FV-10 | Inclement Weather Policy

APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE
Reviewed November 2026

Scope

All outdoor activities, including travel, setup and pack-down.

Purpose and authority

Protect participants and the team from weather and environmental hazards. Facilitators and activity leaders may cancel, postpone, move indoors or stop immediately if conditions are unsafe. Safety takes priority over attendance targets. Communicate changes promptly to participants, carers, schools and volunteers and offer a safe alternative where practicable.

Planning and monitoring

Check official Bureau of Meteorology forecasts and warnings, CFA fire danger ratings, VicEmergency, site and road closures, water quality, tide and swell before the event. Review at least 24 hours ahead, before travel and continuously on site. Assess the activity time, local exposure, gusts, accessibility, participants' needs and safe shelter and evacuation options. Conditions below a numerical threshold may still be unsafe.

Retained organisational cancellation triggers

- Forecast or observed temperature at the activity of 35°C or higher, or 12°C or lower: cancel the outdoor activity or substitute a suitable indoor program.
- Forecast or observed wind of 30 km/h or higher, or 16 knots or higher: cancel the outdoor fishing activity. Assess gusts and direction, casting space, waves and falling branches; do not rely on averages alone.
- Heavy rain, flooding, unsafe banks, dangerous swell, lightning, closures or emergency warnings: stop or cancel the affected activity and travel as necessary.

These are Fishcare operating rules, not universal legal thresholds. Do not relax them by informal agreement with a participant group. Any future change requires an approved policy revision and documented risk basis.

Lightning and shelter

At signs of an approaching electrical storm or thunder, stop fishing, put down rods safely, move away from water and exposed structures and shelter in a substantial enclosed building or enclosed hard-top vehicle. Do not shelter under a tree or an open picnic shelter. Resume only when the storm has passed, official warnings and local assessment allow and at least 30 minutes have elapsed since the last

thunder. If no safe shelter is available, cancel early rather than rely on evacuation during the storm.

Bushfire, smoke and other hazards

Use the current ratings: Moderate, High, Extreme and Catastrophic. As Fishcare's conservative operating rule, cancel activities in bushfire-prone areas, and travel through those areas, on Extreme or Catastrophic days. Follow closures, Total Fire Ban restrictions and emergency advice at any rating. Plan departure early; do not drive into fire or follow a blanket instruction to evacuate irrespective of official advice.

Assess smoke, air quality, heat stress, cold exposure, floods, contaminated water and algae. Provide drinking water, rest, shade, appropriate clothing and sun protection. When UV is 3 or above, use combined sun protection including SPF50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen, a broad-brimmed hat, clothing, shade and sunglasses. Reapply as directed. Individual health needs may require additional controls or cancellation.

Records and emergency action

Document the forecast, site assessment, decision, notifications and any changed conditions. Account for everyone before leaving. For immediate danger call 000 and follow the site emergency plan. Report incidents and near misses; review whether the weather controls worked.

References and review

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Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic): incident notification
https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/notifiable-incidents-under-occupational-health-and-safety-act-2004

CFA: current fire danger ratings
https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-and-restrictions/fire-bans-ratings-and-restrictions/about-fire-danger-ratings

US National Weather Service: lightning safety and 30-minute wait
https://www.weather.gov/mlb/lightning_safety