

COURT COVERS & AIRHALLS FACT SHEET

Netball is a popular sport that is played both indoors and outdoors. Although netball is played in all weather conditions, games, programs and training can become contingent on weather. This applies in both extreme wet weather and high temperature conditions.

INDOOR ALTERNATIVE

Covered courts or airhalls are becoming an alternative for Schools and Councils to support outdoor netball competition programs. There are many advantages to covered outdoor courts including:

- Reduced number of cancellations due to extreme weather
- Improved programming
- Additional activation by community
- Sun-smart
- Environmental sustainability
- Improved life of acrylics on courts
- Reduced ambient surface temperatures
- Lower capital costs compared to indoor stadia

Covered Courts

The coverings over courts are made of sturdy “hard” structural engineered products which can support structural load across the width and breadth of courts, weather conditions and adhere to building regulations and specifications. There are specialist companies who are experienced in manufacturing and supplying sports covers.

Airhalls

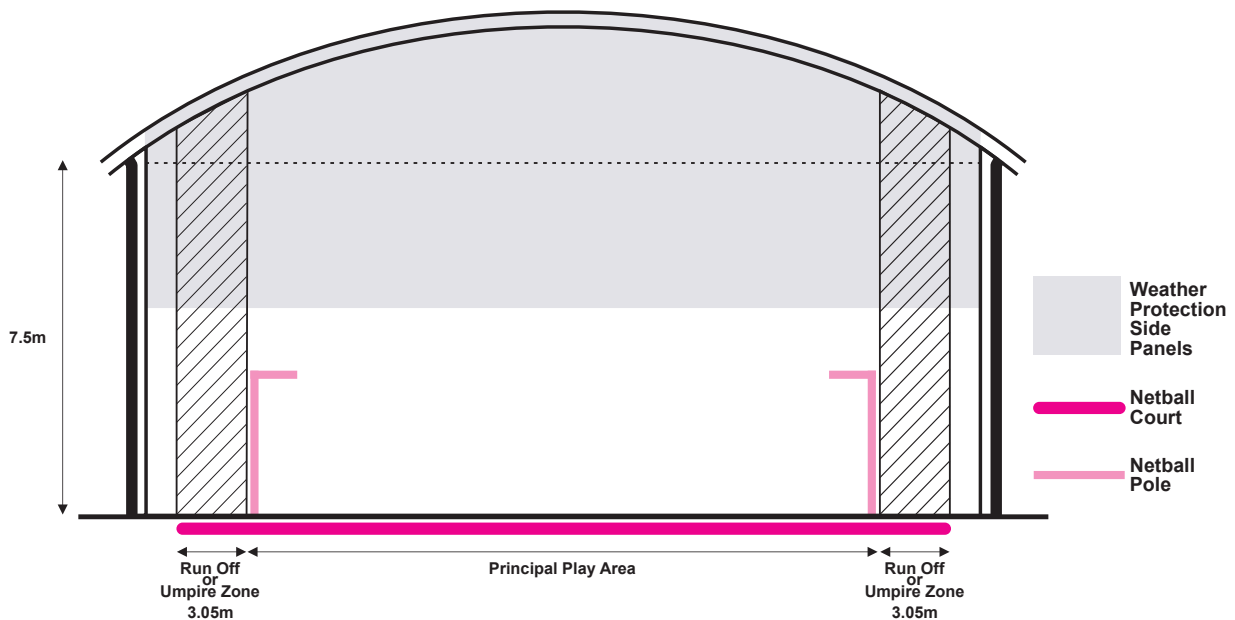
Similar to covered courts, airhalls are engineered to replicate an indoor venue with covering that surrounds the sporting courts similar to a dome. There are temporary versions that can be engineered with lightweight fabric which protects players from all weather and supports events, however this fact sheet provides information for manufactured options that are permanent infrastructure models.



COURT COMPLIANCE

To ensure the venue is compliant by Victorian and National standards, project managers need to ensure that the project meets requirements as specified in the:

- NV Compliance Fact Sheet and the
- Netball Australia Facility Policy and Technical Manual (NA)



Netball Competitions

Please check the **NV Facilities Manual** for advice on the applicability of covered courts at your venue. Covered outdoor courts are not a substitute for indoor competitions which are played on sprung timber flooring.

Equalisation

There are some pathway competitions that require courts to be of equal or near equal condition. This removes any competitive advantage when playing at venues within a home/away competition. Equalisation issues may exist in football and netball home/away leagues if court covers or airhalls exist at one venue and not at others. This should be checked with Netball Victoria or the league during project planning.

Schools

Project managers should refer to the VSBA - Building Quality Standards Handbook for guidelines within schools related to sports infrastructure. Existing infrastructure projects with compromised footprints may require SSA dispensation. Please contact Netball Victoria for further assistance.

Other Resources

Additional resources to use in conjunction with this fact sheet:

- NV Compliance Fact Sheet
- NV Inclusion Fact Sheet
- NV Facilities Manual
- NV Lighting Fact Sheet
- NA Facilities Policy and Technical Manual
- VSBA - Building Quality Standards Handbook

COURT COVER & AIRHALL COMPLIANCE

Project Footprint

The project will require significant infrastructure around the courts to support the covers and airhalls.

- The supporting vertical posts must be outside of the run-off/umpire zone
- Circulation space should be considered if more than one court is being covered

Spectators

Covered courts and airhalls can provide an opportunity to provide additional shelter for spectators. This may be in the form of bleachers or space for mobile seating.

Neighbours and Noise Reduction (Insulation)

Consideration may need to be given to insulation that supports noise reduction. Noise barriers or walls can also be considered.

Height

The lowest part of the structure including lights and other fixtures, should be no lower than 7.5m. This height extends from the run-off area across the principal play area (PPA).

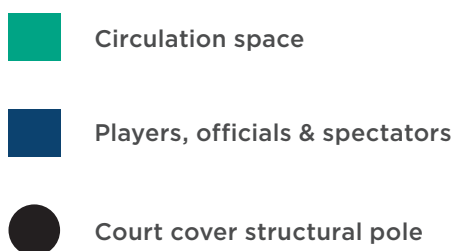
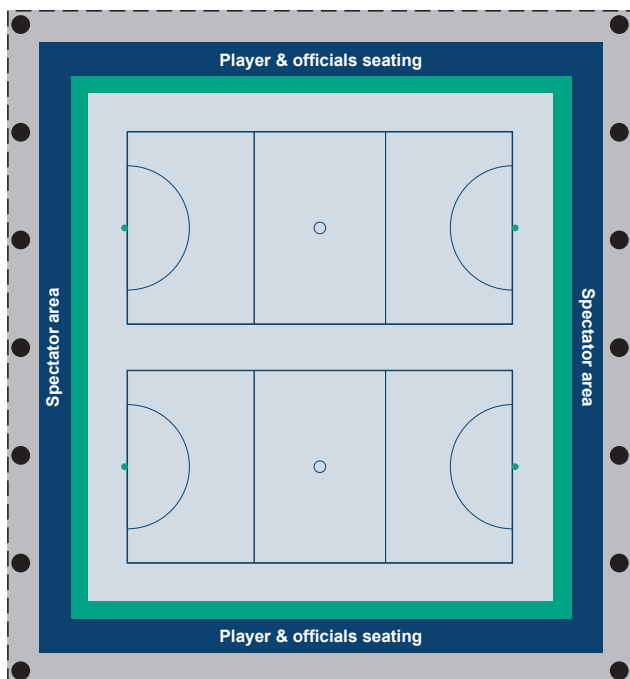
Airhall & Court Cover Entry / Exits

Maintenance equipment and vehicles must be able to access the courts and therefore entry heights must allow for this. Scissor lifts and other tall maintenance vehicle access will be required to maintain lighting and other infrastructure maintenance tasks at the venue.

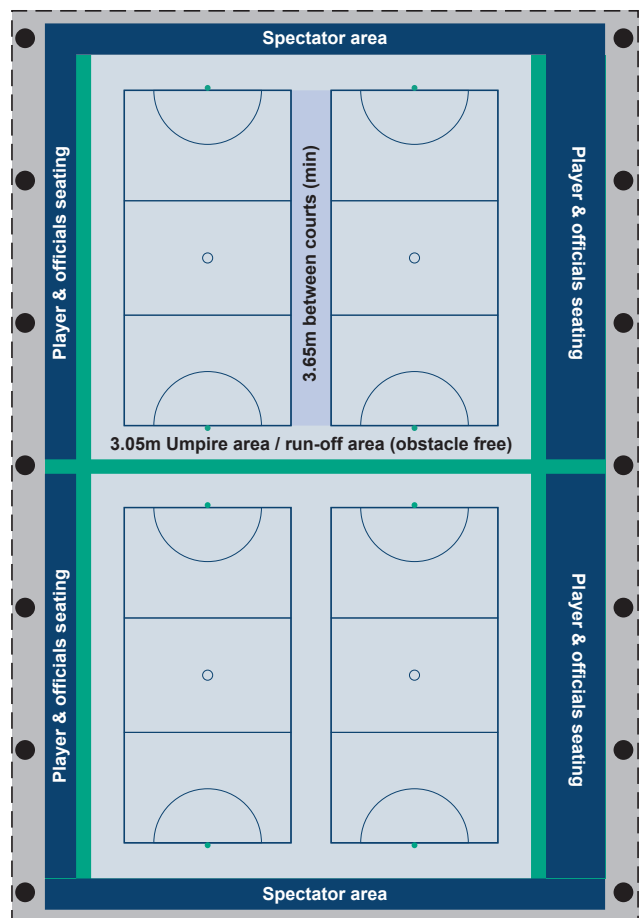
Guttering Options

Project managers should consider guttering options and the way in which water overflows on infrastructure such as this. Roof access and fall protection may be required to allow for roof gutter cleaning.

Two Court (Option Only)



Four Court (Option Only)



Drainage

Additional drainage or water management may need to be addressed due to the surface area and falls developed through the structure. Existing drainage infrastructure may not support the quantity and flow.

Provision for Environmental Sustainable Design

Project managers may be able to take advantage of the court covers and airhalls to promote ESD outcomes at the venue. This includes reducing the heat island effect and creating water and energy saving systems within or around the infrastructure design.

Lighting Compliance

The project should seek to achieve an average of 100-200 lux for outdoor competition standards as shown in the table. Bolted connections are also available in court cover projects which reduce risk of lighting pendants becoming damaged during their use and also improving the height requirements to achieve average lux levels at the venue.

	Training	Competition
Outdoor Courts	100 lux	200 lux
Covered Courts	100 lux	200 lux
Indoor Courts	399 lux	500 lux (750 State & National)

Increasing to 500 lux will improve the lighting outcomes under these structures. The difference will be noticeable particularly on dull and very dark days and where there is very little light supporting the surrounding infrastructure.

With acknowledgment and thanks to:

Committee of Lilydale and Yarra Valley Netball Association at Pinks Reserve in Kilsyth and the Yarra Ranges Shire Council for their generosity in sharing knowledge and experience throughout their pilot program.

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Cleaning

A cleaning regime will need to be considered for the surface of the courts. Where external whether may have had a positive or negative impact on the courts, planning cleaning programs will be required for the new conditions at the venue.

Cleaning of the structure, including cobwebs and insects, will also need to be factored into the program.

Bird Deterrents

In order to protect the courts from excessive bird droppings, a physical or acoustic bird deterrent can be used to restrict nesting birds in the structure of the cover.

The roof beams and purlins can be enclosed so birds can't roost in the roof structure. Where this cannot be achieved due to light restriction or access, such as in the horizontal walls, an acoustic bird deterrent may be an animal friendly solution.

These can be set on timers to work outside court use. There is some science around teenagers hearing the ultrasonic sounds it makes. So it should be limited to use when the courts are not in operation.