clubs.

Over the next few days we will send out communication to clubs relating to suggested preparation and measures that should be put in place in the meantime. This preparation will be based on practical steps that clubs will need to be prepared for, regardless of when and how the NCC allows golf to return.

When we do get the go-ahead, it will be a carefully managed process with extreme effort being taken to contain the spread of the disease. We all love this game and appreciate the value it brings to our lives through exercise, mental wellness, recreation and, for so many, a livelihood. In the interim, please keep safe and we hope our patience and hard work will be rewarded soon.



Grant Hepburn
Chief Executive Officer
GolfRSA



Chris van der Merwe
Chairperson
CMASA



Ivano Ficalbi
Chief Executive
PGA of South Africa



