

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ICE SKATING ASSOCIATION Inc.



Policies and Procedures

Occupational Health Safety & Welfare
Hot Weather Policy

Version 1

2012

Review date: May 2014

Hot Weather Policy

Purpose

Figure Skating on ice is an indoor sport usually conducted under air-conditioned climates. The South Australian Ice Skating Association (SAISA), however, recognises hot weather could become high risk for members travelling to the ice rinks or attending off-ice training sessions. SAISA and all affiliated clubs have a duty of care to all skaters, officials, volunteers and spectators. The following policy is to ensure all SAISA members are protected in high-risk temperatures and that no member shall suffer injury or damage due to such conditions.

Scope

The policy is binding on SAISA and all affiliated clubs.

The policy refers to children, adolescents, adults, irrespective of whether they are skaters, officials, volunteers, etc.

The policy applies to, but is not restricted to:

- Training
- Clinics and sports camps
- Off-ice practices
- Other events and activities determined from time to time

Factors of heat related illnesses

High-risk temperatures will affect individuals differently based on:

- Air temperature and humidity
- Age
- Air movement
- Length of exposure to the high-risk temperature
- Clothing
- Acclimatisation
- Hydration levels
- Illnesses and medical conditions

Responsibilities

The safety of all members is primarily an individual responsibility.

SAISA provides the guidelines in this policy to ensure all members understand their individual responsibilities.

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SAISA responsibilities:

SAISA will provide a policy, distribute Sports Medicine Australia literature, and ensure members understand their responsibilities to avoid unnecessary risk.

Coach, team manager or SAISA official responsibilities:

Coaches, team managers and SAISA officials have the authority and the responsibility in conditions deemed high-risk to:

Cancel training

Alter the start times

Alter the length of the session

Modify breaks

The coach, team manager or SAISA official shall not cancel training based on the least fit member when detrimental to the majority of members. The coach or team manager will not deem any condition as high-risk based solely on ambient temperature; other factors such as age of the participants, air movement, humidity, shade and other factors will be considered.

However, on days when the ambient temperature forecast is 38 degrees or higher all outdoor events must be cancelled.

Member responsibilities:

Individuals have a responsibility to withdraw from an event if participating will place them at risk of health implications. Members must:

- Read and understand the SAISA Hot Weather Policy and any Sports Medicine Australia literature
- Follow the directions of the coach, team manager or SAISA official
- Assess their susceptibility to heat stress
- Seek advice of a medical professional if unsure whether high-risk conditions are present
- Inform the coach, team manager or SAISA official if the member feels any symptoms as detailed in Sports Medicine Australia 'Beat the Heat' fact sheet.

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Useful information on hot weather and sport

Dehydration

Fluid loss occurs during exercise, mainly due to perspiration and respiration. It makes an athlete more susceptible to fatigue and muscle cramps. Inadequate fluid replacement before, during and after exercise will lead to excessive dehydration and may lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Sports Medicine Australia recommends athletes drink:

- At least 500mls (2-3 glasses) ½ to 1 hour prior to exercise
- At least 200mls (1 glass) every 10-15 minutes during exercise
- And after exercise drink 1.5 times your fluid deficit to ensure you are fully re-hydrated

Heat exhaustion

Dehydration can lead to heat exhaustion characterised by:

- High heart rate, dizziness, headache, loss of endurance or skill, confusion, nausea
- Pale colour to skin which may still be cool/sweaty
- Reduction in urine output, highly concentrated urine (will be darker than normal)
- Cramps

Heat stroke

Severe dehydration may lead to heat stroke which is potentially fatal:

- The athlete may not have shown signs of heat exhaustion and have continued with the activity
- Heat stroke is characterised by symptoms similar to heat exhaustion but with a dry skin, confusion and collapse

N.B. heat exhaustion/stroke can still occur even in the presence of good hydration.

Strategies

Drink breaks - Opportunities for drink breaks should be scheduled every 15 and 30 minutes

Shades - Shades and shelters must be available whether there is natural shade or not

Headwear - Suitable, preferably broad-brimmed hats should be worn

Sunscreen - Broad spectrum water resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen must be made available for use by participants

Drinking water - Iced water must be made available

Cooling - Spray bottles containing water should be made available so as to allow participants to douse themselves, thereby assisting the cooling process

Reading matter

- Beat the Heat-Fact Sheet
- Hot Weather Guidelines
- UV Exposure and Heat Illness Guide.pdf

Available from the Sports Medicine Australia website : <http://sma.org.au/resources/policies/hot-weather/>