



HEAT POLICY

This VYUFDA document has been reviewed and approved by the Committee on 26th May 2019

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Purpose:

The Association recognises that it has a duty of care in relation to the health and safety of the people and animals involved in our sport. This document represents the Associations Heat Policy and is intended to provide our Convenors and members guidance on how to address days of excessive heat. Trials affiliated with the VYUFDA are expected to be run in accordance with this policy.

Approach:

In the formulation of this policy, the Association's approach has been to leverage information publicly available. Where possible and appropriate, existing industry level information has been used in the formulation of this policy. It attempts to take a common-sense approach; would you work your dogs and sheep at home under these or forecast temperatures? If not, why would you do it in public?

Background:

In Victoria, the major heat risk period is from December through to the end of March. For this reason, there are few trials conducted.

Working in hot conditions can result in a number of adverse health effects, ranging from discomfort to serious illness, which are generally grouped together as heat stress. In extreme circumstances this can be fatal.

According to <http://www.ohsrep.org.au> , in Victoria there are NO specific statutory or regulatory limits on the temperature to which workers can be exposed. Within the construction industry EBA's, the stop work temperature has generally been set at 35c.

According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, **35 - 40°C is considered to be the 'limit of high temperature tolerance' for most people.**

A dog cools its body through evaporative heat loss through lungs and cardio vascular system. Once a dog's ability to compensate is exceeded, heat stress rapidly develops. If a dog's body temperature exceeds 42 degrees muscle activity decreases and if this continues for any length of time muscle damage, heart failure, organ breakdown and brain swelling can occur.

Dogs Victoria's extreme weather policy states "If the forecast temperature for the district where the show is to be held is 36 degrees or higher then:

- (a) The show is to be cancelled or:
- (b) The show is to be rescheduled to start at 7pm where the exhibition area has lighting and is available for use."

Agriculture Victoria recommend not to handle animals in extreme heat unless absolutely necessary. If necessary, make sure it is done as early or late in the day as possible when temperatures are lower. Providing shade or shelter for livestock helps them to deal better with the heat and can reduce production losses that may result from heat stress.

Introduction:

To assist in the usability of this document, a structure similar to the CFA’s fire danger ratings will be used to describe heat risk levels. The mitigation activities to be undertaken will then be tailored to the risk level.

Heat Index Calculator:

When determining the likelihood of heat stress, there are two main factors to consider, Heat and Humidity. Factors such as wind speed and direction can further increase risk.

The US National Weather service have developed a heat index calculator that we will utilise. This calculator estimates the temperature felt by the body as a result of air temperature and relative humidity. Heat index is similar to wind chill in its attempt to measure perceived, rather than actual temperature.

The below table has been broken into 4 heat zones. For each zone, Table A provides guidance on the actions to be utilised to address the heat risk.

Heat Index Table

	Temperature																	
	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	
Relative Humidity (%)	20	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	37	38	39	41	42	44
	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	38	39	41	43	45	47
	30	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	38	39	41	43	45	47	49
	35	27	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	36	38	39	41	43	46	48	50	53
	40	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	37	39	41	43	46	48	51	54	57
	45	27	28	29	30	32	33	35	37	39	41	43	46	49	51	54	57	
	50	27	28	30	31	33	34	36	38	41	43	46	49	52	55	58		
	55	28	29	30	32	34	36	38	40	43	46	48	52	55	59			
	60	28	29	31	33	35	37	40	42	45	48	51	55	59				
	65	28	30	32	34	36	39	41	44	48	51	55	59					
	70	29	31	33	35	38	40	43	47	50	54	58						
	75	29	31	34	36	39	42	46	49	53	57							
	80	30	32	35	38	41	44	48	52	55								
	85	30	33	36	39	43	47	51	55									
	90	31	34	37	41	45	49	54										
	95	31	35	38	42	47	51	57										
100	32	36	40	44	49	54												

Caution	Basic heat safety and planning
Extreme Caution	Implement precautions and heighten awareness
Danger	Additional precautions to protect workers
Extreme Danger	Triggers even more aggressive protective measures

The Heat Index is a measure of how hot it really feels when relative humidity is factored in with the actual air temperature. To find the Heat Index temperature, look at the Heat Index Chart above. As an example, if the air temperature is 36°C and the relative humidity is 65%, the heat index, “how hot it feels” is 51°C. The red area without numbers indicates extreme danger.

For heat and humidity levels outside that shown on the above chart, a calculator is available. The calculator can be found [here](#)

Call to Action Temperature

If the forecast temperature is above 32C on the day of the trial, the convener must consider making adjustments to the structure of the trial. Guidance on possible considerations are included in Table A.

Leading up to a Trial:

If within 48 hour of the trial the forecast temperature is expected to enter the Extreme Danger zone (Red), then the event is to be cancelled or rescheduled. The decision is to be made by the Convenor in conjunction with the committee representative

If the projected temperature is expected to approach the Call to Action point, review the location of the trial course and holding areas to maximise available shade. Consider altering the trial start time to utilise cooler parts of the day. It may be necessary to eliminate finals or classes to enable the trial to proceed.

On the day of the Trial:

If temperatures are expected to approach the Call to Action temperature, the Convenor should regularly monitor the temperature.

Table A below provides guidance on the types of actions to be taken dependant on the heat risk level identified.

Should the temperature reach the Extreme Danger zone (Red) during the course of the trial, then competition will be suspended until the temperature or humidity reduces.

Table A: Heat Index Guidance:

The following table provides a guide of actions to be considered dependent on the heat risk. The category of heat risk determined via a combination of heat and humidity is defined in the Heat Risk Table.

Further advise can be obtained from the reference material contained within the Acknowledgements section.

	Judges	Competitor	Officials	Dogs	Sheep
Caution	Apply a broad-spectrum sun screen with a minimum SPF of 30+ and lip balm. Use natural or portable shade where possible Encourage the use of hats and sunglasses	Apply a broad-spectrum sun screen with a minimum SPF of 30+ and lip balm. Use natural or portable shade where possible Encourage the use of hats and sunglasses	Apply a broad-spectrum sun screen with a minimum SPF of 30+ and lip balm. Use natural or portable shade where possible Encourage the use of hats and sunglasses	Provide plenty of cool, clean water. Ensure that they have access to cool, shady and well-ventilated areas	Ensure that adequate clean water is available for sheep. Consider the sight of the holding area to maximise available shade.
Extreme Caution	Provide cool drinking water near the work site. During hot weather, workers should be encouraged to drink a cup of water (about 200 mL) every 15 to 20 minutes, and not rely solely on soft drinks or caffeinated drinks	Encourage Competitors to adequately hydrate.	Ensure that Officials have shade protection Ensure regular hydration as per Judges Tasks will be rotated amongst volunteers to avoid prolonged exposure to the heat	Be aware of the signs of heat stroke in animals – this can be potentially fatal. Signs include rapid panting, lethargy, drooling, weakness, muscle tremors, or collapse. See Appendix A	Reduce sheep density in holding area to allow heat dissipation. Be conscious of the number of times that sheep are recirculated during the day. Dependant on the number of sheep available, this may necessitate a reduction in the number of runs for the day or the numbers of sheep utilised per run.

<p>Danger</p>	<p>Encourage rest breaks as needed by an individual. Consider mandatory rest breaks Simplify the course requirements (e.g. placing of stock prior to obstacles) to minimise the time dogs and sheep spend on course..</p>	<p>Consider the amount of natural shade available within the trial area and supplement if possible</p>	<p>Commence trial as early as practical or alternatively delay the start until late afternoon/evening when it has cooled Schedule lunch break to coincide with the hotter parts of the day Cancel Finals Dependant on the number of entries, consider the cancelling of a class.</p>	<p>Be conscious of the number of runs a dog may have during the course of the day. Cool water trough be provided so that the dog can be partially immersed. Be aware of the cages being used to store and transport dogs. Ensure it has a roof to provide shade, and that the sides are well ventilated (e.g. meshed rather than solid material)</p>	<p>Dependent on the natural shade available, consider the introduction of artificial shade via shade cloth etc.</p>
<p>Extreme Danger</p>	<p>Halt event Consider its rescheduling</p>	<p>Halt event Consider its rescheduling</p>	<p>Halt event Consider its rescheduling</p>	<p>Halt Event Consider its rescheduling</p>	<p>Halt Event Consider its rescheduling</p>

Appendix A: Heatstroke in Pets

PETS IN SUMMER SERIES

HEATSTROKE IN FAMILY PETS

What to do if you suspect heatstroke

- 01** Hose down your pet thoroughly so that their panting slows down and to prevent their body temperature from rising further.
- 02** Ring your vet to tell them you are on your way – immediate veterinary attention is recommended, don't take a 'wait and see' approach.
- 03** In the car, keep your air conditioning on or your windows down to keep your pet cool.
- 04** At the vet, treatment for heatstroke may include intravenous fluids, oxygen or a blood test to determine if organ damage has occurred.
- 05** Severe cases can have a significant risk of death and may require hospitalisation for 1-10 days.

What symptoms to look for

What to do on a hot day with your pets

- Ask your neighbour to check on your pet if it is kept outside.
- Keep your pet inside.
- Make sure your pet has a shady area to escape to.
- If you don't have air conditioning, use fans to increase air circulation.
- Spray small animals with a spray bottle of water set at a fine mist.
- Make sure your pet has two bowls of water in case one gets knocked over.
- For guinea pigs and rabbits, put their cage under shade cloth to drop the temp while still allowing cool air to circulate.
- Provide your dog with a paddling pool to cool off.
- Exercise early morning or evening - when the temps are cooler.
- Repeatedly wet your dog with a hose if they are panting heavily.
- Add ice cubes to water bowl to make it extra cool.

What not to do on a hot day with your pets

- Don't leave your pet in your vehicle, even if it's in the shade.
- Don't travel with your pet in a poorly ventilated vehicle.
- Don't take your dog for a run in the middle of the day.
- Don't allow your pet to exercise excessively.
- Don't forget to provide adequate amounts of fresh water.

Average body temperature of household pets

Pet Type	Temperature Range (°C)
DOGS	37.8°-39.2°
CATS	37.8°-39.3°
BIRDS	38.8°-39.5°
RABBITS	38.5°-40°
GUINEA PIGS	37.5°-39.5°

The closer the temp of the day is to your pets body temperature, the harder it is for them to keep themselves cool.

Types of pets most susceptible to heatstroke

- Short snout breeds - Pugs, Pekes and Bulldogs.
- Elderly or ill pets.
- Cats with shortened faces like the Persian.
- Dogs that snore or have airway problems.
- Pets which are caged or unable to seek cooler environments.
- Pets which are overweight.
- A pet that has had heatstroke before could be at a higher risk of getting it again.
- Pets with heart conditions.
- Dogs which exercise excessively in hot weather.
- Pets which have recently been relocated to hotter climates.

Why your dog may be more likely to get heatstroke than you

- DOGS CAN'T SWEAT. THEIR ONLY EFFECTIVE METHOD OF COOLING IS PANTING.
- YOUR DOG CAN'T ASK FOR A DRINK OR TELL YOU IF THEY ARE TOO HOT.
- DOGS ARE SO EAGER TO PLEASE THEIR OWNERS THEY OFTEN WON'T STOP PLAYING UNTIL THEIR BODIES CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE.

What heatstroke can do to your pet

- Brain damage - in severe cases may be permanent.
- Muscle damage can be severe if heat stroke is associated with exercise or seizures.
- Organ failure if the body temp reaches 43 degrees.
- Swelling of the upper airways.
- Death
- Liver damage and liver failure.
- Bleeding disorders.
- Lung damage.
- Kidney damage or failure.
- Ulceration of the stomach and intestines.

Appendix B – Heat stroke symptoms

The symptoms to look out for include:

- Panting which increases as heatstroke progresses
- Drooling, salivating
- Agitation, restlessness
- Very red or pale gums
- Bright red tongue
- Increased heart rate
- Breathing distress
- Vomiting Diarrhea (possibly with blood)
- Signs of mental confusion, delirium
- Dizziness, staggering
- Lethargy, weakness
- Muscle tremors
- Seizures
- Collapsing and lying down
- Little to no urine production
- Coma

If you suspect your pet has heatstroke or they are showing signs of heatstroke:

Know how to do **Emergency First Aid** at home if you suspect your pet has heatstroke. Initial emergency treatment at home should aim to normalise body temperature.

- Remove your pet from the hot environment immediately.
- Apply or spray tepid/cool water onto the animal's fur and skin. Then apply a fan/fanning to maximise heat loss.
- Wetting down the area around your pet can also help.
- Don't use ice-cold water or ice as this may worsen the problem.
- Then take your pet to the nearest Veterinarian immediately.

- Heatstroke is an emergency – always see a vet. Even if your pet looks like they may be recovering or you just suspect they might have heatstroke they should still always be checked by a vet.

Acknowledgements:

The following documents and websites were used as references in the creation of this document.

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/working-heat>

<http://www.ohsrep.org.au/faqs/workplace-and-amenities/heat-when-is-it-too-hot>

<http://www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au/saleyards-and-depots/>

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-health/animals-in-hot-conditions/caring-for-animals-during-extreme-heat>

http://www.bom.gov.au/info/thermal_stress/

<https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-index>

<https://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/html/heatindex.shtml>

https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/atoms/files/working_safely_in_hot_conditions2016.pdf

<https://www.vcalc.com/wiki/rklarsen/Australian+Apparent+Temperature+%28AT%29>

<https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/104052/2/02whole.pdf>

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/pets/dogs/dorg-health/heat-and-pets>

<https://fswgap.worksafe.qld.gov.au/etools/etool/heat-stress-basic-calculator-test/>

https://www.mla.com.au/globalassets/mla-corporate/22357-lpa-fact-sheet-7_animal-welfare_web.pdf

<http://www.wkc.org.au/PDF/AnimalWelfare-LivestockWorkingDogs.pdf>

<https://dogsvictoria.org.au/uploads/Extreme%20Weather%20Conformation.pdf>

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