



The impact of COVID-19 on LETR

Scott Whyte
Chairman

LETR International Executive Council

How many times in the past few years have you heard the word 'unprecedented' used to describe a weather event or climate change - here in Australia it has been relentless - when in reality it was a poor choice of words because those things have happened before?

Well in the past six weeks the world has had to confront a crisis that is truly 'unprecedented'!

Not just in our lifetime - I don't think the world has ever ground to a halt as rapidly and comprehensively as has happened in response to the Coronavirus.

The impact on Torch Runners has varied of course - those of you still in the law enforcement workforce are probably working harder than ever before - dealing with social issues not usually encountered on a normal workday.

Some of you may have already or will soon pick up the virus - I hope that your recovery is rapid and complete.

Regardless of the degree that you have been impacted, I am certain that you will have had to push some things onto the backburner - and your LETR activities could fall into that category.

I'd ask that you not let your commitment to one of the finest causes there slip away and be forgotten.

I don't know how long it will be before life returns to normal (or even new normal) but I am convinced that it will happen and when it does the athletes of Special Olympics will be in need of your support and assistance even more than in the past.

I need to bring you up to date with some the changes forced on us by the pandemic.

2020 LETR International Conference - National Harbor, Maryland

The LETR International Executive Council in conjunction with Special Olympics Maryland, LETR Maryland and Special Olympics International have made the decision to cancel the 2020 LETR International Conference due to the current environment with COVID-19 and the hardships it will place on our LETR & Special Olympics Programs.

Planning is underway for the 2021 LETR International Conference which will be held in Chicago.

Whilst the conference will not proceed, we are determined to carry through with as many elements of the agenda as we possibly can.

Annual Awards - Nominations will open for the LETR Hall of Fame, John Carion 'Unsung Hero' and Council Athletes on April 1 and close on Friday, June 26, 2020 (extended by one month).

The timing and method of announcing the inductees and award winners have yet to be determined.

In Remembrance Tribute and Year in Review submissions will open on April 1 and close on Friday, July 17, 2020.

The IACP Photo Contest will open for submissions on May 1 and close on Friday, May 29, 2020.

We will be working on the best way to showcase the IACP Photo and Year in Review submissions. The In Remembrance Tributes will be placed on the Honor Roll in August.

We will also collate the information received from programs about their fundraising and awareness activities and publish the results and various award winners later this year.

In closing, I would like to extend to each and every one of you my best wishes - stay safe and well and we'll be back doing great things for the athletes of Special Olympics soon.