

**TO:** QRL – Division Managers  
**DATE:** 24 January 2006  
**RE:** **Recommended Heat Policy**

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Dear Sir/Madam,

The League's Board of Directors at its meeting on 20 January, 2006, considered a submission prepared by QRL Medical Officer, Dr Roy Saunders, following several months of research regarding the playing of rugby league matches in extreme weather conditions.

It was decided that the attached paper be circulated as a Recommended Policy for Leagues and Clubs if matches are proposed in extreme heat conditions, in particular during the months of November to February.

It is stressed that the policy is a Guide only and should be used in conjunction with all available information to ensure the safety of all participants.

Please ensure that all Local Leagues and Clubs within the Division receive a copy of this advice and ensure that they are fully aware of their responsibilities under this Recommended Policy.

Yours sincerely,

**Ross Livermore**  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR**

# **Queensland Rugby League Heat Policy**

## **Information Sheet**

Queensland Rugby League strongly recommends that during the hotter months of November to February inclusive, games do not commence prior to 4pm. It is essential that, regardless of the environmental conditions, the standard exercise in the heat precautions as per Sports Medicine Australia Heat Guidelines be applied. (Please refer to the following link for access to this document [http://www.sma.org.au/pdfdocuments/Hot Weather Guidelines.pdf](http://www.sma.org.au/pdfdocuments/Hot_Weather_Guidelines.pdf)).

Should it become necessary to consider commencing games prior to 4pm or when weather conditions at other times during the year are extreme, the following protocol may be used as a guide to assist in making safe and informed decisions.

These may be achieved by using information provided by the Bureau of Meteorology and applying the Sports Medicine Australia Guidelines.

The process is set out below.

**STEP 1:** Access the Weather Bureau Website at [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

**STEP 2:** Click on Weather Forecasts, Warnings and Observations for Queensland

**STEP 3:** Under Weather Observations click on All Latest Queensland Observations

**STEP 4:** Under Latest Observations: Met Observations - click on Thermal Comfort Observations

The ambient temperature, humidity and the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (**WBGTsun**) are displayed in table form for all areas in Queensland. Alternatively, the ambient temperature of the specific playing area can be determined by using an accurate thermometer.

To make an informed decision regarding playing, use the information from the tables to determine either the ambient temperature or the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature sunny (**WBGT sun**) for your particular area. If the environmental conditions are hot and dry as shown on the Website then the ambient temperature can be used. If the environmental conditions are hot and humid then the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature sunny (**WBGT sun**) is the best. These temperature readings are then used in conjunction with the following tables below to determine the thermal risk.

## Hot & Dry Conditions

Ambient Temperature	Relative Humidity	Risk of thermal injury	Possible modifying action for vigorous sustained activity
15-20		low	Heat illness can occur in distance running Caution over-motivation
21-25	<60%	Low - moderate	Increase vigilance Caution over-motivation
26-30	<50	Moderate	Moderate early pre-season training intensity. Reduce intensity and duration of play / training. Take more breaks
31-35	<30%	High-very high	Limit intensity. Limit duration to less than 60 minutes.
36 and above	<25%	Extreme	Postpone to a cooler part of the day or cancel.

## WBGT for Hot & Humid Conditions

WBGT	Risk of thermal Injury	Possible modifying action for vigorous sustained activity
<20	Low	Heat illness can occur in distance running. Caution over-motivation
21-25	Moderate to high	Increase vigilance. Caution over-motivation. Moderate early pre-season training intensity and duration. Take more breaks
26-29	High-Very High	Limit intensity. Limit duration to less than 60 minutes.
30 and above	Extreme	Postpone to a cooler part of the day or cancel.

Please regard the above information as a **guide only**. It is important to not only consider the Players but also Officials, Referees and Volunteers. **There are a number of factors that can influence exercising in the heat.** Please refer to the Sports Medicine Australia policies at the Sports Medicine Australia website [www.sma.org.au](http://www.sma.org.au) under the following headings for more details.

- Sports Medicine Australia National Heat Guidelines  
[http://www.sma.org.au/pdffdocuments/Hot\\_Weather\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.sma.org.au/pdffdocuments/Hot_Weather_Guidelines.pdf)
- Sports Medicine Australia National Heat Policy  
[http://www.sma.org.au/pdffdocuments/SMA\\_Heat\\_Policy\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sma.org.au/pdffdocuments/SMA_Heat_Policy_2005.pdf)
- SMA Beat the Heat Fact Sheet  
[http://www.sma.org.au/pdffdocuments/Beat\\_the\\_heat2.pdf](http://www.sma.org.au/pdffdocuments/Beat_the_heat2.pdf)

### DISCLAIMER

The information in this sheet is of a general informative nature. Individual circumstances may require modification of general advice from an appropriate Health Professional eg Doctor, Physiotherapist, Podiatrist or Dietician.