



## HEALTH & SAFETY

# Bocce Australia Smoke Pollution and Exercise Policy

### Policy Statement

Bocce Australia Smoke Pollution and Exercise Policy provides for the sport of bocce to ensure that its members participate in the sport of bocce in the safest environment possible.

Although Bocce Federation tournaments are primarily played indoor, the sport is also played outdoors and as such is not immune to extreme Smoke Pollution conditions.

Weather conditions can vary greatly throughout Australia and the object of this policy document is to prevent injury, and possible death, from extreme Smoke Pollution conditions. Likewise this document is to assist State Federations, Affiliated clubs, Bocce Members, Officials, Coaches, Bocce volunteers and participants to recognise and manage potentially dangerous extreme weather situations, in particular Smoke Pollution.

### Definition

1. Member: being an affiliated State, Regional Federation or Club, or a Bocce Member participating in an official Federation endorsed Bocce tournament, coaches, referees, tournament directors, volunteers &/or committee members.
2. **SMOKE POLLUTION - greater than 100 AQI . Air Quality Index (AQI) is an accepted means of quantifying air quality by public health authorities encompassing:**
  - 2.3 **Air pollution levels at your nearest monitoring site or region**
  - 2.4 **The common contributing pollutants**
  - 2.5 **The overall health risk associated with a given rating**

3. HEAT - *When temperature exceeds 36 Degrees Celsius (36°C), all sessions will follow these guidelines and adhere to policy compliance ensuring appropriate rest, drink breaks and low impact/intensity activities are conducted.*
  
4. WET/COLD – *When the weather conditions result in frost, snow, rain, water, mud or if the temperature drops below 4 Degrees Celsius (4°C) all sessions will follow these guidelines and adhere to policy compliance ensuring the safety of all involved.*

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

Breaches of this policy must be reported to Bocce Australia management within 14 days of any occurrence.

## Smoke Pollution

- *The Club, as the Controlling Body, may decide to cancel the game prior to its commencement, or during play, if they believe that the weather is not likely to be suitable for play to commence or continue.*
- *A Club may have in place a policy under which all play is suspended if certain criteria are reached or met (e.g. a threshold temperate or in this case Smoke pollution AVI level, which if reached or while exceeded all play is then suspended).*
- *Players may appeal to the Controlling Body / Referee for play to be suspended or abandoned. In a team game, such appeal should be made by the Captain or Club delegate.*
- *In all cases, the health and safety of players should be the prime consideration in determining whether play should be suspended and/or abandoned.*
- *Each club should have in place evacuation and emergency policies and procedures and should conduct an evacuation drill at least once in each 12 month period.*
- *Each club should provide a contact number that players and officials can ring if they are in doubt as to the state of play on any given day.*

Bocce Australia advises that where possible, clubs should usually continue play or competition where they are able to do so however, player and official's safety will remain the paramount consideration.

The controlling body should suspend play/competition for up to two hours if the adverse smoke pollution condition may improve.

Where conditions have not improved in that time the controlling body should cancel the play/competition for that day and reschedule.

The controlling body may approve rescheduling play/competition to another day or weekend if the controlling body determines that conditions are unsafe for players,

officials or spectators. Typical reasons for this include consistent smoke pollution, heavy rain, snow, slippery conditions, extreme heat or cold and bad light.

If play completion is to be cancelled and rescheduled the controlling body will use their best endeavours to notify participants.

The controlling body will determine the most appropriate method of communication and might consider community radio, newsletter, phone calls, SMS text, or emails.

Each club should have its own policy as to refunding any fees to those participants who are unable to play/compete at the rescheduled time when the play/competition is cancelled due to adverse weather.

## **SMOKE POLLUTION**

Players, officials and spectators should at all times be encouraged to wear appropriate light weight uniforms along with shorts or for women three-quarter pants with short sleeved top. If playing outdoors that a hat is part of the uniform.

Drinks should be available at every venue where play/competition takes place. Tap water should be available free of charge and in unlimited quantities. Other drinks may be served or sold as determined by each club.

Bushfire smoke can pose a health risk to athletes. The health impact of bushfire smoke can vary based on an individual's current health status and previous medical conditions. Current public health advice is aimed at high-risk groups, including people over 65, children 14 years and younger, pregnant women and those with existing heart or lung conditions. However, athletes involved in high performance sport can also be at higher risk while performing high intensity prolonged exercise outdoors and additional caution should be taken (e.g. The Bocce Progressive Throw events).

When pollution exposure is at low levels, the respiratory tract usual defence mechanisms trap, transport and clear pollutants effectively. With elevated exposure, short-term accumulation can occur resulting in inflammation and this can exacerbate a number of health conditions with asthma being the most common in athletes.

During exercise, respiratory rate and volume increases, this in turn increases the total airway exposure to pollutants. In high performance athletes, moderate exercise can increase the total amount of air passing through the airway by more than 10 times and vigorous exercise by more the 20 times, compared to resting values. Even at moderately reduced air quality, this can represent a significant increase in pollutant exposure during a one-hour, high intensity training session.

## **Air Quality Index (AQI)**

The AQI is an accepted means of quantifying air quality by public health authorities encompassing:

- Air pollution levels at your nearest monitoring site or region
- The common contributing pollutants
- The overall health risk associated with a given rating

Each state and territory has live online updates on current, local AQI levels. The AQI evaluates the current level of air quality with general advice on implications for individuals. In athletes performing extended higher intensity exercise the risk of airway irritation is higher at lower levels of pollution.

Table 1 (below) is adopted by Bocce Australia as the standard to be followed and applied to all Bocce endorsed events.

When the smoke pollution exceeds 100AQI , play/competition should be interrupted so that players are advised and the organising body can determine the next steps.

Any time limit imposed on the interruption will be added to the game time limit.

When play is in the open, shelter should be offered for the players while the officials determine the next steps.

The Tournament Director at the venue along with the Game Day referee will determine suspension or cancellation of play/competition, where the smoke pollution exceeds 100AQI. The immediate safety of all players and officials is taken into consideration if agreeing to continue play; however it is recommended that play/competition be discontinued.

It will be at the discretion of the controlling body to determine whether to discontinue play. In making the decision, the controlling body will take into account all relevant factors including the age and health of players and officials, the weather conditions and climate for that part of the country, the level of humidity, the evacuation/emergency plans for the club/venue and the amount of shade or shelter available at the venue.

For Bocce competitions the classification for **General population and low intensity exercise** should apply where the smoke pollution exceeds 150AQI, Bocce Australia policy is to stop all play/competition and reschedule to another date.

**Table 1. AQI and suggested risk stratification, adapted from NSW Public Health Unit & Sport Australia.**

General population and low intensity exercise		Endurance based and high intensity exercise	
AQI	Action	AQI	Action
<b>VERY GOOD</b> (0-33)	Enjoy activities	<b>VERY GOOD</b> (0-33)	Enjoy activities
<b>GOOD</b> (34-66)	Enjoy activities	<b>GOOD</b> (34-66)	Enjoy activities
<b>FAIR</b> (67-99)	<b>People unusually sensitive to air pollution:</b> Plan strenuous outdoor activities when air quality is better	<b>FAIR</b> (67-99)	<b>Asthmatic athletes:</b> Should have medical review prior to performing high intensity extended training outdoors
<b>POOR</b> (100-149)	<b>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</b> <b>Sensitive groups:</b> Avoid strenuous outdoor activities <b>Everyone:</b> Cut back or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities	<b>VERY POOR</b> (100-149)	<b>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</b> Asthmatics or symptomatic non-asthmatics should not compete or train outdoors. Minimise asymptomatic athlete exposure
<b>VERY POOR</b> (150-200)	<b>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</b> <b>Sensitive groups:</b> Avoid strenuous outdoor activities <b>Everyone:</b> Cut back or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities	<b>HAZARDOUS</b> (150-200)	<b>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</b> Outdoor training should be rescheduled indoors, and exposure should be minimised for everyone
<b>HAZARDOUS</b> (>200)	<b>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</b> <b>Sensitive groups:</b> Avoid strenuous outdoor activities <b>Everyone:</b> Significantly cut back on outdoor physical activities		

The following links will be useful in helping you determine your region's air quality;

- [Australian Capital Territory](#)
- [Victoria](#)
- [New South Wales](#)
- [Queensland](#)
- [Western Australia](#)
- [South Australia](#)
- [Tasmania](#)

## RESONSBILE OFFICERS

- Bocce Australia
- State Federations & Regional Associations
- Affiliated Clubs

## AUTHORITY

- Board of Bocce Australia

## REVIEW DATE

- January 2020