

Lightning guidelines

Rowing at Roodeplaat Dam for
Athletes, Coaches, Spectators and other Attendees

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Rowing is an outdoor activity, therefore athletes, coaches, spectators and officials are at risk during a lightning storm. Lightning can strike the ground at a large distance from the centre of the storm, and storms can move very fast, it is therefore critical that everyone involved in rowing, whether at a regatta, training or social rowing be vigilant and aware, especially in areas where thunderstorm activity is prevalent.

If lightning is detected within 20km of an event then there is risk, if the storm starts moving closer then shelter must be sought as soon as possible. If lightning is detected within 10km of an event, then attendees are at extreme risk and shelter must be sought immediately.

Participants must remain under shelter until the lightning has moved off to a distance of at least 20km and is moving away from the venue.

Source: Guidelines for Dealing with Lightning
Authors: Prof Ian R Jandrell (PrEng, BSc(Eng) GDE(Elec) PhD, SMIEEE FSAIEE); Dr Ryan Blumenthal (MBChB (Pret), MMed (Med Forens) Pret; FC For Path (SA) Dip For Med (SA) PhD (Wits))

VENUE READINESS

Roodeplaat has installed an Automated Lighting Detection and Assessment system "AfricaWeather" to assist with safeguarding the venue.

Automated Detection Systems:

- The installation will provide the warning of an approaching storm, as well as information on its progression.
- All persons at the venue are required to act in accordance with the system sirens and/or instructions over the PA system.
- An alert is provided by the system to regatta officials as it approaches 15km from the venue. At this stage all launching of boats will be suspended.
- If the lightning moves closer than 15km, approaching 10km then all athletes and boats will be returned to the launching area if the storm comes within 10km from Roodeplaat

then all people at the Regatta venue are required to seek suitable shelter.

- A period of 30 minutes should elapse after the last lightning activity (lighting / thunder) before activity resumes. Activity includes rowing, boat packing or similar.

SUITABLE SHELTER

Suitable shelters are structures that provide protection to athletes, coaches, spectators and officials at Roodeplaat:

- A fully-enclosed substantial building such as the club-house, a boat shed, or the ablution facilities at Roodeplaat.
- A car or bus, provided all doors and windows are closed.

Clubs are requested to make their facilities available to visiting schools for shelter in the event of a lightning event at the venue.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY DUE TO LIGHTNING STRIKE

The Regatta Organisers will have an appropriate medical and medical response protocol at the Regatta.

RESUMPTION / CANCELLATION OF ACTIVITIES

The resumption of racing is at the discretion of the Safety Officer and / or the President of the Jury (POJ) only, the decision to cancel the Regatta is at the discretion of the Organising Committee.

Decisions will be communicated via the PA system, and via Coaches of Clubs.

SAROC

