

# FMNC Smoke Hazard Policy

## Background

Fine smoke particles are known to affect the human breathing system. The smaller or finer the particles, the deeper they go into the lungs. The amount of these particles inhaled into the lungs is greatly increased during exercise, particularly during strenuous sporting activities.

Bushfire smoke can affect everyone and generally causes mild irritation such as itchy or burning eyes, coughing, a sore throat and a runny nose. These symptoms generally disappear in healthy people once the smoke disappears. People with pre-existing heart conditions or a lung condition, such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema or asthma should have their medications handy at all times during periods of high smoke. Health effects for people with pre-existing conditions can continue for some weeks after the smoke has gone.

To minimize adverse effects from smoke, it is suggested that people avoid vigorous activities when it is smoky and more importantly, if players have asthma, lung or heart conditions they should try to avoid vigorous activity completely.

Every fire is different; house fires, prolonged bushfires, tip fires, etc., so the risks from the smoke from each fire will vary with the different types and concentrations of particles and/or gases. If there is a prolonged bushfire during winter, when temperature inversions are more common (due to still air conditions and cold air close to the ground at night time trapping smoke close to the ground), smoke is likely to hang around from the early evening when the inversion starts, until mid-morning when the inversion lifts. This may impact on evening games.

## Warnings

In the event of a health warning from the North Coast Public Health Unit;

- FMNC may cancel or relocate scheduled games away from smoke affected areas where possible, and/or
- Clubs will be advised to monitor local conditions before allowing games or training to continue.

## Action to be taken

The local weather conditions, the time of day of the fire, and the type of fire will determine the level of risk to players and the actions needed to be taken by FMNC and clubs.

**Should any smoke haze become visibly thick or any players start to display signs of distress, play or training should be halted.**

Games cancelled or abandoned due to smoke haze will be treated in a similar fashion to washed out fixtures in the FMNC competition rules.

Seek immediate medical assistance if anyone suffers breathing difficulties or cardiac symptoms. ***In case of emergency dial triple zero (000) and ask for an ambulance.***

For further advice contact NSW Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055, the RFS Bushfire information line on 1800 679 737, your local Rural Fire Service Fire Control Centre or your local Fire & Rescue NSW Fire Station.

**Adopted 5/8/2019**

**FMNC Competition Administrator**