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Hang Gliding Federation of Australia's SUNSMART Policy

The following policy is in place to help HGFA members minimise the risks of overexposure to UV. The policy considers the needs of pilots during pre-launch and post-landing, and officials, volunteers, duty pilots or other ground operations staff on launch, landing or during competitions.

Rationale

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the main cause of skin cancer. UV damage also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before the age of 70.

Sunburn and other UV damage is common while playing or watching sport, when people are exposed to the sun's UV radiation for long periods of time.

Sporting clubs and organisations have a responsibility under health and safety legislation to provide and maintain a safe working environment for staff, volunteers, players and spectators. By minimising UV harms, you will help to fulfil this obligation and duty of care.

Sun protection times

- The sun protection times from the Bureau of Meteorology forecast the time of day UV levels are due to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types.
- A combination of sun protection measures are needed during the daily local sun protection times.

To assist with the implementation of this policy, club officials, coaches and participants are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at sunsmart.com.au, on the free SunSmart app and in the weather section of the newspaper. Competition or fly-in weather reporting should also include the peak UV anticipated for each day.

Schedules, fixtures and rule modifications

For ground operations (pre-launch or post-landing) it is often not possible to avoid peak UV and heat periods, the following interim steps are taken to minimise the risk of overexposure to UV and heat illness:

Remain in shade whenever possible.

The duration of the activity is reduced. (eg Competition launch windows)

Rest breaks and opportunities to seek shade and rehydrate are increased.

Officials rotate out of the sun more frequently than usual.

Officials, coaches and senior members act as role models by wearing sun-protective clothing and hats, applying sunscreen and seeking shade wherever possible.

Sun protection measures

1. Clothing

Sun-protective clothing should be included as part of any uniform for officials and volunteers.

Sun-protective clothing is recommended for use by all pilots

Tops/jerseys are made from UPF (UV protection factor) 50+ material and have long sleeves and a collar.

Tops/jerseys are loose-fitting and lightweight.

Where the competition uniform does not provide adequate sun protection, participants are reminded to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to all exposed skin and wear covering clothing whilst on the ground.

2. Sunscreen

SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is promoted and/or provided to participants.

Participants are encouraged to apply sunscreen 20 minutes before exposure and to reapply every two hours.

Sunscreen is stored below 30°C and replaced once it is past the use-by date.

Participants are encouraged to apply a generous amount of sunscreen (the equivalent of one teaspoon per limb).

The first aid kit includes a supply of SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.

3. Hats

Wide-brimmed, bucket, or legionnaires hats are included as part of a ground uniform. Pilots are encouraged to pack a lightweight hat in their flight equipment for use after landing.

Caps and visors do not provide adequate sun protection to the face, ears and neck and are not recommended for extended sun protection but may be used, in combination with sunscreen on parts of skin not covered, as an interim measure.

4. Helmets

HGFA operations requires the wearing of a helmet. Helmets do not usually provide adequate UV protection of the face and neck area, additional protection such as balaclavas, sunglasses, and/or sun block on exposed skin (eg nose, neck) is advised. (note: Adding a visor to a helmet may catch or foul on paraglider lines)

5. Shade

When not actively involved in ground or flight operations, participants are able to rest in shaded areas.

Where there is insufficient natural or built shade, temporary shade structures are provided or participants are notified to bring their own temporary shade (e.g. tents or umbrellas).

Shade from buildings, trees and other structures is used where possible (e.g. marshalling areas, spectator areas).

Marshalling, and presentation ceremony areas are protected by shade.

Participants and officials rotate to cooler, shaded areas.

6. Sunglasses

Participants are advised to wear sunglasses that meet the Australian standard (AS/NZS 1067:2016).

Education and information

The times when sun protection is required (as determined by SunSmart's daily local sun protection times) are communicated to participants and spectators during competition or fly-ins.

Relevant documents and links

SunSmart: [sunsmart.com.au](https://www.sunsmart.com.au)

SunSmart widget: [sunsmart.com.au/uv-sun-protection/uv/uv-widget](https://www.sunsmart.com.au/uv-sun-protection/uv/uv-widget)

SunSmart app: [sunsmart.com.au/app](https://www.sunsmart.com.au/app)

Heat and UV Guide:

[sunsmart.com.au/downloads/communities/sports-clubs/uv-exposure-heat-illness-guide.pdf](https://www.sunsmart.com.au/downloads/communities/sports-clubs/uv-exposure-heat-illness-guide.pdf)

Shade audit: [sunsmart.com.au/shade-audit/](https://www.sunsmart.com.au/shade-audit/)

For more information contact SunSmart:

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