



Parachute Association of South Africa

Postal: P O Box 423, Melkbosstrand, 7437
Physical: 4 Janssens Crescent, Melkbosstrand, 7441
Western Cape, South Africa

Tel: +27 21 553 3398
Email: admin@para.co.za
www.para.co.za

Re-introduction of parachuting at PASA dropzones during Lockdown level 2

1. Introduction

SA Government has implemented a Level system for exiting the lockdown where Level 5 is the most severe down to Level 1, the least severe. The current definition of levels allows for sporting activities to be introduced at Level 2.

Dropzones shall take notice of the rules for lockdown level 2 as promulgated by the Government including but not limited to the notices which can be found at <https://www.gov.za/coronavirus/alert-level-2>

PASA has a mitigation strategy to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus, while still operating our dropzones. Dropzones already had various measures in place to minimise the risk of transferring infection before the lockdown. These safety measures are specific to the prevention of Covid-19 for sport jumpers, students and tandem students.

SA-CAA regulates the use of aircraft of various types including the aircraft used for General Aviation (GA). The parachuting community operates aircraft which falls in the GA category. The duties and powers of SCAA has to do with the regulation of aircraft including those used for parachuting.

PASA (Parachute Association of South Africa) is a registered and approved ARO (Aviation Recreation Organization) (CAA/ARO/0004) which oversees and regulates sport parachuting in South Africa. The duties and powers of PASA has to do with the regulation of the sport of parachuting, how, where and under what conditions it may be practised including safety and mitigation protocols relating to COVID-19.

2. COVID-19 administration

2.1 PASA Administration and control

All parachute dropzones in South Africa are members of the Parachute Association of South Africa (PASA). PASA has an accountable manager, a Quality Assurance Manager, and a National Safety & Training Officer.

Management Council:
Vernon Kloppers (Chairman) ♦ Henk van Wyk ♦ Mike Teague ♦ Mark Bellingan (National Safety & Training Officer)

*Approved by the S A Civil Aviation Authority as an Aviation Recreation Organisation - Approval number: CAA/ARO/0004
Registered as a Public Benefit Organisation PBO 930014768*

PASA has control over the safety and training procedures of all the parachuting facilities in South Africa and self-regulates on matters of administration, operations and safety. PASA is capable and mandated to prescribe and exercise control over additional and extraordinary safety rules at dropzones to combat and prevent Covid-19.

It should be noted that to perform parachute jumps in SA, all parachutists are required to have membership with PASA. Membership requires the payment of a membership fee and a registration process inclusive of full disclosure of identity, place of residence, next of kin, medical aid membership etc. Each member has a membership number, license number and (if applicable) rating numbers.

2.2 Declaration of compliance to interim COVID-19 SOP.

Each individual dropzone operating under PASA will need to send a signed copy of this interim SOP to the PASA office (admin@para.co.za) before resuming parachuting under lockdown level 2.

2.3 Dropzone level Administration and control

Each dropzone has a list of paid-up members and each dropzone is affiliated to PASA by means of a yearly membership fee with an accountable person (Dropzone Operator) and Safety Officer/ Chief Instructor for each dropzone.

During the lockdown L2 period, the DZO at each dropzone shall act as the COVID-19 compliance officer. The COVID-19 compliance officer shall be responsible to facilitate and enforce the procedures set out in this interim SOP.

Therefore, there is complete control and oversight over all dropzones and all members.

This ideally lends parachuting to be reintroduced during COVID-19 Lockdown level 2, as there is more than sufficient oversight and control as well as traceability of its membership base and dropzones.

2.4 Procedure when a jumper displays signs of Covid-19

2.4.1 At the dropzone

If a jumper displays any of the know signs of COVID-19 during his or her visit to the dropzone, the person shall be asked to leave the dropzone, return to home, apply self-isolation and contact the national Covid-19 helpline on 0800 111 132.

If the person is not in a condition to return to home by themselves, the dropzone should contact the national Covid-19 helpline on their behalf and follow the instructions from the helpline operator.

The dropzone will liaise with the local healthcare authorities for referral according to the South African Department of Health's National Guidelines.

The contacts of the identified possible infected person will be managed according to the South African Department of Health's National Guidelines.

2.4.2 Within 21 days after visiting the dropzone

If any skydive visitor, whether regular member, student or tandem students contacts the dropzone within 21 days of their visit and reports testing positive for Covid-19, the dropzone shall immediately:

- a) Notify the PASA admin office.
- b) Call the national helpline for Covid-19 and inform them of the case and ask for the procedures to contain any possible infections and prevent further infection.
- c) The dropzone will liaise with the local healthcare authorities for referral according to the South African Department of Health's National Guidelines.
- d) The contacts of the identified possible infected person will be managed according to the South African Department of Health's National Guidelines.

3. Regular sport & student parachuting at dropzones in South Africa

3.1 Before coming to the dropzone

- a) All parachutists to complete a pre-screening process. This will be a question and answer type form completed when arriving at the drop zone. (Types of questions: have you travelled overseas in the last 28 days?, have you had Covid-19?, have you been in contact with Covid-19 in the last 28 days?, have you been tested for Covid-19 in the last 28 days?, do you currently have any flu like symptoms?, etc).
- b) All parachutists should be told that if they do not feel well when arriving at the dropzone, they should leave the dropzone and comply with national health regulations for COVID-19.
- c) Request on website and emails to all parachutists "No spectators allowed on the operational side of the dropzone".
- d) Discourage people over 60 years of age and people with underlying health issues.

3.2 Arrival at the dropzone

- a) On arrival, hand sanitizing provided, temperature screening before entering the premises and verbal confirmation at entrance that they have completed and submitted the pre-screen form, and that they are feeling well.
- b) Anyone not on a pre-manifest list should not be allowed in until they have completed and submitted the pre-screening form.

3.3 Awaiting the parachute jump

- a) Minimise contact with manifest itself and if at all possible pre-manifest or use apps such as [Burble](#) to manifest for a jump.
- b) Minimise entry of parachutists into the manifest area. Only manifest staff should be in manifest.
- c) If parachutists need to go to manifest, maintain a safe distance from manifest window;
- d) Payments should be completed online to minimise contact between manifest and parachutists.
- e) Parachutists will be reminded continually via intercom etc to wash/sanitise hands regularly and maintain social distancing practices. A dropzone has big open spaces and social distancing will be easy to maintain.
- f) Masks should always be worn at the DZ (according to government guidelines).

- g) All hard surfaces around the DZ and bathrooms to be sanitised regularly by dedicated staff during the day.
- h) Canteen staff to wear PPE as required and sanitise after each client.
- i) Posters around the dropzone at various places promoting hand sanitising/washing and social distancing etc.

3.4 Parachute equipment

3.4.1 Experienced parachutist equipment

Experienced parachutists almost always own and use their own equipment. Gear rental shall be treated as per the individual manufacturers' recommendations for COVID-19. This will mitigate the risk of spreading disease through touching equipment that was handled by someone else.

3.4.2 Student parachutist equipment

Student equipment shall be treated as per the individual manufacturers' recommendations for COVID-19. No chemicals or solvents may be used on parachute equipment other than as approved by the equipment manufacturer.

3.5 Procedures during parachute jumping

- a) Masks, a buff pulled down over the mouth and nose or full-face helmet with visor down shall be compulsory in the aircraft.
- b) Where possible, the seat next to the pilot should be left open. Talking to the pilot is discouraged unless essential to safety.
- c) Pilot should wear a mask if he can still complete coms unaffected.
- d) Load sizes shall follow the same guidelines issued by the Department of Transport to minibus taxis. (Check Government gazettes regularly for these guidelines)
- e) The handlebar, sides of door and door handles to be cleaned prior to each load.
- f) Aircraft to be sanitised inside at end of each day and before start of each day.
- g) Nobody permitted to board without wearing a mask, a buff pulled over their mouth and nose or closed full face helmet.
- h) Parachutists, where possible, should minimise the touching of all hard surfaces in the aircraft.

3.6 After parachute jumping

- a) After each jump, parachutists should use hand sanitizer or wash their hands with water and soap as per government guidelines. Hand sanitiser will be provided close to manifest, in the bathrooms, at the canteen and various other point around the dropzone.
- b) Reminders throughout the day to notify manifest if you start to feel ill and then leave the DZ immediately.
- c) For 21 days after skydiving, jumpers are expected to notify the DZ immediately if you suspect you have contracted Covid-19, or of you are tested for Covid-19 or if you have a Covid-19 test that comes back positive.
- d) Parachuting is a closed community and, should tracing afterwards be necessary, it can be carried out easily and very quickly as we have the contact details of all our members.

4. Safety measures specific to the prevention of Covid-19 for tandem students

4.1 Currency for tandem instructors

It is assumed that most PASA tandem instructors will be uncurrent in August 2020 and will need to follow the recurrency procedures described in the PASA SOPs Section 13.

It is the responsibility of each DZO to ensure adequate recurrency training is conducted for each tandem instructor at their respective dropzones, and that such recurrency training is duly recorded in the tandem instructor's logbook.

Note that recurrency training shall NOT just consist of a tandem jump with a skydiver of 100 jumps and more in the student position, but adequate emergency procedure training shall precede the recurrency jump.

Suggested re-training

- 1 Appoint a tandem instructor leader to organize and conduct the recurrency training.
- 2 Tandem emergency drill shall be conducted with a tandem student in the harness in front of the tandem instructor. If the instructor is handycam qualified, the training shall include emergency procedures with a handycam strapped to the left hand of the instructor.
- 3 All tandem emergencies to be tested until 100% proficiency is attained.
- 4 Tandem emergency aircraft drills to be revisited.
- 5 The first 5 jumps should preferably not be with a handycam.

4.2 PASA Administration and control

Tandem students are a specialized category of student jumpers. They are deemed to be temporary members of PASA when they sign up for training at the dropzone. Each tandem student is attached to a tandem instructor who is a bona fide PASA member.

Prospective tandem jumpers complete a registration process at the dropzone, inclusive of full disclosure of identity, place of residence, next of kin, medical aid membership etc.

Each dropzone will keep the records of tandem students for a period of 6 months minimum, allowing full traceability should it become necessary.

As in the case of sport jumpers, tandem jumpers are subjected to full control and oversight at dropzones. There is sufficient oversight and control as well as traceability of its tandem student base, instructors, and dropzones.

4.3 Before coming to the dropzone

- a) Preferably, tandem student parachuting activities should be arranged on a pre-booked basis only. Prospective tandem students should register and book jumps online before arriving at the dropzone. (Each dropzone shall supply its own online registration system, which could be a mobile app or Google form sheet).
- b) The online registration process should include the completion of a pre-screening form. This will be a question and answer type form completed before arriving at the drop zone. (Types of questions: have you travelled overseas in the last 28 days?, have you had Covid-19?, have you been in contact with Covid-19 in the last 28 days?, have you been tested for Covid-19 in the last 28 days?, do you currently have any flu like symptoms?, etc).

- c) Tandem students shall be briefed to bring their own jump clothing as dropzones shall not issue and rotate jumpsuits between students. A complete description of clothing, safe for tandem jumping, must be conveyed to the students during the pre-booking phase. Arms and legs should be covered, and everyone shall bring their own gloves.
- d) Tandem students and anyone accompanying them should be told that if they do not feel well before coming to the dropzone, they should not come to the dropzone.
- e) Request on website and emails to all prospective tandem students "No spectators allowed on the operational side of the dropzone".
- f) Discourage people over 60 years of age and people with underlying health issues.

4.4 Arrival at the dropzone

- a) On arrival, hand sanitizing provided, temperature screening before entering the premises and verbal confirmation at entrance that they have completed and submitted the pre-screen form, and that they are feeling well.
- b) No queuing allowed. The dropzone booking office should spread the arrival of tandem students in such a fashion that there will never be more than the equivalent of 2 aircraft loads of tandems on the operational side of the dropzone premises.
- c) Only tandem students will be allowed in the operations area, no spectators.
- d) A gate guardian should be posted to ensure the students get directed and controlled efficiently.
- e) Anyone not on a pre-manifest list should not be allowed in until they have completed and submitted pre-screening form.

4.5 Awaiting the tandem parachute jump

- a) Minimise contact with manifest itself and if at all possible pre-manifest or use apps such as [Burple](#) to manifest for a jump.
- b) Minimise entry of parachutists into the manifest area. Only manifest staff should be in manifest.
- c) If tandem students need to go to manifest, there should be signage to remind them to maintain a safe distance from manifest window.
- d) Payments should, wherever possible, be completed online to minimise contact between manifest and tandem students.
- e) Tandem students will be reminded continually via intercom etc to wash/sanitise hands regularly and maintain social distancing practices. A dropzone has big open spaces and social distancing will be easy to maintain.
- f) Masks should be worn at the DZ at all times (according to government guidelines).
- g) All hard surfaces around the DZ and bathrooms to be sanitised regularly by dedicated staff during the day.
- h) Canteen staff to wear PPE as required and sanitise after each client.
- i) Posters around the dropzone at various places promoting hand sanitising/washing and social distancing etc.

4.6 Tandem Parachute equipment

4.6.1 Student parachutist equipment

- a) Tandem Student equipment shall be treated as per the individual manufacturers' recommendations for COVID-19. No chemicals or solvents may be used on parachute equipment other than approved by the equipment manufacturer.

- b) Student goggles shall be disinfected after every jump using 60% alcohol or hot water and soap.

4.7 Procedures during tandem parachute jumping

a) General

Due to the enormous airflow during freefall, the molecular volume of shared air between the tandem student and the tandem instructor is 1000ths of times more than what will normally exist between 2 people in close proximity. This high rate of air change (freefalling at around 200km/h) drastically reduces the chances of exhaled air from the student reaching the instructor or vice versa. It would be significantly safer for a tandem pair to flying together than 2 people being seated next to each other in a taxi.

b) For instructors:

- i. Mask, a buff pulled down over the mouth, plus full-face helmet with visor down shall be compulsory in the aircraft.
- ii. Full protective jumpsuit, no bare arms or legs.
- iii. Helmet shall remain closed during freefall and parachute descent.
- iv. Gloves shall be worn at least in the aircraft. (May be remove when tandem pair moves to the door if required for safety reasons.)
- v. Where video is involved, the videographer shall conduct any interviews on the ground from at least 2m away from the student.

c) For tandem students:

- i. Students shall wear a mask, together with a buff pulled over the mask and folded in the recommended way behind the head to ensure a tight fit that will stay on during freefall.
<https://www.facebook.com/VigilAAD/posts/3191683374200617>
- ii. Students shall wear full protective clothing, no bare arms or legs.
- iii. Goggles shall be worn from exit until landed back on the ground. The early removal of goggles during canopy flight is not allowed.

d) For pilots and aircraft:

- i. Load sizes should be reduced, along the same guidelines issued by the Department of Transport to minibus taxis (Check Government gazettes regularly for these guidelines).
- ii. Aircraft jump door shall be kept in the open position to ensure sufficient ventilation of fresh air. (Doors may be closed intermittently to comply with door STC stipulations for take-off.)
- iii. The handlebar, sides of door and door handles to be cleaned prior to each load.
- iv. Aircraft to be sanitised inside at end of each day and before start of each day.
- v. Nobody permitted to board without wearing a mask, a buff pulled over their mouth and nose or closed full face helmet.
- vi. Tandems students, where possible, should minimise the touching of all hard surfaces in the aircraft.

4.8 After tandem parachute jumping

- a) After each jump, parachutists should use hand sanitizer or wash their hands with water and soap as per government guidelines. Hand sanitiser will be provided close to manifest, in the bathrooms, at the canteen and various other point around the dropzone.

- b) Reminders throughout the day to notify manifest if you start to feel ill and then leave the DZ immediately.
- c) Videos and certificates can be delivered via email and Dropbox / google drive in order to shorten the time spent by the tandem students on the dropzone.
- d) For 21 days after skydiving, tandem jumpers are expected to notify the DZ immediately if they suspect they have contracted Covid-19, or if they are tested for Covid-19 or if they have a Covid-19 test that comes back positive.
- e) Full contact details are kept of each tandem student, therefore, should tracing afterwards be necessary, it can be carried out easily and very quickly.

5. Summary

PASA is in constant contact with other parachute associations internationally and will collect new information and trends from other parachuting centres internationally, particularly where parachuting activities have been resumed after lockdown. We will adapt and incorporate best practices in our own procedures as they become known.

18 August 2020

Parachute Association of South Africa

Website: www.para.co.za

Contact: Vernon Kloppers, Chairman

+27722146040

chairman@para.co.za

Declaration of compliance to interim COVID-19 SOP

Name of PASA Dropzone: _____

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the PASA interim COVID-19 SOP for parachuting at PASA dropzones during Lockdown level 2 as well as the Coronavirus COVID-19 Alert level 2 as published by RSA Government and that I shall abide by these rules.

Name of DZO : _____

DZO Signature : _____

Name of Witness : _____

Witness Signature : _____

Date : _____

Dropzone stamp (if available)