

# Associated Public Schools of Victoria

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## COMBINED APS/AGSV SPORT ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY - **REVISED**

### 1. CONTEXT

- (a) The APS and AGSV separately and together, oversee competition in a range of sports at a range of venues. Each organisation has in place a considered management structure for overseeing inter-school sporting competition..
- (b) As part of their governance responsibilities the Heads of the APS and AGSV schools have identified the need to provide guidelines for those acting on their behalf in the management of inter-school sporting competition.
- (c) As the APS and AGSV provide a combined competition for Girls Sport and also play representative matches against each other, the Heads have consulted during the formulation of the guidelines that they believe to be appropriate.

### 2. REFERENCE POINTS

- (a) The Heads of the Associations have made reference to appropriate documentation from well credentialed bodies on the likelihood and effects of heat stress and protection against lightning strikes and hail.
- (b) The Heads of the Associations have shared legal advice which inform their responsibilities under what may be regarded as “duty of care”.
- (c) The Heads of the Associations have made appropriate reference to “community standard” regarding the provision of sporting competition in general, and in particular sports.
- (d) The Heads of the Associations have involved their own senior staff who are experienced in the provision of inter-school sporting competitions in the consultative processes.

### 3. THE FUNCTION OF THE POLICY

This is a general policy designed to draw attention to the general risks of heat-related illness or injury in sport and provide precise guidelines for conduct of sporting activities in hot weather and in instances of lightning strikes or hail.

### 4. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Documentation which should be read in conjunction with the policy is provided within Appendix 1.

### 5. POLICY DETAIL

- (a) *Prior to the Event*
  - (i) If at 9.00 a.m. on the day prior to the matches/event the predicted temperature in the Greater Melbourne and Metropolitan area as provided by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) is 40°C or above then the APS/AGSV Sports Offices in conjunction with their Chairs of Heads will by 10.00 a.m. on the day prior cancel all sport (for the sake of clarity this includes indoor and outdoor sport)
  - (ii) Prior to the event the monitoring of the predicted temperature will be the responsibility of the Executive Officers of the respective Associations.

(b) *On the Day of the Event*

Heat:

- (i) At 31°C (ambient temperature) Directors of Sport, Sport Coordinators and Coaches must consider and implement where appropriate management procedures consistent with the advice provided in Appendix 1 which will attempt to ensure that environmental and risk factors relevant to heat stress are minimised.
- (ii) Once the ambient temperature is 36°C or above, then the game/event must be suspended. If the temperature does not fall below 36°C during the subsequent 30 minute period then the game/event must be cancelled. In the case of 1st XI Cricket and Rowing Regattas, competition may resume in the allocated playing time
- (iii) On the day of the event, the responsibility for monitoring temperatures is as described below:

Outdoors:

- (APS) It is the responsibility of the *Home Delegate* or their delegated representative to monitor the BoM Website to determine local temperatures.
- (AGSV) It is the responsibility of the *Home School Sports Coordinator* or their delegated representative to monitor the BoM Website to determine local temperatures.

Indoors:

- (APS) It is the responsibility of the *Home Delegate* or their delegated representative to use a thermometer to gauge the temperature.
- (AGSV) It is the responsibility of the *Home School Sports Coordinator* or their delegated representative to use a thermometer to gauge the temperature.

Central Venue:

- (APS) It is the responsibility of the venue manager to determine the temperature.
- (AGSV) It is the responsibility of the venue manager to determine the temperature.  
(Central Venue managers must be informed of the APS/AGSV Combined Policy)

Electrical storms/ Lightning:

- (i) In the event of electrical/ thunderstorms, (especially if the time delay between thunder and the flash is less than 30 seconds) players, coaches and officials should seek urgent safe shelter. Play should only restart if at least 20 minutes has passed since the last sound of thunder and coaches and officials are confident of player safety.
- (ii) **Severe Hail**  
When safety is compromised by severe hail, coaches and officials should agree to abandon play and seek immediate shelter until the hail stops and it is safe to restart play.

(c) *Major Events*

In the event of an imposed delay or cancellation due to adverse weather for the finals of the APS Combined Sports (Athletics), Swimming & Diving and The APS Regatta, these events may continue when it is safe to proceed in whole or part at the discretion of the Chair of Heads in consultation with the APS Heads and in conjunction with the APS Executive Officer.'

## **6. COMMUNICATION**

- (a) This policy will be communicated by the Chairs of the Heads of the APS and AGSV to:
  - (i) The Executive Officers of their respective Associations
  - (ii) To other relevant senior staff within their Associations
- (b) The Executive Officers and other relevant staff will have the responsibility of communicating the policy to Sports Coordinators within their Schools.
- (c) Any public statements regarding the policy should be made only by the Chairs of the Heads of the respective Associations or by the Executive Officers of the Associations if the Chairs deem it appropriate to delegate that responsibility.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

- (a) The Position Descriptions of the Executive Officers of the respective Associations and of any other relevant Senior Staff must reflect precisely the responsibilities indicated above.
- (b) Position Descriptions for Sports Coordinators within competing Schools must reflect precisely the responsibilities indicated here including the communication to coaches and team managers of the detail within Appendix 1.
- (c) The policy as outlined above has implications for the means of communication between team coaches/managers and senior sports staff on competition days including a review of the use of mobile phones.
- (d) It would be prudent for schools to review the nature of relevant medical information they request from parents/carers regarding the predispositions of students to the effects of heat.

# COMBINED APS/AGSV SPORT ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

## APPENDIX 1 – HEAT POLICY

### 1. CONTEXT

- (a) Heat related illness and injury consequent upon exercise can be severe and in some cases fatal. The danger of heat related illness and injury must never be underestimated. Heat stress during exercise needs to be carefully managed.
- (b) The management of exercise during extreme heat is particularly important in the case of children and young adults (referred to as “children” throughout the policy and supporting documentation)
- (c) The management of elderly personnel who may be acting as officials is also particularly important.

### 2. DETAIL

Environments to which competitors are exposed will vary as will Individual responses to heat stress on the individual. It should be noted that there is a risk of heat related illness or injury at all temperatures, however, the risk is much greater at 30°C or above.

It is important to understand the factors that may contributed to heat stress. What constitutes extreme conditions will vary depending upon:

#### (a) Environmental Factors

- (i) The type of sport e.g. fitness based vs. skill based
- (ii) The venue utilised by the sport e.g. water based vs. field based or indoor vs. outdoor
- (iii) The duration and intensity of the activity
- (iv) The time of day during which the activity takes place
- (v) Humidity of the immediate environment
- (vi) Exposure to Solar Radiation

#### (b) Individual Risk Factors

- (i) Fitness levels of the athlete / official
- (ii) Age of the athlete / official
- (iii) Acclimatisation
- (iv) Hydration levels
- (v) Past history of heat stress (genetic factors)

It is difficult to predict precisely how an individual will respond to heat stress and how likely heat stress is to cause illness or injury in a particular sport. Where there is any doubt, on the basis of medical information provided by parents/carers in relation to a particular individual, specialised medical advice should be sought.

#### (c) Management of Environmental and Individual Risk Factors

Where possible, the factors contributing to heat stress should be managed by attending to:

- (i) Event timing: altering the time of the event to take in the cooler part of the day (e.g. early morning)
- (ii) Reduce the length of the game
- (iii) Ensure all players are well hydrated, prior to and during the event

- (iv) Player rest and rotation
- (v) Pre-cooling
- (vi) Appropriate clothing
- (vii) Use of shade, fans, ice, water etc
- (viii) Acclimatisation to heat through appropriate training

**(d) Signs of Heat-Related Illness or Injury**

- Common symptoms of heat-related illness or injury include (but are not limited to) fatigue, nausea, headache, confusion, light headedness, high heart rate, collapse, dry skin and/or pale skin colour (pale skin colour may occur with or without dry skin).
- If a child complains of feeling unwell during exercise or experiences any of the above symptoms, he or she should **immediately** cease activity and steps should be taken to assist the child to cool down (removal of unnecessary clothing, provision of drinks, move to a cool area with air-conditioning or a fan, spray with water, application of wrapped ice packs to the child's armpits and/or groin area). **Under no circumstances** should a child be permitted or encouraged to continue exercise.
- Medical advice should be sought promptly if the symptoms do not improve rapidly.
- Medical advice should **always** be sought **immediately** if a child collapses.
- If a child suffers heart-related illness or injury, a record should be maintained to assist in treatment and immediate and future management of the condition.

**(e) Guidelines for Avoiding Dehydration (Sports Medicine Australia)**

**General**

Dehydration can occur in the winter months; however, the importance of addressing hydration is underlined in extreme heat.

- Children should not wait to feel thirsty as thirst may not be a reliable indication of fluid needs
- Cool fluids may be absorbed more rapidly than warmer fluids
- Children must avoid starting exercise when dehydrated – they should drink plenty of fluids prior to exercise
- If children do not like the taste of water they may well favour flavoured drinks such as “sports drinks” and low concentration cordial
- If children are well hydrated they should be able to pass a good volume of clear urine in the hour before exercise

**Specific**

- Encourage children to have their own water bottle that they are able to regularly refill to remind them of the need to drink regularly
- A reasonable guideline is the intake of 500ml an hour before exercise
- A reasonable guideline is the intake of 150ml every 15 minutes during exercise
- Children must be actively encouraged to take advantage of all breaks in play to take in fluids
- Students should be encouraged to drink liberally after exercise to ensure full rehydration

## APPENDIX 2

### Local Bureau of Meteorology sites

APS School	BoM Site
BGS	Moorabbin
CY	Viewbank
CCC	Melbourne (Olympic Park)
CWH	Scoresby
GC	Geelong Racecourse
GGG	Geelong Racecourse
HY	Moorabbin
MGS	Melbourne (Olympic Park)
SKC	Melbourne (Olympic Park)
SC	Melbourne (Olympic Park)
WCS	Melbourne (Olympic Park)
WCE	Moorabbin
WCW	Scoresby
XC-BH	Melbourne (Olympic Park)
XC-KH	Moorabbin

AGSV School	BoM Site
ACK	Kilmore Gap (North Central)
CAMB	Viewbank
IVAN	Viewbank
MARC	Viewbank
MENT	Moorabbin Airport
PEGS	Essendon Airport
TPS	Frankston
TRIN	Viewbank
YVG	Scoresby

### Central Venues

Outdoor Venue	BoM site
Nagambie	Seymour
Barwon	Geelong Racecourse
Ballarat	Ballarat
Carrum	Frankston