

WP&CS of Australia Inc.

WEATHER EXTREMES & EVENT CANCELLATION POLICY

Rationale:

Extremes of weather, such as very high temperatures and severe storms and / rain can pose a serious risk to judges, competitors and spectators, as well as to livestock. In such events, the necessary steps should be taken to ensure the wellbeing of humans and livestock as much as possible.

Aims:

- To educate Regional Promotional Groups in common sense strategies in the event of weather extremes occurring at WPCS Australia approved events.
- To encourage competitors and spectators to protect themselves from possible harmful effects of extreme weather conditions
- To implement a refunds policy in the event of cancellation of events due to weather extremes

Implementation:

- Planning:
 - ✓ Check weather forecasts for the duration and location of the activity.
 - ✓ Ensure all emergency contact numbers for Policy, CFA or similar authority, Ambulance, hospital are on hand in a place known to all organisers.
 - ✓ Consider the implications of forecasts, warnings and associated conditions
 - ✓ Be familiar with procedures for managing severe weather events.
 - ✓ Be aware that you should cancel, postpone or evacuate any events if the environmental conditions come close to exceeding your capabilities.
 - ✓ Know the 'Trigger Points' ie. Catastrophic Fire Rating, excessive high temperatures, extreme storm / lightning forecasts, that may stimulate a decision to cancel, postpone, halt or modify an event.
- In excessively high temperatures (35 degrees & over), where competition continues, Regional Promotional Groups are to request competitors to remove jackets whilst competing. Judges and officials are requested to do the same.
- In temperatures reaches 35 degrees, children aged 12 years and under **must** remove their jackets while competing.
- Cool water is to be made available to all competitors outside the rings, and water is to be offered to competitors and judges, whilst in the ring.



- Competitors are to be encouraged to ensure all livestock have regular access to drinking water.
- Workouts must be adjusted where necessary to suit adverse weather conditions.
- If temperatures are extremely high, events are to be held earlier, or postponed to a cooler time of the day where possible.
- If available, shaded areas such as marquees are to be provided.

This policy is to be read as part of the WPCS Risk Management Manual.

HOT WEATHER STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER

TIMING OF ACTIVITY
PRE-COOLING (by water saturation or the wearing of ice-vests)
CLOTHING (removal of jackets & perhaps vests)

HYDRATION

REST



FIRE

Actions Required:

- On Code Red fire danger days, WPCS of Aust Inc. events identified as being within or bordering a CODE RED rated district MUST cancel or postpone the planned event.
- A nominated phone number, with a recorded message regarding the event taking place must be available.
- Details of this phone number, with the message available from 8 pm the evening before the planned event date, or earlier if possible, must be included on all show information available ie. Programs, catalogues, advertising

Fire Activity When An Event Is Taking Place:

- If it is safe, stop and observe the smoke and assess the following:
 - ✓ Where is the fire?
 - ✓ How big is the fire?
 - ✓ In what direction is the fire moving?
 - ✓ CONTACT an appropriate local authority such as the CFA and report any smoke or fire.
 - ✓ Seek advice from that authority to help inform your actions.
 - ✓ Agree on a regular time to communicate with an external contract for up to date information.
 - ✓ Inform all participants of the authority recommendations.



STORMS / LIGHTNING



Actions Required:

- In the event of severe lightning classes / activities are to be stopped until such time as the lightning activity lessens.
- **Standards Australia 30/30 rule** – if there is 30 seconds or less from the lightning flash to the ‘thunder’ you are in danger and should avoid high and exposed areas. Wait until at least 30 minutes after the last thunder before assuming it is safe to continue the activity.
- **The ‘15 second’ rule** – this means if there is 15 seconds or less from the lightning flash to the ‘thunder’ you should advise attendees to get into a ‘lightning position’.
LIGHTNING POSITION – remove and stay away from metal objects. Spread people out, approx. 15 metres away from one another if possible. Crouch down, feet and knees together, put your head down, cover ears with hands and try to make yourself the smallest target possible while minimising your contact with the ground.
DO – suspend all outdoor activities and seek safer less exposed ground. Try to find an enclosed structure. Get inside vehicles if possible, close the windows and avoid touching metal. Find an area of forest / bush that is protected by a wide area of uniform trees, the smaller the better.
DON'T SEEK SHELTER IN OR NEAR:
 - Shallow caves, towers, tall trees, fences, telephone lines or metal objects
 - Single large trees in the open
 - Rivers, lakes and other bodies of water
 - Don't use communication devices

RAIN / WINDS

Actions Required:

- When rain has been excessive, the grounds should be checked prior to, or during the events being run, to ensure conditions are safe.
- Ensure that any shelters (ie marquees, tents) erected are well anchored to the ground, in case of strong winds. If excessive winds are predicted, dismantling of shelters may be necessary.
- Workouts must be adjusted where necessary to suit adverse weather conditions.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

All weather information and warnings may be found at the Australian Government Bureaus of Meteorology www.bom.gov.au

Fire Information and warnings may be found at:

TAS	www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageld=colCurrentBushfires
WA	www.emergency.wa.gov.au
VIC	www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions
SA	www.cfs.sa.gov.au/warnings-and-incident
NSW	www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fires-near-me
QLD	www.qfes.qld.gov.au/Current-Incidents



WEATHER FORECASTS

Weather forecasts / warnings must be checked at least three days prior, to, and up to the event.

Actions Required:

HIRE OF FACILITIES

- At the time of hire, a written agreement between the facility managers and the RPG should be negotiated, noting any costs incurred in the event of cancellation.

CANCELLATION, CHANGE OF VENUE, OR POSTPONEMENT OF EVENTS

- A nominated phone number with a recorded message regarding the event taking place must be available.
- Details of this phone number, with the message available from 8 pm the evening before the planned event date, or earlier if possible, must be included on all show information available ie. programs, catalogues, advertising.

REFUND POLICY

- If an event has commenced there will be no refunds.
- If an event is cancelled prior to commencement of the event – costs incurred by the show committee prior to the show will be paid and remaining funds will be reimbursed to the member if the amount per exhibitor is \$2 or more.
- If an event is postponed entry fees will not be refunded without a written request from the exhibitor within 7 days of the notification of postponement.
- If an event has to be moved to another venue due to extreme weather events, disease outbreaks, entry fees, minus any administration fees and costs incurred by the show committee prior to the show, will only be refunded with a written request from the exhibitor within 7 days notification of change of venue.
- This Refund Policy must be included in full on all entry forms and catalogues.

TIMING OF EVENTS

- Sporting activities involving moderate to high intensity exercise should be scheduled to avoid conditions where ambient temperatures exceeds or is likely to exceed 36 degrees Celsius.
- Where possible, especially in January and February, events should be scheduled to avoid the hottest part of the day (11 am – 3 pm).
- In high risk conditions, participants should be encouraged to drink fluids at scheduled drink breaks and should be provided convenient access to fluids during activities.



CHILDREN

- At ambient (surrounding air temperature) temperature greater than or equal to 30 degrees Celsius, children have greater difficulty getting rid of heat than adults. Children sweat less and get less evaporative cooling than adults.
- Compulsory removal of jackets at 35 degree temperature.
- Provision of regular drink opportunities. Participants to be encouraged to limit warm ups to minimise increase in body temperatures before competition.



TREATING HEAT ILLNESS



Sports heat exhaustion is characterised by low blood pressure, on completion of exercise. Victims suffer a faint-like collapse with ashen-grey skin. They usually recover rapidly on **lying down with legs raised**.

The difference between heat exhaustion and high risk heat stroke is not always obvious.

Athletes who have collapsed should be rapidly cooled as below:

Heat Stroke: in heat stroke the body's ability to control its own temperature is impaired. Heat stroke is **potentially fatal**. The severity of complications from heat stroke increases with the duration of high body temperature.

Immediate First Aid is essential and potentially life saving. The aim is to lower the body temperature rapidly using the '**strip / soak / fan**' methodology.

Strip off any excess clothing / loosen clothing

Cool by wetting the skin liberally

Fan to aid evaporative cooling

Raise legs to improve blood pressure

Ice placed in groin or armpit is helpful

The person should be immediately referred to or treated by a medical professional. If the person remains ill, confused, vomiting or shows signs of altered consciousness call an ambulance immediately and see medical help.

SOURCES:

1. Smartplay 'Hot Weather Policy a sports injury saviour'
2. Swimming SA Policy Preventing Heat Illness in Swimming
3. Sports Medicine Australia Policy 'Preventing Heat Illness in Sport'
4. EA SA Branch 'Hot Weather Policy & Guidelines'
5. Outdoor Recreation Centre of Victoria Inc 'Guidelines for Consideration of Severe Weather Conditions'. (Supplied by P Davenport, Affinity Insurance Risk Management)



AMBIENT TEMPERATURE & WET GLOBE BULB TEMPERATURE INDEX

Ambient Temperature is the most easily understood guide available and is most useful on hot, dry days.

Wet Globe Bulb Temperature Index

Further guidance may be gained from what is known as the WGBT index. The WGBT is useful when **humidity is high**.

These charts should be referred to and 'recommended management' should be strongly considered.

Ambient Temperature

Ambient Temperature is the most easily understood guide available and is most useful on hot, dry days

AMBIENT TEMPERATURE	RELATIVE HUMIDITY	RISK OF HEAT ILLNESS	RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT
15 - 20		low	
26 - 30	Exceeds 70 %	Low - moderate	Increase vigilance. Caution over-motion
26 - 30	Exceeds 60 %	Moderate	Reduce intensity and duration of events. Take more breaks
31 - 35	Exceeds 50 %	High – Very high	Uncomfortable for most people. Take more breaks. Limit duration of classes to less than 60 minutes per session
36 & above	Exceeds 30 %	Extreme	Very stressful to most people. Postpone to cooler part of day or cancellation

WGBT (Wet Globe Bulb Test)

Further guidance may be gained from what is known as the WGBT index. This is useful when humidity is high

WGBT	RISK OF THERMAL INJURY	RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT FOR SPORTS ACTIVITIES
< 20	LOW	
21 - 25	Moderate to High	Reduce intensity and duration of events. Take more breaks
26 - 29	High – Very High	Limit intensity of activity. Take more breaks. Limit duration to less than 60 minutes per session.
30 & above	Extreme	Postpone to cooler part of day or cancellation.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) produces ambient and WGBT readings for many locations in Australia.

You can check these readings and a guide for the relative risk for locations at www.bom.gov.au/products/IDS65004.shtml or by clicking '**Local Hot Weather Alerts**' button at www.sma.org.au

**THIS POLICY WAS RATIFIED AT THE COM MEETING 15/04/13
AND IS TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY**

