



AGSV/APS Quality/Condition of Sporting Facilities Guidelines



Statement of Context

- AGSV and APS Sport oversee competition in a range of sports at a range of venues. At AGSV/APS schools, the quality / condition of the venue is primarily the responsibility of the host school. At 'external venues' (in most cases secured by commercial arrangement), the quality / condition of the venue is primarily the responsibility of the provider of that venue.
- As part of their governance responsibilities, the AGSV and APS Heads have identified the need to provide guidelines regarding the quality / condition of sporting facilities / surfaces provided by host schools for sporting competition. For a variety of reasons which are understandable, the quality / condition of surfaces / venues will vary.

Reference Points

In considering this matter, AGSV and APS Sport have relied in large part on what represents community standard across a range of sports. Should the venue be managed externally (i.e. council or commercial venue), communication should also be made regularly with this body.

Aim

In formulating these guidelines, AGSV and APS Sport aim to reflect their Duty of Care for participants of sporting events.

These guidelines are designed to draw attention to the general risks only of injury within sporting competitions and set down guidance to be followed by schools in respect of assessing and monitoring the condition of sporting facilities.

Guideline details

For all venues:

- Delegates/Sports Coordinators (or school representative), in many cases informed by grounds managers and acting on behalf of competing schools, are responsible to their Head / Principal for ensuring that the quality of facilities and surfaces offered at their school for competitions, represents a safe sporting environment so far as is reasonably practicable. They are also responsible for liaising with commercial and other providers to ensure that the quality of facilities and surfaces offered for competition at off campus venues also represents a safe sporting environment so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Delegates / Sports Coordinators (informed by grounds managers or commercial providers) will advise the Head / Principal of the host school prior to the time of competition if there is a significant doubt regarding the quality / condition of a particular venue.
- Appropriate tests will be overseen by Delegates/Sports Coordinators (or school representative) with subsequent advice to the Head / Principal. **Prior to the start of the season** and subject to re-checking during the season, the Delegates/Sports Coordinators should oversee the assessment of playing surfaces to be used in AGSV and APS competition. This initial check may include visual check for grass cover, hardness and evenness. Records should be kept of checks and testing undertaken.

As an example for Australian Rules Football, the following tests could be conducted:

- a) Clegg Hammer assessments – to determine surface hardness as experienced by players running or falling on to the surface
- b) Penetrometer assessments – to assess the impact of the surface hardness on turf root development
- c) Ball Bounce assessments – to determine the impact of the fields playing characteristics
- d) Slip Factor

Communication

- These guidelines and the implications of the guidelines will be communicated by the Chair of the Heads / Principals of the AGSV and APS schools to the Executive Officers, who will advise the Delegates / Sports Coordinators of competing schools prior to the commencement of each season of competition.

Implications for Practice

- The position descriptions of the Executive Officers of the respective Associations and of any other relevant staff should reflect the responsibilities indicated in these guidelines.
- Position descriptions for Sports Coordinators/Delegates within competing schools should reflect the responsibilities indicated in these guidelines including the communication to coaches and team managers.
- The guidelines have implications for the means of communicating between team coaches/managers and sports staff.