Extreme Weather Policy and Guidelines – August 2024

Purpose

In partnership with our member schools, the Independent Girls Schools Sports Association (IGSSA) is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all participants and attendees, including students, staff, volunteers, officials, families, and spectators.

This policy defines IGSSA's strategies for mitigating and managing risk associated with extreme weather conditions.

Scope

This policy guides staff, officials, volunteers, member schools and all other individuals involved in facilitating, organising and supervising school sport matches. It should be read in conjunction with the Hot Weather and Extreme Conditions policies in place in member schools, and schools should refer to these policies for guidance in relation to training sessions.

Policy Detail

Hot Weather

Saturday Morning Sport - Middle and Senior School Competitions

Matches will be cancelled or cease when the temperature at the location of the sporting fixture reaches **38 degrees Celsius** as reported on the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website/app.

Mid-Week Sport – Middle and Senior School Competitions

If, at 8.00am the maximum daily temperature for the location of the sporting fixture is predicted to reach **36 degrees Celsius or above** on the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website/app, that afternoon's match will be cancelled.

Mid-Week Sport – Junior School Competitions

If, at 8.00am the maximum daily temperature for the location of the sporting fixture is predicted to reach **35 degrees Celsius or above** on the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website/app, that afternoon's match will be cancelled.

For airconditioned venues, the Host School will consult with the participating school(s), regarding the conditions in the venue, and determine if safe to proceed in alignment with own school polices.

Inclement Weather (Junior, Middle and Senior School Competitions)

In the event that matches may need to be cancelled due to heavy rain, hail, stormy or windy weather, or any other unforeseen circumstances (such as the playing surface deemed unsafe), the decision to cancel will be made and communicated by the Head of Sport at the host school, as early as practical, but no later than 2pm on the day of competition.

Lightning/Thunderstorms (Junior, Middle and Senior School Competitions)

When lightning is considered to be a threat, staff, officials, and volunteers should be vigilant and apply the **"30 – 30 Rule"**:

- The 30/30 rule is a lightning safety protocol and governs the suspension and subsequent resumption of activities. The requirement is to seek shelter when the lightning activity is too close (as defined below). The observation of approaching storm clouds, the first flash of lightning or clap of thunder should heighten lightning awareness. The level of risk depends on the location (direction and distance) of the storm cell and the direction in which the storm is travelling.
- The proximity of lightning may be determined by counting the seconds between the lightning flash and the thunderclap. Each second represents approximately 330 metres. If the time measured between the lightning and the thunder is less than 30 seconds, that flash was within 10 kilometres and there is a high change further strikes will happen within 10 kilometres. All those in exposed areas should seek safe shelter.
- Individuals should wait a minimum of 30 minutes after the last sighting of lightning or sound of thunder before the resumption of activity. The activity shall be abandoned if weather conditions fail to improve, and/or time does not allow the continuation of the match.
- Lightning may be obscured by clouds so it must be assumed that when thunder is heard, lightning is in the vicinity. Blue skies and lack of rainfall are not adequate reasons to breach the 30-minute minimum return to activity rule.

External Links

Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)

Australia's official weather forecasts & weather radar - Bureau of Meteorology (bom.gov.au)

Sports Medicine Australia – Hot Weather Resources

Hot Weather | Sports Medicine Australia (sma.org.au)

Compliance

The IGSSA Extreme Weather Policy and Guidelines will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis.