

GUIDELINES FOR ICC MATCH OFFICIALS REGARDING LIGHTNING

Introduction

The safety of all persons within the ground is of paramount importance to the ICC. Clause 2.8 of the Standard Test Match Playing Conditions (and other applicable Playing Conditions) provides that “If at any time the umpires together agree that the conditions of ground, weather or light, or any other circumstances are dangerous or unreasonable, they shall immediately suspend play, or not allow play to start or to recommence. The decision as to whether conditions are so bad as to warrant such action is one for the umpires alone to make, following consultation with the ICC Match Referee.” These Guidelines have been introduced to assist the umpires with their duties under clauses 2.7 and 2.8 in respect of instances of lightning, in order to ensure the safety of everyone within the ground.

These Guidelines apply to the following matches (in men’s and women’s cricket): (i) all Test Matches, One Day Internationals and Twenty20 International Matches; (ii) any of the following ICC Events: (a) the ICC Cricket World Cup; (b) the ICC Men’s Twenty20 World Cup; (c) the ICC Women’s Twenty20 World Cup; (d) the ICC Women’s Cricket World Cup; and (iii) any other event organized or sanctioned by the ICC from time to time to which the ICC deems it appropriate that these Guidelines should apply (each a “**Match**”).

In circumstances where there is no ICC Match Referee on duty at a Match, these Guidelines will apply with the following changes:

- (a) All references to “ICC Match Referee” are substituted with Match Manager and all duties and responsibilities of the ICC Match Referee will be assumed by the Match Manager; and
- (b) All references to “Home Board” are substituted with “ICC”.

Guidelines

1. At least ten (10) days prior to the Match or the first Match in an ICC Event, the Home Board must supply the Match Manager with detailed information for each venue, including the name of the local weather bureau, their phone numbers, email addresses and websites and designated safe zones.
2. During the course of a Match, it is the role of the Match Manager to keep in regular contact with the local weather bureau while play is in progress and to act as the central point for the flow of information between the local weather bureau and the umpires and ICC Match Referee. The Match Manager will ensure that such information is supplied to the umpires and the ICC Match Referee in order to assist the umpires with their obligations under clauses 2.7 and 2.8 of the Standard Playing Conditions and these Guidelines.
3. If, at any point during the Match, the threat of lightning, whether actual or perceived, comes to the attention of any of the umpires or the ICC Match Referee, the umpires and the ICC Match Referee must follow the protocol outlined below and agree a course of action taking into account all factors outlined below having taken into consideration the 30/30 guideline outlined below in 3 e).
 - a) If the on field umpires agree that the lightning threat is imminent, then they should immediately direct the players to leave the field of play in a safe and orderly manner with the umpires and relocate to a secure and safe location as designated by the Home Board.
 - b) In order to resume play, the umpires must agree that the threat has passed and it is safe to resume play having regard to all relevant information.
 - c) In making decisions regarding suspension or resumption of play due to the threat of lightning, actual or perceived, the umpires may consult with the ICC Match Referee.

- d) **When making decisions regarding the suspension or resumption of play, the umpires must err on the side of caution and must prioritize the safety of those within the ground over and above the maximization of play, irrespective of the state of the Match.** If there is any doubt as to the likely threat of lightning, then the umpires should either suspend play or if that has happened already, not resume play until they have agreed that the threat has passed.
- e) **If no meteorology or weather service is able to offer any relevant information regarding lightning and the threat thereof, the widely 30/30 guidelines must be considered by the umpires:**
 - i. Play should be suspended and shelter immediately sought when there is 30 seconds or less between the flash of lightning and the associated thunder clap.
 - ii. Subject to paragraph (iii) below, it is generally safe to return to the field of play a minimum of 30 minutes after the final flash of lightning or clap of thunder has been seen or heard.
 - iii. It might be possible to resume play earlier than 30 minutes but only if it is clear and agreed by the umpires, in accordance with paragraph (d) above, that the storm has moved on and there is no threat of lightning.
 - iv. For clarity, the final decision remains in the hands of the umpires
- f) When the Match has been suspended because of the threat of lightning, the stadium announcer should announce the locations of the designated safe zones for the spectators and officials operating around the ground. This information should also be placed on the electronic board and the giant replay screen for a short period of time. It shall be the obligation of the Match Manager to communicate with the stadium announcer in this regard.

Further Assistance

Should a Match Official require any assistance or guidance regarding lightning at an international match, please do not hesitate to contact the ICC Medical Manager on the contacts provided below.

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