



POLICY TITLE: WEATHER POLICY

RELATED POLICIES:	Nil
RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS:	General Manager Bowls Operations Chair - National Officiating Advisory Group Events Coordinator
AUTHORITY:	Chief Executive Officer
APPLICABLE FORMS:	Nil
APPROVED:	June, 2015
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	June, 2017

1. PRINCIPLE

- 1.1. Bowls Australia strives to ensure that its members participate in the game of bowls in the safest environment possible and with minimum risk of harm. This includes ensuring the weather policy can apply to Bowls Australia events nationwide and provides clubs with confidence to adopt the practices as they see fit.
- 1.2. Weather conditions can vary greatly throughout Australia and Bowls Australia does not intend to second-guess the judgement of the controlling body of any given game. The decision whether to suspend or discontinue play remains the discretion of the controlling body and in Bowls Australia's case, the competition manager.
- 1.3. Bowls Australia provides the following policy for use during all Bowls Australia events. The policy can be adopted at any level to assist the controlling body in their decision making.

2. WHERE BOWLS AUSTRALIA IS THE CONTROLLING BODY:

- 2.1. At all events where Bowls Australia is the controlling body, the following methods will be used to monitor the event location's weather:
 - 2.1.1. A portable calibrated weather station.
 - 2.1.2. Bureau of Meteorology website (www.bom.gov.au) or the BOM's 'Pocket Weather Application' accessible via smart phones.
- 2.2. The competition manager will consult the tournament director, the head technical official, the club's green keeper and other personnel as required to gather information to make an informed decision.

3. MONITORING AND MANAGING HOT WEATHER

- 3.1. Before the start of the event, the controlling body will monitor the expected temperatures for the duration of the event.
- 3.2. Before the start of play each day, the temperature will be monitored and an announcement to all players will be made warning them of the expected extreme temperatures if appropriate. Players will also be made aware that the weather policy may be invoked during the event.
- 3.3. When the competition manager deems the heat stress index (as indicated using one of the methods listed in point 2.1 above) has reached 36, play will be suspended by the controlling body and all players will complete the end they are currently playing and move from the green to a cool shady area. If the end is declared dead, the end will be replayed if and when the game is restarted.
- 3.4. When the competition manager determines the heat stress index has fallen below 36, play should resume.
- 3.5. Players, officials and spectators should at all times be encouraged to wear hats or other sun protection. It is recommended that a hat be part of any uniform and sunscreen be worn as appropriate.
- 3.6. Drinks should be available at every venue where play/competition takes place. Tap water should be available free of charge and in unlimited quantities. Other drinks may be served or sold as determined by the host club(s).
- 3.7. Where available, shelter should be offered for players and officials not involved in current play.

3.8. In making the decision, the controlling body will take account of all relevant factors including the age and health of players and officials, the weather conditions and climate for that part of the country, the level of humidity, the evacuation/ emergency plans for the club/venue and the amount of shade or shelter available at the venue.

4. LIGHTNING

4.1. Lightning can strike without other typical storm characteristics (i.e. thunder, rain and wind) being present. Bowls Australia is committed to ensuring all players, officials, administrators and spectators are safe during lightning activity.

4.2. When lightning is sighted by the competition manager, the controlling body will suspend play and all players will be required to leave the green immediately and move to a safe structure.

4.3. When the controlling body deems it safe to return to the green, play should resume as per Law 32.

4.4. Identification of safe structures

4.4.1. No place is absolutely safe from lightning strikes, but some places are much safer than others. The controlling body must identify the location's safe areas and ensure that all parties are aware of them.

4.4.1.1. SAFER areas include:

- 4.4.1.1.1. Enclosed vehicles with windows closed (car, bus). Do not touch metal parts.
- 4.4.1.1.2. Substantial enclosed buildings.
- 4.4.1.1.3. Low ground, sheltering in clumps of low bushes.
- 4.4.1.1.4. Trees of uniform height- i.e. forest.

4.4.1.2. UNSAFE areas include:

- 4.4.1.2.1. High ground.
- 4.4.1.2.2. Open ground.
- 4.4.1.2.3. Water.
- 4.4.1.2.4. Isolated or tall trees.
- 4.4.1.2.5. Near outdoor metal structures such as shade shelters, fences, flag poles, gates, seats, steps, hand rails, boundary pegs.
- 4.4.1.2.6. Equipment such as bowlers arms, bowls lifters, bowls rakes, umbrella, etc.

4.4.1.3. If you are caught outside during a lightning activity and feel your hair stand on end or hear buzzing/crackling noise in the air, you are within the field of charge of a lightning strike. Remove metal objects (keys, badges, belts etc.), crouch down with feet together, head down and hands over your ears. It is safer to adopt this position if outdoors than to be in one of the unsafe situations listed above.

5. MONITORING AND MANAGING WET/COLD WEATHER

5.1. Before the start of the event, the competition manager will monitor the expected conditions for the duration of the event.

5.2. If the ground is slippery from frost, snow, rain or mud or if the temperature drops below eight degrees or the sky becomes dark, it is at the discretion of the controlling body to determine whether to discontinue play.

5.3. In making the decision, account should be taken of all relevant factors including the age and health of players and officials, the weather conditions and climate for that part of the country, the wind-chill factor, the evacuation and emergency plans for the club and venue and the amount of shelter available at the venue.

- 5.4. If it begins to rain, play will continue until the competition manager deems it unsafe to do so or the greens become unplayable. In making the decision, the competition manager will utilise the methods listed on page one to gain an understanding of the rain patterns in the immediate area. Should it be apparent that prolonged rain periods will continue, it is recommended play will be discontinued.
- 5.5. The time off the green may vary from venue to venue depending upon the playing surface, the shelter available etc.
- 5.6. When the controlling body deems it safe to return to the green, play should resume as per Law 50.
- 5.7. When severe winter weather is forecast, the controlling body should initiate procedures and regularly monitor weather conditions and reports. The controlling body may contact local and state/territory agencies for input on weather and road conditions. The controlling body should review such things as the present weather condition and the traffic conditions within the immediate area as well as outlying roads upon which players and officials are arriving. Based on this information, the controlling body will decide whether to cancel play/competition.
- 5.8. Where available, shelter should be offered for players and officials not involved in current play.

6. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS

- 6.1. It is best practice for clubs to use a calibrated weather station to measure the weather. If one is not available, contact your state/territory association to determine the method preferred in your state/territory and the preferred temperature guidelines.
- 6.2. Each club should have in place evacuation and emergency policies and procedures and should conduct an evacuation drill at least once in each 12 month period.
- 6.3. Each club should provide a contact phone number that players and officials can ring if they are in doubt as to the state of play on any given day.
- 6.4. Bowls Australia advises that where possible, clubs should usually continue play or competition where they are able to do so, however, player and official's safety will remain the paramount consideration.
- 6.5. The controlling body should suspend play/competition for up to two hours if the wet/cold weather conditions look like they may improve. Where conditions have not improved in that time, the controlling body should cancel the play/competition for that day and reschedule.
- 6.6. The controlling body may approve rescheduling play/competition to another day or weekend if the controlling body determines that conditions are unsafe for players, officials or spectators. Typical reasons for this include consistent heavy rain, lightening, snow, slippery conditions, extreme heat or cold and bad light.
- 6.7. If play/competition is to be cancelled and rescheduled, the controlling body will use their best endeavours to notify participants. The controlling body will determine the most appropriate method of communication and might consider community radio, newsletter, phone calls or e-mails.
- 6.8. Each club should have its own policy as to refunding any fees to those participants who are unable to play/compete at the rescheduled time when the play/competition is cancelled due to adverse weather.
- 6.9. In parts of Australia susceptible to cold and wet weather, it is recommended that clubs have warm clothes and a waterproof jacket as part of their uniform.

7. FIRST AID FOR LIGHTNING VICTIMS

7.1. Victims of lightning strikes are safe to handle - they do not "retain charge". First aiders must ensure they do not become another casualty - move the victim to a safer location. Effects of lightning strike include cardiac and respiratory arrest caused by disruption of the brains' control centres. Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) or Expired Air Resuscitation (EAR) should be given as required. It is important that even people who show no symptoms immediately after the strike receive medical attention as some effects may not be immediately obvious. Do not hesitate to call 000.