

Douglas Langley  
Series Director  
HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series  
World Rugby  
8-10 Pembroke Street Lower  
Dublin 2, Ireland



Mobile: +353 87 067 8599  
E-mail: [douglas.langley@worldrugby.org](mailto:douglas.langley@worldrugby.org)

**To:** Men's and Women's Team Managers (copies also sent to core & relevant invitational teams' unions)

**Date:** Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**Subject:** Circular 9 - HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series 2020

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Dear Team Manager,

**World Rugby Sevens Series,  
TOP Variation – Coronavirus**

World Rugby of course hopes that you and your families are safe and well in these challenging times with the Coronavirus outbreak. Please extend our best wishes to other members of your teams and union that you are in conversation with.

**Background**

- A. You are of course aware of the impact that the current situation with the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak is having on our daily lives and the global sporting calendar. This is obviously having a significant impact on the scheduling on upcoming World Rugby events. On March 11<sup>th</sup> 2020, the World Health Organisation escalated 2019-nCoV to Pandemic status.
- B. The World Rugby Sevens Series Contingency Group (the "Contingency Group") as you know, was created to monitor the situation with the Coronavirus (Covid-19) with its effect on the World Rugby Sevens Series ("Series") events. The Contingency Group is made up of the following:
  - a. World Rugby Chief Medical Officer;
  - b. World Rugby CEO;
  - c. World Rugby Head of Competitions and Performance;
  - d. World Rugby Sevens Series Director;
  - e. Ad hoc advisors deemed necessary by the Series Director.
- C. The Contingency Group has been monitoring the developing situation regarding Coronavirus and made recommendations to the World Rugby EXCO. World Rugby EXCO made the following decisions:
  - a. World Rugby must prioritise the health and safety of players, fans and all employees and contractors working on the Series and its constituent Tournaments;
  - b. World Rugby must consider the travel and logistical implications posed by the Pandemic;



- c. In the above circumstances, and in conjunction with the local Tournament Organisers, the decision has been made to postpone the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series 2020 events scheduled in Langford, London and Paris on 2-3 May, 23-24 May and 30-31 May respectively.
- d. Any rescheduling of the events will be considered where feasible after the Olympic Games and in-line with other 2020 Series season events already rescheduled late in the year. More information on this will be given to relevant teams and unions as soon as this is known.

#### **Variations**

2. In accordance with Sections 1.3 and 5.14 of the Terms of Participation, (Variations), World Rugby makes/varies the rules and gives directions as follows:

#### **Schedule**

3. Section 3.2.2 and Section 15, Schedule 2 are varied as follows:
  - a. The Tournament scheduled to take place in Langford on 2-3 May 2020 shall be postponed until further notice,
  - b. The Tournament scheduled to take place in London on 23-24 May 2020 shall be postponed and is looking to be rescheduled in September 2020 and
  - c. The Tournament scheduled to take place in Paris on 30-31 May 2020 shall be postponed and is looking to be rescheduled in September 2020.

#### **Olympic Seedings**

4. Section 5.2.3 shall be replaced by the following:

*"The seedings for the men's and women's Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games Rugby Sevens Competitions shall be determined in the following way:*

1. *For teams who are Core Teams on the World Rugby Sevens Series: by the combined World Rugby Sevens Series points gained by teams in: (i) all Tournaments in the 2018/2019 World Rugby Sevens Series; and (ii) all Tournaments from the 2019/2020 World Rugby Sevens Series excluding Langford (for women), London (for men), Paris (for both men and women), Hong Kong (for both men and women) and Singapore (for men).*

*The four teams that qualified directly to the Olympic Games from the 2018/2019 World Rugby Sevens Series are guaranteed to be included in the top 4 seeded positions with positions 1-4 being determined by each team's combined World Rugby Sevens Series points over the two seasons in: (i) all Tournaments from the 2018/2019 World Rugby Sevens Series; and (ii) all Tournaments from the 2019/2020 World Rugby Sevens excluding Langford (for women), London (for men), Paris (for both men and women), Hong Kong (for both men and women) and Singapore (for men). These teams are Fiji, USA, New Zealand and South Africa for the men's competition and New Zealand, USA, Canada and Australia for the women's competition.*

2. *For teams who are not Core Teams in either the men's or women's World Rugby Sevens Series competitions: seedings will be determined by World Rugby (in its sole discretion) based on an analysis of their performances in: (i)*

*all Tournaments in the World Rugby Sevens Series 2018/19; and (ii) all Tournaments from the World Rugby Sevens Series 2019/2020 excluding Langford (for women), London (for men), Paris (for both men and women), Hong Kong (for both men and women) and Singapore (for men); and (iii) other World Rugby sanctioned tournaments such as the respective men's and women's World Rugby Sevens Series qualification tournaments for example the 2020 Challenger Series events completed for men, the 2019 Sevens Series Qualifier tournament for Women as well as relevant Regional tournaments.*

**Series Ranking**

3. *For the avoidance of doubt, in circumstances where the Langford, London, Paris, Hong Kong and/or Singapore Tournaments in the 2019/2020 World Rugby Sevens Series have been rescheduled and will take place on a later date in the season, any points allocated for the Langford, London, Paris, Hong Kong and Singapore Tournaments shall be included to determine the final rankings in the 2019/2020 World Rugby Sevens Series.*

**Series Tournament Seedings**

5. Section 5.3 shall be varied so that the seeding of teams for the next scheduled postponed events shall be determined based on the final ranking from the teams' previous respective Tournaments (i.e. Sydney for women and Vancouver for men for the next scheduled event and so on).

**Other**

6. In the event that circumstances in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic change further such that, having consulted with the Contingency Group, the World Rugby EXCO determines that it is not possible or practicable to hold the rescheduled Langford, London, Paris, Hong Kong and/or Singapore Tournament, then as set out in Section 5.2.3 of the TOP, the Tournament(s) shall be deemed to be abandoned and no Series points shall be allocated for the Tournament(s) and the final Series rankings will be calculated without reference to such Tournament(s).
7. If there is a scenario that is not contemplated above, or in the event that evolving circumstances require a further variation, the World Rugby Series Director will consult with the Contingency Group before requesting the World Rugby Executive Committee to make a direction as to such variation, based on achieving the fairest solution possible for all Teams. Section 5.13(b)(1) of the TOP shall be applied when considering any such variations: "Variations of the Terms of Participation, rules or directions shall not be retrospective and shall apply uniformly across all Participating Unions and Team Members."

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions related to the above.

With regards,



Douglas Langley  
Series Director



Cc:

*Mark Egan, Head of Competitions and Performance, World Rugby*  
*Cian Twomey, Series Coordinator, World Rugby*