NZBridge

29 May 2020

To Club Secretaries
CC Regions

Advisory No 7

Our advisory issued earlier this week has been criticised for being flawed, over the top, unnecessarily conservative, not practical. Others have been very complimentary.

Yesterday the Government published details of amendments to the Government Order allowing gatherings of 100 people from midday. This will be of interest as there is a specific reference to Bridge Clubs.

https://covid19.govt.nz/latest-updates/alert-level-2-changes-confirmed-for-friday-29-may/

A bridge club is classed as a social gathering- as long as it does not operate a club-licence for alcohol- with the organiser or other designated individual responsible for record keeping. Clubs will be able to operate with defined, separate areas, with 100 person maximum applying per area, as long as intermingling in common spaces, such as entrances, exits and toilets, can be prevented.

Bridge Clubs have been compared to faith-based gatherings. We see it through a different lens, maybe because we know how clubs' function.

Our overarching objective when constructing the advisory was to protect the welfare of players. Waiting an additional week is a small sacrifice to ensure the likelihood of transmission is de risked as much as possible.

Players need to feel confident that the club is a safe space and the club is taking all the necessary prescribed steps.

Contrary to bridge clubs being classed as a social gathering the mix of attendees is in the older age bracket who are more susceptible to disease.

We are as keen as anyone for clubs to resume and for players to return to the table. Waiting a little longer, we suggest, is not the end of the world. In the intervening period clubs can prepare and do what is needed to open. They can outline to their members what is planned. Let players know if they have Covid-19 symptoms or are unwell not to attend. Let players know what they need to do if they sneeze or cough. Let players know not to intermingle.

Yours sincerely

ALLAN MORRIS
CHAIR, NEW ZEALAND BRIDGE