



## **Withdrawal from World Women's U18 and World Men's U20 participation in IIHF Championships January 2021**

IHA has today advised the IIHF that we are withdrawing from participating in the IIHF 2021 Championships for WW18 DivIIA (Great Britain, Dumfries) and WM20 DivIII (Mexico) because of the situation with COVID-19.

No doubt this is an absolute blow to our young players, some of whom are in their last, or only, year of participation in these tournaments. We are saddened and disappointed for all our players and our dedicated staff who give of their time and effort to develop, prepare, coach, and manage them at the tournaments.

There are many factors that led the Board to this decision with health, safety and financial risk being at the core.

1. Australia continues to have closed internal borders and prohibited international travel with the government indicating restrictions on international travel to continue well into 2021.
2. The requirement to quarantine for 14 days upon return from any international travel, in a hotel at the individuals cost for 14 days, adds 2 weeks to the team's time away from home and work. This is an unacceptable cost and loss of time to players and staff.
3. Insurance to cover sickness due to COVID-19 is not available and represents an unreasonable risk to IHA, staff and players. If illness does occur, we are 16,000km from home in the case of Britain and 12,000km in the case of Mexico.
4. The insurance implications are greatly exacerbated if the entire team is required to quarantine overseas and unable to travel home on time.
5. Given the distances our teams travel, the cost of travel is substantial, and we know that cancellation of flights due to COVID-19 is not covered.
6. The situation worldwide is still uncertain with respect to i)the long-term health implications of contracting COVID-19 and, ii)the trajectory of the pandemic.

All these factors present an unacceptable risk to our players, staff and Ice Hockey Australia. IHA have made this decision with the long-term sustainability of the sport in Australia in mind.

IHA will keep a watching brief on the worldwide situation and assess our participation in the 3 remaining tournaments, being held in March and April 2021, in the coming months.

We thank all the team staff who have been vital in the making of this decision.  
Kind regards

**Miranda Ransome**

**President – Ice Hockey Australia**

*I respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country on which we play our sport.*