POLICY NO.1 - EXTREME WEATHER

Background

The VSDCA Board understands that playing cricket in extreme heat is a danger to participants, including players, officials and spectators. In recognition of this, the Board has developed this Policy to be adopted to reduce the likelihood of injuries and illness in those conditions.

The Board accepts that cricket is a game played during summer and that conditions of extreme heat are likely to be experienced and expected by participants.

The Association comprises four grades where the professionalism and standards of players and umpires vary considerably. Players, particularly in the lower grades may be quite young and umpires may be quite elderly. Another factor is that the JG Craig Under 15 competition is played over periods of up to four days without a rest day during the hottest part of the summer. A Policy for this competition are issued separately.

It is also acknowledged that the weather and temperature conditions (heat, cold, wind, and lightning) experienced at individual grounds throughout the playing areas of the Association can vary considerably. The standard of grounds and the grass cover also impact the comfort levels of the participants.

This Policy charges the umpires with the responsibility to manage conditions and as such they are the final arbiters as to the fitness of conditions to allow play to continue.

The umpires are required to do all within their power to facilitate play **without** compromising their responsibility in respect of 'duty of care', and are therefore required to balance all the factors and make a decision whether conditions are fit for play and if not satisfied, suspend play until such a time as they are.

PLEASE NOTE: No person is obliged to participate in any game and clubs shall place no pressure on any participant if he or she considers withdrawing from any part of a game for health reasons.

Guidelines:

1. **General**

   The Board reserves the right to consider a full or partial cancellation of play in advance where extreme temperatures are forecast. Should this occur clubs & umpires will be notified by the Board.

   Extreme Temperature Guidelines:
   - Forecast Temperature 40 degrees and above play in 1st & 2nd XI.
   - Forecast Temperature 38 degrees and above play in 3rd & 4th XI.

   On Match Day morning the Board may declare an "Extreme Weather Day" when this Policy must be adopted by participants. The Board will notify clubs and umpires by 10.00 am on match day of cancellation of play or declaration of "Extreme Weather Day" via SMS to nominated club representatives, the Association Webpage, Twitter and Facebook.

   On Extreme Weather Days, clubs shall monitor on a half-hourly basis, current temperatures via the Bureau of Meteorology website and phone app.

Should the current temperature reach 40 degrees (1st & 2nd XI) or 38 degrees (3rd & 4th XI) play shall be suspended immediately at that club's home ground. The temperature shall be monitored, play shall not resume until the temperature falls below 40 degrees (1st & 2nd XI), and below 38 degrees (3rd & 4th XI)

2. Shade
Clubs should provide shaded areas where the batting team, spectators and scorers can shelter.

3. Drinks
Umpires should allow additional drink breaks without concern as to the extra time taken beyond the scheduled playing time. Any participant may call for additional drinks at any time while batting, fielding or umpiring, although every effort should be taken to minimize delays when this occurs. For example, the drinks should be run onto the ground immediately at the conclusion of an over and batsmen must be ready to take strike with a minimum delay to the fielding team.

Bowlers may have drinks placed on the boundary line, which can be consumed during or at the completion of an over without disrupting play.

It is recommended that participants begin regular drinking routines using water or sports drinks before, during and after training and competition. These practices should become habitual. The electrolyte content of some sports drinks consumed following activity may shorten the time taken to recover, particularly in well-trained young athletes who sweat considerably.

Individuals may want to monitor weight changes before and after workouts to determine the amount of fluid they are likely to require.

4. Sun Protection
Players are reminded of the need for frequent applications of sunscreen and the preference for long sleeved shirts to reduce exposure to the sun. Hats are an essential item and the wide brimmed style is recommended, particularly on sunny days.

5. Playing Times
Scheduled playing times may be changed by the Board and umpires may schedule a longer tea break and play additional make up time after the scheduled time for stumps. This is entirely at the umpires' discretion.

On a declared "Extreme Weather Day" if at any time umpires agree that the weather is not suitable for play, they shall inform the captains and shall suspend play or not allow play to commence or to restart, or to commence, or to restart play. (As per The Laws of Cricket Law 2.8)

6. Slow Play
When the required number of overs is not bowled within the scheduled time, umpires should show appropriate leniency where delays are reasonably due to extreme heat affecting either team.

7. Player Rotation
After notifying his captain and an umpire (if possible), a player may remove himself from the field at any time for reasons of heat stress.

A batsman who has left the field of play for reasons of heat stress may return at the fall of a wicket. The batting team will be all out if there are no remaining batsmen.

Where a fieldsman has left the field of play for reasons of heat stress, the fielding team may use a substitute after notifying an umpire. Fieldsmen may return at the conclusion of any over. In accordance with the Laws of Cricket, the fieldsman may not bowl immediately on his return, where he has been absent from the field for a period of more than 15 minutes.

Captains, coaches and managers should consider a participant's age, level of fitness and weight when supervising training or playing activities.

8. Umpires

Where an umpire feels that his health or judgement may suffer because of the exposure to heat, he may take a break from his duties, after arranging an appropriate substitute. The appropriate substitute will depend on the circumstances of the match in which he is officiating, but it is likely to involve requiring the other appointed umpire to officiate at both ends and a club official or player to stand at square leg. If the affected umpire is the only official (or club umpire), it will be necessary for an experienced club official or player to officiate.

Where two games are being conducted in close proximity, it may be possible to use an official umpire from another game, without detracting from the independence of the standing umpires.

9. Illness and Treatment

Club first aid kits must include aids for the treatment of heat affected participants. Every endeavour should be made to have a club member, who is properly skilled in the treatment of heat affected people, at home games.

A notice should be prominently included in or displayed near the first aid kit, explaining the treatment of heat affected patients.

Symptoms of heat illness may include:

Light headedness, dizziness Nausea
Obvious fatigue Cessation of sweating
Obvious loss of skill and co-ordination/clumsiness/unsteadiness
Confusion
Aggressive or irrational behaviour
Altered consciousness
Collapse
Ashen pale grey skin

Serious heat illness in sport presents as heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Heat exhaustion is the more common sports related heat illness. Heat stroke is rare, but is a life threatening condition.

The following action should be taken in cases of heat illness:

- Remove from the field and lay the person down in a cool place
- Raise legs and pelvis to improve blood pressure remove excess clothing
- Cool by wetting skin liberally and vigorous fanning (evaporative cooling) apply ice packs to groin, arm pits and neck
- Give cool water if conscious

Persons suffering from heat exhaustion usually recover rapidly with this assistance.

If the patient remains seriously ill, confused, vomiting or shows signs of altered consciousness call an ambulance immediately and seek medical assistance.

If available, cool in a shallow canvas/plastic bath of iced water (5 – 10 minutes) if necessary, cooling should continue medical assistance (ambulance) is available.

10. Lightning

Where an umpire believes that lightning poses a threat to the safety of participants, play must be suspended and safe shelter taken.

Suspension and resumption of play should follow the '30/30' rule. Play should cease immediately when flash to bang count is 30 seconds, as this indicates that lightning is 10km away, and there is a significant possibility that the next lightning strike could be much closer to the vicinity of play.

The umpires should suspend play and players moved to safe shelter areas. Play should not resume until 30 minutes following the last lightning strike.

Where a game has been suspended and the scheduled time for the cessation of play is reached, the game is abandoned.