

Adverse Weather Policy

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Owner: Officer of the Commissioners

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Under the Human Rights Act 2019 a decision maker has an obligation to act and make consideration in a way that is compatible with human rights, and when making a decision under this policy, to give proper consideration to human rights.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent framework for the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) to assess and manage adverse weather risks at race meetings and official trials to protect animal welfare, participant safety, and racing operations.

1.1 Policy Statement

This policy establishes a consistent, risk-based decision-making framework for QRIC to help safeguard the welfare of racing animals, licensed participants, race club officials, service providers, and QRIC-approved personnel during race meetings and official trials affected by adverse weather conditions.

2. Authority

- [Racing Integrity Act 2016](#)
- [Racing Act 2002](#)
- [Animal Care and Protection Act 2001](#)
- [Rules of Racing \(Greyhound\)](#)
- [Rules of Racing \(Harness\)](#)
- [Rules of Racing \(Thoroughbred\)](#)

3. Background and context

Adverse weather conditions can pose significant risks to the safe conduct of racing and trials. QRIC is committed to mitigating these risks through proactive planning, timely intervention, and clear operational protocols.

This policy supports those efforts by outlining how QRIC monitors and responds to both forecast and real-time weather conditions on race and official trial days, using a precautionary, evidence-based approach to decision-making.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all QRIC staff, QRIC-approved personnel, licensed participants, race clubs, race club officials, and service providers. It also covers all animals, whether racing or support, present at race meetings or official trials. It applies across Thoroughbred, Harness, and Greyhound codes, and is applicable before and during any race meeting or official trial in Queensland.

The policy outlines measures designed to minimise the potential impact of adverse weather and provides guidance on race and official trial meeting scheduling, modification, postponement or abandonment where necessary.

5. Definitions (including abbreviations and acronyms)

Term / Acronym	Definition
Adverse Weather	Lightning, catastrophic fire danger, extreme heat or humidity, heavy rain or hail, poor air quality (smoke or pollution), strong winds, and other weather conditions that may pose an environmental hazard at race meetings or official trials.
BoM	Australian Bureau of Meteorology.
Chair of Stewards	The Steward appointed as the Chair of the Stewards Panel for a specific race meeting.
Club Official	Any person employed, engaged or appointed by a race club.
Decision Point (Greyhound)	When the ambient temperature at the relevant venue reaches 38°C, any remaining races or official trials must be suspended, and either postponed or abandoned.
Forecast Ambient Temperature	Temperature forecast on the BOM website (or data from a QRIC approved weather source) in relation to the day of the race meeting or trial.
Wet Bulb Globe Temperature or WBGT (sun)	A composite index used to assess the thermal load imposed by outdoor conditions in direct solar exposure. It incorporates ambient air temperature, humidity, and radiant heat from sunlight, and also reflects the indirect influence of air movement. WBGT measurements may be obtained through on-course devices or calculated using Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) data. Note: The BoM's calculated WBGT values rely on modelling/inputs that may not capture all wind or solar components; they should therefore be treated as approximations.
WBGT approximation matrix	A table used to estimate the thermal load imposed by outdoor

	conditions with full sun and light wind, derived from an approximate formula based on ambient temperature and relative humidity when direct WBGT measurement is unavailable (at Appendix 1).
Hot-Weather-Affected (Equine)	A Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) forecast for the venue or its nominated reference station, or a steward-observed ambient temperature recorded at the venue, of $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$, or WBGT (sun) values of $\geq 28^{\circ}\text{C}$ (either recorded on-course or estimated using the WBGT approximation matrix), that are sustained, repeated, or trending upward during the event period.
Hot-Weather-Affected (Greyhound)	A Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) forecast for the venue or its nominated reference station, or a steward-observed ambient temperature recorded at the venue, of $\geq 32^{\circ}\text{C}$, or WBGT (sun) values of $\geq 28^{\circ}\text{C}$ (either recorded on-course or estimated using the WBGT approximation matrix), that are sustained, repeated, or trending upward during the event period.
Race Meeting	An event at which racing is held under the Rules of Racing (Thoroughbred), the Rules of Racing (Harness) or the Rules of Racing (Greyhound).
Officiating Veterinarian	A qualified veterinary practitioner registered pursuant to relevant Queensland legislation and employed or engaged by QRIC or the race club to perform the duties of an official on-course veterinarian at a race meeting or official trials.
QRIC-approved Personnel	Any person employed or contracted by QRIC, Racing Queensland (RQ), or a race club who has been granted approval by QRIC, following relevant education, induction, evaluation, or assessment, to provide race- or trial-day support in accordance with this policy.
RQ	Racing Queensland Board trading as Racing Queensland established under the Racing Act 2002 (Qld).
Licensed Participant	Any person who holds a current QRIC-issued licence required to perform duties in a racing environment. This includes trainers, jockeys, apprentice jockeys, drivers, concession drivers, trackwork riders, stable hands (including those performing strapping duties), and greyhound attendants or kennel hands.
Industry Participant	A person involved with a code of racing (i.e. Thoroughbred, Harness, or Greyhound racing), other than a club, or a person whose only involvement is as a spectator or bettor.
QFD	Queensland Fire Department.
DETSI	Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation.
Official Trial	A trial held at a licensed venue under the supervision of QRIC Stewards, including:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an official trial under the Rules of Racing (Thoroughbred); • an official trial or time trial under the Rules of Racing (Harness); and • a satisfactory trial or qualifying trial under the Rules of Racing (Greyhound).
Rules of Racing (Greyhound)	Rules of Racing of Racing Queensland (Greyhound), constituted by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules and the Queensland Local Rules of Racing – Greyhound.
Rules of Racing (Harness)	Rules of Racing of Racing Queensland (Harness), constituted by the Australian Harness Racing Rules and the Local Rules of Racing – Harness Racing.
Rules of Racing (Thoroughbred)	Rules of Racing of Racing Queensland (Thoroughbred), constituted by the Australian Rules of Racing and the Local Rules – Thoroughbred Racing.

6. Key Principles

All licensed and other industry participants have a duty to ensure that the welfare of animals in their care is not, and is not likely to be, compromised by forecast or prevailing adverse weather conditions.

Responsibility for monitoring and safeguarding animal welfare and participant safety during race meetings and official trials is a shared obligation of licensed participants, club officials, medical personnel, QRIC employees, and QRIC-approved personnel. Close collaboration between these groups is essential to ensure that appropriate measures are implemented, and welfare standards are maintained.

Racing or official trials in adverse weather conditions require careful planning, coordinated action, and appropriate resources to safeguard animal welfare and ensure the safety of all personnel. When such conditions are forecast or arise, QRIC will consider the need for and availability of additional resources and personnel to support effective monitoring, timely response, and the management of any risks to the safe conduct of race meetings and official trials.

Where identified risks cannot be adequately mitigated, QRIC will consider any necessary changes to the meeting schedule, including alterations to the date, time, or venue, in consultation with Racing Queensland (RQ) where appropriate. If, following a risk assessment, the Stewards determine that the safety or welfare of animals or participants cannot be reasonably assured, the event may be cancelled, postponed, or abandoned.

6.1 Risk Management and Decision Framework

This framework outlines how QRIC and its Stewards, in consultation with RQ where appropriate, assess and manage risks associated with adverse weather. Decisions are guided by animal welfare, participant safety, and integrity considerations.

Control	Action
Elimination	Abandon or postpone the race meeting or official trial to eliminate the risk entirely.
Modification	Adjust the date, start time, or location of races or trials to reduce risk.
Mitigation	Implement measures to reduce the impact on animals and participants during race meetings or trials.
Proceed with Safeguards	The Chair of Stewards, or another Steward acting under delegated responsibility, having considered information and advice from the Officiating Veterinarian, QRIC veterinary staff, club officials, and medical personnel, and in consultation with RQ, may authorise a race meeting or trial to proceed where risks are assessed as manageable and suitable safeguards (which may include modification or mitigation measures) are in place. Stewards may also consider input from licensed participants on relevant matters; however, responsibility for the final decision rests with Stewards on race day, or with RQ prior to the official scratching deadline.

6.2 Adverse Heat

6.2.1 Heat Risk Principles and Decision Framework

High heat and humidity are common adverse weather conditions in Queensland and require thoughtful planning and practical safeguards to protect the welfare of animals and the safety of all personnel involved in race meetings and official trials.

The risk of heat-related illness increases when high temperatures coincide with elevated humidity, limited airflow, or prolonged exposure.

It should be recognised that races and trials involve relatively short periods of exertion and environmental exposure, and that both animals and participants are supported by specific management provisions on the day — including enhanced cooling measures, hydration, and ongoing monitoring. With these provisions in place, and with input from veterinary and medical staff, as well as from riders, drivers, and handlers informing decisions, fit and acclimatised animals, together with well-supported personnel, are generally able to perform safely under most hot-weather conditions.

6.2.2 Weather monitoring, assessment and consultation

Prior to a race meeting or official trials, QRIC and RQ will monitor weather forecasts and conditions at venues hosting scheduled events and liaise with individual race clubs and their appointed Officiating

Veterinarians to understand local microclimates, available resources, and past experiences relevant to managing comparable conditions. Such contextual insights will be considered alongside direct input from QRIC veterinarians and Stewards in guiding decision-making and ongoing monitoring.

Where hot weather conditions are forecast, QRIC Stewards will advise race clubs on the code-specific measures and considerations required to safeguard animal welfare and the health and safety of personnel, including jockeys and drivers, to reduce associated risks.

QRIC, in consultation with RQ when appropriate, is responsible for declaring when a meeting is Hot-Weather-Affected. Where required on animal welfare grounds, QRIC may recommend or implement changes to the meeting schedule. Communications to licensees will be managed by RQ prior to the official scratching deadline and by QRIC thereafter.

Ambient temperature is used for forecasting because WBGT is a real-time index that is not routinely projected, and modelled WBGT estimates may not accurately reflect on-course conditions. Accordingly, ambient temperature is applied to determine species-specific pre-scratching withdrawal allowances and planning.

As recognised across most sporting industries, WBGT values are best used to guide appropriate action and resource allocation. The WBGT is a dynamic, situational indicator that reflects momentary rather than sustained thermal load. Accordingly, within this policy, it serves as one component of a combined assessment, used alongside ambient temperature trends and observed welfare indicators to guide mitigation and surveillance measures rather than act as a fixed threshold for cancellation.

During a meeting or official trial, QRIC Stewards will consider a combination of ambient temperature recordings, WBGT (sun) readings (or the WBGT approximation matrix when direct measurements are unavailable — see Attachment 1), and welfare-based assessments provided by the Officiating Veterinarian, reflecting how racing animals are responding to the prevailing conditions. This combined assessment will guide on-day decision-making and whether the Stewards accede to any trainer applications to withdraw an animal.

Conditions at each race meeting or official trial session will be determined by the Stewards from either direct on-course measurements at the venue or by reference to the venue's nominated reference station, usually the nearest BoM site or the station deemed most representative of the venue conditions.

When a meeting is assessed as Hot-Weather-Affected or becomes so, the Stewards will closely monitor conditions (note: for greyhounds, this includes the two hours prior to kennelling) and, in consultation with the Officiating and QRIC veterinarians and race clubs, will consider any necessary modifications to the programme, including delaying, rescheduling, or relocating the meeting (in consultation with RQ where appropriate).

During the forecast hottest part of the day, ambient temperature and WBGT will be measured or calculated between each race by the Stewards or their delegated officials.

The Officiating Veterinarian will liaise with the Stewards after each race or trial to report observations and provide professional advice on the condition of horses or greyhounds immediately after exertion and during recovery. Any immediate welfare concerns identified outside these intervals must be raised with the Stewards without delay.

6.2.3 Operational preparedness and resource planning

Race clubs conducting meetings during hotter months are expected to maintain contingency arrangements, equipment and resources that give Stewards confidence that welfare will remain protected should environmental conditions deteriorate.

As risk levels increase from Low to Moderate to Elevated, the measures required are principally operational, and where additional facilities are called for, these should be readily deployable from those already available and maintained on-course throughout the summer months. This ensures that safeguards can be activated promptly if conditions deteriorate, supporting both animal welfare and participant safety.

Where a risk category calls for additional QRIC-approved personnel, clubs are encouraged to ensure they have enough approved staff on hand who may be redeployed to support animal monitoring and active cooling if conditions deteriorate. Other staff should also be prepared to assist more generally as circumstances require.

To maintain an appropriate level of preparedness throughout the summer months, clubs must also ensure the availability of adequate and readily accessible supplies of ice, water, and fully operational cooling stations (tested and confirmed to be functional before the meeting). Cooling station refers to a chiller bin or equivalent ice-water cooling system (equine codes) or cold-water immersion tub (greyhounds). Planning to ensure appropriate provisions are in place provides a practical safeguard should conditions worsen and increases the likelihood that racing or trialling can continue safely if WBGT or ambient temperature readings rise unexpectedly.

6.3 Code-specific thresholds and associated mitigation measures

Due to species and code differences, separate thresholds apply for horses and greyhounds.

As outlined in 6.2.2, during racing or trials, Stewards base decisions regarding the modification or continuation of events on a combined assessment of forecast conditions, ambient temperature, observed WBGT trends, and direct veterinary observations to ensure a measured, evidence-based approach to welfare and safety.

Local and event-specific factors may require Stewards to evaluate and, where justified, make considered adjustments to this guidance. In doing so, Stewards will consider relevant transport distances and local environmental or microclimate conditions, particularly localised wind speed, humidity, and track orientation, as well as the availability of effective cooling resources and supporting infrastructure. Seasonal timing and the extent to which animals have had the opportunity to acclimatise to hotter conditions will also be considered.

Races and trials may proceed only where sufficient cooling resources and welfare safeguards are in place, and after consultation between the Stewards, QRIC and Officiating Veterinarians, in coordination with race-club officials and on-course medical personnel, and RQ, where appropriate.

6.3.1 Thoroughbred and Harness Racing – Hot weather affected risk categories and associated mitigation measures

Risk Category: LOW

Guiding Parameters:

Ambient temperature < 35°C or WBGT (sun) < 28

Mitigation Measures:

Maintain routine monitoring and resource provisions

Risk Category: MODERATE (Hot-Weather-Affected)

Guiding Parameters:

Ambient temperature ≥ 35°C to 37.9°C or serial WBGT (sun) 28 to 31.9

Implementation of Hot-Weather Mitigation Measures, which may include:

Stewards must record the ambient temperature and/or WBGT (sun) before the start and between each race during the forecast hottest part of the day until conditions improve.

Consideration by Stewards of race-scheduling adjustments (e.g., modified arrival times, reduced parades, suspension of presentations).

Increased airflow through fans, misting fans, or roof-sprinkler systems.

Caution: In high-humidity conditions, misting fans may give the impression of cooling, but they can further saturate the air and reduce its capacity to evaporate sweat. As a result, their effectiveness may be limited or even counterproductive.

Consideration given to engagement of an additional Official Veterinarian and/or additional QRIC-approved personnel to assist with cooling and monitoring horse recovery.

In alignment with RQ Licensed Venue Standards, ensure adequate wash bays with cool, high-pressure water are available to enable the simultaneous cooling of multiple horses.

Providing at least two chiller bins or equivalent ice-water cooling systems, positioned strategically at key locations or most expedient access area, which may include the mounting yard, hosing bays, and veterinary and sample-collection areas. Each station should be equipped with sweat scrapers and

buckets for dousing and drinking.

Sufficient ice supplies available throughout the meeting, with designated club staff responsible for replenishing supplies.

Ideally, hoses with adequate pressure and reach, or a mobile cooling unit available, within the mounting yard.

Sample-collection stalls kept as cool as possible using ventilation, sprinklers, fans, or air-conditioning.

Air-conditioning systems in sample-collection areas must be activated at least two hours before the scheduled time of the first race.

Limit the extent of Clerk of the Course horses to essential safety functionality only.

Any horse considered by the Officiating Veterinarian to have been adversely affected by the heat must not be permitted to travel until the veterinarian has reassessed the animal and deemed it safe to do so.

Risk Category: ELEVATED (Hot-Weather-Affected)

Guiding Parameters:

Ambient temperature $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ or serial WBGT (sun) ≥ 32

Additional Hot-Weather Mitigation Measures, which may include:

Stewards, in consultation with QRIC and Officiating Veterinarians, welfare and medical staff, race clubs, and RQ, may consider delaying, rescheduling, relocating, or abandoning races or the meeting.

Engaging an additional Official Veterinarian where possible.

Deployment of additional QRIC-approved personnel to assist with cooling and monitor horse recovery.

Where possible, veterinarians should arrive before the first horses to assess post-transport condition.

In their absence, QRIC-approved personnel may oversee arrivals, monitor horses, assist with cooling, and refer animals for veterinary assessment.

Restriction of pre-race warm-ups.

Provision of at least one mobile cooling unit to enable intensive cooling away from fixed stations, or, alternatively, sufficient buckets and staff to ferry water from strategically positioned cooling stations (e.g. unsaddling areas, trackside locations, or along long walkways back to tie-ups).

Steward direction to licensed persons regarding active cooling measures, including the immediate cooling of some or all horses after competition.

Rostering of an additional Clerk-of-the-Course horse wherever possible.

Modification or cancellation of post-race prize ceremonies, including:

- Immediate cooling before photographs.
- Suspending ceremonial or sponsor rugs that may impede cooling and recovery.
- Cancellation of presentations.

6.3.1 Greyhound Racing – Hot weather affected risk categories and associated mitigation measures

Risk Category: LOW

Guiding Parameters:

Ambient temperature < 32°C or WBGT (sun) < 28

Mitigation Measures:

Maintain routine monitoring and standard kennelling protocols.

Risk Category: MODERATE (Hot-Weather-Affected)

Guiding Parameters:

Ambient temperature ≥ 32°C to 34.9°C or serial WBGT (sun) 28 to 31.9

Implementation of Hot-Weather Mitigation Measures, which may include:

Stewards must record the ambient temperature and/or WBGT (sun) before the start and between each race during the forecast hottest part of the day until conditions improve.

Air-conditioning in kennels, Veterinary and swab rooms, and kennel bays must be turned on at least three hours before the start of kennelling. The ambient temperature in these areas must be maintained between 16°C and 24°C by the start of kennelling, with an ideal target of 18°C – 20°C.

Kennelling for meetings can open earlier at Stewards' discretion

Sufficient hosing or wash-bay facilities must be available, ideally shaded, with water of adequate pressure and volume to enable the immediate cooling of greyhound's post-race.

At least one cold-water immersion tub should be available, with a thermometer to ensure the water temperature remains below 22°C. Clubs are strongly encouraged to provide a second tub near to the catching pen, with both supplied with sufficient ice to maintain the target temperature range.

Greyhounds must proceed directly to the starting boxes without being paraded. After racing, they should be taken immediately to the nearest hosing or cooling area.

Race presentations must only occur after greyhounds have been cooled and allowed to drink, and only in a shaded or air-conditioned area.

Pre-race previews must not be conducted unless they can be held in a cool and shaded environment with the Officiating Veterinarian present.

Greyhounds must remain on-course, inside the air-conditioned kennel block, for at least 40 minutes after racing to allow monitoring in recovery unless cleared to leave the venue at Stewards discretion.

Any greyhound considered by the Officiating Veterinarian to have been adversely affected by the heat must not be permitted to travel until the veterinarian has reassessed the animal and deemed it safe to do so.

Implementing measures where appropriate to reduce heat exposure from exposed hard surfaces (e.g. concrete, asphalt, rubberised paths), such as selecting alternative routes to minimise radiant heat and

hot-surface contact with greyhound paw pads.

Risk Category: ELEVATED (Hot-Weather-Affected)

Guiding Parameters:

Ambient temperature $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$ or serial WBGT (sun) ≥ 32

Additional Hot-Weather Mitigation Measures, which may include:

Additional QRIC-approved personnel should be made available to assist with active cooling and monitor greyhound recovery.

Pre- and post-race parades and presentations may be abandoned.

DECISION POINT

Guiding Parameters:

Ambient temperature $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$

Greyhound races and official trials must not proceed where the ambient temperature at the venue is, or is reliably forecast by the BoM to reach, 38°C or higher during the scheduled period of racing or trials, or at any time from two hours prior to kennelling. In such circumstances, the meeting must be rescheduled to a cooler part of the day or abandoned. If this threshold is reached during a race meeting or official trials, proceedings must cease, and any remaining races or trials must be suspended and either postponed to a cooler time or abandoned following consultation between the Stewards, QRIC, and the Officiating Veterinarian.

Note: Refer to Section 8.1.1 for clarification that WBGT values are guidance indicators used to inform mitigation and surveillance measures, to be interpreted together with ambient temperature, observed trends, and animal-welfare indicators.

6.4 Participant welfare and safety

When Hot-Weather-Affected conditions are declared, Stewards will also consider the welfare of licensed participants, including jockeys, drivers, trainers, stable and kennel hands, and other on-course personnel. Race clubs should ensure that cool, well-ventilated facilities are available for shelter, and that an adequate supply of cold fluids is maintained, and that exposure to direct sunlight is minimised wherever practicable. Cooling arrangements behind the barriers and medical support on-course should be sufficient to monitor and assist participants as needed.

In accordance with this policy, Stewards may exercise discretion in managing race timings, presentations, ceremonies, and rider weights to safeguard participant welfare under the prevailing conditions.

6.5 Applications for withdrawal in hot weather affected conditions

6.5.1 Equine scratching and deadlines

Before Withdrawal Deadline: If a race or official trial meeting is declared Hot-Weather-Affected prior to the withdrawal deadline, RQ will not apply a scratching fee for any horse withdrawn from a race or official trial on animal welfare grounds between the time of the declaration and the withdrawal deadline.

After Withdrawal Deadline (Late scratching): QRIC Stewards during any race or official trial meeting may, without penalty, approve a Trainer's application to withdraw an individual horse on animal welfare grounds when a race or official trial meeting becomes classified as Hot-Weather-Affected under the following conditions:

Thoroughbred and Harness: $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$ during the scheduled race meeting or official trial meeting, or the Stewards record/estimate a WBGT (sun) reading of $\geq 28^{\circ}\text{C}$ at the venue during the event period that is sustained, repeated, or trending upward.

If a race or official trial meeting is declared Hot-Weather-Affected after the withdrawal deadline for the meeting, RQ will not apply a scratching fee for any horse withdrawn from a race or official trial on animal welfare grounds after the time of the declaration.

6.5.1 Greyhound scratching and deadlines

QRIC Stewards, in consultation with RQ, will declare on the day prior to the scheduled race meeting, or up to the scratching deadline of the scheduled race meeting, if the race meeting is declared Hot-Weather Affected, when the forecast ambient temperature at race meetings is $\geq 32^{\circ}\text{C}$.

Prior to Scratching Deadline (Normal Scratching): Where a race meeting has been declared Hot-Weather-Affected, then any greyhound scratched from that meeting due to hot weather, prior to the scratching deadline, will not have a stand down period applied (penalty free). This provision only applies to scratching a greyhound due to hot weather and does not apply to scratching's for other reasons including, but not limited to, injury, illness, seasonal, or other reasons.

Note: Trainers may withdraw individual greyhounds and are not required to withdraw their full kennel from the race meeting.

After Scratching Deadline - when meeting was declared Hot-Weather-Affected prior to the scratching deadline (Late Scratching – Scenario 1): Any scratching after the appointed deadline must be determined by the QRIC Stewards, at their absolute discretion. A request for scratching a greyhound under this policy after the scratching deadline, when the race meeting was declared Hot-Weather-Affected prior to the deadline, will incur a 10 day stand down period from racing for that greyhound.

After Scratching Deadline - when meeting was not declared hot-weather affected prior to the scratching deadline (Late Scratching – Scenario 2): Where a race meeting has been declared hot

weather-affected after the appointed scratching time for that meeting, the Stewards may at their discretion, waive the stand down period if the greyhounds scratching is notified to Stewards between the time of the declaration and the close of kennelling.

6.5.2 All Codes

If a Trainer applies for, and is granted, permission to withdraw an individual animal on a Hot-Weather-Affected race or trial day, the Stewards retain the right to place an embargo (equine) or nomination restriction (greyhounds) upon any subsequent start for the same animal under similar conditions.

6.6 Greyhound Club Trials in hot weather

Where a club has scheduled trials and the forecast maximum temperature for the venue on the day is 32°C to 37.9°C during the proposed trial session, the club must apply the same principles of this policy in mitigating the risks associated with Hot-Weather-Affected conditions. This includes the provision of sufficient hoses, ice-water immersion tubs, and staff to assist with monitoring and replenishing cooling supplies.

Where the forecast maximum temperature for the venue on the day of club trialling is 38°C or higher during the proposed trial session, the Club must cancel or re-schedule the trial sessions in-line with the principles of this policy.

If the ambient temperature during a trial session is $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$, trials must cease until conditions improve and remain below 38°C.

6.7 Other adverse weather conditions

6.7.1 Lightning

QRIC uses real-time lightning detection systems as the primary tool for assessing lightning risk at race meetings and official trials. These systems monitor lightning activity across the surrounding region.

Because long-range lightning strikes may occur up to approximately 10–15 kilometres from the parent storm, meaning lightning risk may extend beyond the immediate storm core, stewards actively monitor lightning activity within approximately 20 kilometres of the venue to support early situational awareness, preparedness and response.

Given the generally open racecourse environment, the exposure of animals and people, the presence of elevated or conductive infrastructure, and the distances and time required to move people and animals to safe shelter, a precautionary and flexible approach to lightning risk management is required.

Thunderstorm activity in the vicinity may also adversely influence animal behaviour, reducing predictability and increasing handling risk.

Decision-making principles

In applying this approach, lightning detection system information supports, but does not replace,

steward judgement. Decisions must be informed by detection system data together with on-site observations and local conditions. Visual or audible evidence of lightning or thunder must never be ignored, including in circumstances where a lightning detection system has not yet recorded a lightning strike.

Suspension threshold – 10 kilometres (with discretion for earlier action)

Racing and official trials must be suspended when lightning is detected within 10 kilometres of the venue by the lightning detection system.

Stewards may suspend activity before lightning enters the 10-kilometre radius where monitoring and local assessment indicate increased risk. This may include consideration of storm direction, movement and speed; increasing strike frequency or intensity; the time and distance required to move people and animals to safety; site-specific exposure or infrastructure; and observed changes in animal behaviour. Once activity is suspended, all personnel and animals must move promptly to appropriate sheltered areas.

Resumption – 30-minute all-clear (10-kilometre basis)

Racing and official trials must not recommence until at least 30 minutes have passed since the last detected lightning activity within 10 kilometres of the venue. The 30-minute count resets with each subsequent lightning strike detected within that range.

Stewards must also consider storm behaviour, movement and the potential for trailing or developing cells before determining that conditions are suitable to resume activity.

Contingency rule – 30/30 rule

If the lightning detection system is unavailable, unreliable or providing conflicting information, the 30/30 rule applies as a manual back-up. A flash-to-thunder interval of fewer than 30 seconds indicates lightning within approximately 10 kilometres and racing or trials must be suspended. Activity must not recommence until at least 30 minutes have passed since the last observed lightning flash or audible thunder.

Discretion to act conservatively

At all times, stewards may suspend or abandon racing where local observations, Bureau of Meteorology warnings, site-specific risks or rapidly changing storm conditions indicate increased danger, even if lightning has not yet been detected within the 10-kilometre radius.

6.7.2 Hail, heavy rain or flooding

In the event of, or where hail, heavy rainfall or flooding is forecast, the Chair of Stewards will assess track conditions, rider or driver visibility, access to the racecourse, impact on essential personnel, and key routes required for emergency response and the safe transport of participants and animals.

For Thoroughbred racing, the Venue Suitability Assessment Procedure, which outlines the process for

evaluating a venue's suitability for racing and trialling, will also be applied. Based on these assessments, the Chair of Stewards will determine whether it is safe and appropriate for the race meeting or official trials to proceed.

6.7.3 Poor air quality (smoke/air pollution)

Risk management related to poor air quality must be informed by real-time data provided by the Queensland Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI). Where smoke or visible air pollution is detected, Stewards are required to consult live air quality monitoring data from the department's system.

- Where the DETSI air-quality category at the nearest relevant monitoring station is Poor or Extremely Poor, the Chair of Stewards should consider appropriate risk controls, which may include modifying, postponing or abandoning races or official trials (in consultation with RQ).
- In locations where live DETSI air quality data is unavailable, the Officiating Veterinarian and on-course medical personnel must be consulted to provide a risk assessment based on observed conditions.

6.7.5 Catastrophic fire danger

If a race meeting or official trial is scheduled in a location declared by the Queensland Fire Department (QFD) as having a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating, the Chair of Stewards for the meeting or trial involved must immediately consult with the local QFD station and RQ.

Race meetings or official trials must not proceed if local fire authorities advise suspension or cancellation due to fire danger.

If a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating is declared during a race meeting or trial, the Chair of Stewards must immediately reassess conditions in consultation with the local QFD station. Based on this consultation, it will be determined whether the meeting should continue, be postponed, or be abandoned, and must consider any risks associated with participant travel to or from the affected area. Formal advice obtained from QFD will be used to inform an immediate response plan.

6.7.6 Strong winds

Careful consideration will be given to racetrack-specific safety and wind effects at the venue. Wherever practicable, decisions will be informed by readings from calibrated wind meters (anemometers) positioned in representative, unobstructed locations on-course. Decisions will prioritise racing animal welfare, participant and personnel safety, risks to or from infrastructure, and racing integrity and performance (e.g., crosswinds affecting starts, parades, rails, lure systems and visibility).

Where BoM advice indicates that conditions are unsafe for outdoor events, including Severe Weather Warnings for damaging winds affecting the venue's region, or where on-track wind conditions present a comparable risk, the Chair of Stewards, in consultation with the Officiating Veterinarian, the club, and

RQ where appropriate, may delay, modify, relocate or abandon the event until conditions improve and hazards are controlled. On-site readings and observations, and BoM information, will be considered collectively to interpret real-time risk factors and guide decisions.

Note: *BoM typically issues damaging-wind warnings when peak gusts of about 90 km/h or higher are expected.*

6.7.7 Other conditions or weather-related hazards

If any environmental or weather-related hazards are identified that may compromise the safety or welfare of animals or participants at a race meeting or official trials, the Chair of Stewards must immediately conduct a risk assessment and seek input from relevant stakeholders and personnel when and where appropriate. Based on this assessment, Stewards will determine whether risk mitigation measures can be implemented or whether the event should be modified, postponed, or cancelled in the interest of safety (liaising with RQ where appropriate).

6.8 Communication protocols

This policy is published on QRIC's website to ensure it remains accessible to all stakeholders and to support transparency in QRIC's management of adverse weather conditions. Wherever possible, decisions to cancel, postpone, reschedule, relocate, or otherwise modify a race meeting or official trials due to adverse weather will be made and communicated in advance. However, because the weather is inherently unpredictable and forecasting has limits, decisions may not be finalised until race day or official trial day and may need to be made during the meeting or official trial session itself.

QRIC will disseminate relevant adverse weather updates through its official communication channels to ensure timely and accurate information is provided and assist in addressing public concerns.

QRIC will also work with RQ to disseminate QRIC adverse weather communications and ensure that industry participants are kept informed of any changes to race meeting or official trial schedules via its established communications channels.

7. Information Privacy Compliance

The department is committed to respecting and protecting individuals' privacy. Under the [Information Privacy Act 2009](#) (IP Act), the department has obligations regarding the collection, use, storage, and disclosure of personal information. When collecting, handling, or disclosing personal information under this Standard, officers must comply with these obligations and ensure personal information is managed in accordance with the Queensland Privacy Principles (refer to [Privacy Compliance Policy](#)).

8. Related and reference documents

- [Preventing and Treating Heat Stress in Horses Factsheet](#)
- [Preventing and Treating Heat Stress in Greyhounds Factsheet](#)
- [BOM thermal comfort observations for QLD \(WBGT\)](#)
- [QFD Fire danger website](#)
- [DETSI air quality website](#)
- [Appendix 1 - Wet Bulb Globe Temperature Approximation Matrix](#)

9. Keywords

QRIC/2026/7492; adverse weather; hot weather; animal welfare; participant safety; race meetings; official trials; thoroughbred; harness; greyhound; heat stress; lightning; air quality; risk management

10. Review

Unless advised otherwise, the default review cycle will be set as annually.

11. Approval

COMMISSION POLICY
<p>APPROVED</p> <p>Catherine Clark</p> <p>Commissioner</p> <p>Queensland Racing Integrity Commission</p> <p>Date: 14/09/2026</p>

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	Click or tap to enter a date.	
	Click or tap to enter a date.	

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Appendix 1 – Wet Bulb Globe Temperature Approximation Matrix

Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) from Temperature and Relative Humidity																																																		
		Temperature (°C)																																																
Relative Humidity (%)	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50																			
	0	15	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	32	32																	
	5	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	33	33	34	35	35																	
	10	16	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	36	37	37																	
	15	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	39	39																	
	20	17	18	18	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39																	
	25	18	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
	30	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
	35	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
	40	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
	45	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
	50	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	37	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
	55	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
	60	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
	65	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	34	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																	
70	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																		
75	22	23	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																		
80	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	36	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																		
85	23	24	25	26	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																		
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95	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	33	34	35	37	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																		
100	24	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	35	36	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39																		

Note: This table is compiled from an approximate formula which only depends on temperature and humidity. The formula is valid for full sunshine and a light wind

Source: <https://ksi.uconn.edu/wet-bulb-globe-temperature-monitoring/>

End of Document