



# Extreme Weather Policy

Policy, Guidelines, and Recommendations

For

Start Running, SARRC Running Groups, and SARRC Sanctioned Participants and Events

## **Approval and Review**

This policy was adopted by the Board of South Australian Runners Club on 24<sup>th</sup> Oct 2017

This policy was last updated on 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2017

## **1. Overview**

SARRC has a responsibility to take a positive role in education and increasing the awareness of its registered members in regards to the dangers of physical activity in extreme weather conditions. SARRC acknowledges it has a responsibility and duty of care to ensure the safety of participants, particularly in events/activity conducted by and on behalf of SARRC. With this in mind, the SARRC Extreme Weather Policy for an affiliated group, participants, and SARRC sanctioned events/activities has been developed in consideration of the guidelines produced by Sports Medicine Australia (SMA) for hot weather and also in consideration of the risks associated with other extreme weather conditions such as electrical storms.

This policy shall apply to all affiliated groups, volunteers, administrators, officials, coaches and participants associated with SARRC.

The following recommended guidelines have been produced by SARRC to assist in our club, its affiliated groups and members in deciding whether to modify, cancel or postpone events or training.

## **2. Notification**

Careful consideration is given with respect as to whether to cancel or postpone any SARRC Event/Activity. Should it be deemed necessary under this policy to cancel an Event/Activity, SARRC will communicate any changes via the following methods:

- A news item will be placed on the SARRC website advising of the cancellation or postponement of the Event/Activity
- An email will be sent to the SARRC database advising all current registered participants and officials of the cancellation or postponement.
- Notification will be provided via SARRC social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

## **3. Hot Weather**

### **3.1 Temperature Determination**

The forecast maximum temperature referred to in this section is that issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) at 4:00pm CDT two days prior to Event/Activity (i.e. 4pm Friday for an Event/Activity to be conducted on Sunday).

Participants are encouraged to refer to the Bureaus website which can be found at [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

The following clauses detail measures that will be taken during hot weather, Changes to competition scheduling or programming or cancellation can be summarised as follows:

- Forecast temperatures of 30 degrees or less – no change
- Forecast temperatures between 31degrees and above – Event/Activity may be postponed or canceled.

### **3.2 Recommended Guidelines and Actions for Training, Events/Activity Conducted in Hot Weather**

- 3.2.1 For training, Events/Activities where the forecast maximum temperature is 30 degrees or below, participants should exercise caution, particularly in endurance events.
- 3.2.2 Participants should drink often to remain hydrated and implement sun smart procedures (e.g long sleeve shirt, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen)
- 3.2.3 No Event/Activity modifications are recommended.

Temperatures 41 degrees and above.

- 3.2.4 Where the predicted maximum temperate is 41 degrees or above, SARRC Event/Activity may be postponed or canceled at the discretion of the Event Director and/or SARRC General Manager

## Discretionary Cancellation

3.2.5 SARRC reserves the right to cancel any competition at its absolute discretion if it is deemed that the environmental conditions, such as extreme humidity, present a serious health risk to athletes and officials even if temperatures fall within the acceptable levels detailed within this policy document.

## Further Recommended Actions

3.2.6 SARRC strongly promote and encourage fluid replacement before, during and after the Event/Activity

3.2.7 Where possible, SARRC will provide fluid replacement before, during and after the Event/Activity

3.2.8 SARRC will provide extra temporary shade where possible

3.2.9 Elderly, young children and those with predisposed medical conditions are at a higher risk of heat-related illness and are therefore encouraged to carefully consider their level of participation in the Events/Activity in extreme heat conditions

## Recommended Guidelines and Actions for Training

3.2.10 When the predicted temperature on the day of training session is 30 degrees or above coaches should consider making modifications to training sessions in the following ways

- Train early in the morning or late at night (preferably after sunset) to avoid the hottest part of the day
- Consider reducing the intensity and or duration of the training session
- Take frequent breaks in the shade where possible and complete instructional time and recovery periods in shaded areas where available.
- SARRC coaches and runners should consider providing extra shade (e.g. pop top tents) where possible
- SARRC coaches and runners should encourage participants to drink before, after and often during the training session to ensure adequate hydration
- SARRC coaches could also consider moving the training session to an alternate environment
- The decision to cancel training is the responsibility of the coaches
- Coaches should closely monitor all runners responses to the conditions and make adjustments to the running load and duration of activitie each athlete if necessary
- Coaches should ensure that water is available to all runner when training sessions are conducted in extreme heat
- If the temperature is above 38 degrees and above, coaches should consider postponing or canceling the training session.
- Participants are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the SARRC Hot Weather Policy Guidelines and Recommendations

3.2.11 SARRC Running Groups

- Actively encourage participants to bring personal drink bottles to both training sessions and Events/Activities
- Educate participants about the importance of hydration, maintaining fluid levels and drinking before, during and after training, Events/Activities
- Be aware of any participant with existing medical conditions (e.g. cold, flu, asthma, heart conditions etc)
- Remind participants that 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

## 4. **Thunderstorms**

Thunderstorms present a significant risk to participants, coaches, marshals, volunteers, contractors, staff and spectators on course, training and Events/Activities when they occur in the vicinity of training or Events/Activities locations. Storms can develop quickly.

It is widely recognised that a significant lightning threat extends out of the thunderstorm cloud for approximately 10-15 km, thus, when a storm is within this range, appropriate action should be taken to minimise the danger to participants. As a general guide, the ability to hear thunder is usually an indication that the storm is within 10-15 km of your location.

In the event of the threat of a thunderstorm, the following actions should occur:

- 4.1 Prior to and during training, Event/Activity the BOM weather forecast should be monitored, and in particular the presence of a severe weather warning indication a change of thunderstorms
- 4.2 If a severe weather warning is in effect or if thunderstorms are predicted, canceling or postponing the training, Event/Activity should be strongly considered

In the event that thunders is heard or a thunderstorm occurs during SARRC training, Event/Activity the following action will be taken:

- 4.3 The Race Director or designated person will ask all participants to immediately leave the arena, training area or Event/Activity
- 4.4 It should be noted that small outdoor buildings, rain shelters, and sheds are not considered substantial building and are not deemed to be a safe area to shelter
- 4.5 In the event that a substantial building is not available for shelter, a hard-topped metal vehicle with the window closed also provides good protection, but contact with metal surfaces in the vehicle should be avoided.
- 4.6 Evacuation from the area to a safe location will be coordinated through PA announcements where available
- 4.7 Individuals should shelter inside away from windows and avoid contact with metal surfaces until the storm has passed.
- 4.8 Any contact with electrical equipment and wiring should be avoided during an electrical storm
- 4.9 Corded phones should not be used during an electrical storm. Mobile phones and cordless phones are safe to use
- 4.10 Once an electrical storm has passed, activity should not resume for another 30 minutes as electrical charges can linger in clouds after the storm has passed
- 4.11 At this time, the Race Director or designated person will assess the area for damage before determining whether the training, Event/Activity should resume
- 4.12 No individual will be permitted to return to the arena, training Event/Activity area until the all clear is given by the Race Director

## **5. Strong Winds**

Strong winds present a safety risk to participants, coaches, marshals, staff, contractors, volunteers and spectators on course and related Events/Activities

In the event of the threat of occurrence of strong winds, the following actions should occur:

- 5.1 Prior to and during training and Events/Activities the BOM weather forecast should be monitored and in particular the presence of a severe weather warning indication strong winds
- 5.2 If a severe weather warning is in effect or if strong winds are predicted canceling or postponing the training and or Event/Activity should be strongly considered

In the event that strong winds occur during SARRC training, Event/Activity the following action will be taken:

- 5.3 The Race Director or designated person will ask all participants to immediately leave the arena, training or Event/Activity and proceed to a substantial building or a safe place using common sense
- 5.4 It should be noted that small outdoor buildings, rain shelters and sheds are not considered substantial building and are not deemed to be a safe area to shelter

- 5.5 In the event that a substantial building is not available for shelter, a hard-topped metal vehicle with windows closed may also provide good protection
- 5.6 Evacuation from the area to a safe location will be coordinated through PA Announcements where available
- 5.7 Individuals should shelter inside away from windows until the threat has passed
- 5.8 Once strong winds have ceased, the Race Director or designated person will assess the area for damage before determining whether the training or Event/Activity should resume
- 5.9 No individuals will be permitted to return to the arena, training or Event/Activity until the all clear is given by the Race Director

## **6. Low Visibility**

Low visibility can present a safety risk to participants, coaches, marshals, volunteers, contractors, staff and spectators on course, training and Event/Activity

In the event of the threat of conditions resulting in low visibility, the following actions should occur:

- 6.1 prior to and during training, Event/Activity the BOB weather forecast should monitor, and in particular the presence of a severe weather warning indication conditions of low visibility
- 6.2 If a severe weather warning is in effect or if low visibility is predicted, canceling or postponing the training and or Event/Activity should be strongly considered

In the event that conditions create a situation of low visibility during a SARRC training or Event/Activity that reduced visibility to less than 200 metres, the following actions will be taken:

- 6.3 The Race Director or designated person will immediately cease the training, Event/Activity
- 6.4 Where possible, announcements will be made via a PA System or coordinated through the use of event radios
- 6.5 Once visibility has improved to beyond 200 metres, the Race Director or designated person will make a decision regarding whether to continue with the training, Event/Activity

## **7. Rain, Hail, and Snow**

Rain, hail, and snow can present a safety risk to participants, coaches, marshals, volunteers, contractors, staff and spectators on course, training and Event/Activity

In the event of the threat of conditions resulting in snow the following actions should occur:

- 7.1 prior to and during training, Event/Activity the BOB weather forecast should monitor, and in particular the presence of a severe weather warning indication conditions of snow
- 7.2 If a severe weather warning is in effect or if rain, hail or snow is predicted, canceling or postponing the training and or Event/Activity should be strongly considered
- 7.3 All participants, coaches, marshals, volunteers, contractors, staff and spectators at either training or Event? Activity is aware of the slipping, flooding or low visibility.

In the event that conditions create a situation of low visibility during a SARRC training or Event/Activity that reduced visibility to less than 200 metres, the following actions will be taken:

- 7.4 The Race Director or designated person will immediately cease the training, Event/Activity
- 7.5 Where possible, announcements will be made via a PA System or coordinated through the use of event radios
- 7.6 Once the conditions have improved, the Race Director or designated person will make a decision regarding whether to continue with the training, Event/Activity
- 7.7 Make snow angels

## **8. Intended Use**

This document is intended to be used as a guide only. Ultimately, every person is different and individuals will respond to participation in physical activity in extreme conditions in different ways. To this end individuals are encouraged to assess their level of participation in SARRC training, Event/Activities in order to best avoid illness or injury in extreme weather conditions.