**Lightning Safety for Outdoor Activities**

**Document Ref AP103**

Lightning is the most frequent weather hazard impacting outdoor rehearsals and competitions.

**"If you can see it, flee it; if you can hear it, clear it."**

The following steps should be observed in any lightening event:

1. A responsible person should be designated to monitor weather conditions. Local weather forecasts - should be observed 24 hours prior any outdoor activities.

2. Suspension and resumption of athletic activities should be planned in advance. Staff must be aware of (i) the location of SAFE lightening shelters at each site and (ii) the time it will take all members, staff and volunteers to get from their outdoor location to the SAFE lightening shelters.

Understanding of SAFE lightning shelters is essential. SAFE evacuation sites include:

a. Fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows up.

b. Substantial buildings.

c. The low ground. Seek cover in clumps of bushes.

3. UNSAFE LIGHTNING SHELTER AREAS include all outdoor metal objects like flag poles, fences and gates, high mast light poles, metal bleachers, golf cars, machinery, etc. AVOID trees. AVOID water. AVOID open fields. AVOID the high ground.

4. Staff must stop all activities and instruct everyone go to a SAFE lightening shelter before lightening or thunder arrives. Lightning's distance from you is easy to calculate: if you hear thunder, it and the associated lightning are within auditory range…about 6-8 miles away. The distance from Strike A to Strike B also can be 6-8 miles. Ask yourself why you should NOT go to shelter immediately. Of course, different distances to shelter will determine different times to suspend activities. A good lightning safety motto is: "If you can see it (lightning) flee it; if you can hear it (thunder), clear it."

5. If you feel your hair standing on end, and/or hear "crackling noises" - you are in lightning's electric field. If caught outside during close-in lightning, immediately remove metal objects (including musicals instruments, flag poles etc), place your feet together, duck your head, and crouch down low stance with hands on knees.

6. Wait a minimum of 30 minutes from the last observed lightning or thunder before resuming activities.

7. People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle. Apply first aid immediately if you are qualified to do so. Get emergency help promptly.