

Gaelic Football & Hurling Association of Australasia Sun Smart Policy

Unprotected exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can have an immediate negative impact on performance and hydration, and can cause painful sunburn. Exposure to UV radiation also increases the risk of skin damage and skin cancer. In excess of 1,800 Australians and New Zealanders die every year from skin cancer, yet it is a largely preventable disease. Given that sporting events often take place during peak UV radiation times during the day, sporting organisations can play a major role in minimizing UV radiation exposure by providing an environment where policies and procedures positively influence sun protective behaviours.

Aims This policy aims to ensure all participants, officials and spectators involved in Gaelic Games are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year, and that we provide a sporting environment that supports sun safety awareness and practices.

Our commitment Our association/ State associations and Clubs have a duty of care to provide a safe environment for everyone involved in our activities. Providing a safe environment includes protecting people from the harmful effects of UV radiation.

Players, officials and spectators will be encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart to view local UV levels. Wherever possible, we will use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from September until the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above (the level that can damage skin and eyes) including the following:

1. Scheduling outdoor activities:

- Schedule outdoor events and/or training times outside peak UV times of 10am–2pm (11am–3pm daylight saving time).
- Consider all sun protection measures when planning outdoor events and/or training.
- Investigate the feasibility of having evening training sessions, games and events.

2. Shade:

- Hold training sessions and competitions at venues that provide adequate shade.
- Encourage players, officials and spectators to use the shade available, and encourage people to bring their own umbrellas and shade tents.

3. Hats:

- Ensure that officials and participants are provided with or encouraged to wear sun-safe hats when not participating/training that protect the face, neck and ears. Recommended sun-safe hats include legionnaire, board-brimmed and bucket hats. Baseball caps do not provide adequate sun protection and are not recommended.

4. Clothing

- Ensure that officials and participants are provided with or encouraged to wear sun-safe clothing that covers as much skin as possible, including shirts/tops with longer sleeves and a collar.
- Incorporate clothing that is cool, loose fitting and made of densely woven fabric into the club uniform. Any fabric with an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) rating above 15 provides good protection against UV radiation, but UPF50+ is recommended (AS/NZS 4399:1996).

5. Sunscreen

- Sunscreen is to be available that is at least SPF 30+, broad-spectrum and water-resistant and players, coaches, officials and spectators are encouraged to use it appropriately.
- Ensure that sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and is reapplied every 2 hours when outdoors, or after getting wet or perspiring.

6. Increase awareness of sun safety

- Regularly promote sun protection information to officials, participants and spectators through briefings or training sessions, newsletters, notice boards, online communications, enrolment and announcements at sporting events. Inform individuals about the associations' Sun Protection Policy when they apply for membership.

7. Role Modelling

- Encourage all officials, coaches, trainers and adult members of the club to act as positive role models for younger members in all aspects of sun safe behaviour, including using a combination of sun protection measures.

8. Review

- Regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection Policy to ensure it remains relevant and current.

Signed (by designated authorities)

Considered and accepted by the State committee:

Considered and accepted by the club captain:

Considered and accepted by the coaching staff:

Further resources

Additional resources for sporting organisations can be found on Cancer Council NSW's website at <http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart>, including:

- **10 step sun protection checklist for sporting organisations:** a short checklist to help officials, coaches and other staff assess current practices and behaviours and suggestions for improvements.
- **SunSmart UV Alert:** You can check the **SunSmart UV Alert** daily at www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmartuvalert, in most local newspapers, or by downloading the **free SunSmart App** for iPhones and Android. You can also add the **UV Alert widget** to your website.
- **The Sun Sound:** a catchy five-second jingle designed to be played at regular intervals on loudspeakers at beaches, pools and sports grounds. It's a friendly reminder to people to protect their skin from the sun.

