



From the General Secretary

9 March 2020

Dear Branch Secretaries and Shipmates,

CORONAVIRUS – URGENT GUIDANCE – PLEASE PROMULGATE WIDELY

As the Coronavirus continues to escalate, we are issuing the following urgent guidance above and beyond that issued by Public Health England due to the main age demographic of **our membership being in a significantly higher risk group**.¹

First identified in China in Dec 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) believes COVID-19 more severely affects older people and those with pre-existing medical conditions (such as high blood pressure, heart disease or diabetes). The UK Chief Medical Officers have raised the risk to the UK from low to moderate and the PM has led another COBRA meeting today. Although not yet switching from the current phase of **Contain** to **Delay**, it was however suggested that further advice may be issued later this week focusing on protecting the most vulnerable groups – the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions. Reducing social contact will form part of that.

Central Office is not yet cancelling any national events however this will remain under constant review as the epidemic develops. Whilst **each Branch Chairman may decide for themselves what precautions to take, including cancellation or postponement of meetings**, Central Office strongly suggests you follow this advice:

- If you or a family member are showing signs of illness, please do not attend your Branch meetings.
- Self-isolate if you are displaying even minor flu like symptoms.
- Minimise mass shared transport and wash hands thoroughly and regularly.

Any Shipmate who feels unwell should follow the advice from Public Health England. If a Shipmate is known to have been infected with COVID-19, then it is standard policy for Public Health to contact all those with whom he has been in contact. Full co-operation is expected to ensure the risk to other Shipmates – and members of the public – is minimised. **We recommend the Secretary maintains an attendance book while the outbreak continues to be virulent**

If you are worried about a shipmate, please keep in contact with them **via the phone** and text to keep an eye on their wellbeing. Please look after yourselves, each other and your families.

Very Sincerely,

Bill Oliphant

¹ This advice applies equally throughout CONA
(Conference of Naval Associations)

Royal Naval Association

Building 1/087

Scott Road

HM Naval Base

Portsmouth

Hampshire

PO1 3LU

E bill@royalnavalassoc.com

T 023 92 720782

W royal-naval-association.co.uk