

# VA Heat Stress Advisory Panel Working Group #4

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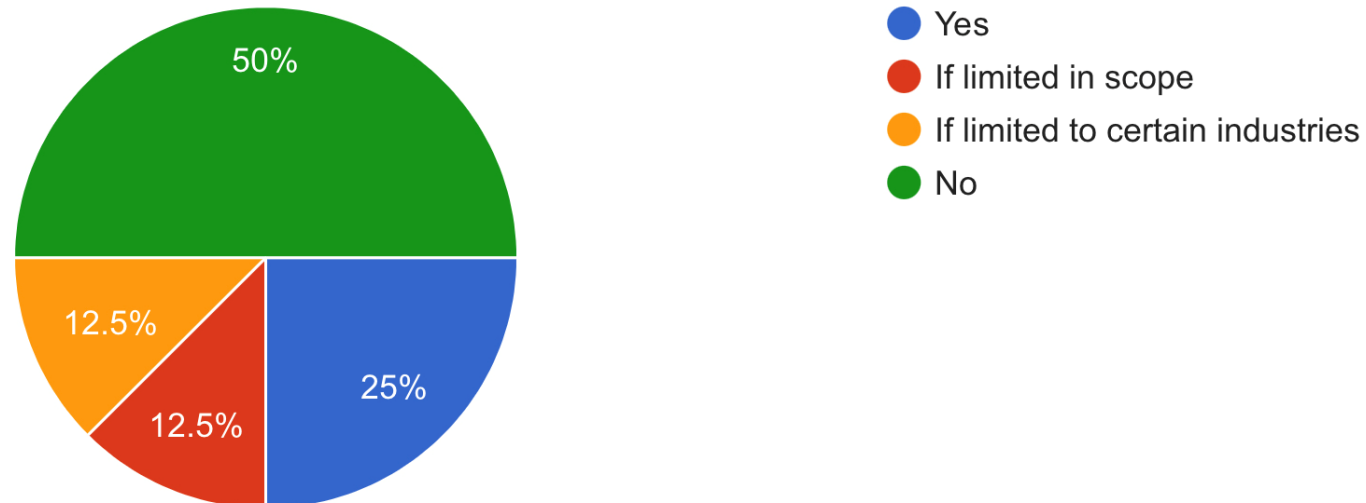
Jonathan Williams - Virginia Ready Mixed Concrete Association

# Limitations

- ▶ Divided on whether to have a heat stress standard

Do you support Virginia creation of a Heat Standard to prevent worker heat illness, injury and death?

8 responses



# Heat Stress Standard Needed?

## ▶ Concerns

- ▶ Employers already do these things
- ▶ General duty clause and other VA regulations are sufficient
- ▶ Not feasible for some industries
- ▶ Employment conditions too variable to have one rule for everyone
- ▶ No data/information demonstrating need in Virginia
- ▶ Employees have a personal responsibility when choosing to be employed as part of specific industries that work outdoors in warmer months.

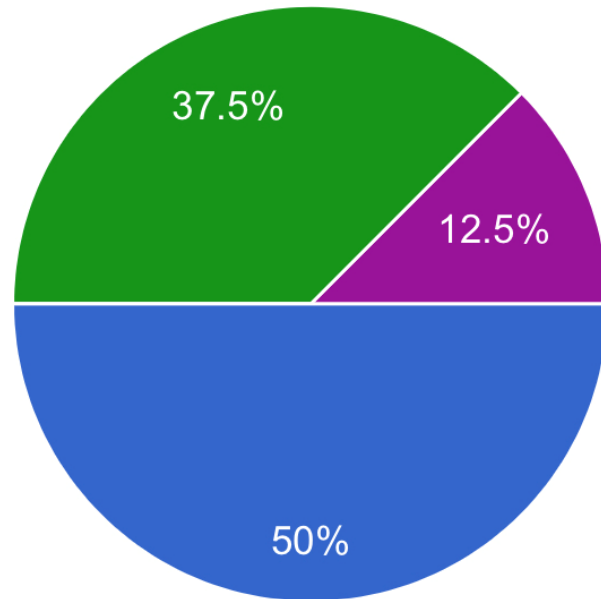
# Employer Plan

- ▶ Employer individualized plan
- ▶ Plan in lieu of specific regulation requirements?
- ▶ Guidance– VOSH could provide
- ▶ Oversight/Approval of plan?

# Employer Plan

Do you support a requirement for employers to create their own guidance-based plan to address heat illness, injury and death prevention at their workplace(s)?

8 responses



- Yes
- No
- Only for industries with history of heat illnesses/injuries and deaths
- Only if employer has history of employee heat illnesses or injuries
- I support only for employers or industries that have a perpetual records of heat illness incidents or deaths.

# Employer Plan Elements

## ▶ **Most support**

- ▶ Emergency response plan
- ▶ Training
- ▶ Hydration
- ▶ Language access

## ▶ **Least support**

- ▶ Acclimatization

## ▶ **Moderate support**

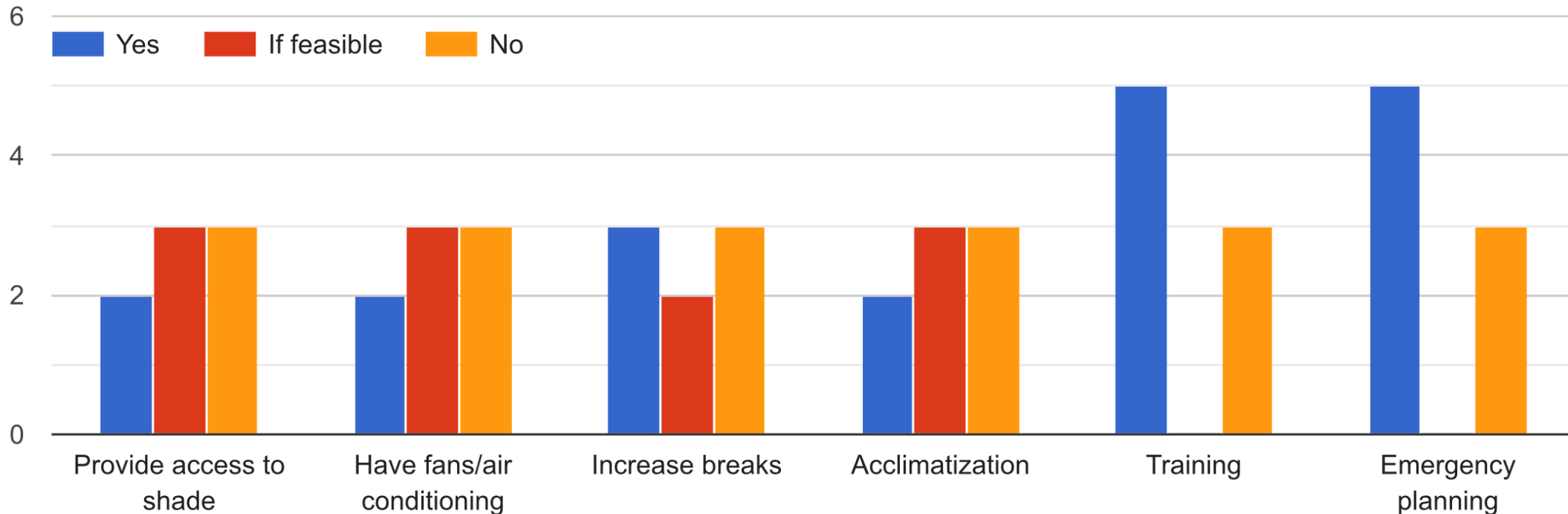
- ▶ Shade/ventilation
- ▶ Record keeping
- ▶ Report/complaint options
- ▶ Extreme heat hazard plan
- ▶ Weather alert warnings
- ▶ Work/rest schedules
- ▶ Warning or reminder signs
- ▶ Temperature to implement

# Temperature Trigger(s)

- ▶ Multiple temperature triggers
  - ▶ Include high heat and/or extreme heat
  - ▶ Based on work conditions (e.g., workload, direct sun, clothing/PPE, etc.)
  - ▶ Different triggers for different actions
- ▶ Use NWS Heat Warning system
  - ▶ Heat Advisory — 100° west of Blue Ridge / 105° east of Blue Ridge
  - ▶ Excessive Heat Advisory — 105° west of Blue Ridge / 110° east of Blue Ridge

# Temperature Triggers

If there is a VA Heat Standard, should there be temperature trigger level(s) when employers are required to do the following things?

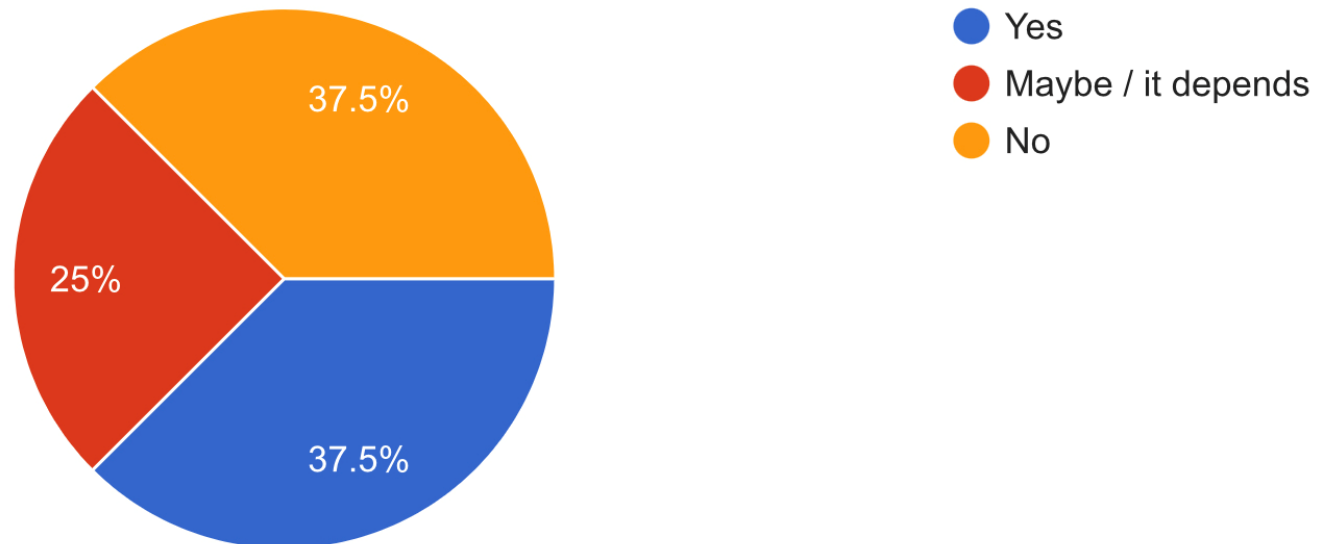




# Rest Breaks

Instead of one or two general temperature trigger(s), do you support using a WBGT table that incorporates work load and clothing to determine necessary work conditions? See example below (could be different table species).

8 responses



# Rest Breaks

- ▶ In order to protect workers from heat stress illness and injury, must accurately measure conditions (WBGT) on-site and tailor work/rest schedules that incorporate workload and the effects of clothing/PPE
- ▶ If WBGT is not feasible, perhaps use CDC guidelines for adding adjustments for direct sunlight (13°) and high humidity
  
- ▶ **However...**
  - ▶ Breaks cost money — would need more workers to meet deadlines
  - ▶ Difficult to quantify/categorize workloads

# Shade / Ventilation / Air conditioning

- ▶ Feasibility of shade?
- ▶ Sometimes difficult/impossible to provide tents
  - ▶ Road work
  - ▶ On boats
  - ▶ Small work teams in remote area
- ▶ Access to air conditioned vehicles/cabs to use as cool-down option
- ▶ Access to shade outdoors and adequate ventilation and air conditioning essential

# Hydration

- ▶ Concerns

- ▶ Water quantities need not be specified
- ▶ Sometimes difficult to make sure water is always accessible
- ▶ Workers may not drink it

# Acclimatization

- ▶ Having employees only working part of the time costs money
- ▶ New employees have worked under same conditions before
- ▶ **However...**
  - ▶ Most heat strokes occur in first few days of work
  - ▶ Acclimatization one of the most essential requirements

# Training

- ▶ Heat illness symptoms
- ▶ Dangerous temperatures
- ▶ Proper hydration
- ▶ First Aid/emergencies
- ▶ Heat-related injuries
- ▶ Employee rights
- ▶ Language accessible training
- ▶ Work clothing/PPE
- ▶ Buddy System
- ▶ Pre-existing conditions
- ▶ Medications and alcohol
- ▶ Cooling at night/sleep

# Comments

- ▶ “Employers should have as much flexibility as possible to develop a plan taking into account their unique work environments. No more mandates micromanaging industries and interfering with the employer/employee relationships. I’d prefer no standard. I also did not like the small group process as I felt in each meeting the attendees were being pressured to change their positions to favor adopting a standard.”
- ▶ “Allow employers to handle these matters.”

# Comments

- ▶ “There should be a clear strong rule with protective elements including water, rest breaks, cooling areas, indoor temperature regulation, acclimatization, training, language access, protections against retaliation, record keeping requirements. Prefer general heat trigger at 80°HI for rule to be applicable. Use WBGT or HI+sunlight and clothing tables to determine work/rest schedules. Extreme Heat trigger for heightened protections/reduced or altered work schedules should be 100°HI+sunlight.”