

**NATIONAL  
POLICY**



# **EXTREME WEATHER POLICY**

# EXTREME WEATHER POLICY

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 Tennis Australia (**TA**) recognises the dangers of extreme weather and the need to ensure that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place to mitigate risks to players, officials, coaching staff and spectators at all of our Tournaments and Competitions should an extreme weather event occur.
- 1.2 The objectives of the Extreme Weather Policy (**Policy**) are to:
  - (a) protect the health, safety and well-being of persons who participate in tennis activities of Australian Tennis Organisations (**ATOs**) Tournaments and Competitions;
  - (b) ensure venues are safe places to play, spectate and officiate so far as is reasonably practicable; and
  - (c) provide a defined process to any event, Tournament and Competition organisers on managing extreme weather conditions.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all ATOs as defined below, and excludes any International Tennis Federation (**ITF**), Association of Tennis Professionals (**ATP**), Women's Tennis Association (**WTA**) tournaments and the Australian Open, which have their own extreme weather policies.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1 The terms below have the following meanings in this Policy:

**Australian Tennis Organisation (ATO)** includes Tennis Australia, Member Associations, Affiliated Organisations, Regional Associations and Affiliated Clubs.

**Competition** means a Team Competition and/or Weekly Competition with which an ATO is associated and at which tennis matches are played and which occurs over a series of weeks and/or on a regular basis and where players compete either individually or as part of a team.

**Tournament** means an event, championship, tournament, team event or challenge match that consists of one or several draws (for example draws for different age groups, genders and/or formats (i.e. singles, doubles, mixed doubles)) at which tennis matches are played. It also refers to any other exhibition event organised by an ATO as well as any event sanctioned by TA that is held within Australia.

**Official** includes the Referee, Assistant Referee, Court Supervisor, Chair Umpire, Tournament Director, Junior Coordinator or other Club/Association Official.

**Shortened Formats** means the method to shorten tennis matches as defined in the regulations that govern the relevant Tournament or Competition (i.e. the 'FAST4' format).

**Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)** is a measure of the heat stress in direct sunlight, which takes into account the temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle and cloud cover.

## 4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 In recognition of the risks associated with extreme weather, ATO Officials and any other relevant administrators responsible for organising and managing Tournaments and Competitions must at all times place the health, safety and welfare of players, officials, coaching staff and guests ahead of the Tournament or Competition, irrespective of the inconvenience, cost or other considerations.
- 4.2 Officials responsible for conducting and managing Tournaments and Competitions must:
- (a) Appoint a nominated Tournament Referee or Tournament Director to monitor regularly weather forecasts in the lead up to, and during the period of use for the Tournaments and Competitions using the Bureau of Meteorology (**BOM**) Website ([www.bom.com.au](http://www.bom.com.au)); and
  - (b) Comply with the specific Extreme Weather Procedures prescribed in Sections 5 - 9 of this Policy.

## 5. Extreme Heat & Thermal Comfort

### Risks Involving Extreme Heat

- 5.1 Vigorous movement, such as playing tennis, may place some people at greater risk of heat illness, especially in hot weather and/or in high humidity. If untreated, heat illness can lead to more serious and potentially life-threatening conditions, including heat stroke.

### Measurement of Heat Stress

- 5.2 Ambient air temperature is an indicator of how comfortable it would feel when playing tennis, however the air temperature is only one factor in the assessment of thermal stress.
- 5.3 Other factors, principally humidity, can vary widely day to day and should be considered for a more realistic assessment of comfort. It is useful to condense the extra effects into a single number and use it in a similar way to the measurement of air temperature.
- 5.4 The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (**WBGT**) is recognised as the standard, and the measurement, which is to be applied by ATOs to determine the base Thermal Comfort level.

### Determining the Thermal Comfort Level for the Location of the Specific Tournament/Competition

- 5.5 To ensure all Tournaments and Competitions conducted by ATOs are consistent, the Thermal Comfort Level and ambient air temperature must be taken from the BOM website.
- 5.6 The reading shall come from the weather station closest to the location of the event (measured using the shortest path between two points) and always taken from the WBGT Shade column.
- 5.7 For ease of reference, the BOM page for each State/Territory WBGT value is linked below:

Australian Capital Territory	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDN65179.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDN65179.shtml</a>
New South Wales	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDN65179.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDN65179.shtml</a>
Northern Territory	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDD65155.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDD65155.shtml</a>
Queensland	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDQ65214.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDQ65214.shtml</a>

South Australia	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDS65004.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDS65004.shtml</a>
Tasmania	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDT65050.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDT65050.shtml</a>
Victoria	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV65079.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV65079.shtml</a>
Western Australia	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDW65100.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDW65100.shtml</a>

### Extreme Heat Procedures during Tournaments

- 5.8 The following procedures have been developed for Tournament play and must be applied by the Tournament Referee or Tournament Director (whichever is applicable) as soon as they become aware that the WGBT reading exceeds the thresholds determined as per below.

<b>Players competing in 16 and under Tournaments:</b>
When the WGBT reading exceeds <b>30.0 °C</b> , an environmental assessment shall be undertaken and consideration should be given to reducing the match to a Shortened Format at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the completion of the current set for matches in progress; or</li> <li>b) all sets for matches which are yet to commence.</li> </ul>
When the WGBT reading exceeds <b>32.5 °C</b> or the ambient air temperature exceeds <b>36.0 °C</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) matches in progress shall be suspended at the completion of the current game; and</li> <li>b) new matches must not commence until the WGBT is less than <b>32.5 °C</b> or the ambient air temperature less than <b>36.0 °C</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Players competing in over 16 Tournaments:</b>
When the WGBT reading exceeds <b>30.0 °C</b> , an environmental assessment shall be undertaken and consideration given to reducing the match to a Shortened Format at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the completion of the current set for matches in progress; or</li> <li>b) all sets for matches which are yet to commence.</li> </ul>
When the WGBT reading exceeds <b>32.5 °C</b> or the ambient air temperature exceeds <b>38.0 °C</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) matches in progress shall be suspended at the completion of the current game, and</li> <li>b) new matches must not commence until the WGBT is less than <b>32.5 °C</b> or the ambient air temperature is less than <b>38.0 °C</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Players competing in Seniors Tournaments in the over 65 category:</b>
When the WGBT reading exceeds <b>30.0 °C</b> , an environmental assessment shall be undertaken and consideration given to reducing the match to a Shortened Format at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the completion of the current set for matches in progress, or</li> <li>b) all sets for matches which are yet to commence.</li> </ul>
When the WGBT reading exceeds <b>32.5 °C</b> or the ambient air temperature exceeds <b>36.0 °C</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) matches in progress shall be suspended at the completion of the current game, and</li> <li>b) new matches must not commence until the WGBT is less than <b>32.5 °C</b> or the ambient air temperature is less than <b>36.0 °C</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Players are competing in Wheelchair Tournaments:</b>
When the WGBT reading exceeds <b>28.0 °C</b> , an environmental assessment shall be undertaken and consideration given the match to a Shortened Format at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the completion of the current set for matches in progress, or</li> <li>b) all sets for matches which are yet to commence.</li> </ul>
When the WGBT reading exceeds <b>32.5 °C</b> or the ambient air temperature exceeds <b>36.0 °C</b>

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### Extreme Heat Procedures during Competition Play

- 5.9 The Competition organiser must ensure that all clubs, centres or participating teams are aware of this Policy and ensure their by-laws enable a consistent application of clauses 5.10 and 5.11.
- 5.10 Junior Competition involving players under 16 years of age:
- a) If the forecasted WGBT exceeds 32.5°C or ambient temperature exceeds 36.0 °C up to one hour before play is due to commence, play may be cancelled and communicated as broadly as possible to all clubs and participants.
  - b) Where, during play the WGBT exceeds 32.5 °C or the ambient air temperature exceeds 36.0 °C, play must be suspended on completion of the current game.
  - c) After suspension of play, the WGBT remains greater than 32.5°C or ambient temperature remains 36.0 °C for more than 90 consecutive minutes, play may be cancelled by the relevant official, administrator, team captain or club representative.
  - d) Play can also be cancelled by mutual agreement of both teams within the 90-minute period outlined in 5.10(c).
- 5.11 Open Competition
- a) If the forecasted WGBT reading within 24 hours and up to one (1) hour before play is due to commence exceeds 32.5°C or ambient temperature exceeds 38.0 °C, play may be cancelled and the communicated as broadly as possible to all clubs and participants.
  - b) Where, during play the WGBT exceeds 32.5 °C or ambient temperature exceeds 38.0 °C, play must be suspended on completion of the current game.
  - c) After suspension of play, if the WGBT remains greater than 32.5 °C or ambient temperature remains 38.0 °C for more than 90 consecutive minutes, play may be cancelled by the relevant official, administrator, team captain or club representative.
  - d) Play can also be cancelled by mutual agreement of both teams within the 90-minute period outlined in 5.11(c).

## **6. Rain, Flood and Hail**

- 6.1 Rainstorms, flooding and hail have the potential to create dangerous conditions for players, officials and spectators. The relevant Officials and Any other relevant administrators must ensure the health, safety and well-being of players, officials and spectators as the overriding priority.
- 6.2 Where rain, flood and hail create an unacceptable risk, the relevant official or any other relevant administrators may suspend play until court surfaces and surrounds are fit for play or cancel the days' play if it is unlikely to be safe.

## 7. Thunderstorms and Lightning

- 7.1 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 if it is obscured by cloud (it is the lightning which produces the thunder).
- 7.2 The simplest and most effective way to assess this distance of lightning is the 30-second rule. If there is less than 30 seconds between the lightning and thunder, then the lightning is within 10 km of the listener. (30 seconds at the speed of sound is 10.2km).
- 7.3 When a lightning strike is within 10km of the event, officials and administrators who are responsible for the event must suspend play and ensure players, officials, coaching staff and guests are removed from the area to a safe place, such as a large, structurally sound building.
- 7.4 The storm and/or cloud cover may make it difficult to observe and monitor lightning. The relevant Officials and any other relevant administrators are encouraged to use online tools (i.e. [Blitzortung](#) or [Lightning Maps](#)) to provide a more accurate assessment of the presence of lightning in the area.
- 7.5 Play can resume once the threat of lightning has passed, which is measured by the lightning and thunder being greater than 30 seconds apart and/or more than 10km away.

## 8. High Wind

- 8.1 High winds have the potential to create dangerous conditions for players, officials and spectators. The relevant Officials and any other relevant administrators must ensure the health, safety and well-being of players, officials and spectators as the overriding priority and where windy conditions create an unacceptable risk and have the authority under this policy to suspend or cancel play.
- 8.2 Examples of windy conditions which create an unacceptable risk and where play maybe suspended:
  - (a) Foreign objects being blown onto the court;
  - (b) Court furniture or court fixtures being disturbed;
  - (c) Fences or court equipment being damaged; and/or
  - (d) Player health being affected by the force of the wind.

## 9. Sand, Dust or Smoke (Airborne Contaminants)

- 9.1 Any situation in which the air quality is compromised presents a risk to players, officials and spectators, especially if they have a pre-existing medical condition.
- 9.2 Airborne contaminants can come in many forms, but the most common are sand, dust or smoke.
- 9.3 The relevant Officials and any other relevant administrators must ensure the health, safety and well-being of players, officials and spectators is the overriding priority and where the air quality conditions create an unacceptable risk, have the authority under this Policy to suspend play.

- 9.4 If smoke is present it is recommended that the source is determined to ensure that the smoke is not toxic, not likely to worsen or is not due to a fire in the vicinity. If the smoke presents any danger, through reduction in visibility or ability to breathe properly, then play must be suspended or cancelled and all patrons removed to a safe area.

## 10. Review and Promotion

- 10.1 This Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis. In addition to this regular review, recommendation for changes to this Policy may be submitted to the TAICU via [integrity@tennis.com.au](mailto:integrity@tennis.com.au) for consideration. If changes are made, the Policy will be updated via TA's website.
- 10.2 This Policy will be made available to the general public on TA's website and will be communicated to all Board and staff members of TA and all ATOs.
- 10.3 Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact the TAICU via [integrity@tennis.com.au](mailto:integrity@tennis.com.au)

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