**Introduction**

Environmental factors regularly affect the conduct of SATIS events (one off matches, rosters, and carnivals) and occasionally extremely adverse weather conditions may give rise to a need to assess whether students, officials and spectators are in danger.

Extreme weather may include any weather conditions that threaten the immediate or long-term safety of individuals, such as heat, rain, lightning, wind, or any other unusual or unpredictable weather conditions.

In extreme weather conditions, officials, and administrators in charge of SATIS events may decide to modify, postpone, or cancel the event to protect students, officials, and other participants from exposure to the elements or physical stress. Refer to the Procedures section for information relating to such cancellations, suspensions and resumption of events. In the case of delay or postponement, most sports should have rules in place for modified playing conditions. At Cricket matches and Rowing Regattas for example, competition may resume in the allocated competition time.

This policy has been prepared to provide guidance to event organisers (school delegate and/or carnival sub committees) regarding the effective management of extreme weather conditions. Unless otherwise specified for a specific sport, this policy covers all SATIS run sports and carnivals.

**Heat**

Heat-related injuries or illnesses pose a risk to students, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators at SATIS events. Heat illness can sometimes occur at temperature levels well below those considered to be a risk and can present in a variety of forms including heat exhaustion and the more severe heat stroke.

Symptoms of heat illness include:

* dizziness
* nausea
* fatigue
* lack of sweating
* lack of co-ordination, clumsiness, unsteadiness
* confusion
* aggression
* altered consciousness
* ashen grey pale skin

Heat exhaustion occurs when students collapse after exercise due to a post-exercise drop in blood pressure. Anyone suffering heat exhaustion should be laid down in a cool place with their legs and pelvis raised. Excessive clothing should be removed, and attempts made to cool them down by wetting the skin and fanning with cool air. Ice packs should also be applied to the groin, armpits and neck and cool water given to drink. A person suffering from heat exhaustion will normally recover quite rapidly.

Heat stroke is a rare, but dangerous condition and occurs when students show signs of altered mental function, loss of consciousness or collapse during exercise because body temperature control is impaired. Anyone suspected to be suffering from heat stroke should be treated as above. If they remain confused, vomiting or show signs of altered conscious, cooling should continue, and an ambulance called immediately.

Students are also at risk of dehydration when exercising in increased heat, due to increased perspiration and respiration. This will make them more susceptible to fatigue and muscle cramps. Students, officials, coaches, and spectators should be encouraged to consume adequate fluid intake before, during and after exercise on hot days.

It is important to understand the factors that may contribute to heat stress. What constitutes extreme conditions will vary depending upon:

Environmental Factors

* The type of sport e.g. fitness based vs. skill based
* The venue utilised by the sport e.g. water based vs. field based or indoor vs. outdoor
* The duration and intensity of the activity
* The time of day during which the activity takes place
* Humidity of the immediate environment
* Exposure to Solar Radiation

Individual Risk Factors

* Fitness levels of the student or official
* Age of the student or official
* Acclimatisation
* Hydration levels
* Past history of heat stress (genetic factors)

It is difficult to predict precisely how an individual will respond to heat stress and how likely heat stress is to cause illness or injury in a sport or event. Where there is any doubt, based on medical information provided by parents/carers in relation to an individual, specialised medical advice should be sought.

**Reduce the risk of heat illness and avoiding dehydration (Sports Medicine Australia):**

General

* Dehydration can occur in the winter months; however, the importance of addressing hydration is underlined in extreme heat.
* Students should not wait to feel thirsty as thirst may not be a reliable indication of fluid needs.
* Cool fluids may be absorbed more rapidly than warmer fluids.
* Students must avoid starting exercise when dehydrated – they should drink plenty of fluids prior to exercise.
* If students do not like the taste of water, they may well favour flavoured drinks such as “sports drinks” and low concentration cordial.
* If students are well hydrated, they should be able to pass a good volume of clear urine in the hour before exercise.

Specific

* Encourage students to have their own water bottle that they can regularly refill to remind them of the need to drink regularly.
* A reasonable guideline is the intake of 500ml an hour before exercise.
* A reasonable guideline is the intake of 150ml every 15 minutes during exercise.
* Students must be actively encouraged to take advantage of all breaks in play to take in fluids.
* Students should be encouraged to drink liberally after exercise to ensure full rehydration.
* If hot weather is expected, parents/guardians should be encouraged to ensure that students are sufficiently hydrated in the lead up to the day’s activities and take proactive measures such as:
  + packing sufficient drinks
  + packing ice packs to be held against the skin for a cooling effect
  + packing personal spray bottles and/or battery-operated fans
  + packing umbrellas or other portable shade structures.
* Ensure that adequate shade is provided and encourage all students to stay in shaded areas whenever they are not competing.
* Altering the time of the event to take place in the cooler part of the day.
* Reduce the length of the event.
* Encourage younger students (under 13 years) to drink water regularly (as they may not experience thirst as much as older children and adults).
* Venues should have equipment available to measure ambient temperature. Information regarding humidity can be obtained from www.bom.gov.au/places/, via apps such as Weatherzone, or by using a hygrometer.

**Implementation of Heat Guidelines:**

Prior to a SATIS event:

* If at 9.00 a.m. on the day prior to the SATIS events the predicted temperature in the Greater Hobart, Launceston and Burnie areas as provided by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) is 40🢭C or above then SATIS staff in conjunction with SATIS School Delegates will by 10.00 a.m. on the day prior cancel all sport (for the sake of clarity this includes indoor and outdoor sport)
* Prior to the event the monitoring of the predicted temperature will be the responsibility of the SATIS School Delegate.

On the Day of the SATIS event:

* At 31🢭C (ambient temperature) SATIS staff and or SATIS School Delegates must consider and implement where appropriate management procedures consistent with the advice provided previously in this HEAT section, which will attempt to ensure that environmental and risk factors relevant to heat stress are minimised.
* Once the ambient temperature is 36🢭C or above, then the event must be suspended (pool venues excluded). If the temperature does not fall below 36🢭C during the subsequent 30-minute period, then the event must be cancelled.
* On the day of the event, the responsibility for monitoring temperatures is as described below:

Outdoors:

* It is the responsibility of the Home SATIS School Delegate or their delegated representative to monitor the BoM Website to determine local temperatures.

Indoors:

* It is the responsibility of the Home SATIS School Delegate or their delegated representative to use a thermometer to gauge the temperature.

Central Venue:

* It is the responsibility of the venue manager to determine the temperature.

**Wet Weather**

The safety of students must remain paramount when deciding whether to postpone or cancel an event due to rain. Consideration must be given to factors such as pooling of water on track surfaces, visibility and the presence of thunder and lightning (see below).

In the event of hail, all events must be suspended immediately, and all students, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators should move to a sheltered area until the hazard clears.

**Thunderstorms & Lightning**

Thunderstorms can develop quickly and present a risk to students, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators at SATIS events. Some facts about lightning include:

* all thunderstorms produce lightning and can therefore pose danger
* lightning can strike as far as fifteen kilometres away from any rainfall
* whenever thunder is heard, lightning is close enough to pose an immediate threat to your location
* a lightning threat can exist when thunder is heard but skies are clear, and it is sunny
* many lightning casualties are due to people not seeking shelter soon enough, occurring before thunderstorm rains have moved into the area
* a large number of casualties occur after rain has dissipated, due to people leaving sheltered areas too soon.

Ways to reduce the risk from lightning:

* ensure that one person is delegated to have the authority to call for the suspension and subsequent resumption of activities
* communicate safe structures to students, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators if thunderstorms are forecast or imminent. Such safe structures include:
  + large, fully enclosed buildings
  + a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and closed windows
* ensure students, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators are directed away from unsafe locations and situations if thunderstorms are occurring or imminent, such as:
  + open fields
  + close vicinity to tall structures such as trees, light poles, discus cages
  + small structures such as rain/picnic shelters, tents, equipment sheds
  + using indoor phones
  + using electrical appliances
  + using umbrellas

**Suspension and Resumption of Activity:**

* follow the 30-30 “Flash to Bang” rule:
  + if the interval between observing the flash and hearing the thunder is 30 seconds or less, all those in exposed area must seek shelter in a safe structure
  + wait at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder or observation of lightning before leaving shelter to resume activities.
  + Each time lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the 30 minute clock should be re-started.

**First aid for lightning:**

Lightning victims are safe to handle as they do not carry an electrical charge and require immediate medical attention. If someone is struck by lightning:

* immediately call 000
* check for a pulse and breathing and begin CPR if necessary
* if possible, move the victim to a safe place, whilst not jeopardising your own safety.

**Cold**

In the event of cold weather, students should be encouraged to keep warm and wear adequate clothing. Long breaks between events should be avoided, to prevent students from cooling down too much, to reduce the risk of muscle-related injuries.

**Strong Winds**

* Strong winds pose a risk to students, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators at SATIS events. In the event of severe weather warnings from the Bureau of Meteorology, where strong winds are predicted, consideration should be given to cancelling or postponing the events.

If strong winds occur during a SATIS event:

* all students, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators should be asked to immediately leave the outside area and take shelter inside a substantial building
* if a substantial building is not available, a hard-topped metal vehicle with closed windows may provide protection
* all individuals should remain inside shelter, away from windows until the threat has passed
* once the strong winds have ceased, an appropriate delegate such as the Venue Manager, SATIS School Delegate, Referee or Carnival Sub Committee should assess the area for damage before deciding whether the event should resume. No individuals should be allowed to leave the sheltered area until this delegate authority gives them permission to do so.

**Sand, Dust or Smoke (Airborne Contaminants)**

Airborne contaminates can come in many forms, but the most common are sand, dust or smoke and can be by-products of conditions such as wind and bushfires and can create a risk to students, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators who suffer from conditions such as asthma, allergies, and heart conditions. Such weather conditions should be monitored, and consideration be given to suspending activities if there is a significant potential risk.

The relevant SATIS School Delegate or Sub Committee must ensure the health, safety and well-being of players, officials and spectators as the overriding priority and where the air quality conditions create an unacceptable risk, have the authority under this Policy to suspend or cancel event.

On the day of the event, the responsibility for monitoring air quality is as described below:

Outdoors:

* It is the responsibility of the Home SATIS School Delegate or their delegated representative to monitor local air quality.

Indoors:

* It is the responsibility of the Home SATIS School Delegate or their delegated representative to monitor the air quality.

Central Venue:

* It is the responsibility of the venue manager to monitor the air quality.

Procedures

**Procedures for Cancellation, Suspension and Resumption of Carnivals, Sport Matches and Trainings. Determination of Results for incomplete events**.

Each SATIS event should have a nominated Competition Organising Committee or Manager.

These people are responsible for the following:

* Determining if the event needs to be suspended, resumed or cancelled.
* Ensure all participants at the venue seek shelter and immediately leave the arena or competition / training area and proceed inside a substantial building such as an office block, school or house.
* The Competition Referee/Committee, designated Technical Officials, referees or umpires will assess the area for damage before determining whether competition, training or the event should resume
* No individuals will be permitted to return to the arena or competition / training area until the all clear is given by the Committee or Home school delegate.

Specific responsibilities and circumstances apply as noted below:

Outdoor Sport: It is the responsibility of the Home school delegate or their delegated representative to monitor any weather event.

Indoor Sport: It is the responsibility of the Home School delegate or their delegated representative to monitor any weather events.

External Hired Venues: It is the responsibility of the venue manager to monitor any weather events.

Referees/Umpires: In situations where the Match manager or Home school delegate are not available the decision made will be at the discretion of the umpires/referees in control of the match in consultation with coaches.

Carnivals (Athletics, Swimming, Cross Country):

A committee consisting of the Carnival Referee, the Chair of SATIS/NSATIS/SSATIS (or his/her deputy), the Administrative Officers and if applicable Delegates from the Organising Schools will be responsible. In the event of a voting deadlock, the Chairperson of SATIS would have a casting vote. The wet weather committee would be expected to be present prior to the start of a meeting.

Rowing: refer to Rule 2.5. If at any time prior to and/or during the regatta, the Referee, in consultation with the Chair of SATIS considers the conditions unfit for rowing, the regatta may be postponed, truncated and/or abandoned.

**Determination of Results**

Athletics or Swimming Carnivals becomes a carnival when a minimum of 75% of the events have been completed and from there on the points will stand.  
In sport matches, if play has commenced and is then suspended during play and the match cannot be resumed, the match will be abandoned. If more than half the game has been completed at the time the game is declared abandoned the current score will stand to be the final result.

**References**

Sports Medicine Australia Hot Weather Guidelines (Web download document) available at <http://sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/hot-weather-guidelines-web-download-doc2007.pdf>

Sports Medicine Australia Beat the Heat Fact Sheet available at <http://sma.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2011/03/beat-the-heat-2011.pdf>

Being SunSmart in Tasmanian – Cancer Council guidelines

<https://www.cancertas.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CCTas_SunSmart_DL_September-19.pdf>

SunSmart Steps

<https://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/sporting-groups>

<https://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-schools>