

14.2 WEATHER POLICY – SCENT WORK (amended 15/08/24, 15/06/24)

This policy is intended to assist trial organisers to minimize the risk of heat stress to humans and dogs participating in scent work trials in hot weather and to minimize the risk of injury or other harm because of inclement weather.

14.2.1 Trial Planning

When scheduling a trial for days when the temperature may be reasonably expected to exceed 30 degrees Celsius, consideration should be given to:

1. Scheduling an early start or a twilight trial;
2. Provision of shade in search areas for judges, stewards and competitors waiting to compete;
3. Provision of drinking water for judges, officials and volunteers;
4. Provision of water and paddling pools for use by dogs; and
5. Scheduling so that judges and officials can be rotated throughout the day.

14.2.2 Conduct of Trial in Hot Weather

1. All persons attending the trial are responsible for their own, and their dogs' safety and welfare. Each person should bring shade, shelter and wet weather equipment for themselves and their dogs;
2. Particular attention should be paid to dogs at high risk of heat stress, including brachycephalic breeds and high drive dogs;
3. Judges and stewards should be prepared to allow dogs running in multiple elements sufficient time between runs. Competitors should consider competing in less elements if the weather is hot;
4. The judge may order removal from competition of any dog suffering signs of heat stress as the dog is unfit to compete (Scent Work Rules 9.3 Welfare of Dogs);
5. Judging at a trial will be suspended if the temperature reaches 32 degrees Celsius as indicated by a suitable outdoor thermometer suspended in an open, shaded area no more than 10 metres from the search area;
6. Judging will resume only if the temperature drops and stays below 32 degrees Celsius for a period of 15 minutes;
7. Should the CFA fire danger rating as advised on the CFA website (www.cfa.vic.gov.au) for the district where the trial is to be held is Catastrophic for the day of the trial, then the trial shall be cancelled; and
8. Should the trial be cancelled, ~~no~~ refunds of entry fees will **apply be made available**. (amended 15/08/24)

14.2.3 Conduct of Trial in Inclement Weather

1. Inclement weather shall include gale force winds, heavy rain, thunderstorms, lightning and flood;
2. Light to medium rain is not considered inclement weather;
3. Gale force winds are defined as 63kms per hour and over;
4. If inclement weather is predicted for the trial area, referral to the Elders Weather website (www.eldersweather.com.au) is recommended and a 'wait and see' approach may be adopted. The trial may proceed if the weather subsequently clears;
5. At the onset of any thunder and/or lightning, judging is to be suspended immediately, until it is clear, then the trial may proceed. Conditions should be reviewed every 15 minutes;
6. If, after 90 minutes of the suspension of judging, the inclement conditions still exist the trial shall be cancelled; and
7. Should the trial be cancelled, ~~no~~ refunds of entry fees will **apply be made available**. (amended 15/08/24)

It is the responsibility of the Affiliate conducting the trial to monitor the forecast and current weather conditions and to invoke the Policy when applicable.