

## **Appendix 5- Extreme Weather Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Environmental factors regularly affect the playing of Soccer on the Sunshine Coast. While environmental factors will not usually influence whether a soccer game should commence or continue to be played, occasionally extremely adverse weather conditions may give rise to a need to assess whether players and/or officials are in environmental danger. This policy sets out the approach that Sunshine Coast Churches Soccer Association and SCCSA Clubs should adopt when assessing extreme weather conditions.

#### **1. Hot Weather**

With higher temperatures now occurring more frequently, consideration must be given to the effects of heat and humidity on elite and amateur athletes and particularly children involved in soccer activities.

##### **1.1 Hot Weather Guidelines**

The following is provided in accordance with information provided by Sports Medicine Australia (SMA). That information is referred to below under “References and Links” and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

During summer and warmer months, clubs and competition organisers are required to:

- A. Refer to the SMA Hot Weather Guidelines
- B. Provide a copy of the SMA Beat the Heat Fact Sheet to players, parents and team officials
- C. Provide information in relation to sun safety
- D. Schedule games and training for cooler parts of the day or evening
- E. Check weather forecasts the day before and closely monitor local weather conditions
- F. Whenever available, use a weather gauge, Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer (WBGT) or Heat Stress Meter to monitor player conditions
- G. Ensure regular hydration (water/fluid intake) by players, officials and other participants
- H. Monitor the wellbeing of players, officials, volunteers and staff
- I. Increase breaks during games and training to allow rest in shade and fluid intake - referees should consider allowing at least a 2 minute drinks break in each half when ambient temperatures exceed 32°C.

##### **1.2 Recommended Temperatures for Cancellation**

The following temperatures are the maximum cancellation temperature for games, training and other events (trial games, selection trials, clinics or any physical activities)

Adults (16 years and older)- games are to be cancelled or postponed at ambient temperature of 37 degrees Celsius or above

Children (Under 16 year old)- games are to be cancelled or postponed at ambient temperature of 34 degrees Celsius or above

Cancellation at lower temperatures may be necessary depending on factors such as: humidity, local conditions including radiant heat from synthetic surfaces and lack of ventilation at indoor centres; player wellbeing; and player acclimatisation.

Note that young children are especially at risk in the heat and should not be forced to continue playing or training if they appear distressed or complain of feeling unwell.

### **1.3 Reference Material**

SMA Hot Weather Guideline- <http://sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/hot-weather-guidelines-web-download-doc-2007.pdf>

Beat the Heat Fact Sheet- <http://sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/beat-the-heat-2011.pdf>

## **2. Lightning**

In Australia lightning accounts for 5 to 10 deaths and well over 100 injuries every year. A large percentage of strike victims survive but many suffer from severe lifelong injury and disability. Statistics show that approximately 25% of people killed by lightning are playing sport.

No lightning safety plan or policy will provide 100% guaranteed total safety, but every effort can be made to ensure that all preventative steps are taken.

### **2.1 Lightning Procedures**

1. Nominate a person to be responsible for monitoring the weather conditions in your area. This may be the association secretary, club secretary or other nominated person;
2. Monitor the weather both the day before, and the day of, the match;
3. If thunderstorms occur, use the '30-30' rule to determine the distance of the storm and take appropriate action to suspend play if less than 10km away;
4. Play can resume when the '30-30' rule has been satisfied;
5. Where practicable, ensure that all present are relocated, if necessary, to a safe shelter;
6. Should a person be struck by lightning, ensure that immediate action is taken; and
7. Provide warnings to all of potential dangers caused by lightning and indicate safety guidelines clearly.

### **2.2 30-30' rule**

If it takes less than 30 seconds to hear thunder after seeing the flash, lightning is near enough to pose a threat; after the storm ends, wait 30 minutes before resuming outdoor activities. This may mean games are delayed, cancelled or are rescheduled.