



ACT
Government

Economic Development

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS SERVICE CHARTER



January 2016

Sport and Recreation Services ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS SERVICE CHARTER

Table of Contents

Section	Page
1. Principles	4
2. Maintenance of sportsgrounds and related facilities	5
2.1 Range of maintenance standards	5
2.2 Renovation of surfaces	7
3. Management of Sportsgrounds and Related Facilities	7
3.1 Days and Hours of Use	7
3.2 School Use	9
3.3 Sporting Seasons	10
3.4 Allocation of Sportsgrounds	10
3.5 Sportsground Bookings	12
3.6 Ranger Services and Contact Information	12
4. Infrastructure Maintenance and Management	14
4.1 Sportsground Safety	14
4.2 Amenities Cleaning	15
4.3 Sportsground Infrastructure	15
4.4 Security	16
4.5 Test and Tag	16
4.6 Floodlights	17
4.7 Equipment Storage	17
4.8 Line marking	18
4.9 Metal Tent Pegs	18
4.10 Portable Grandstands	19
<p>Portable grandstands are stored at a number of ACT Government sportsgrounds and are available for the use of the hirer and spectators. However, the stands are also available for hire for other events across Canberra, and may be taken off site to satisfy external requirements. If a hirer determines that grandstand seating is required for a special event e.g. for Finals or Gala Day, they are required to advise the Sportsground Office who will endeavour to avoid hiring them out at that time.....</p>	
4.11 Use of BBQ's	19
4.12 Sale of Alcohol	19
5. Ground Closures	20
5.1 Wet weather	20
5.2 Frost	20
6. Major Events	22
7. Maintenance Support Provided by Clubs/Associations.....	23
8. Financial Management	23
8.1 Fees and charges	23
8.2 Payments and accounts	24
9. Capital Works	24
10. Communication	25
10.1 Requests for Information	25
10.2 Complaints	25

**Sport and Recreation Services
ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS
SERVICE CHARTER**

11. Sport Specific Information.....	25
11.1 General	26
11.2 Cricket-Grade.....	26
11.3 Senior Baseball.....	27
11.4 Softball	27
11.5 Athletics	28
11.6 Football	28
11.7 Bootcamps.....	28
12. Conclusion.....	29

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

1. Principles

Serving the community

In the provision and management of ACT Government sportsgrounds and associated facilities, Sport and Recreation Services (SRS), as a branch of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, will:

- Endeavour to meet the sportsground needs of the various groups comprising the ACT sporting community;
- Ensure that sportsgrounds and related facilities are maintained in a safe and fit for purpose condition;
- Manage the usage of sportsgrounds and related facilities in a manner that is equitable to the various sporting groups within the community and at reasonable cost;
- Provide a responsive service to our community stakeholders;
- Be open and honest in providing information to our community stakeholders; and
- Seek to establish positive relationships built upon mutual understanding of each other's needs and constraints.

Our service standards

You can expect a quick, courteous and effective response whenever you approach us.

We will:

- Respond to Booking Office phone or email enquiries or complaints within three working days
- Endeavour to process booking requests within seven working days
- Have available, through Canberra Connect, a 24 hour phone line for reporting safety incidents or other emergency issues at sportsgrounds
- Rectify or mitigate reported safety hazards within three working days of the report
- Formally inspect (or have inspected on our behalf) every sportsground for which we are responsible at least once a month
- Effect minor repairs to netting and cricket wickets within two weeks of the reported damage
- Endeavour to effect repairs to floodlights within two weeks of reported incident, where funding and weather allow

Sport and Recreation Services ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS SERVICE CHARTER

Help us to serve you better

You can assist us in serving you more effectively by:

- Treating our staff with courtesy and respect,
- Providing two full working days notice (excluding the actual day required) when submitting a new booking,
- Providing four full working days' notice in the event of changed booking requirements (amendments and cancellations),
- Respecting the allocation and confirmation processes (detailed later in this document),
- Following the instructions for appropriate sportsground use (detailed later in this document),
- Contacting us if you notice damage or other issues at the sportsground that may constitute a hazard

2. Maintenance of sportsgrounds and related facilities

SRS will, as far as resources and climatic conditions allow, maintain ACT Government sportsgrounds and related facilities in a condition that is safe for use and suitable for the designated activity. In general, this means a firm surface with an even coverage of grass and no significant hazards in the form of holes or irregularities in the playing surface. Usage of turf playing fields will, however, inevitably lead to some wear and tear, particularly during the winter season.

2.1 Range of maintenance standards

There will be a range of maintenance standards for varying levels of sport, types of sport and for different seasons of the year. The following table sets out the specific details of mowing heights to be provided on sportsgrounds by SRS field maintenance staff.

Every effort is made to ensure these levels are provided for competition use but on occasions, machinery breakdown, rain or other circumstances can affect mowing programs. The frequency of mowing required to achieve these levels will vary at different times of the year, requiring mowing up to three times per week.

Where problems arise, users should contact the Sportsgrounds Office to alert SRS to the problem and to discuss options for remedy.

**Sport and Recreation Services
ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS
SERVICE CHARTER**

Summer sport

Sport	Senior – enclosed oval	Senior – unenclosed	Junior - unenclosed
Athletics	25mm	25mm	25mm
Baseball	25mm	25mm	38mm
Cricket	1 st /2 nd grade turf – 18mm Other grades – 25mm	1 st /2 nd grade turf – 18mm Other grades and all synthetic wickets – 25mm	All synthetic wickets – 25mm Concrete wickets – 38mm
Football (soccer)	N/a	38mm	38mm
Softball	N/a	38 mm (25mm main diamonds)	38mm
Touch	N/a	25mm	25mm

Winter sport

Sport	Senior – enclosed oval	Senior – unenclosed	Junior – Unenclosed
Australian Football (AFL)	25mm	38mm	38mm
Hockey	N/a	25mm	25mm
Football (soccer)	38mm	38mm	38mm
Rugby League	38mm	38mm	38mm
Rugby Union	38mm	38mm	38mm
Touch/Oztag/Ultimate	N/a	25mm	38mm

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

2.2 Renovation of surfaces

Sporting use of sportsgrounds leads to wear and tear on turf surfaces. To provide sustainable surfaces it is necessary to carry out renovation programs, particularly at the end of the winter sports season. The renovation program at the end of the summer season mainly deals with cricket wicket run ups and baseball/softball base areas. To carry out the programmed maintenance **all ACT Government natural turf sportsgrounds will be closed for the last 14 days of each season** (18-31 March and 17-30 September). These periods are fixed to the same 14 day period each year. To gain the maximum benefit from this program and to allow efficient allocation of resources, SRS requires the cooperation of users by avoiding the programming of events during these fixed shutdown periods

**ACT Government
natural turf
sportsgrounds will
be closed for the
last 14 days of
each season:
18-31 March
and
17-30 September**

Synthetic grass sportsgrounds will not be affected by the closure but will still be subject to cyclical maintenance activities throughout the year.

As soon as possible after the conclusion of winter sport competitions, SRS field staff and contractors, undertake a major renovation program on most sportsgrounds.

This involves the coordination of a range of tasks including:

- Removal/erection of goalposts;
- aerating;
- dethatching;
- fertilising;
- top dressing; and
- seeding and/or turfing.

Sportsgrounds which have been over sown will need to be irrigated until such time as the seed bed has germinated and established. This will often involve watering above and beyond what some sports would consider desirable in the short term but it is essential in achieving the desired restoration of the surface.

3. Management of Sportsgrounds and Related Facilities

3.1 Days and Hours of Use

Sportsgrounds are generally available for use between 7.00am and sunset. Usage is extended to 9.00pm on sportsgrounds that have artificial lighting. Lights are controlled electronically and normally are turned off by 9.00pm to minimise disturbance to surrounding residential areas. Sportsground hirers need to be book and pay for the time that these facilities are being utilised.

Sport and Recreation Services
ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS
SERVICE CHARTER

Lights are set to switch off ten minutes after the end of the booking to allow for safe packing up of equipment etc.

Priority of access to floodlit sportsgrounds is given to juniors (defined as players up to and including the age of 19) until 7.00pm, and to seniors between 7.00-9.00pm. If there are no junior bookings at a ground then seniors may be permitted to make a booking that starts earlier than 7.00pm.

Consideration can be given to some limited extension of time for the use of lights, particularly at the Narrabundah Ballpark, Hawker Softball Centre and Tuggeranong Enclosed Oval where elite competitions take place and where events sometimes require additional time for completion. These areas have limited residential development in the immediate vicinity. Consideration may be given to a lighting extension to 9:30pm for competition purposes and approval given on a case by case basis

Sport and Recreation Services ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS SERVICE CHARTER

3.2 School Use

All schools (both public and private) are permitted to use all ACT Government unenclosed sportsgrounds during school hours on each day of the school term without having to make a formal booking. This use is however subject to the conditions that:

- the school relocate activities as necessary to avoid disruption of maintenance activities such as mowing; and
- the school will abide by any notification from SRS of closure or partial closure of a sportsground in the event of any maintenance issue that SRS considers to be a safety concern; and
- formal bookings by other users will take priority.

**Athletics
carnivals and
interschool
competitions
require formal
bookings and
hire charges
apply**

Interschool competitions, athletics carnivals and special events (fetes etc) require a formal booking to be submitted and the hire charge paid. Such paid bookings provide schools with guaranteed and uninterrupted access. Enclosed ovals can only be accessed when formally booked and hired.

Schools are required to inspect the ground and facilities at the end of the hire period, ensure litter is removed from all surfaces (including the changerooms and canteen) and placed in bins provided. Fixed bins are serviced by contractors, however, free standing bins which are stored within the pavilion must be emptied into the on-site hopper and returned to storage.

Care is required when using PA systems at school events and carnivals to ensure noise is kept to an acceptable level to minimise impact on nearby residents. We suggest facing PA speakers away from residential areas.

A number of schools hold annual fetes and fairs. There are conditions of use applicable to these functions. An on-site inspection is required at least 7 working days prior to the booking. You will need to contact our maintenance supervisors, Phil Davies (Southside) on 0417 822 452 or Dave Mann (Northside) on 0417 822 460. On-site inspections can only take place between 7:30am – 3pm Monday to Friday. Amusement rides, and other heavy items, cannot be set up on the irrigated surfaces. Dry land surrounds may be used if there is sufficient space.

Vehicles can access the grounds only to drop off or/collect gear. Where possible, please stay off the irrigated surfaces and drive around the perimeter of the fields. Please include a note with your booking request if access is required through the ambulance (red) gates.

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

3.3 Sporting Seasons

The two seasons are generally accepted to be:

- Summer: **October 1st to March 17th** (with the aim of commencing the first round of competition on the first full weekend in October)
- Winter: **April 1st to September 16th** (with the aim of commencing the first round of competition on the first full weekend in April)

An allocation is not an actual sportsground booking. To secure use of a sportsground throughout the sports season you must submit a booking form

Within their respective seasons, summer or winter sports receive priority for access to sportsgrounds. Sporting groups seeking sportsgrounds outside their main season (e.g. football codes in summer) for training or competition will be accommodated where possible, however, the traditional seasonal sport will receive priority. Accommodating out of season activities, such as pre-season football training prior to 1st April, may not always be possible at the particular club's preferred ground.

When sportsgrounds are no longer required, as teams enter the finals series each summer and winter season, early advice to SRS will be helpful as it assists in the programming of essential maintenance work such as goalpost removal and erection, and turf restoration.

To assist in this programming, sporting organisations are to advise SRS of any sportsgrounds not required for finals by **7th March** for the summer season and **7th September** for the winter season.

3.4 Allocation of Sportsgrounds

The sportsground allocation process is a bi-annual meeting used to determine equitable access to unenclosed sportsgrounds (year round) and enclosed sportsgrounds (winter), and to secure timeslots for ACT sporting associations and their member clubs during the relevant sporting seasons (summer-1 October to 17 March and winter-1 April to 16 September). All Associations are invited to bid on behalf of their clubs to ensure training and match play requirements are met. The bids are compiled, and a spreadsheet produced showing allocations for all codes. Allocation outcomes are honoured pending confirmed bookings for the first month of each new season (October or April). From 1 November or 1 May, unbooked grounds and timeslots are made available to all other interested parties, and for this reason it is critically important that Associations, and their member clubs, convert their allocations into actual confirmed bookings to avoid loss.

Please advise SRS by 7 March/ 7 September if a regular sportsground booking is no longer required during finals

At the allocation meeting conflicts are identified and resolutions proposed with an emphasis on honouring

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

historical use, but also considering the needs of new members, and taking into account usage from season to season. Generally speaking an established precedent of use is honoured if that use has been continuous. A group cannot be allocated grounds, and expect to maintain those allocations each season unless records show that the allocation has been fully utilised.

Associations are asked to attend a short meeting, held at SRS office during business hours, to discuss allocation outcomes. They are provided with proposed resolutions in advance of the meeting so that they can familiarise themselves with the options. The meeting is an opportunity to discuss preferred options and ratify outcomes. Association members are also given the opportunity at the conclusion of the meeting to raise issues and to discuss 'special events' among themselves, thereby negotiating opportunities for their sport with other groups. As an example groups may choose to swap or trade a given date with another group in order to secure a sportsground for a specific event.

It is important that all Associations and clubs are aware that an allocation is not an actual ground booking but should be considered a reservation. Hirers are required to submit a booking form to secure their allocations within the first month of each season.

On an annual basis associations will need to provide to SRS a copy of a certificate of currency for their relevant public liability insurance policy to a minimum value of \$10 million.

Please note that the allocation process for enclosed sportsgrounds in the winter season is managed by representatives of the following associations- AFL, Rugby, League, Football and Gridiron. SRS reserves the right to arbitrate on the outcome of this meeting if required.

Sport and Recreation Services ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS SERVICE CHARTER

3.5 Sportsground Bookings

Booking Office

Booking requests can be made via:

Website: <http://www.sportsgrounds.act.gov.au>

email: sportsgrounds@act.gov.au

or in person at:

Electroboard House, Ground Floor Annex, 220 Northbourne Avenue Braddon

Please note counter hours are 10am to 2pm or by appointment

Ranger Supervisor	Bernie Murphy (Bernard.murphy@act.gov.au)	6207 5142 0466 419004
Booking Enquiries	Charmaine Canonigo sportsgrounds@act.gov.au	6207 5141
Facsimile Number		6207 5149
Postal Address	Sportsground Office PO Box 352 CIVIC SQUARE ACT 2608	

3.6 Ranger Services and Contact Information

SRS Sportsground Rangers are on duty between 1.30pm and 10.00pm on weekdays and 6.30am and 10.00pm on weekends, patrolling and inspecting sportsgrounds and associated facilities. Four full time sportsground rangers work on rotating shifts in different regions of the city to cover these duty periods.

Services provided by Sportsground Rangers include:

- compliance with booking requirements and regulations;
- safety inspections of facilities;
- opening/securing buildings, gates etc as required and assisting hirers where possible;
- programming of floodlighting systems;
- resolution of minor maintenance problems; and
- referring issues of concern to management.

Telephone contacts for the Sportsground Office and mobile phone numbers for Sportsground Rangers are placed in each pavilion and toilet block to assist the hirers in communicating any problems associated with the hire and usage of the sportsgrounds. Contact information is provided below:

**Sport and Recreation Services
ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS
SERVICE CHARTER**

Mon to Friday 8.00am – 4.00pm

Sportsgrounds Manager South Canberra

Phil Davies 0417 822 452

Sportsgrounds Manager North Canberra

Dave Mann 0417 822 460

After Hours Contact

On Call Officer 0409 791 523

Please use this number for all enquiries/requests outside standard business hours. The after hours phone is staffed Mon – Fri 5.00pm-8am, and 24 hours Sat-Sun. If unanswered, please call Canberra Connect on 13 22 81 and advise them that you have a sportsground related issue.

Wet Weather Hotline 6207 5957

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

4. Infrastructure Maintenance and Management

4.1 Sportsground Safety

SRS endeavours to maintain its sportsgrounds and associated facilities in a condition that is fit for purpose and safe for use. A number of regular inspection processes are conducted by sportsground rangers and field staff to identify any hazards that may arise and rectify them as soon as practicable.

Sportsground rangers and/or field staff visit most sportsgrounds on most working days. In addition the City Services mowing operations staff, cleaning contractors and SRS plumbers are regularly at the sportsgrounds and report any faults that are identified.

Hirers should inspect the grounds on arrival and report safety hazards immediately

If a hazard is identified every effort is made to rectify it as soon as possible. If this cannot be quickly achieved, the hazard will be fenced off, usually with high visibility webbing. Where necessary and if possible an alternative venue will be allocated.

In accordance with the conditions of hire for sportsgrounds ([Booking form and conditions of hire](#)), users are required to inspect sportsgrounds prior to use to ensure that they are safe at the time of the booking. If any hazards or safety concerns are identified they should be reported as soon as possible, either to the Sportsgrounds Office or (if outside office hours), to a sportsground ranger or the SRS on-call officer (contactable by mobile phone on 0409 791 523 or through Canberra Connect on 13 2281).

Hirers should not pick up discarded syringes themselves. If a syringe is found it should be reported to Canberra Connect.

Other ongoing safety requirements include:

- the sale of glass bottles is not permitted at ACT Government sportsgrounds
- LP Gas bottles may not be stored inside sportsground buildings

For major events, it is a requirement for event organisers to thoroughly inspect all venues the day before use to ensure all aspects are safe and suitable for use. Although some sportsgrounds have a first aid room, SRS does not supply stretchers and if required this is a hirer responsibility.

SRS does not supply goals post padding or protectors and provision is at the discretion of the hirer.

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

4.2 Amenities Cleaning

Pavilions and toilet blocks at sportsgrounds are normally cleaned once or twice weekly, depending on the level of usage. Waste hoppers located at sportsgrounds are normally emptied once per week. Toilet paper is stocked to allow for a typical full day's activity and is restocked on a weekly basis. For large multi-day events, hirers may need to provide additional toilet rolls and to clean the facility themselves on a daily basis.

Any concerns about the standard of cleaning should be passed on to the Sportsground Office (sportsgrounds@act.gov.au).

Users of sportsgrounds are expected to assist in reducing operational costs by leaving change rooms, canteens and toilets, and the ovals surrounds, in a reasonably clean and tidy condition, with litter picked up and floors swept. SRS venues and facilities are multi-use venues and hirers are expected to comply with the conditions of hire to ensure subsequent hirers access clean and useable grounds. This is particularly pertinent for weekend users where many grounds are used on both Saturday and Sunday. Leaving the grounds or facilities in an unacceptable condition may lead to additional cleaning costs being passed on to the hirer and/or penalties applied if there are recurrences.

It is suggested that hirers empty bins when half full, rather than waiting until they are full, for ease of lifting. Litter can rot and become offensive if left in the bins, particularly so in the hotter months. Bins must be emptied at the conclusion of hire into the hopper provided, regardless of how much litter is in the bin. Hoppers are locked with a PEA 5.3 padlock, the same as that used for toilets.

Written authority is required before any user groups can leave or store furniture, sporting equipment etc in change rooms or other parts of pavilions as this can obstruct cleaning or create potential safety hazards. Only dedicated store rooms can be used for equipment storage (see 4.6). Beyond that clubs must utilise their own storage containers or store equipment off site.

4.3 Sportsground Infrastructure

Essential sportsground infrastructure such as goalposts, cricket training nets, baseball/softball back nets and fences will be repaired as soon as possible if public safety is compromised. The aim is to have safety hazards rectified within three working days. If a potential safety hazard is identified, it should be reported as soon as possible to the Sportsground Office.

When cricket nets and softball/baseball back nets become unserviceable through wear and tear, SRS will arrange for partial or complete replacement of the wire mesh. Timing of work will depend on the scale of the necessary work and available repairs and maintenance funding. Smaller repairs will normally be carried out within two weeks. Major

Bins must be emptied at the conclusion of the hire regardless of how much litter is in them

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

replacement work may have to be considered in the next financial year, subject to availability of funding.

Synthetic cricket wickets are replaced when the condition of the carpet is considered irreparable and unfit for play. Minor patching may occur throughout the life of the wicket to deal with vandalism, wear and tear and to extend the life of the wickets for as long as they can remain serviceable. Minor repairs are normally carried out within a week of being reported.

SRS is not in a position to carry out repainting of goalposts after initial construction and installation; however SRS is supportive if a club or association wishes to undertake this work. Funding for the required materials can also be considered.

**No LP Gas
bottles are to
be stored
inside
sportsground**

4.4 Security

Pavilions and toilet blocks are valuable assets that can be subject to damage by vandals if unauthorised access is facilitated. SRS has progressively added and changed features to make pavilions more secure. Newer pavilions have no glass panels and entry points are limited, and older pavilions are being modified to add these features where possible and as funding permits.

Sporting organisations entrusted with keys to access amenities have a responsibility to secure the buildings at the conclusion of bookings. All doors, roller shutters, gates etc should be locked at the conclusion of each booking. Once facilities are opened hirers should not leave padlocks in the open position but should re-lock them onto the sliding bolt to prevent theft or interference. Hirers who are issued with a PEA 5.3 keys should be aware that as well as opening toilets the key will also open access gates and garbage hoppers. Hirers are liable for the cost of replacing locks lost or stolen during their period of hire.

It is recommended that organisations do not leave equipment in canteens. Large equipment such as a refrigerator, freezer, pie warmers or microwave may be left in place but hirers do so at their own risk. Smaller items must be removed or (if available) locked in under bench cupboards. No stock is to be kept in canteens outside of hire periods. The intention is for hirers to have the maximum available free bench space available to prepare food. Any equipment or materials left in canteens must be kept in a clean, tidy and maintained condition.

Although storage of barbeques is permitted in certain circumstances, for safety reasons and in line with advice from ACT Fire and Rescue, no LP Gas bottles are to be stored inside sportsground buildings.

4.5 Test and Tag

It is a requirement that all electrical equipment owned by clubs be tested and tagged in compliance with ***Tag and test electrical equipment to conform to***

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

Aus/NZL 3760-2010. Items such as fridges, freezers, microwaves, heaters, electric heaters etc, need to be tested and tagged annually. Clubs are responsible for the implementation, and payment, of this practice. Please note that all equipment must be tested and tagged before each new season commences.

Under the guidelines, authorised persons will begin inspecting all facilities and, any club owned equipment without the appropriate, and dated, tag will be removed. New equipment will not be accepted at any venue without tagged proof that the test and tag guidelines have been adhered to.

4.6 Floodlights

SRS provides floodlights designed in compliance with the relevant sporting codes Australian Standard (AS2560) at many locations across the city to enable clubs to train their respective squads. Lighting to competition (match play) standard is expensive and only a few venues have lighting to this standard. Sportsgrounds with match play standard floodlights are:

- Tuggeranong Enclosed Oval at Greenway;
- Gungahlin Enclosed Oval;
- Nicholls 1 Synthetic;
- Lyneham 2 (Southwell Park);
- Narrabundah Ballpark;
- Hawker Softball Centre; and
- Deakin Touch fields.

Venues used regularly for Touch and Oztag, that have floodlights at the training standard, are considered acceptable for competition use due to the nature of these two sports.

Other training venues should not be used for any form of competition under lights as this could create liability issues in the event of someone sustaining an injury.

Routine repairs to floodlights are carried out as soon as practicable. Because of the high cost of hiring a cherry picker for replacement of bulbs, refocusing etc, SRS will generally wait until a number of repair tasks are reported before arranging the execution of work. The timing will vary according to the number and frequency of faults identified, but generally repairs will be undertaken within two weeks of reporting, weather permitting.

For major events or if the safety of players is potentially compromised, more urgent attention will generally be arranged.

4.7 Equipment Storage

At most pavilions, some limited space is usually provided for equipment storage, particularly where special needs exist, such as Little Athletics centres

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

or turf cricket wickets. It is not always possible to provide enough storage to satisfy all user groups. The use of additional small storage buildings or shipping containers can be approved in some circumstances. Approval forms may be obtained by contacting the Sportsground Office on 6207 5142 or sportsgrounds@act.gov.au

Additional buildings can be erected at the cost of the user group if they can be accommodated on the site without undue aesthetic impact and would not interfere with maintenance operations. These structures are subject to normal Design and Siting requirements of the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESDD) and would require a Development Application to be submitted via SRS as the “owner” or custodian of the land. The use of shipping containers may be approved, although they are seen as temporary structures. Their placement would be subject to their being able to be sited in a visually unobtrusive location (e.g. screened from residences), that they are painted deep green in colour, and that they do not interfere with operational activities. Ongoing removal or painting over of any graffiti is the responsibility of the respective club/organisation. SRS may require at any time that the container be relocated or removed. An application form is available through the Sportsground Office and must be completed and approved prior to any container being placed at a sportsground.

SRS accepts no responsibility for the security of any materials stored within buildings or containers.

4.8 Line marking

SRS marks the lines at the majority of ACT Government sportsgrounds using diesel marking. Diesel marking is the most cost effective and efficient method available. Although it is accepted that white paint markings offer a higher standard of marked line, it is expensive and time consuming. Facilities such as athletics centres require approximately 6 kilometres of marked lines and the lines do not last for more than a week during the peak growing season.

At some higher level facilities including enclosed ovals, SRS surveys and marks the sportsgrounds for the first game of the season in white paint. Subsequent re-marking throughout the season is carried out by the club or association as required.

4.9 Metal Tent Pegs

Metal tent pegs are only permitted to be used at ACT Government sportsgrounds if permanently attached to nets or structures which ensures their removal. Alternatively, only plastic tent pegs should be used. Metal pegs may damage irrigation or cause damage to mowing equipment which will result in all mowing operations ceasing until repairs can be completed which can affect a number of grounds/sports. Hirers who cause the damage will be required to pay for any repairs.

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

4.10 Portable Grandstands

Portable grandstands are stored at a number of ACT Government sportsgrounds and are available for the use of the hirer and spectators. However, the stands are also available for hire for other events across Canberra, and may be taken off site to satisfy external requirements. If a hirer determines that grandstand seating is required for a special event e.g. for Finals or Gala Day, they are required to advise the Sportsground Office who will endeavour to avoid hiring them out at that time.

4.11 Use of BBQ's

An on-site BBQ is a valued source of revenue for many sporting groups; however, there are some conditions in place. BBQ's must have a fat tray in place at all times and should not be used on the concrete aprons. Fat spills are a Workplace & Safety hazard, and require additional work to clean. Hirers are responsible for the costs incurred.

4.12 Sale of Alcohol

Hirers wishing to sell alcohol at an ACT Government sportsground must apply to The Office of Regulatory Services, Justice and Community Services (JACS) for a licence. As part of that process SRS will be asked to provide written approval.

Broken glass is a Workplace & Health & Safety issue at sportsgrounds. Consequently, it should be noted that the sale of glass bottles at ACT Government Sportsgrounds is prohibited. In addition alcohol cannot be left in open view inside the canteen or any publicly accessed area of the pavilion outside the hours booked.

4.13 Dogs

Dogs are prohibited at Enclosed Ovals at all times, and can only be taken to unenclosed ovals when the grounds are not in formal use (training, competition or school use). If you experience issues with dogs please contact Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

5. Ground Closures

5.1 Wet weather

SRS manages its sportsgrounds to provide as far as possible a surface that is safe and fit for purpose for the particular sporting use. In the event of wet weather, SRS may close sportsgrounds to preserve the surfaces from excessive damage or if they are considered unsafe for use.

Training usage is generally seen as more expendable than competition so a closure of sportsgrounds is much more likely for weekday training than for weekend competition use. Closure on training days helps to preserve surfaces for competition. Total closure of sportsgrounds for weekend competition is very rare and only applied in exceptional circumstances.

Ground closures are much more likely in the winter months when turf is generally dormant and more vulnerable to damage. In summer when turf is growing vigorously and not as prone to damage any decision to cancel usage will generally be left to the sporting organisation involved, based on an assessment of the safety of participants or the capacity for the activity to be carried out in the prevailing ground and weather conditions.

When a general ground closure is declared, SRS staff in the Sportsground Office will place a recorded message on the hotline (6207 5957) and will endeavour to advise media outlets and other key contact points by email by 9.00am on the day. E-mail and SMS messages are also sent to all peak bodies, the day's hirers, government schools, radio stations, and Canberra Connect (132281).

**Rain closure
information line:
6207 5957**

If sporting groups determine grounds are unusable due to wet conditions, they must advise SRS in writing (sportsgrounds@act.gov.au) as soon as possible and by no later than 9am on the next working day. A credit will then be placed in the hirer's account.

5.2 Frost

The use of ACT Government sportsgrounds between the months of June and August poses a risk to the condition of turf, in particular, during the early morning when activities such as boot camps take place. Hirers using ACT Government sportsgrounds in the early mornings during these winter months should rotate their use across the entire sportsground to limit the impact of such activity. Sport and Recreation Services reserves the right to cancel use in the event of damage occurring. Using sportsgrounds when heavy frost is present can cause turf damage to grass, as plant cells are frozen and brittle and any activity, particularly if it is repetitive and in the same location, has the potential to damage and shatter the plant cells, particularly if the activity is repetitious and in the same location.

Sport and Recreation Services ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS SERVICE CHARTER

5.3 Use of grounds during Shut Down

ACT Government sportsgrounds are closed between 18-31 March and 17-30 September each year to allow for major renovation programs (expanded details included in 2.2). Sporting groups are not permitted to conduct events or bookings (includes presentation and registration days, and return of sporting gear at season end) during this period unless they are competing in an ACT Final series. In this instance, clubs will be provided with a ground suitable for training but not necessarily at their preferred location. Please be aware that goalposts will be removed by contractors during the shutdown period and may not be available for use.

Clubs, or hirers, who are found to have used an ACT Government sportsground during the shutdown, without prior agreement, will be issued a fine. In addition, if maintenance programs are disrupted or abandoned as a result of the non-scheduled use, the users will be required to meet the cost of re-programming the maintenance.

Sport and Recreation Services ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS SERVICE CHARTER

6. Major Events

When sporting organisations are planning major events on ACT Government sportsgrounds, such as national championships, tournaments etc, it is prudent to make SRS aware of any proposal at the earliest opportunity. Three months notice would be expected to enable adequate consideration of the event requirements. Events of this kind often require coordination with other users, special arrangements for goalposts, cleaning, mowing or irrigation that can require considerable forward planning to ensure optimum presentation of the facilities.

Hirers may need to provide additional toilet paper for large events

SRS will work cooperatively with organisations to ensure these events are as successful as possible.

Maintenance operations during a multi-day event can present particular challenges. Organisers need to bear in mind that sportsgrounds are likely to need irrigation and/or mowing during an event, especially in summer, and appropriate scheduling of matches or sessions needs to be undertaken to allow maintenance activities to take place. If adequate time is not made available for irrigation in hot conditions, serious damage to turf surfaces can result. Scheduling a rest day or an adequate break during the day is desirable and will assist SRS in providing a quality surface. Event programs that recognise this requirement need to be agreed in advance between organisers and SRS staff.

Toilet paper is stocked to allow for a typical full day's activity and is restocked on a weekly basis. Organisers of large multi-day events may need to provide additional toilet rolls and to clean the facility themselves on a daily basis.

For safety reasons the sale of glass bottles is not permitted at ACT Government sportsgrounds.

The sale of glass bottles is not permitted at ACT Government sportsgrounds

6.1 Non-sporting hire (eg Fetes etc)

Sportsgrounds can be hired, within reason, for non-sporting events. An on-site inspection is required at least 7 working days prior to the booking. You will need to contact our maintenance supervisors, Phil Davies (Southside) on 0417 822 452 or Dave Mann (Northside) on 0417 822 460. On-site inspections can only take place between 7:30am – 3pm Monday to Friday. Amusement rides, and other heavy items, cannot be set up on the irrigated surfaces. Dry land surrounds may be used if there is sufficient space available.

Vehicles can access the grounds only to drop off or/collect gear. Where possible, please stay off the irrigated surfaces and drive around the perimeter of the fields. Please include a note with your booking request if access is required through the ambulance (red) gates.

Sport and Recreation Services
ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS
SERVICE CHARTER

7. Maintenance Support Provided by Clubs/Associations

If clubs or associations wish to see some aspect of maintenance undertaken at a level beyond the capacity of SRS to provide, they may consider carrying out additional work themselves, or provide funding for additional maintenance activities.

SRS welcomes the opportunity to discuss such proposals that might include tasks such as line marking with paint, goalpost painting, additional attention to edging of base paths, or mowing.

Providing such work is undertaken competently, with due regard for public safety and the long term sustainability of assets, it would generally be supported, and where possible, assisted or facilitated.

Where a club or association makes a substantial contribution to facility maintenance, some appropriate recognition by means of signage will be permitted.

8. Financial Management

8.1 Fees and charges

Fees and charges for sportsground usage are determined on an annual basis. The new fee schedule normally takes effect from 1 October each year, the official beginning of the summer season. Generally, the increase is linked to movements in the Wage Price Index, with some rounding. On occasions some adjustments may be necessary to address anomalies.

Bookings are charged at an hourly rate dependent upon the sport played; the age of the participants (junior or senior players); and whether the booking is for training or competition purposes. Hirers should be aware that when participants are charged (additional to seasonal registration fees) to attend training or development sessions, the booking is considered to be a coaching clinic and the appropriate match play rates apply.

A sundry rate is applied for fetes, fairs, Gala days, club development days and for club trials and gradings. These activities are not deemed to be team training activities.

Overall, fees and charges for sportsground usage recover approximately 15% of the total maintenance and management costs incurred by the ACT Government. This recovery rate is considered comparable to many other local government authorities around Australia.

Sport and Recreation Services ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS SERVICE CHARTER

8.2 Payments and accounts

In accordance with the conditions of hire for sportsgrounds ([Booking form and conditions of hire](#)), each booking is to be paid in advance. For regular users that provide at least four weeks' notice in advance, a statement will be mailed each month, outlining a required payment schedule, including dates when payments are due. Bookings made with less than seven days' notice should be paid for at the time of booking.

For organisations whose accounts fall more than fourteen days in arrears, their bookings and future access may be subject to review.

Cancellations must be received in writing or e-mail at least four working days prior to the booking or payment may not be refunded or re-credited. In the event of wet weather preventing use, the Sportsground Office should be advised by e-mail the next working day. If reasonable notice is given, a credit will be applied to the relevant account.

If a general closure of sportsgrounds is declared by SRS as a result of wet weather, accounts will be automatically credited for affected bookings. These credits will be indicated in the next monthly account issued.

9. Capital Works

Each year the ACT Government develops a program of capital works that is announced as part of the Budget. For projects to be considered on a whole of government basis, preliminary bids are usually sought by Treasury about September each year. Projects that gain preliminary approval in that process require the development of supporting business cases by November/December for consideration by Treasury and the government as part of the Budget process.

For projects to be successful, a soundly argued business case with strong supporting evidence is required.

If sporting organisations identify a particular capital development need for their sport they should in the first instance make an approach to SRS, preferably in writing, setting out the perceived need. SRS may subsequently meet with the organisation to discuss the proposal, gather information and determine whether it can be supported by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. Depending on this analysis, further work may then be undertaken to develop the proposal for consideration by the Treasury Directorate.

Advise SRS in writing of cancellations at least four working days prior to the booked date

Suggestions for minor capital improvements to existing facilities may also be submitted to SRS for possible inclusion in its Facilities Improvement Program that has been conducted for about the last twenty years. Proposals could include extensions/refurbishments to change rooms, toilets, canteens, storage

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

areas, installation or upgrade of floodlights, car parking or fencing. SRS develops a program each year that prioritises the proposals within the available funding allocation.

SRS encourages all sporting organisations to have a facility plan in place. It can assist both parties in understanding needs and priorities when considering capital upgrades and capital projects.

10. Communication

10.1 Requests for Information

Any requests for information on issues relating to sportsground development, maintenance or management will be handled as soon as practicable by SRS staff. Normally at least an initial response will be provided within three working days. Some issues will require additional research or advice and a more comprehensive response may require extra time.

Requests relating to bookings, accounts and related matters should, in the first instance, be directed to:

Charmaine Canonigo
Booking Officer and Administrative Support
Sport and Recreation Services
6207 5141
sportsgrounds@act.gov.au

Other requests should be directed to:

Mick Roberts
Manager, Sportsgrounds Improvements and Maintenance Section
Sport and Recreation Services
6207 5143 or mobile 0418 652 567
mick.roberts@act.gov.au

10.2 Complaints

Complaints received by SRS will be recorded and a response will be provided at the earliest possible time, normally within three working days. If there is a delay due to the need for further investigation every effort will be made to keep the complainant informed of progress.

11. Sport Specific Information

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

11.1 General

SRS appreciates the numerous self help activities that are carried out by sporting clubs and associations. Sports such as cricket, with turf wicket curation, and baseball/softball with diamond sand grooming could not survive without such efforts. SRS will work cooperatively with groups to assist where possible, and within available resources, to support such activities.

Assistance with activities such as the provision of top soil to top dress the more worn sections of line markings can be arranged by contacting SRS with reasonable notice.

SRS expects that all volunteers and those in paid employment (such as cricket curators) follow all appropriate occupational health and safety requirements when doing such work. Appropriate personal protective equipment such as suitable footwear, ear muffs, etc should be used as required. Staff operating machinery should be suitably trained and inducted to use such equipment.

Under no circumstances should any chemical application be carried out other than by SRS or its accredited contractors.

11.2 Cricket-Grade

- All maintenance issues in relation to turf wickets should be directed to either the South Side or North Side SRS supervisor in the first instance.
- Phil Davies - South Side supervisor - 0417 822 452 or email: phil.davies@act.gov.au.
- Dave Mann - North Side supervisor - 0417 822 460 or email: dave.mann@act.gov.au
- It is essential that the turf wicket curator form a close working relationship with the relevant supervisors. They are responsible for activities such as the activation of green time to the wicket irrigation controller that will provide the curator with water as required.
- Any irrigation fault should be reported to the supervisor, or if after hours the SRS on-call officer through Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.
- Each turf wicket that is maintained by SRS is provided with an annual allocation of 1cu m of wicket soil at the start of each season. The supervisors will ensure this material is delivered to Cricket ACT in mid September, who will in turn distribute it to clubs.
- Curators are responsible for all aspects of wicket maintenance. If there is pest, disease or weed issue with the wicket, the SRS supervisor should be contacted to arrange suitable treatment.
- All curating equipment, including mowers and rollers, is the property of the individual clubs.
- Couch outfields will be treated for weed infestation in late September each year and a pre emergent application will take place in late Spring to discourage further weed infestation.
- Couch surfaces will be scarified and dethatched on an as needs basis.

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

- Mowing operations aim to provide a quality and fit for purpose outfield but wet weather, mechanical break down and staffing issues sometimes prevent this. When behind on the mowing program SRS will prioritise the highest grade sportsgrounds first and will endeavour to keep the association informed of the status prior to the weekend.
- All sportsgrounds are treated for scarab infestation with *Acelepryn* each year and this also provides a preventative cover for three months.
- If a club considers that the wicket is in need of a major upgrade, Cricket ACT should be informed and SRS will consider including such upgrades as part of the Facilities Improvement Program subject to funding being made available.
- The majority of ACT Government sportsgrounds are line marked with diesel. This is the only cost effective method available to SRS. If associated rutting is considered severe SRS will consider topdressing the affected areas. SRS will not top dress out all lines, as this would necessitate costly re-survey and marking. Many senior football venues are marked in white paint by the clubs so there is no issue with rutting at those sportsgrounds.
- The chain mesh frame of the senior locked cricket practice nets are maintained by SRS. SRS will provide the internal drop netting and synthetic cover at construction but clubs are responsible for the synthetic carpet replacement and drop netting replacement after that. Dollar for dollar grant funding may be available to assist.
- Curators are not to empty wicket clippings onto the ground unless they are evenly and thinly spread in dry land grass areas only. Tipping them in one pile results in the death of the grass below and the dumped clippings can become stagnant and smell.
- Curators are not to place wicket covers on any grass areas when removed from the wicket as this causes sweating and can burn the grass.

11.3 Senior Baseball

- Suburban baseball diamonds are provided with an annual allocation of 2 cubic metres of diamond sand.
- The Narrabundah Ballpark is provided with an *as required* amount in recognition that it is a National League facility and other maintenance activities are reflective of the requirements of the ABL and in accordance with the MOU between SRS and Cavalry.
- Maintenance of diamond sand areas at suburban diamonds is the responsibility of the baseball club as is the provision of bases, batting plate and infield line marking.
- SRS mows the main suburban diamonds at 25mm, twice weekly, during the season.
- SRS will maintain the back nets and batting cage netting and structure. Any internal netting is the responsibility of the club.

11.4 Softball

Sport and Recreation Services

ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS

SERVICE CHARTER

- Suburban softball diamonds are provided with an annual allocation of 2 cubic metres of diamond sand.
- The Hawker Softball Centre is allocated 10 cubic metres per season with any additional amount to be purchased by Softball Canberra.
- Maintenance of diamond sand areas at suburban diamonds is the responsibility of the softball club as is provision of bases, batting plate and infield line marking.
- SRS mow the main suburban diamonds at 25mm, twice weekly, during the season.
- SRS will maintain the back nets and batting cage netting and structure. Any internal netting is the responsibility of the club.

11.5 Athletics

- SRS maintains all line marking at athletic facilities.
- SRS will provide long jump pit sand on an as required basis.
- Clubs are responsible for checking the pit prior to each use to ensure the pit is safe to use
- Clubs should rake out the pit at the conclusion of each hiring period
- SRS will maintain the throwing cages where provided
- Clubs are responsible for synthetic long jump pit run ups and their maintenance

11.6 Football

- Clubs must not use steel pegs to secure goal nets unless the pegs are permanently attached to the netting.
- Electrical tape is not to be used to attach netting to the goal post as it is difficult to remove and strips the paint.
- The provision of corner posts is a club responsibility.

11.7 Bootcamps

Because boot camps frequently use early am timeslots, SRS cannot guarantee that the sessions will not be impacted by the use of sportsground irrigation systems particularly during the summer months.

Every ground is serviced by a number of irrigation stations which operate separately, and each station runs for between 15 and 20 minutes. Stations operate sequentially and cycle through up to three repeats of the sequence. Hirers can minimise the disruption caused by irrigation systems by setting up in a area furthest point away from any system that is in use as it is likely to be several hours before that area is irrigated again.

Boot camps also operate during the winter months when frost is present and repeated activity on frost covered turf will result in damage. Operators are asked to rotate their activity from session to session, and to move around the

Sport and Recreation Services
ACT GOVERNMENT SPORTSGROUNDS
SERVICE CHARTER

ground during the session. Rotating use over the entire field surface will greatly minimise the impact of using frost covered grounds.

12. Conclusion

This document aims to set out a clear statement of what SRS does and does not provide for users of public sportsgrounds and related facilities. This document will necessarily change from time to time as demands and budgets vary and as such, will be subject to annual review. SRS will continue to liaise with the sporting associations and clubs regarding major changes.

Feedback from user organisations is welcomed to ensure that the information provided remains as accurate and as helpful as possible.

Mick Roberts
Manager, Sportsgrounds Improvements and Maintenance Section
Sport and Recreation Services
Economic Development Directorate

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