Audax Australia Extreme Conditions Policy: 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.

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.

	Ride distance 200km or more	Ride distance Less than 200km
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, shelter and; making checkpoint opening times later (to encourage slower riding longer rests and therefore less exertion), and the provision of a suitable sag wagon.

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?
Catastrophic/Code Red	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.
Extreme	Extremely hot, dry and windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving
Severe	Hot, dry and possibly windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it may be uncontrollable
Very High	If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled
High	If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled
Low – Moderate	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.

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 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 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
- Send messages to the Audax chat list