



# South Australian United Church Netball Association Inc.

## Policy Statement Hot and Extreme Weather

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This policy applies to both Winter and Summer competitions.

### 1 Overview

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SAUCNA recognises that the game of netball is traditionally an outdoor, winter sport, and the preference is that all matches are played to schedule.

SAUCNA expects that correct clothing and suitable footwear is worn by all players and officials at all times, and that all players and officials are responsible for ensuring that they have access to appropriate protective clothing, sunscreens, supply of drinking water and access to dry clothing, if required before, during and after matches.

Although severe weather forecasts may result in a blanket cancellation of games in advance, this is unlikely, and decisions regarding cancellation, interruption or abandonment of matches would normally be made on a time slot basis, either immediately prior to, or during play.

Match duration may be lessened and / or break times adjusted, due to prevailing conditions at the time, or in order to have excess water drain from playing surfaces.

Matches may be interrupted by the Court Supervisor to allow intense weather conditions to pass, before play is re-commenced. Umpires retain the right to hold time on individual courts if they feel weather conditions make this necessary.

The decision to cancel, interrupt or abandon matches will be made by the Court Supervisor, and will be based on reasons of player safety, and not on the comfort of players and officials. The Court Supervisor will monitor weather reports and radar information, and take into account weather warnings supplied by the Bureau of Meteorology.

The Association also is aware that very young players may be more susceptible to distress caused by intense conditions.

The policy is to protect the safety and well-being of players, official and spectators that participate in SAUCNA's competitions.

Each Club that hosts matches at their respective home courts will be required to appoint a Court Supervisor whose actions will be directed by this policy.

***Situations where cancellation of matches may apply:***

Forecasts of extreme heat, catastrophic fire danger, or prolonged extreme violent weather.

***Situations where interruption to play may apply:***

Short periods of intense rain, hail or strong winds  
Short periods of localised thunderstorm or lightning activity  
Short periods of intense heat  
Foreign objects being blown onto the court  
Court furniture or court fixtures being disturbed or damaged  
Player safety being affected by the force of the wind



***Situations where abandonment of play may apply:***

Prolonged localised thunderstorm or lightning activity  
Prolonged intense hail or sleet activity  
Prolonged extremely heavy rain or high wind speeds  
Excessive water remaining on court playing surfaces.

## **2 Procedures**

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### **2.1 Cancellation of matches due to weather forecasts - Hot Weather**

*Summer Competition*

Matches for the night will be cancelled if the temperature is 36°C or more during the day and / or the Court Supervisor deems that it will be too hot to play.

It will be announced on the SAUCNA Facebook page and the SAUCNA website no later than 4.30pm on the day of the matches.

*Winter Competition*

Matches for the day will be cancelled if the predicted temperature is 32°C or more during the day and / or the SAUCNA Executive deems that it will be too hot to play.

It will be announced on the SAUCNA Facebook page and the SAUCNA website no later than 9.00am on the day of the matches.

The onus is on each club and each team to be aware of this policy and to watch for such an announcement. If the Hot Weather Policy is invoked and matches are cancelled, no points will be awarded for that round of matches.

If Major Round matches are cancelled due to hot weather the following will apply:

For Semi Final matches: the following week there will be two matches played

The team in first position will play the team in fourth positions, and

The team in second position will play the team in third position.

The winner for each match will progress to the Grand Finals.

For Preliminary Final matches: the higher ranked team will progress to the Grand Finals.

For Grand Finals: each participating team will be declared joint Premiers.

### **2.2 Cancellation of matches due to weather forecasts - Thunderstorms and Lightning**

The definition of a thunderstorm is where lightning can be seen and / or thunder can be heard. Any storm which produces thunder means lightning is always present, even though it may be obscured by cloud.

If there is less than 30 seconds between the lightning and thunder, then the lightning is within 10 km of the listener (the speed of sound is 343 m.s<sup>-1</sup>).



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## Policy Statement

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---

When a lightning strike is within 10km of the venue, the Court Supervisors will suspend play and ensure players, umpires, coaching staff and spectators are removed from the area. Play may resume once the threat of lightening has passed, which is measured by the lightning and thunder being greater than 30 seconds apart. (Refer Alert procedure below)

### **3 Modification of playing times and game breaks**

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If matches are not cancelled and the Court Supervisor deems the weather to be debilitating, matches will go ahead however playing conditions will be adjusted (e.g. shorter quarters, longer breaks, and / or the addition of a drinks break). Quarters shall be no shorter than 10 minutes duration and all quarters will be of the same duration for that match. Any changes to the playing conditions made by the Courts Supervisor will need to be reported to the Secretary of the relevant section.

#### **4.1 Interruption of matches due to intense conditions - Alert**

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Players and officials will be notified of an interruption to matches by notification via the Public Address system (or other suitable method depending on the venue being used).

Umpires should instruct timers to hold time, and players should move to the side of the court and stay safe (e.g. keep warm) until play re-commences.

The Court Supervisor will assess the conditions and will give a 30 second warning to advise players and officials when matches are about to re-commence.

If after a reasonable amount of time, the Court Supervisor considers that the conditions will not improve, play in that timeslot may be abandoned.

Decisions regarding the next timeslot will be made prior to the start of those matches, unless the decision has been made to cancel all remaining matches.

#### **4.2 Interruption of matches due to intense conditions - Evacuation**

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Players and officials will be notified of dangerous weather conditions on courts by notification via the Public Address system (or other suitable method depending on the venue being used).

At this time, they will be asked to proceed, in an orderly manner to the area immediately south of clubrooms to receive further instructions, or to leave the parklands. For other venues, players and spectators will be either directed to a specific area or to leave the facility.

### **5 Extra Information**

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#### **Rationale**



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Exercise in the heat places extra demands on the body. High intensity exercise in a hot environment, with associated fluid loss and elevation of body temperature can be quite dangerous. Dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke may result.

### ***Recommendations to Officials, Coaches and Managers***

Team coaches and managers should strongly promote and encourage fluid replacement before the game, during breaks and after the game. Further information can be obtained from the Sports Medicine Australia brochure “Drink Up”

Where possible promotion of fluid replacement messages before, during and after the game should be made.

Team coaches and managers should use the entire bench (e.g. rotate players regularly).

### ***Education***

All Clubs should:

- actively encourage participants to bring personal drink bottles to both training sessions and games;
- educate participants about the importance of hydration, maintaining fluid levels and drinking before, during and after participation;
- ensure that all participants are advised of the existence of the Extreme Weather and any other relevant Policies

### ***Coaches' Tips***

Be aware of any participant with existing medical conditions (e.g. cold, flu, asthma, heart conditions etc.).

Remind participants if they are feeling dizzy, faint or nauseous to discontinue activity and seek medical attention.

Keep an eye out for any participant looking confused or suffering any loss of endurance or skill level – this can be a sign of heat exhaustion.

### ***Environment***

Clubs, Administrators, Team Coaches and Managers are to ensure easy access to clean drinking water is available for participants at both training sessions and games.