



WILLIAMSTOWN
SAILING CLUB

PO Box 50
Williamstown VIC 3016
Reg. No. A803
ABN: 87 945 070 751

Club House
The Strand
Williamstown VIC 3016
www.williamstownsailingclub.org.au

Air Quality Policy

1 Purpose

This policy seeks to provide guidance to Instructors, OOD's and members for safe activities during club sailing and fishing, Tackers, Learn to Sail courses, special events, functions and other club-related activities where the air quality may be compromised. It represents our club's commitment to its members, volunteers and visitors, acknowledging the role that sporting clubs and associations play in ensuring healthy communities.

This policy will help to ensure our club:

- Meets its duty of care in relation to the health and safety of our members, volunteers and visitors who attend any club events, special functions and other activities.
- Upholds the reputation of our club.
- Understands the risks associated with poor air quality, and our role in minimising risk.
- Educates our members about air quality.

2 Rationale

Ensuring members, visitors and guests undertaking club activities and events do so safely is an important part of being a responsible, healthy club.

Major Causes of Poor Air Quality

Bush fire smoke and dust storms are the two main environmental conditions for which you may need to consider the air quality to determine if a Club activity, such as sailing, fishing, Learn-to-Sail or Tackers programs should be revised or cancelled. The intensity of the health affect is multiplied if the participant is exerting themselves undertaking effort and energy when exercising.

Bushfire Smoke

Smoke from bushfires is made up of small particles, gases and water vapour. The particles are very small - up to 1/30th the diameter of an average human hair - and are not visible to the human eye.

The gases in bushfire smoke include carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds.

Fine smoke particles are known to affect the human breathing system. The smaller or finer the particles, the deeper they go into the lungs.

These particles can cause a variety of health problems, such as itchy or burning eyes, throat irritation, runny nose and illnesses such as bronchitis. The smoke particles can also aggravate existing lung conditions, such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema and asthma.

Dust Storms

Dust storms are natural events and are common in parts of the world with dryland areas. Periods of severe and widespread drought can dramatically increase the likelihood of major dust storms, particularly during the summer months.

Dust storms reduce air quality and visibility, and may have adverse effects on health, particularly for people who already have breathing-related problems. Dust particles vary in size from coarse (non-inhalable), to fine (inhalable), to very fine (respirable). Obviously, these smaller particles have a greater potential to cause serious harm to your health.

The most common symptoms experienced during a dust storm are irritation to the eyes and upper airways. Dust storms can trigger allergic reactions, asthma attacks and cause serious breathing-related problems.

Prolonged exposure to airborne dust can lead to chronic breathing and lung problems, and possibly heart disease.

Air Quality Index

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is an index for reporting daily and hourly air quality. It is an indication of how clean or polluted the air is in areas across VIC.

The AQI is a quick and easy tool to inform you about:

- Air pollution levels at your nearest monitoring site or region
- Specific information for people more at risk from exposure to short-term air pollution
- Simple steps to take to protect yourself

The AQI does not provide guidance on the effects of long-term exposure to air pollution.

The AQI in Victoria is obtained from the EPA and WSC will use the IQAir App as a reference since this App is quick and easy to access and gives the AQI rating.

Air Quality will vary based on environmental changes on any one day and could change significantly in a short timeframe so monitoring of the local environment is best maintained. Air Quality Index via IQ Air can be assessed via its website or its smart phone/Tablet app.

AQI	Guidelines
Good 0-50	Enjoy activities
Moderate 51-100	Enjoy activities
Unhealthy/Sensitive groups 101-150	People sensitive to air pollution: Plan strenuous outdoor activities when air quality is better
Unhealthy 151-200	AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT Sensitive Groups: Cut back or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities
Very Unhealthy 201-300	AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT Sensitive groups: Avoid strenuous outdoor activities Everyone: Cut back or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities
Hazardous 301-500	AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT Sensitive groups: Avoid all outdoor physical activities Everyone: Cut back or avoid outdoor physical activities

3 General principles

This air quality policy applies for all activities organised by the club, including but not limited to sailing events, fishing events, Learn-to-Sail programs, Tackers Family and Junior fleet activities and Tackers courses.

Our club will:

- Check the air quality as part of the process of risk assessment before starting any Club activities.
- Alert Members and guests to the advertised air quality on the day, if not Good or Moderate, so that individuals can make informed decision around their participation in club activities.
- Move activities indoors if possible or cancel/postpone activities until another available day when the air quality has improved to the extent that allows activities to go ahead.

4 Air Quality for club activities

AQI Category	EPA Guide	Actions
Good 0-50	Good	Enjoy Activities as planned
Moderate 51-100	Moderate	Activities Continue as planned Advise all participants that air quality is poor and if feeling short of breath to notify the instructors. Instructors to adjust the program where possible if considered that it is affecting the participants. Instructors to closely monitor participants who have been identified as asthmatic. Alternate activities maybe given to reduce the amount of physical exertion of the Person, such as letting the person ride in the rescue craft.
Unhealthy/Sensitive groups 101-150	Poor	AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT Monitor all participants. Instructors may adjust the program where appropriate and reduce time outdoors. Turn air conditioners on to help clear inside air
Unhealthy 151-200	Very Poor	AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT Limit outdoor activity to no more than 1 hour at a time and go inside frequently to get a break. Turn air conditioners on to help clear inside air. Indoor activities and games.
Very Unhealthy 201-300		AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT Immediately go indoors and stay there. All outdoor strenuous activities cancelled.
Hazardous 301-500	Hazardous	AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT Immediately go indoors and stay there. All outdoor strenuous activities cancelled.

Tackers and Learn-to-Sail Courses

Our Tackers and Learn-to-Sail courses are designed so that if, due to adverse weather conditions, outdoor activities are cancelled or restricted for a significant part of the course it is still possible to cover the essential components. Instructors will adjust their program to suit the weather and air pollution conditions.

WSC refund/cancellation policy:

WSC will only consider offering a place in another course or issuing refunds where the health of a participant may prevent that participant from continuing in relation to an air quality event. Transfers/refunds will not be made after the second day. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Committee of Management.

5 References

Monitoring of Air quality levels can be

Air Quality Index (<https://aqicn.org/map/melbourne>)

EPA AirWatch website (<https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/epairwatch>)

Victorian Emergency Services Website (<https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au>)

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/news-and-events/healthalerts/health-concerns-bushfires>

Download an air rating App from Apple or Google stores;

- Emergency Management VIC (EMV) App
- IQAir Airvisual.

6 Recommendations

Whilst engaging in Club activities, members, volunteers and visitors will:

- Accept responsibility for their own behaviour, use good judgment and take a responsible approach towards outdoor activities if air quality or visibility is not good.
- Postpone outdoor activities and make alternative arrangements indoors or postpone activities to another day when air quality or visibility has improved.
- Where air quality is deemed Very Poor or Hazardous by the EPA it is recommended to abandon activities and advised to wear a P2 Mask.
- Consider catching up on training curriculums on good days by extending the day or rearranging any lost day with an additional days at the end fo the course or at another time to be advised.
- Should a refund of course fees be necessary it should be on a prorata basis less a deduction for any course material costs.

7 Promoting this policy

Our Club will:

- Notify members, volunteers and guests about our policy and the benefits of having such a policy.
- Implement strategies to create awareness of safe transport messages to Club members (e.g. display air quality posters/ indicators to help patrons recognise what air quality is safe are and the implications on poor air quality).

- Ensure this policy is easily accessible and promote it via our website.

8 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains relevant to Club operations and reflects both community expectations, latest scientific information and legal requirements. The review shall take reference from our peak body, Australian Sailing.

9 Approval

This Policy was approved at the Committee of Management Meeting on 12 February 2020.

10 Enquiries

Contact: Williamstown Sailing Club Secretary

Email: secretary@williamstownsailingclub.org.au