

# Audax Australia Safety Rules

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## 1 Overview / Introduction

Riding a bike is a legal activity that involves intrinsic risks, including of road accidents. Some risk factors (such as the behaviour of other road users) are largely outside Audax Australia's control, but there are things we can and should do to reduce our exposure to the various risks while participating in Audax rides (and while riding generally).

Safety is embedded in the Audax Australia Ride Rules, including:

- a) riders' equipment (including bicycles, brakes, lights and helmets) meet all legal requirements for riding on public roads (4.2)
- b) riders comply with all relevant road rules (4.7)
- c) rider organisers have absolute discretion to cancel, postpone, suspend or modify rides if necessary for reasons of safety or unforeseen circumstances (4.3)

(The Audax Australia website also contains extensive information on aspects of ride safety.)

Audax Australia has also developed specific rules and recommendations in relation to the following three areas of ride safety:

- lighting
- visibility
- extreme weather conditions, including heat and fire.

## 2 Lighting

### 2.1 Lighting Laws

- 1) Australian road laws in all states require cyclists riding at night, or in hazardous weather conditions causing reduced visibility to display:
  - a) a white light clearly visible for at least 200 metres from the front,
  - b) a red light clearly visible for at least 200 metres from the back, and
  - c) a red reflector on the back visible from 50 metres.
- 2) Riders are responsible for complying with the relevant Australian road laws.
- 3) Failure to comply with the law when riding at night or in reduced visibility shall result in immediate disqualification.
- 4) Lights must not be obscured by clothing, bags or other items. They must be angled correctly for visibility, vision and the comfort of other riders and road users.

### 2.2 Back-up Lights

The consequences to a rider of their lights failing are significant and could be catastrophic.

- 1) Audax Australia strongly recommends riders have TWO sets of both front and rear lights.
- 2) The back-up lights should be independent of the primary lights. Example, both primary and back-up lights should not depend on a single power source.

### 2.3 Lighting Good Practices

- 1) Audax Australia recommends activating lights before dusk until after dawn, also when riding in low light conditions such as rain, overcast, riding in dark forests and even in dappled shade.
- 2) Audax Australia encourages the use of front and rear daytime running lights which can alert motorists to your presence throughout the day as well as the night.
- 3) Head torches are discouraged to avoid dazzling other riders.

## 3 High Visibility

### 3.1 Visibility Minimum Recommended Practice

As a minimum Audax Australia recommends riders carry and wear at night:

- 1) A vest, sash or device with at least:
  - a) 300 cm<sup>2</sup> of rear-facing reflectivity, and
  - b) 200 cm<sup>2</sup> of front-facing, shoulder and/or side reflectivity

Examples are included in figure 1 with retro-reflective strips typically 5 cm wide



Figure 1 Typical Reflective Vest Designs

- 2) Ankle Band Reflectors



Figure 2 Typical Ankle Band Reflectors

### 3.2 Visibility Good Practice

- 1) Bicycle Reflectivity increases the likelihood of been seen by other road users, hence riders are encouraged to
  - a) add retro reflective material at various angles on the sides and back of their bicycles
  - b) add retro reflective material to the wheel rims of their bicycles
  - c) wear reflectivity to maximise visibility when riding as well as positioned on the road side to attend to a mechanical or similar.

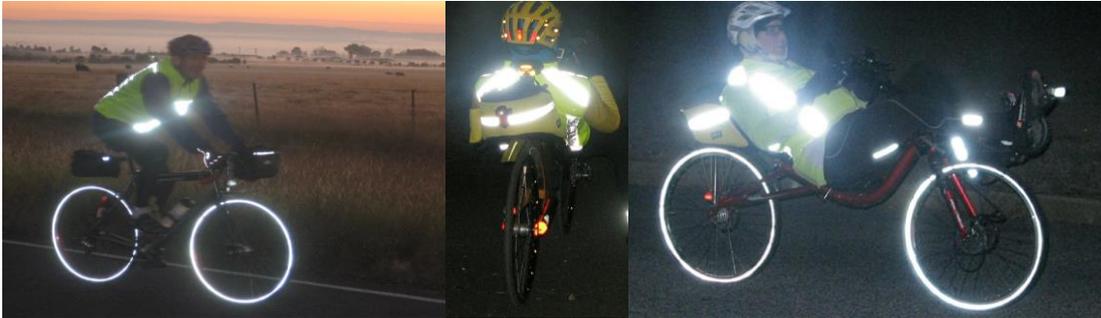


Figure 3 Bicycle Reflectivity Good Practice

- 2) Audax Australia also encourages riders to wear clothing with hi-vis or fluorescent colours.

## 4 Extreme Conditions - Heat & Fire

Strenuous exercise, especially in hot weather, increases the risk of heat illness, which can lead to the more serious and the potentially life-threatening conditions. Riding through areas of heightened fire danger also poses obvious health and safety risks.

Risk management of club rides is the responsibility of Audax Australia, Ride Organisers who organise rides on behalf of the club, and riders. All members are urged to consider that extreme conditions of temperature or fire have the potential to put the lives of both riders and ride support crews at risk and could lead to injury or loss of life. Assessment of the weather and fire danger forecasts at the time an event is scheduled is essential.

While other extreme conditions are not specifically covered in this policy, Audax Australia recognises the risks of extremes of cold weather, rain and flooding, wind or storms and recommends that riders and Ride Organisers consider all risks before commencing or organising a ride.

### 4.1 Heat

- a) The following table summarises conditions under which rides can be run and in forecast temperature above 31°C the conditions under which they may be run.

	<b>Ride distance 200km or more</b>	<b>Ride distance Less than 200km</b>
Maximum forecast temperature is above 36°C	All unsupported rides shall be cancelled. Rides may only be run with significant extra support and control.	All unsupported rides shall be cancelled.
Maximum forecast temperature is between 36°C and 31°C	Supported and unsupported rides may run with additional safety considerations	Supported and unsupported rides may run – no additional safety considerations required.
Maximum forecast temperature is 31°C or lower	Supported and unsupported rides may run – no additional safety considerations required.	Supported and unsupported rides may run – no additional safety considerations required.

- b) *Bureau of Meteorology* (BOM) forecasts shall be the primary source for weather information. The BOM provides an interactive online mapping tool called *MetEye*, which shows 7-day weather forecasts for all locations across Australia. It is strongly recommended that club officials and Ride Organisers familiarise themselves with the use of *MetEye*. Reference: <http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/meteye/>
- c) If the forecast temperature for the day of the ride is 36°C or above, all unsupported rides shall be cancelled.
- d) Although not generally recommended, supported rides over 200km may continue under extremely hot conditions provided additional support can be provided for both riders and support crews. This support could include: changing starting times to reduce exposure to the hottest times of the day; increasing the provision of cold water and shelter; encourage slower riding, longer rests and the provision of a suitable sag wagon.

## 4.2 Fire

- a) Around all States and Territories, local fire services assign Fire Danger Ratings to bushfire risk areas, to indicate the level of bushfire threat on any day. Fire Danger Ratings are selected from a common scale which indicates how dangerous a fire would be if one started. Fire Danger Ratings are as follows:

Fire Danger Rating	What does it mean?
<b>Catastrophic/Code Red</b>	These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire. These areas should be vacated prior to the day of a catastrophic danger rating.
<b>Extreme</b>	Extremely hot, dry and windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving
<b>Severe</b>	Hot, dry and possibly windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it may be uncontrollable
<b>Very High</b>	If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled
<b>High</b>	If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled
<b>Low – Moderate</b>	If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled

Source: <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/6003/aus-arrangements-bushfire-advice-alerts.pdf>

- b) With the exception of routes contained fully within urban boundaries, Audax rides shall not be run through areas declared as '**Catastrophic**'/'**Code Red**' or '**Extreme**' fire danger ratings. To comply with this requirement, scheduled rides shall be cancelled, rescheduled or re-routed to avoid areas of Catastrophic/Code Red or Extreme fire ratings.
- c) Audax rides may be run through areas under a '**Severe**' fire danger declaration, although Ride Organisers shall analyse forecast conditions along the route and may consult with local fire and emergency services if there is any doubt as to the likely conditions. In this circumstance, rides may be rescheduled, re-routed or cancelled for safety reasons. Under '**Severe**' fire warning conditions, extreme temperature forecasts may also influence the decision as to whether to run a ride.

## 4.3 Making the decision

- a) In accordance with rule 4.3.3 of the Audax Australia Ride Rules, the decision to cancel, suspend or modify rides will be the responsibility of Regional Presidents and will be made in consultation with the Ride Organiser and/or the Regional Calendar Coordinator.
- b) As per ride rule 4.3.4, a Ride Organiser may, at their absolute discretion, cancel, postpone, suspend or modify a ride immediately before or during the ride if necessary to

deal with unforeseen circumstances, including unexpected extreme heat and fire risk along the route.

#### **4.4 Communication & Notification**

a) Modification, rescheduling or cancellation of a ride will be made at the earliest possible opportunity before a scheduled ride or planned permanent. Ideally this shall be not more than two days before the planned date of a ride. The Ride Organiser (and/or Regional President or Regional Calendar Coordinator) should consider the following modes of notification:

- Email, sms or phone riders who have registered for the ride
- Modify the online calendar entry for the ride-at the earliest opportunity
- Post decisions on Facebook and other web pages that have been used to publicise the event.