



ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

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ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

Rationale

The policy is to ensure that FDNA provides effective management guidelines in the event of the need to delay, cancel and/or alter game times and breaks due to dangerous weather.

FDNA Staff & Board of Management have a duty of care to ensure the courts are safe for play. FDNA is responsible for providing a safe environment for players, coaches, umpires, and spectators, meeting legal duties of care, and reducing potential injuries.

While it is preferable not to cancel games, the safety of members is paramount. Effective risk management must be maintained at all times, prioritising the safety and welfare of all participants and considering the age and skill level of players.

Purpose

The Adverse Weather Policy of the Frankston District Netball Association (FDNA) aims to ensure the safety of participants and the integrity of netball matches during adverse weather conditions. This policy outlines guidelines for managing game cancellations, delays, and rescheduling due to weather-related concerns.

This policy and any adverse weather decisions are made in accordance with the following Netball Victoria Policies and Guidelines:

- Wet Weather Policy
- Lightning Guidelines
- Hot Weather Guidelines

Authority

The decision to cancel, delay, or reschedule games due to adverse weather conditions rests with the FDNA Competition Staff and/or any Management on duty in consultation with the appointed venue management and umpires.

Decision-making follows the guidelines set forth by Netball Victoria for wet weather, lightning, and hot weather conditions.

Adverse Weather Conditions

Adverse weather conditions include but are not limited to:

- Lightning
- Heavy rain causing unsafe court conditions
- Extreme heat
- Other severe weather events deemed unsafe by FDNA officials

Lightning Policy

- **Suspension of Play:** Outdoor play will be suspended immediately if lightning is observed, or thunder is heard.
- **Return to Play:** Outdoor play may resume 30 minutes after the last observed lightning strike or thunderclap.
- **Safety Protocol:** Participants and spectators must seek shelter indoors or in vehicles until the all-clear signal is given.

Heavy Rain or Unsafe Court Conditions

- **Court Inspection:** FDNA officials will inspect courts to assess their suitability for play in case of heavy rain or other unsafe conditions.
- **Decision Making:** A decision to cancel or delay games due to unsafe court conditions will be communicated as early as possible via official communication channels (e.g., Netball Connect, social media, email).
- **Rescheduling:** Postponed games will be rescheduled by the FDNA Competition Staff in consultation with affected teams and officials.

Extreme Heat Policy

- **Heat Guidelines:** Games may be postponed or rescheduled if the predicted temperature reaches a level deemed unsafe by FDNA officials.
- **Hydration and Breaks:** During extreme heat, regular breaks and increased access to water will be provided to participants.
- **Player Safety:** Participants are encouraged to take personal precautions such as wearing sunscreen, hats, and appropriate clothing when playing outdoors.

Heat Exhaustion:

- **Symptoms:** Heavy sweating, weakness, pale and clammy skin, fast and weak pulse, nausea or vomiting, fainting, dizziness, headache, and muscle cramps.
- **When to Seek Medical Attention:** Seek immediate medical attention if symptoms worsen, last longer than an hour, or if the person is unable to drink water, shows confusion, or loses consciousness
- **Resources:**
 - **SMA Extreme Heat Policy:** <https://sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/SMA-Extreme-Heat-Policy-2021-Final-1.pdf>
 - **SMA Extreme Heat Assessment Tool:** <https://sma-heat-policy.sydney.edu.au/>

Communication

Notification: The decision to cancel, delay, or reschedule games will be communicated promptly to coaches, and club officials.

Channels: Official FDNA communication channels, including the Netball Connect, social media platforms, and email, will be used to notify participants and required officials.

Procedure

Competition staff will complete a risk assessment of the courts before games commence (NV Match Checklist) and will communicate with Management as required. In wet weather (for outdoor matches) a determination between unsafe and unpleasant conditions shall be made. Inclement weather may make conditions uncomfortable, and members may choose not to play in unpleasant conditions.

- If heavy rain and/or strong winds are forecast (level 11-14 rain, strong wind warning), the Competition staff and/or Manager may:
 - A. **Abandon all outdoor games for the day.**
 - B. **Decide timeslot by timeslot.**
 - **A) Abandonment:** The decision will be made within the hour preceding the first match. Club Secretaries will be notified by telephone immediately.
 - **B) Timeslot Decision:** If the Supervisor deems it suitable for a game to commence, any decision to abandon or forfeit a game is at the discretion of the coaches. At halftime, the Competition Supervisor may decide to abandon all games (scores stand). Further decisions will be made by the Coaches or the Umpires if play resumes.
- If weather conditions are forecast to be inclement the Competition Supervisor and/or Board of Management representative will review the Bureau of Meteorology forecast at 9am on the day of competition. Attention will be paid to any wind warnings as well as the rainfall radar.
- Consideration will be given to the specifications provided on the Bureau website (www.bom.gov.au) (refer to appendix 1) with regard to wind & rain.
- Consideration should be given to the age & ability of players. It should be acknowledged that, generally, older & more experienced players are more able to adjust their play to suit the weather conditions.

The Competition staff reserve the right to abandon any match at any time if conditions change from those in which the match commenced. An Umpire may request to call off a match if they believe it has become too dangerous to continue, after consulting with the Umpire Coordinator and both teams' Coaches.

Once Staff have abandoned a game, only the Competitions Supervisor can authorise the game to recommence.

Policy Notes

- **Forfeit:** If one team elects not to play and concedes four points to the opposition, this team will pay courts fees for both teams
- **Abandon:** If both teams agree not to continue play and take two points each they will each pay court fees. If this occurs prior to half time teams will be awarded 2 points each. If after half time scores will stand.
- **Rollers** are available if teams want to quickly clear water from their court after rain (located in the Club Storeroom)
- Advice from ProSport Courts (provider of surface) is that the courts are designed to handle water and the drainage allows water to run off quickly. The surface is slip resistant even when damp.
- **Dangerous conditions** = thunder/lightning, extreme wind (gale force = more than 63kmh)
- Where finals are final ladder standings may be impacted by adverse weather conditions, matches may be rescheduled as determined by the Association.
- Games are considered abandoned due to adverse weather conditions if play ceases prior to half time. Games abandoned due to adverse weather conditions after half time are deemed played and scores will stand.

APPENDIX 1

- Excerpts from www.bom.gov.au

Wind Warning specifications:

Strong wind warning	Winds averaging from 26 knots and up to 33 knots.
Gale warning	Winds averaging from 34 knots and up to 47 knots.
Storm force wind warning	Winds averaging from 48 knots and up to 63 knots.
Hurricane force wind warning	Winds averaging 64 knots or more.

Rainfall rates:

The following values can be used as a general guide but they are not always accurate.

Level	Colour	Approx. Rainfall Intensity (mm/hr)
0	clear Not visible	Under 0.2
1	Off-white	0.5
2	Sky-blue	1.5
3	Light Blue	2.5
4	Blue	4
5	Light Cyan	6
6	Cyan	10
7	Dark Cyan	15
8	Yellow	20
9	Yellow-orange	35
10	Orange	50
11	Orange-red	80
12	Red	120
13	Dark Red	200
14	Maroon	300
15	Dark Brown	over 360

Radar Features to Watch For

Rain Bands

Radar echoes from widespread rain (e.g. from a frontal rain band) are usually extensive and fairly uniform in intensity, with ill-defined edges. The estimated rainfall intensity usually appears as light to medium because of the smaller raindrop size produced in such rain bands.

Showers from Cumulus Clouds

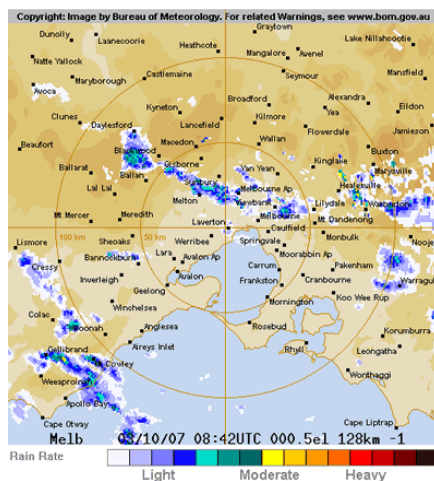
Radar echoes from showers falling from cumulus (tall bubbly clouds) appear as sharp-edged cells scattered around the radar display. The estimated rainfall intensity can be medium to heavy owing to the high rainfall rates from such clouds.

Heavy Precipitation from Thunderstorms

Radar echoes from the rain and hail produced in thunderstorms are very sharp-edged cells with intense cores indicating heavy rainfall. Hailstones produce particularly intense echoes

because of their large size. Thunderstorm precipitation cells can appear as isolated cells or in clusters or lines. Each cell tends to last for 30 minutes or more. Fast moving cells, rapidly growing cells, a bow in the direction of movement of a line of cells and/or a long-lived cell moving in a markedly different direction to others may indicate the potential for severe weather (large hail, damaging winds and/or very heavy rain). Also a very slow moving cell or the repeated passage of a number of cells over a particular location could indicate potential for flash flooding.

[Example: Radar Image loop of Melbourne Thunderstorm, 2/12/03](#)



APPENDIX 2

Athlete preparation for wet or cold conditions

- avoid standing exposed for long periods;
- wear appropriate clothing for expected conditions;
- Change wet clothes as soon as practicable;
- bring a change of clothes in a waterproof bag for immediate change after the game.

Athlete preparation for hot weather conditions

- avoid standing exposed for long periods;
- wear appropriate clothing for expected conditions; including a soft brimmed hat, if possible
- apply sunscreen at frequent intervals
- consume sufficient water before, during and after activity to remain hydrated