



FOOTBALL  
VICTORIA

# EXTREME WEATHER POLICY

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# POLICY STATEMENT

Football Victoria (FV) and its registered clubs and members have obligations to ensure the health and wellbeing of their staff, volunteers, players, officials and spectators.

FV Extreme Weather Policy will assist volunteers, players, officials and spectators to undertake necessary action in cases of extreme weather in order to seek to reduce or prevent illness or injury.

This includes but is not limited to extreme heat, extreme cold, lightning and thunderstorms, air quality and pollution and unforeseen environmental conditions.

## EXTREME HEAT CONDITIONS

### 1.0 RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH HOT WEATHER

FV recognises that there is a risk of an elevated body temperature from high intensity sport in a hot environment.

Heat-related stress can lead to impaired player performance including but not limited to;

- high heart rate
- dizziness & collapsing
- headache
- loss of endurance & skill
- nausea
- pale skin

Symptoms can be enhanced if fluid replacement during exercise is inadequate which leads to fluid loss and dehydration.

In its extreme form, heat can be life threatening. Preventing heat stress and injury maintains optimum performance and improves recovery.

To prevent heat stress, careful planning and preparation is required

Heat stroke is a condition in which body temperature control is impaired. Heat stroke can lead to devastating injuries and is potentially fatal. The severity of complications of heat stroke increases with the duration of high body temperature. Immediate first aid is essential with the aim to lower body temperature rapidly.

### 1.1 PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

- 1.1.1. Clubs should assess the heat stress risk by reviewing information provided only by the [Bureau of Meteorology](#) for the specific location of the activity. Heat stress management strategies should also be applied at all training sessions and matches. FV heat management protocol has been developed with reference to international guidelines, including Sports Medicine Australia, FIFA and FFA, among others.

- 1.1.2. This policy attempts to mitigate the risk of heat related injury when matches are played in cases of extreme heat.
- 1.1.3. In cases where hot weather is of concern FV requires all parties involved in the fixture/training to act with caution and prepare accordingly.

## 1.2 DUTY OF PLAYER/PARENT/GUARDIAN

1.2.1 Players have a responsibility to ensure that the impact of environmental factors such as extreme heat is not aggravated by their own conduct.

1.2.2 Therefore, the following general procedures should be followed by players:

- Ensure adequate fluid intake (min 500 – 750ml) two hours prior to training and matches and (min 500-750mls per half during a match or every 60 minutes of physical activity at training.
- Monitor hydration
- Notify medical and coaching staff when affected by heat or when performance is noticeably affected
- Use water and electrolyte drinks
- Use pre-game, game and post-game cooling strategies
- Do not play in the heat with an illness
- Apply sun protection factor 30+ sunscreen in high UV conditions

## 1.3 DUTY OF CLUB

1.3.1 Clubs have a responsibility to educate players in these guidelines for personal action. All Clubs should monitor environmental factors such as extreme heat both in matches and at any training session or activity administered by the Club. The Club should assess the heat stress risk by reviewing information provided by the Bureau of Meteorology for the specific location, and heat stress management strategies should be applied at all Club administered sessions, activities or games. The following general guidelines should be followed by Clubs:

- Use cooling aids if available – ice vests, spray bottles, sponges, fans (in rooms and on interchange bench) and shade
- Use a Club official to be delegated the primary responsibility of monitoring and managing players for heat stress issues as they arise
- Provide adequate fluids in appropriate bottles
- Ensure trainers/physiotherapist/doctors are fit enough to access as many players as possible during a game
- Coordinate training times/activities outside extreme conditions

## 1.4 COMPETITIONS IN HOT WEATHER

1.4.1 Ambient temperature alone is not the sole determining factor in assessing the risk of heat related injury. In addition to the ambient temperature, a range of other key factors such as humidity, cloud cover, solar radiation, wind, shade, and the time of day can interact to determine the heat load on a players, temperature's for abandonment or postponement of games, training and other football events including trial games, selection trials, clinics, gala days or any other football activity involving physical exertion can be found in below table.

**The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)** reading works as an indicator of the risk of exertional heat illness for a footballer and considers all these factors in providing a temperature reading during training or competition. **The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)** is a measure of the **heat stress** in direct sunlight, which takes into account: temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle and cloud cover (solar radiation) [http://www.bom.gov.au/info/thermal\\_stress/](http://www.bom.gov.au/info/thermal_stress/)

1.4.2 With higher temperatures now occurring more frequently, consideration must be given to the effects of heat and humidity on football participants, and in particular juniors. FV has considered several factors in the development of this policy including year-round High-Performance Programs, the ongoing popularity of summer football and the recent increase in the temperatures experienced at the beginning of the traditional football season. The following direction is provided in accordance with information provided by FIFA, FFA & Sports Medicine Australia. Refer to below table for management on sports activities at trainings and matches.

**Table 1: Management of Sports Activities at Training and Matches**

WBGT	RISK OF HEAT ILLNESS	AGE GROUPS	RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT OF SPORTS ACTIVITIES AT TRAININGS & MATCHES
<b>Less than 20</b>	Low	All Age Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heat illness can occur in distance running</li> </ul>
<b>20 – 26</b>	Moderate-High	MiniRoos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased caution.</li> <li>Increase drink breaks.</li> <li>Activation of section 1.2. &amp; 1.3. of this document.</li> </ul> Abandon or postponement of Fixture at <b>26 WBGT</b> and above.
<b>26 – 29</b>	High-Very High	U12 – U18 Metro & Masters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased caution for all junior competitions as well as all Metro and Masters competitions.</li> <li>Increase drink breaks.</li> <li>Activation of section 1.2. &amp; 1.3. of this document.</li> </ul> Abandon or postponement of Fixture at <b>29 WBGT</b> and above.
<b>30+</b>	Extreme	Seniors, Reserves, U20s & U19s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased caution for all U18+ competitions.</li> <li>Increase drink breaks.</li> <li>Activation of section 1.2. &amp; 1.3. of this document.</li> </ul> Consider abandonment or postponement at <b>30 WBGT</b> and above.

\*For the purpose of this policy a child is a person aged up to and including 16 years of age. FV also notes that an age level of competition does not mean that all players participating in that level of competition will be the same age. It is the parents/guardians and team official's responsibility to ensure that an age appropriated assessment of the WBGT measure is applied notwithstanding the age level of competition.

These are the maximum cancellation temperatures. Abandonment/Postponement of games, training or events at lower temperatures may be necessary depending on local

conditions, humidity, player wellbeing and acclimatisation. Please refer to 1.6 Decision Making Responsibilities.

All participants have a responsibility to carefully consider their physical capacity to participate at high temperatures. Participants who are on medication and/or recovering from illness should exclude themselves from participating in fixtures when temperatures approach the stated thresholds.

## 1.5 PROCESS OF DETERMINATION

1.5.1 Football Victoria requires all clubs to monitor heat via the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) Heat Stress Meter.

1.5.2 In the case the device is not available clubs are advised to refer to the [BOM](#) website and track the [Thermal Comfort Observation](#)

1.5.3 The WBGT can be obtained from the BOM by following the below instructions:

- (a) type "WBGT" into search field;
- (b) select first link "Thermal Comfort Observations";
- (c) choose Victoria
- (d) read off WBGT (sun) from the closest weather station to your location for all day fixtures

<http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV65079.shtml>

**Table 2: Metropolitan Melbourne – Weather Stations Determination**

NORTH	WEST	SOUTH	EAST
Viewbank	Essendon Airport	Phillip Island	Ferny Creek
Bundoora	Melbourne Airport	Rhyll	Fawknor Beacon
Melbourne Airport	Laverton	Cerberus	Scoresby
Melbourne (Olympic Park)	Avalon	South Channel Island	St Kilda Harbour RMYS
Essendon Airport	Sheoaks	Frankston	Viewbank
	Geelong Racecourse	Cranbourne	Coldstream
	Point Wilson	Moorabbin Airport	Melbourne (Olympic Park)

### Regional Victoria – Weather Stations Determination

Please click on below link to identify closest weather station to your location;

<http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/vic-observations-map.shtml>

## **1.6 PROVISIONS FOR DRINKS BREAKS & VARIATIONS TO MATCH CONDUCT DUE TO HEAT**

1.6.1 If, the WBGT is calculated to be above 20 WBGT for all competitions no later than 30 minutes prior to kick-off, the Match Official following consultation with the Match Commissioner (where applicable) and the Medical Officer(s) and or Team Managers of both Home & Away teams, must implement an agreed number of drink breaks for consumption of fluid during each half of the Match.

1.6.2 If, in accordance with paragraph 1.6.1. it is determined that drinks breaks will be implemented in accordance with this Policy, as a minimum there must be at least one (1) drinks break in each half.

1.6.3 Further, additional drinks breaks may be implemented by the Match Official, provided that the number of drinks breaks to occur in the 2nd half of a Match must be at least the same as the number of drinks breaks agreed for the 1st half and the Match Official, following consultation with the Match Commissioner (where applicable) and the Medical Officer(s) and or Team Managers of both Home & Away teams.

1.6.4 Following consultation with the Medical Officer(s), Team Managers, FV, and the Match Commissioner (where applicable), the Match Official must determine whether to:

- (a) commence the Match as per key timings;
- (b) commence the Match as per key timings with provision for drinks breaks for consumption of fluid in accordance with paragraphs 1.6.1 and 1.6.3;
- (c) delay or abandon the Match; or
- (d) postpone the Match.

Any decision under this Policy should be based on the assessment of the potential medical risk of playing in the heat to both the Players and Match Officials.

## **1.7 DRINK BREAK PROTOCOLS**

1.7.1 Where drinks breaks are implemented in accordance with paragraphs 1.6.1. and 1.6.2., the following protocols must apply for conducting drinks breaks during the Match.

(a) Each drinks break will last up to 90 seconds in length and will typically be held approximately 25 minutes into each half (around the 25th and 70th minute respectively) for matches with 90 minutes duration or as determined by Match Official in all other fixtures with reduced match duration.

(b) The Match Official will signal for the drinks break to commence when the ball is out of play in a neutral position in or around the 25th minute mark and 70th minute mark respectively for matches with 90 minutes or as otherwise determined by the Match Official in accordance with paragraph 1.6.3.

(c) The Players and Match Officials must remain on the field of play during the break.

(d) Substitutes and other occupants of the technical area must remain in the technical area and not enter the field of play.

(e) The clock will continue to run, and all time allotted for the break will be added to stoppage time.

(f) The Match Official will signal when there is 15 seconds left in the break at which time Players must take their positions on the field of play.

1.7.2 Where additional drinks breaks are to be implemented in accordance with paragraph 1.6.3, the drinks break protocols will apply, noting however that the specific times for the drink’s breaks will vary as determined by the Match Official following consultation with the Match Commissioner (where applicable) and Medical Officers/team managers.

## 1.8 SCHEDULING OF COMPETITION FIXTURES DURING HOT WEATHER PERIODS DURING THE WEEK OF THE COMPETITION FIXTURE OR PRIOR TO THE COMPETITION FIXTURE

1.8.1 FV reserves the right to postpone or reschedule matches due to hot weather at its sole and absolute discretion.

1.8.2 Where possible FV will work with clubs to ensure fixtures are not scheduled after 11.00am and before 5.00pm on days where extreme weather is forecast.

1.8.3 **All clubs, teams, players, parents and officials fixtured to play in forecasted extreme weather conditions must be prepared to adhere to all alterations of the original kick off times as required by FV.** In the instance where one club is unavailable to play amended fixture times, FV may at its sole discretion deem the match a 3-0 result against the offending team.

## 1.9 AT GAME: PROCEDURE FOR ABANDONMENT/POSTPONEMENT OF MATCHES & DECISION MAKING RESPONSIBILITES

Below is a table identifying;

- **Responsibilities-** competitions and officials required to abide by the heat management action list.
- **Maximum WBGT** - If the measured WBGT is at or above the Maximum WBGT as per the determined age groups 30 minutes prior to kick off, the match may be abandoned/postponed refer to table below for **Competition Guidelines**.

**Table 3: Competition Guidelines for Abandonment/ Postponement**

COMPETITION	RESPONSIBILITY TO POSTPONE OR ABANDON	MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE (WBGT - THERMAL COMFORT OBSERVATIONS)
<b>MiniRoos</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Club Official &amp; Away Club Official</li> <li>• Match Official to review and verify decision</li> </ul>	26WBGT
<b>U12 – U18 Metro &amp; Masters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Club Official &amp; Away Club Official</li> <li>• Match Official to review and verify decision</li> </ul>	29WBGT



<b>Seniors, Reserves, U20's, U19's Competitions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match Official <b>to consider</b> in collaboration with Home Club Official &amp; Away Club Official</li> </ul>	<b>30WBGT</b>
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\*For the avoidance of doubt, any player selected under the age of 16 in senior squads must be managed by respective clubs and play must be limited if the WBGT exceeds 29.

- 1.9.1 In the event of hot weather, as outlined above, it is the responsibility of the home club to monitor the WBGT and local conditions and inform the match official of current conditions.
- 1.9.2 Should the WBGT be 29 or greater for junior football, the Match Official must liaise with the Match Commissioner or Match Official mentor (where applicable) and the Medical Officer(s)/team managers of both teams to assess the risk to the Players and Match Officials and abandon or postpone the fixture.
- 1.9.3 Should the WBGT be 30 or greater for senior football the Match Official must liaise with the Match Commissioner or Match Official mentor (where applicable) and the Medical Officer(s)/team managers of both teams to assess the risk to the Players and Match Officials. The match official is to consider postponement or abandonment.
- 1.9.4 In the instance a match has been postponed or abandoned the match will be rescheduled at FV's discretion. Where one club is unavailable to play the new fixture times, FV may at its sole discretion deem the match a 3-0 result against the offending team. The home club in conjunction with the Match Official, Away Club Official and where applicable Match Commissioner are always required to utilise the WBGT. Should the device be unavailable, only information from the [Bureau of Meteorology \(BOM\)](#) should be used.

## **1.10 DURING THE GAME: PROCEDURE FOR ABANDONMENT/POSTPONEMENT OF MATCHES & DECISION MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1.10.1 In extreme cases If the measured temperature rises to or above the Maximum WBGT after kick-off, the identified Home Club Official may advise the Match Officials at the next drink break or at half time. Home Clubs are required to validate their readings with the Away Club Official and the Match Official.
- 1.10.2 At this point of play the Match Official in conjunction with the Team Managers may choose to abandon the match.
- 1.10.3 Match Official must submit to FV an incident report noting the abandonment.
- 1.10.4 FV reserves the right to postpone or reschedule matches due to hot weather at its sole and absolute discretion.

# 1.11 TRAINING IN EXTREME HOT WEATHER

**Table 4: Club & Player Responsibilities (Training)**

WBGT	RISK OF HEAT ILLNESS	AGE GROUPS	PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY	CLUB RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Less than 20</b>	Low	All Age Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heat illness can occur in distance running</li> <li>Caution over exertion</li> <li>Ensure adequate fluid intake (min 500 – 750ml) two hours prior to training and matches and (min 500-750ml) per half during a match or every 60 minutes of physical activity at training from this point on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heat illness can occur in distance running</li> <li>Caution over exertion</li> <li>Provide readily available drinks to ensure hydration</li> </ul>
<b>20 – 26</b>	Moderate- High	Miniroos	<p>In addition to WBGT Less than 20;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor hydration</li> <li>Notify medical and coaching staff when affected by heat or when performance is noticeably affected               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use water and electrolyte drinks</li> </ul> </li> <li>Use pre-game, at game and post-game cooling strategies</li> <li>Do not play in the heat with an illness</li> <li>Apply sun protection factor 30+ sunscreen in high UV conditions</li> </ul>	<p>In addition to WBGT Less than 20;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use cooling aids if available – ice vests, spray bottles, sponges, fans (in rooms and on interchange bench) and shade</li> <li>Use a Club official to be delegated the primary responsibility of monitoring and managing players for heat stress issues as they arise</li> <li>Provide adequate fluids in appropriate bottles</li> <li>Coordinate training times/activities outside extreme conditions</li> </ul> <p>Clubs must ensure: Trainers/physiotherapist/doctors are fit enough to access as many players as possible during a game</p>
<b>26 – 29</b>	High – Very High	U12 – U18 Metro & Masters	<p>In addition to WBGT Less than 20 – 26;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit intensity</li> <li>Take more breaks</li> <li>Limit duration to less than 60 minutes per session</li> <li>Consider postponement to a cooler part of the day or cancellation</li> </ul>	<p>In addition to WBGT Less than 20 – 26;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit intensity</li> <li>Take more breaks</li> <li>Limit duration to less than 60 minutes per session</li> <li>Consider postponement to a cooler part of the day or cancellation</li> </ul>
<b>30+</b>	Extreme	Seniors, Reserves, U20s & U19s	<p>Consider abandonment or postponement to a cooler part of the day or cancellation at <b>30WBGT</b> and above.</p>	<p>Consider abandonment or postponement to a cooler part of the day or cancellation at <b>30WBGT</b> and above.</p>

- 1.11.1 If extreme conditions as set out in above table are evident training sessions are to be undertaken and completed by 11.00am or after 5.00pm. No outdoor training activities are to occur between 11.00am and 5.00pm.
- 1.11.2 Training sessions that are conducted in an air-conditioned venue may continue.
- 1.11.3 During summer and warmer month's clubs and competition organisers are required to regularly refer to the below documents and follow the relevant guidelines;

- [SMA Hot Weather Guidelines](#)
- [Beat the Heat Fact Sheet to players, parents and team official](#)
- [Bureau of Meteorology-BOM website for all weather forecasts and information](#)
- [Sports Medicine Australia –UV Exposure and Heat Illness Guide](#)
- [Cancer Council Australia –Sun Protection Checklist for Sporting Groups](#)

# EXTREME COLD WEATHER CONDITIONS

## 2.0 RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH COLD WEATHER

In conditions where extremely cold temperatures prevail, health risks exist for players not acclimatised to such conditions. It is advised that officials should note the following progressive signs of the onset of hypothermia:

- Shivering
- Cold sensation, goose bumps, confusion and numbness
- Intense shivering, lack of co-ordination and sluggishness
- Violent shivering, difficulty with speech, confusion, stumbling, depression
- Muscle stiffness, slurred speech and vision impairment

## 2.1 DUTY OF CLUB & PLAYERS

2.1.1 At the earliest signs of the above symptom's officials should:

- Take the participant to a dry environment and warm the player with blankets or extra dry clothing free from further exposure to the elements
- Substitute wet clothing for dry where practical
- Maintain the intake of fluids

2.1.2 All measures should be taken to ensure no players or officials are put at risk of serious health concerns by participating in a game or training session where extreme cold weather may be present. When football matches or training sessions are scheduled to be conducted at times when the above conditions may prevail, the following strategies should be considered:

- Allow alterations to uniforms to provide more warmth for players
- Choose alternate training sessions not exposed to the weather conditions

## 2.2 COMPETITIONS AND TRAINING IN EXTREME COLD WEATHER

Clubs may decide to cancel training session if weather conditions are deemed to be too cold.

Please find below table as a reference for determining outcomes of training and in competition matches during extreme cold weather conditions.

**Table 5: Competition Guidelines for Fixtures & Training in Extreme Cold Weather**

<b>CONDITIONS</b>		
<b>Extreme Heavy Rain / Poor Visibility</b>	<b>Extreme Hail/Ice on Ground</b>	<b>Extreme Cold Weather</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play/Competition should be suspended until hazard clears. If it continues to rain heavily during that time, it is recommended that play/ competition be postponed until further notice.</li> <li>• The match official will determine whether play is safe to continue or is delayed until hazard clears.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play/ Competition should be suspended immediately until hazard clears.</li> <li>• Refer to weather radar for official report and where available, shelter should be offered for players/ spectators/officials until cleared.</li> <li>• The match official will determine whether play is safe to continue or is delayed until hazard clears.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When severe winter weather is forecast, weather reports and traffic conditions within the immediate area should be monitored.</li> <li>• If the ground is slippery from frost, snow, rain or mud, or if the temp drops below 8 degrees, it is at the discretion of</li> <li>• The match official will determine whether play is safe to continue or is delayed until hazard clears.</li> </ul>

# LIGHTNING & THUNDERSTORMS

## 3.0 RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH LIGHTNING

Lightning can present a risk of death or serious injury to outdoor sports participants. It accounts for around 10 deaths and over 100 injuries in Australia each year. Lightning does not need to directly strike a person to cause death or serious injury.

A person touching, or close to, an object struck by lightning may be affected by a side-flash or transferred energy (for example, being within 20m of a tree struck by lightning is considered to be in the lethal zone).

Amplified awareness of lightning risk on a training or match day due to BOM weather warnings leading up to the activity should remain of concern for Club officials on match day until the activity has finished.

## 3.1 DUTY OF CLUB/PLAYERS

3.1.1 Clubs & participants must not let the desire to start or complete a match or training session hinder their judgment when the safety of players, coaches or spectators is at risk.

## 3.2 PRECAUTIONS

3.2.1 The threat to personal safety is greatest if a person is outdoors when a thunderstorm is local.

3.2.2 Experts consider that a safe distance from lightning is more than 10km. Therefore, when lightning is within 10km, appropriate shelter should be sought.

3.2.3 In addition, it is suggested that clubs, comply with the Australian Lightning Standard (AS1768-2007) published on 10 January 2007 (Lightning Standard). While compliance with the Lightning Standard will not necessarily prevent damage or personal injury due to lightning, it will reduce the probability of such damage or injury occurring. This policy has been developed with reference to the Lightning Standard Section 3 'Precautions for Personal Safety.

3.2.4 Teams and officials should proceed to the venue unless otherwise directed.

3.2.5 In the absence of specific information from a weather radar or specialised lightning warning device, the **30/30 Safety Guideline** (described in further detail below) should be used.

Note: that lightning may be obscured by clouds. If thunder is heard, you should assume lightning is in the vicinity. Similarly, just because there are blue skies overhead, does not mean that the danger has passed. Careful judgment must always be used to determine whether a threat exists. If in doubt, stop outdoor activities and seek safety under an appropriate shelter.

## 30/30 SAFETY GUIDELINE

3.2.6 In the absence of specific information from weather radar [BOM](#) or a specialised warning device then the 30/30 Safety Guideline should be used. This is used because;

- 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.
- 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.
- 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).

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.

3.2.7 According to the 30/30 Safety Guideline, when lightning is considered to be a possible or actual threat to a Football Victoria sanctioned fixture the following procedures are applicable:

### STEP 1 - STOP ACTIVITY

- 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.

### STEP 2 – RESUME ACTIVITY

- The second part of the 30/30 rule provides the criteria for the resumption of activity.
- 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.
- This decision to delay or suspend play as well as resume play will be made by the match officials based on information obtained from the BOM, the 30/30 safety guidelines and discussions with the Club team managers.
- Only in the event of the 30/30 safety guideline an official fixture may resume after a 30-minute delay. Matches are not to be abandoned whilst waiting 30 minutes after the last sighting of lightning or sound of thunder.
- 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.

### **3.3 PRIOR TO MATCH DAYS, TRAINING AND EVENTS**

The following checks should be made prior to Match Days, training activities and outdoor events:

- Check weather forecasts for likely thunderstorms on the BOM website [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au);
- Where thunderstorm activity is forecast, clubs, Associations and event organisers should continue to monitor forecasts in the days and hours leading up to the event and take note of any warnings posted.
- Consider informing participants ahead of the event that it may be disrupted due to lightning risk.

### **3.4 CLUB RESPONSIBILITY AT TRAINING**

3.4.1 All Clubs competing in a competition administered by the Football Victoria should monitor environmental factors such as lightning both in matches and at any training session or activity administered by the Club. The Club should assess the lightning risk by reviewing information provided by the BOM.

The following general guidelines should also be followed:

- a) If a lightning threat emerges, the nominated Club Official must contact all relevant staff and provide updates on a regular basis.
- b) A decision to delay, suspend or resume training or game should be made in consultation with all relevant match officials, coaching and administration staff.
- c) If players are training when the lightning threat becomes real then they should leave the training venue immediately and take shelter inside a building or metal framed car. They should not shelter under or near trees or bodies of water.
- d) Once the storm's path has been reassessed, there must be a minimum of 30 minutes elapsed before returning to play/training.
- e) When there is no access to the BOM, the "30/30" rule serves as a guide for the suspension and subsequent resumption of activities.



3.4.2 In the event of lightning being present in the proximity of the venue during the course of a match or training session, play/training shall be stopped, and all involved parties are to return to the pavilion.

### **3.5 SAFETY MEASURES**

When outdoors, measures to reduce the risk of injury caused by lightning strikes include the following:

- Seek shelter in a substantial building with at least normal headroom or within a totally enclosed, metal bodied vehicle such as car or truck with metallic roof. If in a car, close the windows and avoid contact with metallic parts and remove any hands-free mobile telephone attachments from the body. Conventional fabric shelters and tents offer no protection; small sheds offer uncertain protection.
- Do not shelter under trees, particularly an isolated tree. If surrounded by trees, seek a position outside the foliage and crouch, keeping the feet together.
- Do not shelter in small sheds, pagodas, walkways etc. with low unearthed metallic roofs supported on wooden or other electrically insulating materials.
- Do not touch or stand close to any metallic structures, including wire fences, light towers, or goalposts.
- Do not stand on or under bridges or other elevated structures.
- Do not carry metallic objects such as umbrellas or golf clubs and remove metallic chains and other jewellery, particularly from the head and upper parts of the body.
- If on an open field away from any shelters, keep as low and as small as possible, i.e. crouch keeping the feet together and do not touch any objects or people near you. A dry ditch, valley or any depression in the ground is safer than an elevated or flat terrain. Do not lie on the ground as dangerous voltage could develop across the body by earth currents generated by a nearby strike. Footwear or a layer of non-absorbing, insulating material, such as plastic sheets, can offer some protection against earth voltages.
- Do not ride or sit on bicycles or motorcycles, or otherwise elevate the body above the surroundings.
- Do not swim or wade in any body of water. Exit the water and move to a safe place

# AIR QUALITY AND POLLUTION

## 4.0 RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH POOR AIR QUALITY

- Weather conditions, and events like fires can affect air pollution levels. For example, smoke from bushfires and wind-blown dust impact Victoria's air quality. Smoke can affect people's health.
- People with heart or lung conditions (including asthma), children, pregnant women and older people are more sensitive to the effects of breathing in smoke.
- People with existing heart or lung conditions (including asthma) should follow the treatment plan advised by a doctor

## 4.1 PRECAUTIONS

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is used by public health authorities to quantify air quality, including;

- Localised air pollution levels
- The common contributing pollutants
- The potential health risks and advice relating to adjusting normal activity Consecutive days of exposure to polluted air can have a cumulative effect.
- To have more clarity on the air quality in your area please click [EPA](#) or [AQICN](#)

## 4.2 GENERAL AIR QUALITY AT THE GROUND / TRAINING FACILITY

- 4.2.1 FV strongly advises that if air quality measures are over 200, match officials/ club officials suspend play/training.
- 4.2.2 Noting that 'real time' measures may not be available, the 24-hour rolling average measure should be considered along with the other points below (acknowledging that the 24-hour rolling average may over or underestimate the actual air quality at the time of judgement).
- 4.2.3 Air quality measures for Victoria can be found via the link [here](#). Clubs are to type in the suburb of their venue to determine the air quality.

## 4.3 AQI PARAMATERS

4.3.1 With reference to the [Smoke Pollution and Exercise Guidelines](#) used by the Australian Institute of Sport, the following guidelines are set for play and training.

**Table 6: Competition Guidelines for Fixtures & Training (Air Quality)**

IN VENUE AQI	ACTION PLAN
<b>Below 150</b>	Matches to go ahead as planned.
<b>150-200</b>	The Match Official assesses conditions in consultation with the club nominated officials and medical officers, with matches to proceed unless otherwise deemed unsafe.
<b>200+</b>	Matches are immediately ceased until such time as the AQI returns to an acceptable range and the Match Official in consultation with the club nominated officials and medical officer agree it is safe to play.

You should consider the ratings on these information sites seriously before conducting any form of physical activity. Further information can be found in below timetable:

Air Quality Rating	Good 0-49	Moderate 50-99	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups 100-149	Unhealthy 150 - 199	Very Unhealthy 200 - 249	Hazardous 250+
<b>Physical Activity</b>	✓	✓	✓	?	X	X
<b>Description</b>	Air quality is considered satisfactory and air pollution poses little or no risk	Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution	Members of sensitive groups, especially those under the age of 14 and over the age of 65, pregnant women or those that suffer from heart and lung conditions, may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects	Health Warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.	Health Alert: Everyone may experience more serious health effects

- Club and Match Officials are instructed to consider the above factors, and should conditions endanger the health and safety of participants, they may abandon the match and or training sessions.
- Should the factors listed above not warrant the match/training sessions to be abandoned, please continue to exercise with care for participants and members who may suffer respiratory problems or adverse effects.

- Clubs are required to be vigilant to the conditions at their respective match/training sessions and the wellbeing of participants and members.

## **4.4 EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

- Anyone experiencing wheezing, chest tightness and difficulty breathing should call Triple Zero (000).
- If you have concerns about your health you should seek medical advice or call Nurse on Call on 1300 606 024.

# UNFORESEEN ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

In the case of any other events of extreme weather or environmental conditions, including but not limited to extremely strong winds, flood, extreme fire danger, or fires being present in the vicinity of the training session/game, consultation of all parties involved must take place to determine the safest outcome for all involved.

- Club and Match Officials are required to stay updated on all developments via the [‘Incidents & Warnings’ website](#), which can also be downloaded as a smartphone application ([click here](#))
- Warnings will be issued when an emergency is likely to impact you. They provide you with information on what is happening. The aim is to provide you with as much information - to help you to make good decisions.

## 5.0 VIC EMERGENCY – INCIDENTS & WARNINGS

- Clubs and or competing teams that fall within the **Yellow Zone**; Please note your match/training may remain as scheduled unless the hazard classification changes to ‘Orange’. Appointed match officials to fixtures within the Yellow Zone will be sent the relevant information regarding fixtures and to monitor conditions.
- Clubs and or competing teams that fall within the **Orange Zone**; Further to the above, if conditions pose a danger to participants and or the hazard classification changes to ‘Red’, the match/training may be abandoned.
- Clubs and or competing teams that fall within the **Red Zone**; Further to the above, if conditions pose a danger to participants and or the hazard classification changes, the match/training may be abandoned.

Without limiting FV’s rights under the relevant Rules of Competition and the provisions of this Extreme Weather Policy, FV may in its sole and absolute discretion reschedule, delay, abandon or postpone any Match which is scheduled to be played in extreme weather in the best interests of a variety of stakeholders including players, fans, employees and volunteers attending a match day venue. In making its decision, FV may consult with the relevant Clubs and other necessary stakeholders.