

Toowoong Bay Ocean Swim



All mail to: PO Box 75, The Entrance NSW 2261

To all the Friends of TBOS

It is with a mixture of disappointment & frustration (and some relief due to the anxiety of the unknown) that the organisers of the 2021 Toowoong Bay Ocean Swim have made the difficult decision to cancel the 2021 event.

We do know that this event has been generating plenty of interest from potential participants and we feel awful to disappoint you guys, however, the decision we made was taken after gaining as much information as possible and then determining an action that the organising committee was most comfortable with.

We have been in planning mode since early February and have put in many hours in preparation, but then the Delta variant came along, and we all know the impact this has had.

Restrictions around events have been ambiguous at best so determining meaning from those restrictions and deciding on the correct action has been difficult.

As at 11/10/2021, when NSW reach 70% double vaccination, events could proceed with up to 500 but must be ticketed and seated and density limits. Density limits are at 1 person / 2 square metres. Outdoor gatherings are permitted but with 30 people maximum

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/easing-covid-19-restrictions/70-percent>

The second mark NSW hope to achieve is 80% where restrictions will ease again. The date for that step is yet to be determined. When this occurs, double vaccinated events will allow up to 200 in a *Covid safe gathering* or up to 3000 people for events that are ticketed, seated, and fenced, again with density limits. Density limits are at 1 person / 2 square metres. The term, *Covid safe gathering*, again is ambiguous.

The confusion/debate around double vaccinated versus non vaccinated forces event operators to not only be the security guards of government orders but also creates community division and these organisers feel that it was too early in the post COVID world to be thrust in this position.

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/easing-covid-19-restrictions/80-percent>

Modelling from University of Sydney suggest that cases will increase dramatically once lockdown measures are removed and we feel that any potential COVID outbreak attributed to TBOS would create much angst for the event organisers but, also critically, impact TBOS' reputation as a fun, family orientated safe event.

<https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2021/08/26/pandemic-peak-in-sight---but-we-must-brace-for-an-infection-surg.html>



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The organising committee have reached out to, or watched, other players in this space and noted that they have mostly cancelled their 2021 event. Larger events conducted by professional organisations have moved to another date in 2022.

Moving the event was considered but it was decided that to run the event in season 2022 and go back to our nominal date of November would require two events in the same calendar year, an excessive workload and demand on all stakeholders, from sponsors, suppliers, the organising committee and most importantly, volunteers

TBOS relies on various stakeholders to support the event. Funding is crucial and the Covid impact on businesses who have been forced to cease trading has made it difficult for them to commit to sponsorship which we fully understand.

Volunteers are asked, and are relied upon, to do so much in normal circumstances around any event. Our wonderful people mix closely with participants and spectators whilst carrying out the duties they would normally perform. We believe that to ask them to perform a duty in an environment that is clouded and may become a potential spreading event is, in our opinion, asking too much.

We totally understand the disappointment this decision brings to many and some may be angered by this outcome. We recognize that some of our TBOS friends may question our commitment to the event, but we are 100% committed, above all, to create a totally safe event for all. We can only assure you that the 2022 event will be planned for with so much more knowledge gained in the post COVID world.

Thank you all for your support and understanding

TBOS committee 2021



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