



Rugby Europe Member Unions

Paris, Thursday, March 19, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 // update on the situation

Dear Member Unions, Dear Friends,

During these difficult times for the world of sports and the world in general, we wanted to provide some information and update. We are facing unprecedented challenges. During this severe crisis, **health and safety of the entire Rugby Europe family are our absolute priority.**

In light of the announcements of the French Government, Rugby Europe Headquarters in Paris have been closed last Monday, with everyone working from home for an indefinite period of time. However, **Rugby Europe is at work** and will continue to operate as close as possible to normal conditions and continue to help and assist our Member Unions the best we can and respond to all queries.

As you know, we have announced a first suspension of all games, tournaments and T&E activities till April 15th. It is very likely that this suspension will have to be extended and the truth is that we don't know – and no one knows in the sporting world – when we can resume our activities. **However we have started to work on various back-to-play scenarios and will share them in due course.** Be assured that the rescheduling of our events, when rescheduling is an option vs a cancellation, will be done in consultation with the participating and hosting Unions and that enough leadtime will be provided to all to resume training and prepare travel and accommodations arrangements in the best possible conditions.

In light of the uncertainty we are facing, **the overarching advice to all Member Unions is to not engage any further expenses linked to participating in or hosting a Rugby Europe event or tournament for the moment, whatever was the initial date of the event.**

For the expenses already engaged, whether the cost is a responsibility of the Union (travel and hosting costs of the teams) or of Rugby Europe (mostly Match Officials), the advice for any suspended game or tournament is to try to recoup the funds engaged. Many airlines are cancelling flights throughout Europe, in which case they have an obligation to refund the tickets. Many airlines are also offering more flexible conditions to exchange tickets even for tickets that were not initially exchangeable in light of the current situation. This should be the first option looked at. For the match officials, Rugby Europe will cover any non-refundable costs upon presentation of all documents certifying that the plane ticket cannot be subject to a partial or total refund.

We are taking this opportunity to work on a number of strategic planning initiatives and to improve our processes. We will emerge from this crisis better and stronger than before.

Thanks to all of you for your efforts ; keep us informed of the situation in your country to help us get a clear picture of rescheduling options of our events in full knowledge.

Best regards.

Florent MARTY, Rugby Europe CEO