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Mr Mike Archer
Chief Executive Officer
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Dear Mr Archer

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORISED OFFICER INVOLVEMENT IN COVID EVENT PLAN RISK ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL PROCESS

I am writing to you about the updated approach to approving events during the COVID-19 pandemic in Western Australia (WA) and to highlight the important new role of authorised officers (in most instances environmental health officers; EHOs) in that process.

On Friday 18 September, the Hon. Mark McGowan (BA LLB MLA) announced a new framework for events approvals in WA, to take effect from 11.59pm, 24 September 2020. Officers authorised under the *Public Health Act 2016 (WA)* for the purpose of the *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911 (WA)* will be authorised under the *Closure and Restriction (Limit the Spread) Directions (No 6)* for this purpose.

The *Closure and Restriction (Limit the Spread) Directions (No 6)* will introduce the need for COVID Event Plans to be developed by event organisers/applicants for any event with greater than 500 patrons, that also requires approval under the *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911*. Authorised officers within local government will review low and medium risk COVID Event Plans for public and private events, where local government approval is required. It will also be a mandatory requirement for event organisers to register their event with the Department of Health (DOH) for inclusion in the events calendar via https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Events-registration.

A suite of tools has been developed by the DOH, in collaboration with WA Police (WAPOL), the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the State Solicitor's Office and Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. These tools are for use by authorised officers and event organisers to assist them to understand the changes to the events approval process and to support compliance with the Directions.

A comprehensive COVID Event Plan will need to consider the following aspects:

- Hand hygiene
- Physical distancing
- Public transport options
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Staff management and training
- Management of unwell staff, volunteers or patrons
- Communications
- Contact Tracing
- Waste Management
- Emergency Procedures

Each event must first be assessed using a risk assessment tool, to determine whether it is a low, medium or high risk from a public health (COVID-19) perspective. The role of the authorised officer within local government will then be to assess and approve COVID Event Plans for those events considered low or medium risk. COVID Event Plans for high risk events are to be escalated to the DOH for review/approval by myself as the Chief Health Officer, or a delegated person. Once the review process is complete, the outcome will be communicated to the local government and the event organiser.

A component of the COVID Event Plan may be the requirement for event organisers to engage COVID Safety Marshals. A COVID Safety Marshal is an individual whose role is to monitor that the public health measures outlined in the COVID Event Plan are implemented and complied with. The requirement for Safety Marshals, and the number required at the event, will be assessed by the approving authority.

COVID Event Plan enforcement and compliance is the responsibility of WAPOL. Authorised officers and COVID Safety Marshals will not play an enforcement role. All non-compliance issues should be reported to WAPOL at the time of the event.

I thank you for your support and assistance in responding to these challenging times. I acknowledge the support of local governments and authorised officers for their ongoing role in protecting public health.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Andrew Robertson
CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH