

ROTARY 9910 DISTRICT CONFERENCE

22 – 26 April 2020, VANUATU

Q & A

1. Why has the District Conference in Vanuatu been cancelled?

Due to ongoing concerns and the unknown nature of the current outbreak of COVID-19 we have made the very difficult decision to cancel the District Conference in Vanuatu.

The Conference Committee and Governor Ian can assure you this decision was not made lightly. It is hugely disappointing as it was a key goal of Governor Ian to have this year's conference in Vanuatu. Taking all aspects into consideration we believe the right decision has been made.

2. The New Zealand Government's travel restrictions allow travel to/from the Pacific Islands. Why aren't we continuing with the district conference?

Whilst travel to/from Vanuatu is still possible, we believe the risks of the New Zealand Government or the Vanuatu Government imposing greater restrictions, along with the risk of someone coming down with the virus in Vanuatu, is just too great to ignore.

The Vanuatu Health Service does not have the capability to handle a COVID-19 outbreak.

3. The Vanuatu Government says they are monitoring the COVID-19 situation and are putting safety measures in place. Why isn't that enough?

Public and Government concerns in Vanuatu have escalated and it is reported the Vanuatu President will make an official address to the nation regarding border restrictions, strict control and preventative measures to be implemented. *Source – Vanuatu Daily Post, 17 March 2020.*

4. Why don't we wait a bit longer to see if the situation stabilises or improves

Given the daily escalation of the worldwide COVID-19 situation, many Rotarians had expressed concern and sought clarity regarding the status of the district conference. This, combined with the potential increased financial risk to the district of delaying a decision meant action needed to be taken.

5. I have already paid for my flights. What do I do now?

Those who booked through House of Travel, Milford be assured they are working with Air Vanuatu regarding options available. Please be patient. They are under pressure at the moment due to the changes occurring in the travel industry and will make contact with you in due course.

If you have booked travel through another travel agent we suggest you contact them directly and request advice on the options available to you.

6. I booked flights directly with Air Vanuatu and they are still operating. Will I get a refund?

We recommend you contact Air Vanuatu direct to explore the options available to you.

7. I booked accommodation in Port Vila – will I get a refund?

If you booked accommodation at Warwick Le Lagon through House of Travel, Milford they will be in contact regarding refund. Once again, please be patient whilst they work through all the ramifications of the current situation.

For those who have independently booked accommodation elsewhere or through another travel agent, we suggest you contact them directly about any refund.

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8. Where will the District Conference be now?

Due to various advisories and restrictions being put in place for events and gatherings there will be no postponement, relocation or re-scheduling of our District Conference. Some consideration may be given to digital presentations via online platforms.

All the other New Zealand Rotary districts, and most in Australia, who have not already held their district conferences have cancelled these events.

9. Will I get a refund on my registration fee?

While a deposit fee has been paid to the Warwick Le Lagon, we hope that we can refund most, if not all the fee you have paid. To assist in this process can you please email the conference registration officer, Christine Rasmussen, at rasfambc@gmail.com with your name, registration number and your bank details so a refund can be made to you.

10. If we still want to use our flight and accommodation bookings and travel to Vanuatu, can we do so?

This is your decision and you will need to discuss this with your travel agent, taking in to account any of the Government restrictions.

11. This is the second district conference scheduled for Vanuatu which has been cancelled. What is the district doing to support our fellow Rotarians there?

Our thoughts are with all those who have worked so hard to prepare for the conference, particularly our Vanuatu team. who were looking forward to this event.

The district will continue to support and promote projects undertaken in Vanuatu, both by the local clubs and those based in New Zealand.