EXTREME WEATHER

(HOT/COLD/STORMS) POLICY

Participation in extreme weather conditions is a risk that can be avoided to ensure the safety of AU Sport members. Remember not only to take players into account but also umpires, officials, volunteers and spectators.

All clubs and members should understand that the document has been written as an "education and awareness" policy. It does not specify maximum temperatures for training, match and participation days, due to the varying policies of the State Sporting Organisation competitions in which AU Sports clubs participate and the diversity of our clubs.

The following information has been adapted from the following resources:

- Sports Medicine Australia SA Hot Weather Guidelines

www.smasa.asn.au/Portals/3/Images/Resources/hot-weather-guidelines-web-download-doc-2007.pdf

- AU Sport 2010 Hot Weather Policy
- AFL National Extreme weather Policy June 2013

www.afl.com.au/staticfile/AFL%20Tenant/AFL/Files/Schedule%207%20-%20National%20Extreme%20Weather%20Policy.pdf

- Australian/New Zealand Lightning Protection Standard (AS/NZS 1768:2007)

Onus on participant:

Participants have a responsibility to ensure that the impact of environmental factors such as extreme heat/cold is not exacerbated by their own actions. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Monitor own hydration levels and ensure adequate fluid intake prior, during and post activity
- Notify Club Officials when affected by heat/cold or when performance is noticeably affected
- Do not take part when ill
- Wear appropriate clothing for the activity and weather conditions
- Apply sun protection (30+ sunscreen) in sunny conditions

Onus on AU Sport and Clubs:

AU Sport and Clubs have the responsibility to ensure the safety of those taking part in any planned activity. Officials should assess the weather risk by reviewing the information provided by the Bureau of Metrology. The following are recommended steps to ensure a duty of care of participants with regard to hot, cold, wet and stormy weather.

HOT WEATHER

Exercising in hot weather accelerates fluid loss, therefore it is important for all clubs to educate their members about the symptoms and be extra vigilant about fluid intake before, during and after playing sport.

The symptoms of heat stress include:

- Deterioration in sporting performance
- Muscle cramps
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Blurred vision

If the symptoms are ignored and left untreated, it can lead to a life-threatening complication known as heat stroke. Clubs must be alert for early symptoms of heat stress or dehydration.

In general, it is recommended that if the forecast maximum temperature at 7.00am on the day of activity is 37˚ or over, all activity should be reviewed with the activity being modified or cancellation considered. If the forecast maximum temperature at 7.00am on the day of training is 35˚ or over, all junior training should be reviewed with the training modified or cancellation considered.

The decision to cancel training is the responsibility of the Coach under the guidelines or Club management. It is recommended that, if the activity continues, all possible modifications listed below are implemented.

Recommended modifications for participating in heat:

- Reduce the duration and intensity of the activity.
- Consider the time of the day that the activity takes place.
- Consider the local environment (ie radiant heat from surfaces, air flow etc).
- For indoor venues, consider the indoor temperature, air flow and air conditioning.
- Consider the type of clothing worn by participants and volunteers.
- Consider the age, fitness levels and medical conditions of those taking part.

- Officials to strongly promote and encourage fluid replacement before, during and after training sessions.
- Officials should provide participants with extra drink breaks throughout the training session.
- Officials to use existing shaded areas or provide additional shade where possible for periods of inactivity.

COLD/WET WEATHER

Officials responsible for conducting and managing activities must assess the situation to ensure the safety of participants. Weather factors such as temperature, wind (speed and chill), rain and snow are all risks that can affect the body's ability to maintain normal temperature and 'cold injuries' (Hypothermia, Frostnip/Frostbite, Chilblain) can occur.

Signs/ Symptoms of Cold Stress:

- Fatigue
- Headache
- Confusion
- Slurred Speech
- Red or Painful extremities
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Numbness/tingling of skin
- Uncontrollable shivering
- Swollen Extremities

Recommended modifications for participating in cold weather:

- Conscious efforts before and after practice to hydrate should be initiated.
- Appropriate clothing should be worn (layers and wind block garments).
- Participants should try and keep dry or dry off as soon as possible.
- Officials must monitor time of exposure.
- Officials should provide shelter, that is dry and warm, blankets or dry clothing.
- Reduce the duration and intensity of the activity.
- Consider the time of the day that the activity takes place.
- Consider the local environment

If the playing surfaces such as ovals and courts are considered too wet on which to participate, find alternate venues or postpone the activities.

AU Sport Ovals

In accordance with the **AU Sport Facilities Policy**, and following consultation with grounds staff and clubs, AU Sport reserves the right to close AU Sport managed fields if they are

considered too wet on which to participate. If it is wet and the ovals have not been closed, clubs are advised to avoid high use areas.

STORMS (thunder and lightning)

When thunderstorms threaten, Club Officials must assess the situation to ensure the safety of players, volunteers and spectators. Generally speaking, when an individual can see lighting and/or hear thunder, people are already at risk.

30/30 Safety Guideline (Lightning Protection Standard)

In the absence of specific information from weather radar, a lightning location system or a specialised warning device, then the 30/30 Safety Guideline should be used. According to the 30/30 Safety Guideline, when lightning is considered to be a possible or actual threat to an activity, the following procedures are applicable:

(a) The observation of approaching storm clouds, the first flash of lightning or clap of thunder, no matter how far away, should heighten lightning awareness. The level of risk depends on one's location (direction and distance) relative to the storm cell and the direction in which the storm system is travelling.
(b) A simple method of determining the distance to the storm cell is to measure the time elapsed from when the lightning flash is observed and when the associated clap of thunder is heard.
(c) Light travels faster than sound. Assuming that the light from the flash reaches the observer instantaneously, and knowing that sound takes approximately three (3) seconds to travel one (1) kilometre, the distance can be determined by using the following rule:

Distance (in Km) = Time from observing the flash to hearing thunder (in 3 seconds)

(d) It is important to remember that lightning may be obscured by clouds so it must be assumed that when thunder is heard, lightning is in the vicinity. In such cases, careful judgment must be used to determine whether a threat exists
(e) The first part of the "30/30" rule is a guide to the postponement or suspension of activities. Most experts agree that the accepted "safe" distance from lightning is greater than 10km. This means that, as the time interval between observing the flash and hearing the thunder approaches 30 seconds, all those in exposed areas should be seeking or already inside safe shelters. A storm cell with lightning activity within 10km constitutes a threat.
(f) The second part of the 30/30 rule provides the criteria for the resumption of activity, which is also applicable to decisions made by the Bureau of Metrology. Here, it is recommended that people wait a minimum of 30 minutes after the last sighting of lightning or sound of thunder. This figure is based on the observation that the typical

storm moves at about 40km/h. Thus, waiting 30 minutes allows the thunderstorm to be about 20km away, minimising the likelihood of a nearby lightning strike.

(g) It is important to emphasise that blue skies and lack of rainfall are not adequate reasons to breach the 30 minute minimum return- to - activity rule.