



# **RANGE OFFICER MANUAL**

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<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
Background .....	1
Desire .....	1
OBJECTIVES OF THIS MANUAL .....	1
The Manual .....	1
Practical Nature .....	1
RO QUALITIES .....	1
Range Officer Qualities .....	1
Desire .....	1
Attitude .....	1
Knowledge .....	1
Objectivity .....	2
DUTIES OF AN RO .....	2
Competitor Action .....	2
Patience .....	2
Control .....	2
Safety .....	2
Impartial .....	2
Similar Conditions .....	2
Range Equipment .....	2
RO APPEARANCE .....	2
Dress .....	2
Appearance .....	3
Footwear .....	3
RO EQUIPMENT .....	3
Personal Equipment .....	3
TRAINEE RO'S .....	3
Competency .....	3
Attitude .....	3
Experience .....	3
Pass Mark .....	4
<b>CHAPTER 2: QUALIFYING AS AN RO</b> .....	5
PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATION AS RO .....	5
Club RO's .....	5
Provincial Institute of Range Officers .....	5
RO Attributes .....	5
Desire .....	6
Requirements for Trainee .....	6
SAIRO ACCREDITATION, STATUS PROGRESSION AND MAINTENANCE POLICY .....	7
Trainee Range/Stats Officer .....	7
Range Officer .....	7
Stats Officer .....	7
Chief Range Officer .....	7
Range Master .....	8
<b>CHAPTER 3: THE RO'S DUTIES</b> .....	9
Categories .....	9
Applying the Rules. ....	9
Image and Attitude. ....	9

Professional Attitude . . . . .	9
Minor Infringements . . . . .	10
THE RUNNING OF A CONTEST AS AN UMPIRE OR REFEREE . . . . .	10
RO Actions at the Stage. . . . .	11
PROVIDING A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR THE SPORT . . . . .	12
Importance of Club Members . . . . .	12
Interest and Enthusiasm. . . . .	12
Enthusiasm . . . . .	13
Contribution. . . . .	13
Training and Discipline . . . . .	13
Training . . . . .	13
Range Discipline . . . . .	13
EQUIPMENT NEEDED WHEN SHOOTING . . . . .	14
Beginners . . . . .	14
Structured Training Program . . . . .	14
Clothing . . . . .	14
Protective Equipment . . . . .	14
Individual Equipment . . . . .	14
Additional Personal Equipment . . . . .	15
TRAINING PROGRAM: INSTRUCTION ON THE RANGE . . . . .	15
Practical Test . . . . .	18
League Standard . . . . .	18
Three Gun . . . . .	18
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPORT . . . . .	18
<b>CHAPTER 4: THE RO'S AUTHORITY . . . . .</b>	<b>20</b>
GENERAL . . . . .	20
Authority . . . . .	20
Popularity . . . . .	20
Range Discipline . . . . .	20
Interests of the Sport . . . . .	21
RESTRICTION OF THE RO'S AUTHORITY . . . . .	21
Right and Duty . . . . .	21
Knowledge of the Rules . . . . .	22
Criteria for Decisions . . . . .	22
<b>CHAPTER 5: THE RO AND CIVIL LAW . . . . .</b>	<b>24</b>
Ambit of Responsibility . . . . .	24
DEFINITION OF THE RO'S RESPONSIBILITY . . . . .	24
WHAT THE RO'S RESPONSIBILITY ENCOMPASSES . . . . .	24
THE RO AND HIS CLUB . . . . .	26
INSURANCE: PUBLIC LIABILITY . . . . .	27
SHOOTING ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS . . . . .	27
Accidents . . . . .	27
Incidents . . . . .	27
THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS COURSE FOR THE RO . . . . .	28
<b>CHAPTER 6: SAFETY RULES AND PROCEDURES . . . . .</b>	<b>29</b>
SAFETY RULES IN GENERAL . . . . .	29
Three Commandments . . . . .	29
Primary Safety Rules . . . . .	29
Regulative Safety Rules . . . . .	29

Local Safety Rules . . . . .	29
IPSC Safety . . . . .	29
SAFETY PROCEDURES ON THE RANGE . . . . .	29
Range Commands . . . . .	30
Safety on Firing Line. . . . .	30
Spot Check . . . . .	30
SAFETY ON THE LINE . . . . .	30
View of the Shooters . . . . .	30
Large Details. . . . .	31
Jammed Gun . . . . .	31
SAFETY DURING THE COURSE OF FIRE . . . . .	31
COF Safety . . . . .	31
Movement . . . . .	31
View of COF . . . . .	31
IPSC RULES . . . . .	32
Origin of IPSC Rules . . . . .	32
<b>CHAPTER 7: COURSE DESIGN . . . . .</b>	<b>33</b>
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	33
The Basis . . . . .	33
Development . . . . .	33
Stereotype. . . . .	33
FACTORS TO CONSIDER . . . . .	33
SAFETY . . . . .	33
Competitor Ability . . . . .	33
Standards Danger Areas . . . . .	34
Pay Attention . . . . .	34
Medium and Long Courses . . . . .	34
Potential Danger Areas . . . . .	35
CLARITY . . . . .	35
Rationale . . . . .	35
Procedure . . . . .	35
PRACTICALITY . . . . .	35
Apply the Rules . . . . .	36
DVC . . . . .	36
Reloads . . . . .	36
Improvisation . . . . .	36
Freestyle . . . . .	37
Emphasis . . . . .	37
Weak Hand . . . . .	37
Concealed Targets . . . . .	37
Penalty Targets . . . . .	37
Club Level . . . . .	38
VARIETY . . . . .	38
Old Courses . . . . .	38
Fun Shoots . . . . .	38
DEVELOPING SKILL . . . . .	38
Purpose . . . . .	38
Responsibility for Developing Skills . . . . .	39
Statistics . . . . .	39
Development Program . . . . .	39
GENERAL . . . . .	39

Promotion Of The Sport . . . . .	39
Public Appeal . . . . .	39
Placing Targets . . . . .	39
A Final Comment . . . . .	40
<b>CHAPTER 8: RANGE PROCEDURE . . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>FIREARMS AND CALIBRES . . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>
Power . . . . .	41
Factor . . . . .	41
Calibre . . . . .	41
<b>TARGETS AND SCORING METHODS . . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>
Targets . . . . .	41
<b>PENALTIES AND DISQUALIFICATION . . . . .</b>	<b>42</b>
Penalties . . . . .	42
Disqualification . . . . .	42
<b>SCORERS, PATCHERS AND DOPPIE PICKERS . . . . .</b>	<b>42</b>
RO Responsibility . . . . .	42
Scoring and Patching . . . . .	42
Scorers . . . . .	42
Scoring from the Start . . . . .	43
Doppie pickers . . . . .	43
<b>SCORESHEET CHECKLIST . . . . .</b>	<b>43</b>
Repeat Calls . . . . .	43
Total . . . . .	43
Cross Total . . . . .	43
Circle. . . . .	43
Procedurals . . . . .	43
Penalties . . . . .	43
Alterations . . . . .	44
Signature. . . . .	44
<b>CHAPTER 9: FIREARMS AND RELOADING . . . . .</b>	<b>45</b>
Introduction . . . . .	45
<b>INTRODUCTION . . . . .</b>	<b>45</b>
Focus . . . . .	45
RO Responsibility . . . . .	45
Benefit of Doubt . . . . .	45
Competitor Experience . . . . .	45
Standards Shoot . . . . .	45
<b>MALFUNCTIONS . . . . .</b>	<b>46</b>
Revolver Jams . . . . .	46
Semi Auto Jams . . . . .	46
Misfires . . . . .	46
Machine-Gunning In Semi-Auto's . . . . .	47
Broken Parts. . . . .	47
<b>WHEN TO DECLARE A GUN UNSAFE . . . . .</b>	<b>47</b>
Trigger Shoe . . . . .	47
Broken Parts . . . . .	47
Revolvers . . . . .	47
Borderline Cases . . . . .	48
<b>RELOADING . . . . .</b>	<b>48</b>
Introduction . . . . .	48

Advice .....	48
Chronograph .....	48
New Reloaders .....	48
On the Line .....	48
HOLSTERS/BAGS/CASES AND EQUIPMENT .....	48
Match Transport and Carry .....	48
Safety .....	49
Equipment Check .....	49
Holster and Equipment Position .....	49
Rules .....	49
<b>CHAPTER 10: BUILDING A SHOOTING RANGE .....</b>	<b>50</b>
Range Requirements .....	50
Assessing Safety .....	50
Inspections .....	50
Government Regulations .....	50
STRAY SHOTS MUST NOT BE CAPABLE OF DOING DAMAGE .....	50
General Considerations .....	50
The Site .....	50
Potential Danger Areas .....	51
DIRECTED SHOTS MUST BE CONTAINED .....	51
Control over Shooting Area .....	51
Backstop .....	52
Natural Barrier .....	52
THE RANGE MUST BE CAPABLE OF SPECTATOR CONTROL .....	52
Spectator Space .....	52
Spectators .....	52
Casual Shooters .....	53
Mark Safe Area .....	53
THE RANGE AS A DANGER AREA MUST BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE .....	53
Notices .....	53
Flags .....	53
Roads .....	53
SHOOTING BAYS .....	53
Size .....	54
Long Courses .....	54
Backstop .....	54
Material .....	54
Berms .....	54
MATERIALS .....	54
Material .....	54
Earth Walls .....	54
Core .....	54
Concrete and Block Walls .....	54
Tyres .....	54
<b>CHAPTER 11: LEGISLATION .....</b>	<b>55</b>
Introduction .....	55
Legislation .....	55
THE POSSESSION, SAFEGUARDING AND HANDLING OF FIREARMS .....	55
Introduction .....	55
What is a Firearm .....	55

Licensing, Self Defence and Sports Shooting	56
Ammunition	58
Lending a Firearm	58
Carrying a Firearm.	58
Offences and Penalties	58
What must I do if I lose a firearm	60
Obligations	60
Can I loose the right to possess arms	60
Other provisions of the Act of interest	60
THE USE OF A FIREARM FOR SELF DEFENCE	61
Introduction	61
Private (Self) Defence	61
The Attack	61
The Defence	61
Using a Firearm in Self Defence	61
CITIZENS' ARREST AND THE USE OF FORCE	62
Introduction.	62
When May the Private Citizen Effect an Arrest	62
How Does One Effect an Arrest	62
When may one use force (and how much) in effecting an arrest	63
AFTER THE ECHOES DIE DOWN, AFTER THE SHOOTING INCIDENT	63
What Happens After a Shooting Incident	63
Cases Where Death Results.	64
Where Death Does Not Result	64
What should one do after a shooting incident	64
Statement	64
Conclusion	65

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1 Background. Range officers are the backbone of practical shooting. The best range officers are dedicated, enthusiastic and knowledgeable people. They are absolutely essential to the success of any match or tournament. They provide consistency and safety in all IPSC competitions. For this reason SAPSA supports the South African Institute of Range Officers and Instructors (SAIRO & I) as well as the provincial range officer's institutions.

2 Desire. In IPSC it is very easy just to simply shoot and let others do the work. Those who decide to do more than just shoot often become range officers. They wish to give back some of the enjoyment of shooting by helping to make shooting enjoyable. The goal is safe and efficiently run competitions. The better the officials the better the match. As RO's we strive to be the best, the best of the best.

### OBJECTIVES OF THIS MANUAL

3 The Manual. This manual is intended to provide the trainee RO with the background essential to understanding what the RO does on the range and why. It does not replace the IPSC Rules of which the RO must have a thorough knowledge. The IPSC Rules are the basis for our sport and must be studied intensively in addition to this manual. The abbreviation RO is used throughout the manual. The chapters of the manual must not be studied in isolation but in conjunction. It may be useful to consult the Club Administration manual too This manual is intended to serve as a guide to:

- 3.1 clubs far from the established centres that do not have an "old hand" to guide them,
- 3.2 trainee ROs during their training period and when preparing for the RO's examination, and
- 3.3 lay down general guidelines for reference in case of doubt. This manual is available to all participants of the sport.

4 Practical Nature. It is emphasized that the ROs training is essentially applying the IPSC Rules in practice and many aspects and facets thereof cannot be covered in a written course or in a lecture room.

5 It is accordingly not claimed that the contents of this manual are exhaustive or that it covers all aspects of the knowledge required of an RO. Don't be surprised to find a question in the examination not even touched on in the manual.

### RO QUALITIES

6 Range Officer Qualities. Desire, good attitude, knowledge and objectivity are the qualities a good RO strives for.

7 Desire. You must really want to become an RO. If you don't have the time or inclination, don't do it. To be a good RO is hard work.

8 Attitude. The RO must always have a good attitude. If you lose your temper or become irritated quickly, think again before enrolling to become an RO.

9 Knowledge. The RO must have an above average knowledge of the IPSC rules,



knowledge of firearms and good communication skills.

10 Objectivity. RO's treat all competitors the same – firmly and fair. They never allow the smallest perception of favouritism. Consistently calm, confident and efficient. They never ever intimidate the competitor and are not intimidated by the competitor. The RO is in control, if in doubt, ASK!

## **DUTIES OF AN RO**

11 Competitor Action. ROs are in charge of competitor action. They brief all competitors on the requirements of the particular stage and answer questions to clarify any misinterpretations of the course designer's intention.

12 Patience. The shooters should see ROs as part of the solution and not part of the problem, we are not there to punish. To this end a little patience and understanding helps. Not all shooters will approach the problem posed by the course in the same way, therefore, it is important that the RO listen to the shooters as much as he/she may want the shooters to listen to him.

13 Control. Once the RO is ready to start a detail he must take control and maintain control throughout. This includes spectators.

14 Safety. Safety is of prime importance in our sport and overrides all other considerations. Any safety infringement is dealt with in terms of the rules.

15 Impartial. An RO is impartial. Always maintain the same standard throughout a match. This is especially important when it comes to scoring targets, where the rule of the outside diameter touching the next highest scoring line is applicable. Don't nit pick, just make sure it is **touching and not just close**. Remember if the shooter did not earn the higher points don't give it just to avoid some unpleasantness. Most shooters will want to get the best possible result but will accept the decision of the RO. The same applies to doubles, if you don't see the double don't be pressured into giving it. You can only score what you see, not what is supposed to be there.

16 Similar Conditions. Each competitor must be given the same conditions in which to compete. That means if a plate must be painted or a target must be changed to give each competitor an equal opportunity, do it or get someone to do it.

17 Range Equipment. Remember, you are representing the host organisation on that range and have certain responsibilities. For instance, it is the host organisation's responsibility (range master) to calibrate poppers and to ensure the range equipment functions properly (match director). Where this is not always possible, you can ensure that the popper will go down when hit properly and the equipment functions correctly. This saves time by avoiding range equipment failure and the resulting re-shoot

## **RO APPEARANCE**

18 Dress. South African ROs will primarily be identified by the red shirt and cap they wear. To further identify the ROs they will wear the SAIRO & I badge and scroll on the left breast and the cap. To standardise the RO's dress it is suggested that dark blue pants be worn, alternatively blue denims. Short pants are acceptable in summer, with shoes and socks.

19 Appearance. Secondly they will be identified by their neat and well-dressed appearance. Clothes and footwear will always be clean and in good repair. No unshaven appearance.

20 Footwear. An RO is on his feet most of the day and it must be borne in mind that he will be running behind competitors and be expected to keep up. Comfortable running shoes with sufficient "tread" are recommended. Socks will be worn. Sandals will only be worn if the range is on the beach next to the sea.

## **RO EQUIPMENT**

21 Personal Equipment. An RO should have the following as standard part of his own equipment:

- 21.1 Copy of the stage/course of fire.
- 21.2 Clipboard and pen.
- 21.3 IPSC rules.
- 21.4 Scoring overlay.
- 21.5 Whistle.
- 21.6 Timer or stopwatch.
- 21.7 Staple gun.
- 21.8 Water/liquid to prevent dehydration.

## **TRAINEE RO'S**

22 Competency. The RO's examination is intended to establish whether the candidate is competent to assume the responsibilities of an RO, an expert in a specialised field in a practical and many faceted sport and one which is continuously developing.

23 Attitude. Past experience has shown that even though a candidate may have extensive knowledge gained from many months or even years on a range, this is not sufficient. He must think as an RO, as opposed to a shottist. This capability cannot be taught, it comes from experience. Some individuals simply never acquire it.

24 Experience. At the same time it is necessary that the RO have general background experience and knowledge that by its very nature cannot be included in a manual like this.

25 The trainee RO who sits the examination must accept that the only way the examiners can establish whether the candidate possesses this background knowledge is to include a few questions of a general nature which are not taken from the contents of this manual or the rules.

26 It is essential that the candidate masters the contents of this manual and does not merely browse through it. Most of the answers to the questions will come from the latest edition of the IPSC rules. Some of the questions will be phrased in such a manner that the answers are somewhat disguised. This will not be a problem for the candidate who has really done his

homework, but may be one for the candidate who did not prepare properly.

27 This is not done without reason. It must be accepted that to a greater or lesser extent the whole sport revolves around the RO and this naturally entails responsibility. Just as the shooter who does not put in real effort to practice remains mediocre, so the RO who is not prepared to put in time and effort will be a mediocre one, and he would be doing himself and the sport a favour were he rather to stay out of "range-officering".

28 Just like any other sport, practical shooting needs its officials and the people who are prepared to "graft" - they are the foundation on which the whole sport rests.

29 So in the first place the ROs' "learnership" and examination becomes, as an incidental, a sifting ground. The shooter who is not prepared to put in some solid work to qualify as a RO is also the one who, having qualified, would be a passenger in the ranks of the ROs. We really do not want or need passengers.

30 Pass Mark. Overriding all other considerations is the fact that it is a potentially dangerous sport and, disregarding moral and legal considerations, slackness in safety can do us great harm. It will, therefore, be appreciated that if a pass mark of 80% is called for in both the practical and theoretical examinations, high as it may seem, this is done for good reason.

## CHAPTER 2: QUALIFYING AS AN RO

### PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATION AS RO

1 Club RO's. Each club is to ensure that suitable individuals receive training as ROs. The provincial body concerned is to assist the club in every way in the training of the nominated individuals and is to conduct a training course for the potential ROs. During this time these individuals will be considered as Range Safety Officers.

2 Clubs are, therefore, urged not to nominate a person as trainee RO who does not have at least these attributes. It must be stressed that qualifying as an RO entails more than just simply knowing this manual and the IPSC rules by heart and being able to pass a written examination. If a verbatim knowledge of these notes and the IPSC rules were all that was required, a non-shooter who had never been on a range would be able to pick up this manual and the IPSC rules, and then become a qualified RO with a little study, something that certainly would not be to the advantage of the sport. It is for this reason that the appointment of a RO takes time, and over the period until he qualifies there is a high "drop out" rate. Many people start with the best intentions, but realise that to succeed requires a commitment greater than they are able or willing to make.

3 Provincial Institute of Range Offers. All provinces should have an RO association as described in the SAIRO & I constitution, which is contained in the SAPSA constitution. Should the province not have such a body:

3.1 SAIRO & I will in conjunction with the provincial executive assist such a province.

3.2 In the event that the province has no RM/CRO the province will be placed under the wing of one of the established provinces.

3.3 An RM/CRO or officers of that established province will at a suitable venue in the new province:

3.3.1 conduct an introductory RO's course for the nominee ROs of the province. An examination may be conducted if there are persons with general shooting background considered equivalent to 18 months' range experience and who obviously will have studied these lecture notes and the latest IPSC rules intensively and

3.3.2 participate on a shooting range in a practical application of safety procedures are fully understood and correctly applied by the trainee ROs.

3.4 On a later occasion the province will again be visited by an RM/CRO who will again conduct a course and examination. It may be necessary for the successful candidates to be evaluated on the practical aspects at an interprovincial match or at a provincial league in an established province.

3.5 A potential CRO from the province should attend RO's courses conducted by its "foster province" for training as a CRO, once he has gained the necessary experience at national level.

4 RO Attributes. It must be accepted that not all shooters are suitable material for ROs. A candidate must have at least the following attributes:

4.1 Leadership in an "aggressive" sport where the weak and timid are not often found.

4.2 Experience as a competitor in the sport.

4.3 Reasonable knowledge of firearms and a smattering of ballistics, the latter because a RO is required in terms of the IPSC Rules Chapter 5 to be able to identify unsafe ammunition.

4.4 The ability (and willingness) to convey knowledge to others (who are going to use that knowledge as his opponents - thereby creating his own opposition).

4.5 Safety-consciousness and particularly the ability to foresee when a dangerous situation may arise.

4.6 Willingness to make the sacrifice as an active participant not only to put in the additional time and effort required to RO but also to accept that this is to a greater or lesser extent to the detriment of his own shooting.

4.7 The ability to handle "difficult" situations firmly and yet diplomatically (the latter perhaps with the qualification "if possible" ... safety comes first).

5 Desire. Before we go any further, the first step should be the candidates **desire** to become a RO. Past experience has shown that other reasons such as being "nominated" by your club or any such reason where peer pressure is used to "motivate" the prospective candidate, usually results in an unmotivated RO within a short period of time.

## 6 Requirements for Trainee

6.1 The candidate must be at least 21 years old.

6.2 The club recommends a person of suitable potential to the provincial association as trainee RO.

6.3 The candidate must have been shooting at league level for at least 2 years.

6.4 He then serves an apprenticeship under a qualified RO at his club, after first taking a shortened and or verbal examination of the IPSC rules.

6.5 During his apprenticeship he must attend local leagues in his capacity as trainee RO, where he will run ranges under supervision of qualified ROs.

6.6 After accumulating 16 match points:

6.6.1 he attends an RO's course, conducted by SAIRO & I or the provincial RO body, which is concluded with a written examination for which the pass mark is 80% and

6.6.2 is examined in the practical aspects by an CRO on the range during a league shoot. The provincial RO body then advises the provincial association if the candidate is found to be competent.

6.7 The provincial association will inform SAIRO accordingly and the new RO is placed on the register of qualified ROs and is issued with a certificate and insignia.

## **SAIRO ACCREDITATION, STATUS PROGRESSION AND MAINTENANCE POLICY**

### **Trainee Range/Stats Officer**

#### **\*Requirements**

1. Must be a member of SAPSA.
2. Must have competed at provincial league level for 2 years.
3. Must be recommended by the club chairman.

### **Range Officer**

#### **\*Qualification Requirements**

1. Must be a member of SAPSA.
2. Must have accumulated 16 level II or higher supervised match points.
3. Must pass a written theoretical exam. (Rules, application and interpretation).
4. Must undergo a practical exam at a level II match, under supervision of a current CRO.
5. Must be recommended to the province by the SAIRO board member.
6. Accreditation must be endorsed by the provincial association.

#### ***Minimum annual Maintenance Requirements***

1. Must remain a SAPSA member.
2. Must accumulate a minimum of 4 match points per year.
3. An RO certificate is valid for a period of three years. If an RO is not active for two consecutive years, his/her name will be marked as inactive in the RO database and will not be issued with a new RO certificate on expiry of the date on the certificate.

### **Stats Officer**

#### **\*Qualification Requirements**

1. Must be a member of SAPSA.
2. Must have accumulated 16 level II or higher supervised match points.
3. Must pass a written theoretical exam. (Rules, application and interpretation).
4. Must undergo a practical exam at a level II match, under supervision of a current CRO and Stats Officer.
5. Must be recommended to the province by the SAIRO board member.
6. Accreditation must be endorsed by the provincial association.

#### ***Minimum Annual Maintenance Requirements***

1. Must be a SAPSA member.
2. Must accumulate a minimum of 4 match points per year.
3. An SO certificate is valid for a period of three years. If an SO is not active for two consecutive years, his/her name will be marked as inactive in the RO database and will not be issued with a new SO certificate on expiry of the date on the certificate.

### **Chief Range Officer**

#### **\*\*Qualification Requirements**

1. Must be a SAPSA member.
2. Must be a certified current RO.
3. Must have a minimum of 15 accumulated level III or higher match points.
4. Must have successfully completed a level I IROA seminar.
5. Must be recommended to SAIRO by the provincial chairman.
6. Must have candidacy upheld by a poll of the SAIRO board members.
7. Must be recommended to SAPSA by the chairman of SAIRO.
8. Must have the approval of the SAPSA Executive.

***Minimum Annual Maintenance Requirements***

1. Must be a SAPSA member.
2. Must accumulate 9 match points per year, of which at least one must be a level III or higher match.
3. An CRO certificate is valid for a period of three years. If a CRO is not active for two consecutive years, his/her name will be marked as inactive in the RO database and will not be issued with a new CRO certificate on expiry of the date on the certificate.

**Range Master**

***\*\*Qualification Requirements***

1. Must be a SAPSA member.
2. Must be a certified current CRO.
3. Must have accumulated a minimum of 35 level III and higher match points with at least one level IV or V match.
4. Must have worked as a Match Director or Range Master at a level III or higher match.
5. Must be recommended by the SAPSA and SAIRO Chairmen.
6. Must have candidacy upheld by a poll of the SAIRO board members.
7. Must have the unanimous approval of the SAIRO Executive.
8. Must have the approval of the SAPSA Executive.

***Minimum Annual Maintenance Requirements***

1. Must be a SAPSA member.
2. Must accumulate 9 match points per year, of which at least one must be a level III or higher match.
3. An RM certificate is valid for a period of three years. If an RM is not active for two consecutive years, his/her name will be marked as inactive in the RO database and will not be issued with a new RM certificate on expiry of the date on the certificate.

Any official not attaining their required maintenance match points for the calendar year may re-certify for the next year, at their level, by attaining 4 supervised match points.

\* Provincial approval

\*\* SAPSA approval

## CHAPTER 3: THE RO'S DUTIES

1 Categories. The duties of the RO may be broadly divided into four categories:

- 1.1 Primary safety.
- 1.2 The running of a contest as referee or umpire.
- 1.3 Providing a firm foundation for the sport.
- 1.4 The advancement of the sport.

2 Applying the Rules. At all times remember that ROs only apply the rules, they never interpret them. Interpretation is done by IROA and IPSC.

3 Image and Attitude. Before we get into specifics let's take time to consider the following. As an RO, you are a key element in your club's Safety Plan. Your actions will help to shape the future of the sport, and to the shooters on the line YOU represent IPSC and SAPSA. That is why we are concerned about

3.1 IMAGE. As an IPSC RO you are invested with considerable responsibility and authority. How you handle the job shapes the image of our sport. Strive to ensure that the impression you make is a positive one.

3.2 PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE. Practical shooting is a sport that challenges you to develop self-control. You need it to control and integrate body and mind when you are shooting. You need it as an RO when you are interacting with a shooter.

4 Professional Attitude. To be a successful RO you need to develop a professional attitude. You convey this by your body language and handling of the shooter:

- 4.1 You are CALM ... because you know the rules, the job and how to run a stage.
- 4.2 You are COURTEOUS... Each shooter, from beginner to master is treated with the same calm and courteous manner, despite any emotional outbursts on their part.
- 4.3 You are in COMMAND... When people of various skills are running around with loaded guns, someone has to be in command. We expect the shooter to be in **control** of his gun and himself. You are in **command** of the stage, the shooter and the action.
- 4.4 You are THINKING AHEAD... You are thinking SAFETY and alert to head off potential safety problems BEFORE they occur. You read the shooter and the situation. Each shooter represents a unique SAFETY QUESTION. Each shooter carries a set of clues with him, his score sheet, gear, body language and verbal interactions. You read and interpret these clues in deciding how to handle the situation.
- 4.5 You are KNOWLEDGEABLE... about the rules and principles of the sport, about firearms and about your job.
- 4.6 You are OBJECTIVE... There is never a whisper of favouritism concerning your actions. Each shooter is treated with the same courteous impartially.



4.7 YOUR JOB... You are responsible for seeing that the course is run fairly and consistently. In order to do that, your instructions must be CLEAR, TO THE POINT AND THE SAME FOR EACH GROUP OF SHOOTERS.

**YOUR GOALS... PROFESSIONALISM - SAFETY - OBJECTIVITY - SAFETY - FAIRNESS - SAFETY - CONSISTENCY - SAFETY - KNOWLEDGE - SAFETY - CONFIDENCE - SAFETY**

### **PRIMARY SAFETY**

5 It is reiterated that **the RO's primary duty is to control competitor behaviour primarily and the range secondarily in a manner that ensures the total safety of competitors and spectators at all times.**

6 Safety before diplomacy!

7 Fortunately the RO does, normally, not have much argument about his decision on safety infringements. He should, however, ensure that he builds up a reputation that he does not tolerate any infringement by consistency and inflexibly reacting to even a minor safety infringement.

8 Minor Infringements. Once you allow a minor infringement to go by unchecked you have set a precedent. The tendency of your shooters will be to chance their luck until you draw the line. When you do this, you are not doing it from a position of strength as you are hampered by the precedent you had set.

9 A particular word of warning regarding "the person in authority". A junior RO is sometimes reluctant to react to safety infringements of, for example, his senior RO, team member, "A" grade shooter, club chairman, etc. You should, if anything, react more severely to this person's infringements as

9.1 he **does** know better and you know it,

9.2 the other shooters will notice this leniency and know that you did not react simply for personal reasons and "bang" goes your authority.

Safety comes before diplomacy! However, there is no excuse for bad manners.

10 It is also stressed that as far as the infringement of safety rules is concerned, the RO has no discretion but **MUST** disqualify the transgressor.

### **THE RUNNING OF A CONTEST AS AN UMPIRE OR REFEREE**

11 Disregarding the design of the course, the manner in which the RO handles a shoot is the single determining factor that decides whether the shoot is a success or a failure. The RO's objectives after safety are to assist the competitor through the COF safely and to ensure that the competitor and spectators enjoy the shoot.

12 He takes control of the range and maintains that control - if he loses it the shoot deteriorates into a shambles with little enjoyment for any competitor and often with unpleasant undertones. This control, in the broad sense, is what is referred to later as range discipline.

13 Never lose sight of the fact that the purpose of the sport is to test the competitor's ability to **shoot** in a simulated hypothetical situation. The operative word is SHOOT!

14 And it is a sport, practised for recreation.

15 In conducting any shoot, the RO should not lose sight of the rationale the designer had in mind when he set the course of fire, and he should apply penalties etc, accordingly.

16 The RO's primary purpose is **not** to see how many penalties he can award against a competitor. The principles underlying the allocation of penalties are clearly defined in the Rules and the RO should apply these principles rigidly. Do not be petty.

17 RO Actions at the Stage. The following "rules" may be applied to ensure that a competition is conducted harmoniously:

17.1 Explain the course to the competitors clearly and concisely and ensure that they understand it. Invite questions.

17.2 Explain the scoring method and penalties clearly and definitely. The competitor must be able to work out from this what category of shoot it is and how he should approach it. Again, invite questions.

17.3 Ensure that competitors can define firing points clearly if penalties are attached to overrunning or stepping a fixed firing point.

17.4 Ensure that competitors can clearly define targets and particularly penalty targets.

17.5 Ensure that competitors can hear your commands clearly.

17.6 Ensure that competitors can check their scores and times, if at all possible, while there is still time to raise a question if they wish to.

17.7 Treat all competitors equally and impartially, irrespective of personal knowledge of them and/or their range manners, or your personal feelings towards them.

Example. After a competitor has loaded and made ready, you notice that his magazine is not properly seated, what do you do?

This must not be seen to conflict with our secondary objective of assisting the competitor, bear the following in mind:

(i) This is not a condition that compromises safety in any way whatsoever.

(ii) As officials, we must not only be fair, but we must appear to be fair. Since there is no way to ensure that we will notice every such instance, we must ensure that we mention none of them.

(iii) At all times readiness to begin competition is the responsibility of the competitor, not the official and the competitor is asked if he is ready. An official shall only intervene to correct an unsafe or potentially unsafe condition.

18 If there is an infringement of the Rules, the competitor must be so informed:

18.1 In a pleasant manner, and

18.2 if the infringement is serious, the RO should warn or disqualify the competitor immediately.

18.3 Be courteous and friendly; you need not be a bully to be strict.

18.4 When taking an individual shooter under command (in any shoot other than standards), try to establish rapport and set him at ease; endeavour to establish the attitude that you are going through the course together, NOT that you are going to try to catch him out.

18.5 Above all, be strict but fair.

## **PROVIDING A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR THE SPORT**

19 Importance of Club Members. As background in this regard it must be borne in mind that the ordinary club member is just as important to the sport as a whole as is the top contender (not that the top contender is likely to admit this), for inter alia

19.1 the sport needs funds and facilities and because of the sources from which these must come (official aid, subs and affiliation fees, sponsorships, etc.), they are only available in meaningful measure to those sports that have large numbers of participants and supporters,

19.2 from the ranks of the ordinary club member comes

19.2.1 those who force the top contenders to even greater and greater heights of achievement in order to stay ahead,

19.2.2 those who will be tomorrow's top contenders and,

19.2.3 the grafters - the people who organise and run championships, leagues, etc., without whom there would be no top contenders.

20 It follows that the greater the number of shooters, the greater the depth of real proficiency and of reserve manpower on which the sport can draw.

21 Since the first and basic contact the ordinary club member has with the organised sport is in the person of his club RO, it follows that the club ROs carries great responsibility in many respects.

22 Interest and Enthusiasm. In the first instance and perhaps the most important, the RO on club level has to generate and sustain the interest and enthusiasm that is the motivating force that drives the whole scene.

23 If this interest and enthusiasm is lacking on club level, it cannot be generated anywhere else and one only needs to look at the effect it had on the members of one or two clubs where the motivation was lost for one reason or the other to appreciate the validity of this point.

24 The question, therefore, arises where this interest and enthusiasm comes from in the first place. It basically appears to be a culmination of three factors, viz.:

24.1 the club RO presenting interesting and challenging shoots,

24.2 the club RO conducting these shoots to the enjoyment of the shooters, and

24.3 the shooter seeing progress in his own performance and developing the desire to do even better.

We are thus talking about course design, conducting a shoot pleasantly and training

25 Enthusiasm. This enthusiasm is contagious, for

25.1 competition spirit in the club, and

25.2 the enthusiastic member will introduce new members to the club/sport.

26 Contribution. It also motivates the member to contribute. Where some effort such as assisting with the work load in arranging and conducting say a championship is called for, the enthusiastic member will be prepared to do his share, etc.

27 You can call it by whatever name you like but it must be apparent that where this attitude towards the sport is present on club level we are building on a sound foundation. And if the club RO does nothing else but generate this interest and enthusiasm in his club he has already made a major contribution towards providing a firm foundation for the sport.

28 Training and Discipline. There are two further aspects on which the club RO should concentrate, namely training and range discipline.

29 Training. The basic handgun proficiency of beginners and the less experienced shooters is dependent on the competence of the club RO. He should watch them closely to gauge their progress and determine in what fields they need additional help and experience and then, naturally, provide this or recommend them to a qualified instructor. When his club members reach that stage of proficiency to compete in league and championships, he should again provide training at this higher level. This is where course design and the remarks made in the applicable section come into play.

30 Range Discipline. The club range is the place where competitors learn range discipline and this is very much part of a sound foundation. **Lack of range discipline in a competitor points a finger straight at his club RO.** If in a national event, no less than 4 members of a provincial team start loading their guns without the ROs command, does this not tell us something? Certainly we can rationalise this incident but does it in the final analysis give us any answer other than that range discipline is lacking and can lack of range discipline eventually lead to anything other than accidents? You can have the finest set of safety rules in the world but if the range discipline is lacking there will be constant infringements of these safety rules and you may just as well not have had them in the first place.

31 To sum up: the contribution expected from the club RO towards providing a sound foundation for the development of the sport is:

31.1 to generate and sustain interest amongst the club members,

31.2 to provide the training from beginners to advanced stages to ensure real proficiency and depth, and

31.3 to instil range discipline.

## EQUIPMENT NEEDED WHEN SHOOTING

32 Right now seems to be a good time to discuss what is possibly the RO's biggest contribution to many of the aspects already discussed elsewhere in this manual, and that is the beginner shooter. Consider the person who drove 80 km because he heard there was a shooting range out here and wanted to try his hand at practical shooting. His experience level is low and gear and gun doesn't exactly comply with the rules. What are you going to do? Well we hope that you won't turn him away. New shooters are vital to the growth of our sport.

33 Beginners. Depending on the person and his skill level you can class him as an observer and get some of the experienced shooters to take him with them and explain the different shoots. He could be a possible coach through, with enough skill to walk through the match with the ROs acting as the coach on each stage, explaining how to handle each situation. He is not shooting for score, so be sure to take the element of speed out when he goes through. In all situations make sure that before the new shooter leaves he has a copy of the rules, a club calendar and a positive attitude about the sport and you. You are normally the first person the new shooter will connect with in the club.

34 Structured Training Program. As the sport has progressed so the demands on the shooters have increased. To take a beginner and show him the ropes for a while and then leave him to his own devices is a sure way of either losing him to the sport, or it's that accident just waiting to happen. A structured training program should be followed to ensure that you as an RO provide the new shooter with the necessary knowledge to come onto a range and react to commands and situations sub-consciously. The new shooter must be made to feel comfortable in the crowd, not stand out. The importance of this cannot be overstressed. Nobody likes to look the fool. If you can manage to have a group undergoing training together this is even better.

### 35 Clothing

35.1 T-shirt. Normal shirts tend to bunch and can get between gun and hand when drawing weapon. On cold days a rugby jersey is fine.

35.2 Jeans are the norm. Ladies use a dedicated pair because they can move the loops. Shorts (denim) are OK. Jeans in good condition. No torn or patched jeans.

35.3 Comfortable running shoes, something with a bit of "tread". There is a lot of stop/start.

35.4 Cap. Not necessarily worn all the time but does help for sun, hair, wind and rain. (to keep rain off your glasses).

### 36 Protective Equipment

36.1 Safety Glasses. The wearing of protective glasses is mandatory on all ranges. Prescription glasses are OK. The alternative is a pair of glasses with coloured lenses. The different lens colours have different advantages.

36.2 Ear protection. It is preferred that the cup type of ear protection is used rather than the earplug type. The plug type has its uses eg prone position.

### 37 Individual Equipment

37.1 Belt. A sturdy leather belt preferably double stitched or the new type of synthetic belt. The width of the belt will depend on your trouser loops and holster. As a guideline the minimum width should be about 40mm.

37.2 Holster. When buying a holster the IPSC rules must be kept in mind. A good choice for a beginner is the bikini type holster. When you graduate to a competitive holster the bikini can be kept for normal carry purposes.

37.3 Magazine pouches or ammo belt (ammunition carrier). A wide variety of styles are available. The type of firearm you are using will normally determine the number of magazines you need to carry. Provision for two to four magazines is the most common. Note the requirement differs for rifle and shotgun.

### 38 Additional Personal Equipment

38.1 Cleaning kit. This should consist of a cleaning rod, bore brush, small brush/toothbrush, flannelette, and a good quality gun oil.

38.2 A dedicated "gun" bag to keep everything in. This prevents you getting to the range with some piece of equipment still lying at home. Also as you continue shooting you will find that you don't have enough hands to carry all the stuff you start collecting.

38.3 A pen is a necessary part of your equipment, you need to write down scores, complete and sign score sheets.

39 Once on the range the program below is followed, not because it is the best, but to ensure that from instructor to instructor there is consistency in what the beginner is taught. Use this as a basis of what must be covered by the instructor. The sequence has been found to work safely, however, the students also, to a large degree, dictate the sequence. Always remember that you are dealing with a beginner and the object of the beginner's course is not to make the student a competitive shooter but a **SAFE** shooter. Using 2.5 hours per afternoon you can work through the course in about 8 afternoons. Use one session a week and demand that students practice the techniques they have been taught at home. Check the technique the next week and go on to the next item on the program.

### **TRAINING PROGRAM: INSTRUCTION ON THE RANGE**

No	Exercise	Detail
40	<u>Range Procedures</u>	Rules Chapter 10.
		Range commands Rules Chapter 8.
41	<u>The Stance</u> (Neutral Stance)	Position of the legs.
		Position of the gun in relation to eyesight
		Position of head.
		Grip especially the weak hand.
42	<u>Position of Holster</u>	See Rules Chapter 5.
43	<u>Typical Start Positions For Hands</u> (See Rule 8.2)	Hands at sides.

		Hands clasped.
		Hands surrender.
		Hands on head (fingers inter-locked or not).
		Holding on to range equipment.
44	<u>The Grip</u>	From the holster. Position of trigger finger.
		Ready to shoot
		Position of strong hand on gun.
		Position of weak hand on the gun.
		Safety off.
		Position of trigger finger.
45	Load and Unload	
46	The Draw	
47	<u>Principles of Firing Accurately</u>	Sight picture - dominant eye - both eyes.
		Trigger control
		Squeeze the trigger
		.Use only the index finger not whole hand.
		Don't anticipate the shot.
		Breathing control.
		Follow through.
48	<u>Mag Changes (Reloading)</u>	Position of magazine carrier.
		Position of magazine in carrier.
		Rule 5.05.
<b>STRESS THE PRINCIPLES OF FIRING ACCURATELY FOR 2ND SHOT</b>		
49	<u>Typical Malfunctions With a Gun</u>	
<b>DURING REMEDIAL ACTION FINGER IS OUTSIDE TRIGGER GUARD</b>		
		Stovepipe.
		Pull trigger and nothing happens
		Is there a round in the chamber? If not was the magazine seated properly? Seat mag and load. If there is a round in the chamber, cock hammer and fire. If still nothing eject round and continue, beware of a hang fire.

		Fired case still in and next round can't be chambered Release magazine and/or cycle gun. Don't try to remedy the malfunction you waste too much time and the chances are you will have to drop the mag eventually.
		Action not locking fully in position. Hit back of slide.
50	<u>Shooting Strong Hand Unsupported</u>	Stance variations.
		Position of gun (variations).
51	<u>Shooting Weak Hand Unsupported</u>	Stance variations.
		Draw (position of hand on butt) and transfer.
		Trigger finger and safety.
		Posture of body - lean in.
		Leading leg position.
52	<u>Positions To Shoot From</u>	Free style.
		Kneeling.
		Prone - roll-over, prone, supine.
		On the move.
		From behind barricades.
		Through apertures.
53	<u>Starting Positions (Body In Relation To Target)</u>	Strong side to target.
		Weak side to target.
		Back to target.
54	<u>Engaging Multiple Targets</u>	Distance.
		Direction (L-R or R-L).
		Tracking.
		Sight picture.
		Rhythm.
55	<u>Practice At Home</u>	
	<b>ENSURE THE GUN IS UNLOADED</b>	
	Insert a rubber or leather strip under hammer, if it makes you feel better.	
		The draw
		Mag changes
		Trigger control and sight picture



	Transfer to weak hand
	Always aim at an area that will contain the bullet if the gun should load itself by chance. Do not aim at the TV, the microwave, large mirror etc. They are expensive to replace. Never ever point the gun at anything you do not want to destroy, even in play or as a joke or by accident.

40 Practical Test. At the end of the course there is a practical test, to ensure that under pressure the beginner is able to function properly and safely. For the practical test it is important to have your senior club members present to evaluate the students as they go through the test, specifically looking at the safety aspects. A one on one ratio is desirable.

41 League Standard. Once the beginner has passed the practical test, he is now a novice and aimed at participating in leagues. The real training starts, to prepare the new shooter for the leagues. Experience has shown that the quicker the new shooter starts to shoot leagues the better the club's chances are of keeping that shooter active in the sport for many years to come. The first league the beginner shoots under supervision of an experienced club member, who will shoot slowly and accurately to demonstrate what should be done at the novice stage of shooting, so as not to discourage the novice.

42 Three Gun. After the beginner is proficient in handgun, progress to rifle and shotgun. Not all will be interested in three gun. The rules and targets remain essentially the same, it is only the equipment and technique that changes. As the member is a beginner no more, the other two disciplines will progress faster. The same stance and principles of shooting apply for all three disciplines.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPORT

43 The club range is the place where new ideas, theories, courses, etc., are devised, tested, (possibly adapted) proved and from where they go on to become generally accepted.

44 The reason for this is:

44.1 Practical shooting in a competition environment, handling up to 300 competitors, is clearly limited for reasons of organisation and time - but this does not apply on club level.

44.2 An innovation, unless it has already been tested and proved, cannot be introduced at a major championship, such as the provincial championship

\*which is probably used for team selection, and naturally the scores of all selection matches must be capable of direct comparison, and

\*the organisers of championships have to stick to the "proven road" for if a new innovation was tried at a championship and "backfired" they would be smothered with complaints, objections, council decisions and what-have-you.

45 This does not apply at the club range. Here the RO has more or less free rein. The RO on club level should therefore not be afraid to try new ideas and this could lead to considerable development of the sport.

## EXAMPLE PRACTICAL TEST

The test is primarily to test the safety aspects and secondly the shooters proficiency with the weapon.

1 Standard target

All exercises will be freestyle unless otherwise specified.

### SAFETY VIOLATIONS WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION

DIST	EXERCISE	DONE	TIME
7m	Load and unload.	1	n/a
7m	Draw and fire 1 shot. Start position hands clasped, until further notice.	2	n/a
7m	Draw and fire 1 shot	2	3
7m	Draw and fire 2 shots	2	3,5
7m	Draw and fire 2 shots strong hand unsupported	2	n/a

SCORE AND PATCH TOTAL 12 SHOTS

### START POSITION HANDS SURRENDER

7m	Draw transfer to weak hand and fire 2 shots weak hand unsupported	2	5
7m	Draw and fire 2 shots, reload and fire 2 more	1	n/a
10m	Start strong side to target, turn, draw and fire 2 shots	2	5

SCORE AND PATCH TOTAL 12 SHOTS

### START HANDS AT SIDES

10m	Start strong side to target, turn draw and fire 2 shots	2	5
15m	Draw, go to kneel and fire 2 shots	2	n/a
20m	Draw, go prone and fire 2 shots	2	n/a

SCORE AND PATCH TOTAL 12 SHOTS

2 Standard targets required per shooter.

### VARY START POSITION OF HANDS

5m	Draw and fire 1 shot on each target	2	3,5
7m	Draw, transfer to weak hand and fire 1 shot on each target	2	5
7m	Draw and fire 1 shot on each target reload and fire 1shot on each target	1	8

SCORE AND PATCH TOTAL 12 SHOTS

10m	Draw and fire 1 shot on each target strong hand unsupported	1	4
15m	Draw, go to kneel and fire 2 shots on each target	1	n/a
20m	Draw, go prone and fire 2 shots on each target	1	n/a

SCORE AND PATCH TOTAL 10 SHOTS

TOTAL ROUNDS REQUIRED FOR TEST = 58

50% OF SCORE NEEDED TO PASS.

## CHAPTER 4: THE RO'S AUTHORITY

### GENERAL

1 Authority. "The RO has complete authority on the range." As imposing as it may sound, this is simply so many words if the RO does not act accordingly.

2 Popularity. The RO is not on the range to win a popularity contest and it is inevitable that his decisions will from time to time be unpopular.

3 Range Discipline. Range discipline is essential and it is something that is only built up over a period of time by the consistent conduct of the RO in bringing meaning to the words "the RO has complete authority on the range".

3.1 By the very nature of his duties and of the sport the Range Officer must apply his discretion in many instances and he should not be afraid to do so, provided it is done fairly and impartially.

Example. An argument may run like this:

"A competitor is required to move from one position to another, the second position being an area which is defined, but with permissible lateral movement, and where the second position requires the competitor to shoot a moving target. If one competitor steps over the foot fault line and is given one procedural penalty, this leaves another competitor free to move after the target and up to point blank range to fire, incurring only the risk of being penalised to the extent in respect of his score as was the previous competitor."

Reading this you have all reached other conclusions as to what you would have done. The options are that it will never happen, because the penalties (every shot fired while faulting) outweigh the advantage, or a DQ for unsportsmanlike behaviour. This is clearly ridiculous, and if this should become the pattern of the sport the RO will effectively have killed practical shooting. The point is that the RO must take control.

3.2 If the argument quoted in the example were to be upheld, it would simply mean that the RO has no authority on the range whatsoever.

3.3 A climate in the sport in which such a situation could develop could only be the direct result of having weak ROs, using the word in its wide sense.

4 The RO is in no different position to the referee or umpire in any other sport in the sense that he is human, as such fallible, and may make a wrong decision, but he is judged on his overall "performance" and not by single instances.

Example. In a major football match the referee may not see a player going off-side in the last seconds of the match, right before the goalposts: he does not award a penalty and the game goes its course, even though 20 000 spectators may have seen the off-side and it was indisputably fixed by the eye of the television camera.

In the same manner, if the RO does not spot an error on a COF and does not award a penalty, that is it, irrespective of spectator appeal and the objections raised by other competitors. (Third party appeal)

The reverse situation occurs in the example of the rugby match - the referee thinks a player is offside and awards a penalty, right in front of the posts in the final seconds and the culprit's side loses. There is no exact demarcated line. It is a question of the referee's discretion, fairly and

impartially exercised, but he is in control of the match and there is no appeal against his decision, even if he is wrong.

In the same manner the RO awards a penalty, based on what he sees and applying the relevant Rule, and that is it. As opposed to the rugby player, the shooter can appeal his decision, by going to arbitration.

5 The whole question therefore boils down purely and simply to range discipline in the sense that shooters should know that the ROs make their decision based on what they see, and that they apply the rule fairly and consequently. Shooters can appeal, and the decision can be reversed.

6 This acceptance of the RO's authority starts at club level and works up. A man who has a weak RO in his club with whom he can argue (even if it is with his tongue in his cheek) and get away with it, is likely to do the same on higher levels of competition.

7 Interests of the Sport. If the RO in the example were to have awarded a penalty against the first shooter for a minor procedural error from which he gained no real advantage and have completely disqualified the second shooter who deliberately tried to exploit the RO's previous decision, to the extent of not only gaining a major and unfair advantage but completely negating the problem the designer of the course set for shooters to overcome, the RO would have been acting in the interest of the sport, albeit harshly.

8 This does not imply that the RO may apply and exercise his discretion unfettered by any discipline or control. But it is NOT for the individual competitor to dispute the RO's ruling with a view to altering his own or, as is more often the case, some other competitor's score. The word "sportsmanship" hopefully has some meaning in this sport too.

9 It is not to say that a competitor may not enquire about and discuss a penalty awarded against him with his RO before he leaves the line. The RO should have an open mind to the competitor's point of view but it is then for him to make his decision and motivate it briefly to the competitor, mentioning the relevant Rule and the specific part of the briefing. He should not permit further haggling or argument after that.

10 However, if the RO cannot motivate his ruling and has to hide behind the answer: "I am the RO and what I say goes" it is pretty certain that his decision was an arbitrary and undefendable one.

## **RESTRICTION OF THE RO'S AUTHORITY**

11 Control over RO. The fact that the RO's decision is final as far as the shooter is concerned does, however, not mean that the RO is a law unto himself and can do just what he likes. The RO is subject to the control of and even, if need be, disciplinary action by authorities above him (in the case of the club RO, the provincial association). The Rules are very clear on this.

12 Right and Duty. However, in the first instance the best control is self-control and good judgement. It should be borne in mind that the counterpart of a right is a duty and the greater the right, the greater the duty. The more power you are given, the greater the discretion with which you should employ these powers. Needless to say, an RO with these more-or-less unlimited powers who is inclined to think and act like a dictator does the sport no good. It is reiterated that the RO must appreciate that where on the one hand he has the right to act with

wide discretion, there is a corresponding duty on him to ensure that he does not abuse this right.

13 The RO in practical shooting is in the unique position that because our sport is potentially not only dangerous but could be lethal; it has to be controlled more strictly than most other amateur sports:

13.1 the RO is invested with more powers than his counterpart in other sports, and

13.2 to ensure that safety and discipline on the range is maintained the whole shooting scene is geared to uphold the authority of the RO.

14 Knowledge of the Rules. The RO himself is as much subject to the rules as are the competitors with the difference that he is assumed to know them. Just as it would be an utter shambles if in say a rugby match the referee started applying the rules of American Football or of soccer, our sport would be in shambles if every RO started applying different rules or his own pet interpretation of what he thinks the rule should be. The RO has to make his decisions in conformity with the rules and a ruling which is clearly incorrect not only makes the RO in question look pretty stupid but is an embarrassment all round, as

14.1 The competitor justifiably objects and wants the ruling reversed,

14.2 The organised sport is in a dilemma, for

14.2.1 on the one hand, and in order to maintain discipline, the door cannot be opened for reversal of RO decisions for all and sundry reasons, but

14.2.2 on the other hand, fairness obviously calls for the aggrieved competitor to be compensated.

15 Criteria for Decisions. The RO **must** therefore know the rules and apply them! Note that the RO only applies the rules and does not interpret them. But further than this, all decisions made by the RO have to meet with certain requirements and if they do not, they are suspect. These criteria are:

15.1 He must not have acted with ulterior motives or male fide (e.g. when there is perhaps some doubt, penalise a competitor simply because he does not like him or because the RO's sympathy lies with another team).

15.2 He must, in a matter where he has discretion, actively apply his mind to the alternatives. He cannot simply take the easy way out and decide on the first alternative that comes to mind, (an "exception" to this is matters relating to safety when the RO has to act **immediately** and **without hesitation**). This is why he has to know the rules and apply the correct one.

15.3 His decision must not lead to grossly unfair results. Unreasonableness on its own is often difficult to establish unless it is so gross that either ulterior motives or a lack of application of his mind to the problem becomes apparent. Shooters will soon realise if the RO becomes unnecessarily dictatorial and unreasonable, and he will then find himself in the position that even his better decisions become suspect in the minds of others. An example of this would be where competitors for the sake of safety are permitted to transgress the "weak hand rules" with reloads and clearing jams, while a competitor who does no more than step over a fault line and engage a target is more severely penalised.

15.4 He must, in case of a dispute, afford the competitor an opportunity to present his side of the story. This may, particularly in instances where safety is involved, not be possible **before** the RO makes his decision and acts, in which case it should be done at the first opportune moment and if the RO is then persuaded that his decision was wrong, be big enough to admit it and rectify the matter as best he can under the circumstances.

15.5 A RO in charge of a stage is exactly that, he is in command irrespective of his status.

16 In this we have dealt only with the RO. The shooter can go to arbitration on any ruling except scoring where the Range Master has final say.

17 Finally, those RO's who do not visibly demonstrate the quality of an RO as reflected in this manual will rarely be promoted or allowed to officiate independently at major matches.

## CHAPTER 5: THE RO AND CIVIL LAW

1. Ambit of Responsibility. The first responsibility of a RO is safety. It is therefore understood that "the RO has complete authority on the range"; by implication it means that the RO also shoulders all responsibility. This entails 3 aspects

- a. to define when, where and for what the RO is responsible,
- b. to determine what this responsibility encompasses,
- c. to consider the "tie-in" between the RO and his club.

### DEFINITION OF THE RO'S RESPONSIBILITY

2. **The ROs primary duty is to control the range in a manner that ensures the total safety of competitors and spectators at all times.** The RO has complete authority on the range, which means that the RO also shoulders all responsibility. See IPSC rules 1.1.1, 2.1.2 and chapter 3. Any other duties are secondary to this.

3. The RO assumes this responsibility the moment he has everybody's attention (e.g. blowing a whistle) and calling the shooters (detail) forward for the briefing. All shooters and other persons on the range then come under his authority, and he retains control until the moment when he absolves himself from further responsibility by declaring the range clear, once the last shooter in the detail has completed the course requirements.

4. The shoot, as conducted on that specific stage on the range, is the ROs responsibility. Safety on the precincts of the range (as opposed by that specific stage) and prior and subsequent to the RO being in control on that specific stage is governed by the Range Master/Match Director. Clearly the RO cannot ignore any safety infringements that happen here.

5. From the foregoing paragraph it is clear that every club should have a competent safety officer whose duty it is to ensure that the safety rules are enforced **at all times**.

### WHAT THE RO'S RESPONSIBILITY ENCOMPASSES

6. The RO may be held responsible for any accident that could occur on the range under his control. This could well entail (over and beyond any disciplinary action which may be taken against him) that where damages are suffered as a consequence of an accident, these may be claimed from him if blame is to be laid at his door.

7. In so far as his legal liability is concerned, our RO's in South Africa are in the fortunate situation (legally speaking) that the matter has never come before our courts for decision and one has only principles to go by. However, applying the basic principles of our law it is certainly possible that such a claim could arise where the RO is solely responsible and held liable.

Example 1. The RO conducts a jungle lane. He fails to take the necessary precautions to ensure that the area is safe and a couple of lovebirds who found a quiet and secluded rendezvous happen to be in the line of fire and one of them is shot when the first competitor goes through.

Example 2. We remain with the jungle lane. The RO fails to check that all patchers and scorers are accounted for and sets the next competitor off. A patcher who was still in the "jungle" is shot.

Example 3. The RO supervises the setting up of a long course. At some point a falling plate is used and quite casually as he is walking back to the RO, a visitor sets up the falling plate for the next competitor. In that round there is a ricochet from that falling plate which results in the visitor losing an eye.

8. Naturally, once we start considering the possibilities where the RO can be held partly to blame, the position becomes frightening. Whether or not he will be held liable will depend on whether he as RO, was negligent in the execution of his duties.

9. The following quote from the Appeal Court decision in the case Kruger vs. Coetzee, 1966 (2) SA 498 (AD) is instructive:

*"For the purpose of liability, culpa arises if:  
a. a diligens paterfamilias in the position of the defendant:-  
(i) would foresee the reasonable possibility of his conduct injuring another in his person or property, and  
(ii) would take reasonable steps to guard against such occurrence, and  
b. the defendant failed to take such steps.*

The Court has constantly stated this for some 50 years. Whether a diligens paterfamilias in the position of the person concerned would take any guarding steps at all and, if so, what will depend on the circumstances of each case. No hard and fast basis can be laid down.

10. The words "no hard and fast basis can be laid down" must be stressed. Bearing in mind what the primary duty of the RO is, he must draw on his total fund of knowledge and experience to ensure that safety on the range is maintained. **ANYTHING** that may constitute a danger falls within his authority. This is why junior and inexperienced members are generally not suitable to be ROs.

11. The "particular circumstances of each case", in the case in which a RO may be involved, will include inter alia the fact that

- a. we are dealing with firearms of large calibre,
- b. the RO is not simply the man on the street but,
  - i. an experienced shooter,
  - ii. who has had sufficient training as a trainee RO or other equivalent experience,
  - iii. who has passed an examination for which a very high standard is set, and
  - iv. who was initially (presumably) chosen as trainee RO because he is a responsible and safety-conscious shooter (presumably experienced) with the personality a RO must necessarily have,
- c. the system of trainee ROs and this course were designed specifically for the purpose of equipping the prospective RO with the necessary knowledge to



determine what is not safe and to foresee what may cause injury or damage, and

- d. the RO is invested with absolute authority on the range to ensure that complete safety is maintained. short: that he is an expert who shoulders complete responsibility.

12. When it is said that the RO may be held legally responsible for the damages arising from a shooting accident, this is not intended to convey that he and he alone will **always** be held responsible for such damages. Certainly the shooter himself may under certain circumstances be held responsible (whether alone or jointly with the RO). Likewise, if the person who is shot was himself to blame, whether completely or partly, this may constitute a defence open to the RO or lead to a reduction of the amount awarded to the claimant if there is a so-called apportionment of damages.

13. But the danger **does** exist, and it is a very real danger, that the RO may be faced with a claim, which could entail many thousands of Rand.

Example. A doctor who visits your range is shot. He is, say, 30 years old and could have worked until he was 60, and he earned R400 000 p.a. net. The damages basically for loss of income will be in the region of 30 years x 400 000 = R12 000 000.

If he is not killed but only paralysed and you take into account such things as pain and suffering, medical and nursing expenses etc, it is not inconceivable that we may be talking about a claim involving many more millions of Rand.

This is obviously an oversimplification of the position, but it does illustrate that the RO can find himself in serious trouble.

14. It can therefore not be stressed enough that safety comes first and however unpopular the RO's decision may be; there is no scope for "the benefit of the doubt" where safety is concerned.

## "SAFETY BEFORE DIPLOMACY"

### THE RO AND HIS CLUB

15. It is of great importance to the RO that his club is properly constituted and affiliated. Unless the club is properly constituted, you are simply dealing with a group of individuals, and in the case of a civil claim against the RO, he is then standing on his own without the strength of a club behind him.

16. From the position of the RO, the constitution of the club should:

- a. indemnify him against all loss in the event that an action for damages is brought against him, and
- b. where (as is usually the case) the constitution provides that the liability of members is restricted to unpaid subscriptions (or any other restriction of liability for that matter) there should be a rider to this to the effect that members' liability is unrestricted where the club is required to make good on the indemnity.

17. Clearly, where the club is not properly constituted and affiliated, it cannot be covered by SAPSA insurance.

## **INSURANCE: PUBLIC LIABILITY**

18. On a yearly basis SAPSA re-negotiates an insurance policy that benefits all its members. You are advised to contact the SAPSA office should you need further details. The current insurance now also covers members of the Black Powder Shooting Union, juniors, and overseas visitors that are here shooting in our matches.

19. It is of vital importance to the RO that all shooters on the range shall be covered by insurance. SAPSA has public liability insurance that is included in the membership fee. This is why it is essential for competitors to be members.

20. The RO should therefore satisfy himself that his club members are fully paid up members of SAPSA before he allows them on the range. This means that he should pay particular attention to:

- a. the payment of affiliation fees for a new member when he joins the club, and
- b. the payment of affiliation fees of all members at the end of the financial year (the end of April of each year).

21. Payment of affiliation fees does not mean payment to the treasurer; it must be paid over by him to SAPSA.

22. Visitors. Currently this policy covers visitors, provided that the RO in authority has given permission to the individual to compete. Provided further that the name of all such visitors is declared. The way in which this cover is arranged will vary from time to time and the clubs and provinces will be kept informed by SAPSA.

## **SHOOTING ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS**

### **Accidents**

23. In the event of a shooting accident occurring on your range and somebody being injured, a full written report must immediately be forwarded to the provincial association who in turn will (if necessary) make a supplementary report on their own findings when reporting the matter to the SAPSA executive. The accident must be reported to the local SAPS as soon as possible and at least the same day.

24. In reporting this to SAPSA the RO should bear in mind that it has to be more than comprehensive to enable SAPSA to submit an accident report to the insurance company.

25. The SAPSA executive has to make a preliminary report on any accident to the insurance company within 7 days. As the report referred to above has to follow the channel through the provincial association it may well be a good idea to make a telephonic report to the SAPSA chairman and administrative officer as soon as possible to ensure that a claim is not jeopardised by postal or administrative delays.

### **Incidents**

26. The SAPSA council decision is that any incident (including an accidental discharge) where nobody is injured must nonetheless be reported to the provincial association.

27. In the past clubs have been inclined to disregard this ruling but there are very good reasons why this rule should be strictly adhered to, inter alia

- a. it is conceivably possible that where an accident happens on a range and it appears (when the matter is then inevitably carefully investigated) that there had been prior unreported incidents, that an insurance claim in respect of the subsequent accident may be jeopardised,
- b. there will undoubtedly be disciplinary action taken against an RO who fails to report the incident if it becomes known. If shooting incidents are not glossed over on the club range, the shooters will be far more careful.

### **THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS COURSE FOR THE RO**

28. This note is purposely under a separate heading for added emphasis.

29. It **must** be appreciated that the very fact of the existence of this course has an effect on the legal position of the RO if he should ever be unfortunate enough to be involved in legal action.

30. Because the safety procedures, areas of danger, etc., are covered in detail in this manual, the RO can never use the excuse "I did not know". You can well imagine what cross examination counsel with a copy of this course in his hand will do to a RO in the witness stand where the RO failed to adhere to the procedures laid down.

31. It also has implications for the examiners. To be "matey matey" and to pass a candidate who is not up to standard is NOT doing him a favour. He is now judged (as a qualified RO) according to a standard that he may not be able to meet and he won't get the benefit of the doubt.

32. If any province does not keep the standard at the same level as the others, the same position will arise.

## CHAPTER 6: SAFETY RULES AND PROCEDURES

### SAFETY RULES IN GENERAL

1 The safety rules the RO works to are the foundation on which he builds further to discharge his primary duty, namely to ensure safety at all times. The basis of safety in practical shooting lies in the RO applying the IPSC rules diligently, constantly, conscientiously and consistently. A thorough and encyclopaedic knowledge of the rules is essential. Safety rules fall into four categories, namely the three commandments, primary safety rules, regulative safety rules and local safety rules.

2 Three Commandments. The three basic, capital rules, which may be called the three commandments, contravention of which leads not only to disqualification of but also to disciplinary action against the transgressor, viz.

2.1 The RO has complete authority on the range.

2.2 Only point a firearm at that which you wish to see destroyed.

2.3 No firearm may be handled except on the firing line and on the command of the RO, the exception being a designated safety area.

3 Primary Safety Rules. The "Three Commandments" are supplemented with a number of primary safety rules, the contravention of which leads to match disqualification without discretion on the part of the RO, such as the following:

3.1 Allowing the muzzle of the gun to point at any part of the competitor's body.

3.2 Dropping a firearm during a course of fire, or during loading, unloading or reloading, whether loaded or not.

3.3 Being under the influence of liquor or drugs on the range.

See Sec 10.5 of the IPSC Rules for detail.

4 Regulative Safety Rules. There are usually a number of regulative safety rules, some of which are obviously always applicable and some that are designed purely as the occasion demands.

5 Local Safety Rules. Each club is free to formulate its own safety rules (provided they are accepted and approved by the local provincial body) and they do not necessarily correspond to the IPSC rules. However, the club has to ensure that its rules meet with IPSC rules to be able to host IPSC matches. It follows that visitors to a club may work to different local rules, and novices may be completely unfamiliar with safety rules. The RO should therefore ensure that all shooters are familiar with the local safety rules - do not take anything for granted.

6 IPSC Safety. The IPSC rules were designed to fit the situation particular to an individual in any level of competition, where you have to cope with a number of shooters from different clubs and provinces. It is necessary that each RO shall know the IPSC rules and coach any member of his club who will be attending a match.

### SAFETY PROCEDURES ON THE RANGE

7 Range Commands. Do not deviate from the wordings and use of recognised IPSC range commands.

8 Safety on Firing Line. Ensure that every shooter is safe before leaving the firing line.

8.1 In all cases when the shooter presents his gun after the command "unload and show clear" look into the chamber and magazine well to ensure that they are both empty. At this stage the shooter is still under your command and it is your responsibility to ensure that when he leaves the line his weapon is in a safe condition. This responsibility will minimally end when you declare his gun clear and subsequently the range clear. It should be pointed out that this the way we apply the rule and not as contained in the IPSC rule book.

8.2 When dealing with a detail (multiple shooters), it is good policy in the case where guns are carried cocked and locked, (between strings during a standards exercise) to have the shooters on the line turn and face the RO once they have holstered. This will make visual inspection easier, especially when the detail is required to move to another distance. This also has the added advantage that shooters who are wearing ear protection can see you, and you can ensure that the shooters are paying attention during the briefing.

8.3 Once they are off the line and no longer under the direct surveillance of the RO, unsafe guns are unlikely to be spotted and fiddling with guns behind the line is a fact of life. All attempts to stamp it out - ruthlessly if need be - should be made. But bear in mind that however strict range discipline may be, it is something which is still likely to occur and is a danger area to which the RO should be alert.

8.4 Safety areas must be set up to allow shooters to not only bag and unbag, but also for inspecting or working on guns, or to add the drop of oil that is so frequently needed. Clubs should be encouraged to set up safety areas for all matches; this will contribute to preventing the problem mentioned above. It is good policy to have the rules governing the safety areas and display them in these areas.

9 Spot Check. The gun loaded and holstered with the safety not engaged is probably the single most dangerous hazard encountered on the range and must be ruthlessly stamped out. In this condition it more or less inevitably must fire when it is grabbed in the draw and the novice who had difficulty with his safety is the usual culprit. At club level the RO should make a habit of doing spot checks from time to time, particularly in draw and fire exercises and should take strong steps against any culprits, suspending second offenders for a given period. At an unexpected moment, after "stand by", command all shooters to place their hands on their heads, and the RO then goes down the line to check that safety catches are engaged.

10 The RO should automatically check

10.1 that the range is clear, and

10.2 that non-shooters are safely behind the firing line before giving the command to load and make ready. It should be second nature, like disengaging a safety or counting your shots.

## **SAFETY ON THE LINE**

11 View of the Shooters. The RO should always stand in such a position that he has a clear view of all shooters in the detail under his control.

12 Large Details. An RO cannot control and supervise a large detail on his own. He should:

12.1 make use of sufficient assistant ROs to ensure that there is a RO watching each three/four shooters at most, and

12.2 **NOT** attempt to operate a manual timing system (e.g. whistle and stopwatch) as well as watching the line, and

12.3 not give the command to load before he has passed to the back of the line.

13 Jammed Gun. Pay close attention to a shooter clearing a jammed gun. The shooter very often tends to point the gun to his weak side, either down the line or at his own body. This naturally also applies on any other courses, but in that case there should not be anybody near where he may point the gun.

14 Exercises with a potential danger element must be strictly controlled.

Example. 3 shots standing, 3 shots kneeling and 3 prone in a fast time. "A" shoots faster than his neighbour "B" and goes prone at an angle while B is still shooting in the kneeling position. NB: Competitors wishing to adopt the prone position shall not be permitted to adopt the ready position behind the detail (squad).

15 Caution should also be exercised when a detail that is shooting (standards) is interrupted.

Example: After the stand-by command has been given, a target falls over somebody will now have to go forward. In such an instance strict range discipline must be maintained, shooters preferably standing with their hands on their heads.

## **SAFETY DURING THE COURSE OF FIRE**

16 COF Safety. Before proceeding with any course of fire, the RO must satisfy himself that it is a safe course, both in design and as it has been set up. He should walk the course specifically to determine

16.1 that the angle of fire from all points is safe,

16.2 that any point at which a possible accidental shot may be fired (e.g. over barricade, in a tunnel, etc.) is angled in such a manner that no harm can be done by a stray shot.

17 Movement. A shooter on the move

17.1 should in the case of an auto, have the safety on and in the case of a revolver, have the hammer down, and

17.2 **must** have his finger out of the trigger guard, when moving from one shooting station or position to the next.

18 View of COF. A particularly dangerous situation arises with any course of fire where the RO cannot see the entire course from the starting position. Here care must be taken to ensure

that patchers and scorers are out of the danger zone before the command to fire is given. It is recommended that

18.1 a constant and fixed number of persons is used throughout the shoot (e.g. scorer and 2 patchers)

18.2 a head count is done each time before a shooter is taken under command.

18.3 individual patchers and scorers are not replaced without the permission of the RO, and

18.4 that a safety officer is in position with the specific duty to ensure:

18.4.1 that the previous shooter is out, and

18.4.2 that nobody wanders into the course at any time (for instance to check a buddy's score).

18.5 The RO remains behind until the last shooter or patcher has finished and walks to the starting position with the all the competitors etc in front of him.

## **IPSC RULES**

19 Origin of IPSC Rules. When the original RO's manual was written, the IPSC rules had not been published as a comprehensive set of rules and SAPSA rules were used. The following publications were referred to:

19.1 Cooper on Handguns.

19.2 Proceedings of the Colombia conference in May 1976.

19.3 Minutes of the meeting of the International delegates of IPSC held in Salisbury in August 1977.

19.4 IPSC Bulletin of March 1978

20 The IPSC Rules now forms the basis of the sport and this manual must be seen as amplifying the Rules for the RO. Only the newest version of the Rules is used in any match or tournament at all levels of practical shooting. The rules are available from the IPSC website [www.ipsc.org](http://www.ipsc.org) for the price of downloading and printing them.

21 It is expected of all ROs and trainee ROs that they will be very familiar with the IPSC rules and keep them updated with the changes that will appear from time to time.

## CHAPTER 7: COURSE DESIGN

### INTRODUCTION

1 Course design is a facet of RO duties which has in the past, unfortunately, not been given the attention it deserves. All too often it has been a case of quickly sitting down and jotting down a few notes and lo! a new course!!! Genius at work!

2 The Basis. A properly designed course is the basis

2.1 of an enjoyable and stimulating shoot,

2.2 which can be conducted safely and without hitch and argument, and

2.3 which sustains the shooters' interest and enthusiasm by challenging his ability without crippling penalties on unrealistic targets.

3 Development. Course design also determines the development of the sport and it is particularly in this field where the RO who has the necessary imagination and ingenuity to design courses that pose new challenges and problems, can make a vital contribution.

4 Stereotype. It is of the utmost importance that the RO as course designer does not fall into the rut of simply rehashing old and stale courses and/or presenting stereotype courses week after week. Nothing can dampen enthusiasm and kill interest in the sport more effectively.

5 The sport does not need gimmicks to make a challenging course of fire, it needs imagination and serious thought. Applying the principles of course design in the IPSC Rules will enable you to keep the COF ever young and challenging and interesting.

### FACTORS TO CONSIDER

6 In addition to the guidelines published in the IPSC Rules (Chapter 1 and 2), there are a number of factors to take into account when designing a course of fire, i.e.

6.1 Safety

6.2 Clarity

6.3 Practicality

6.4 Variety

6.5 Training

### SAFETY

7 As has been stressed throughout this manual, safety is the primary function of the RO and this is as much a consideration in designing a course as it is in running a stage.

8 Competitor Ability. A major factor that should be taken into account is the ability of the competitors participating. There will obviously be different standards for the different levels of matches and tournaments as specified in the IPSC Rules. Our members are a cross section



with different levels of skill. Don't design a shoot to give the top shooters in the club a real challenge and completely demoralise the shooter who has only recently graduated from the beginner's class. By and large the intermediate shooters make up the bulk of our members, let's keep them enthusiastic, they too can develop into the top shooters of your club, if we keep them in the sport long enough.

Example: "Draw and fire 1 shot in 1 second at 10m, repeat 3 times" is simply inviting an accident if you are dealing with novices. If you feel that you want to put pressure on the top shooters use two targets and say one on each in 1.5 seconds. This will allow the less experienced shooter to shoot one shot at one target, and still, all things being equal, allow him to shoot 50% of the top shooter.

9 Standards Danger Areas. The exercise where a squad is on the line (standards) in particular is where there are potential danger areas, inter alia for the following reasons:

9.1 you often have the experienced shooter and the less experienced shoulder to shoulder within approximately 1,5m of each other,

9.2 what might be "old hat" for the experienced shooter may be beyond the capabilities of the less experienced shooter who is now making an all-out effort to match the better shooter, and

9.3 it is particularly on the standard exercise where shooters work to tight times, and under stress the accidental discharge is most likely to result in an accident with somebody being injured.

10 Pay Attention. It follows that in designing an exercise the RO should pay particular attention to the following:

10.1 any exercise which entails a change in stance or shooting position, such as starting strong or weak side on, back to target, etc.,

Example. The exercise "2 shots standing, 2 shots kneeling, and 2 shots prone" must be singled out as particularly hazardous if not properly conducted for it often happens here that one shooter is already prone and ahead of his neighbour who is still kneeling and may perhaps even be trying to clear a jam,

10.2 weak hand shooting,

10.3 any exercise where the time limits become very tight, having regard to the ability of the shooters in question, and

10.4 concealed carry shoots.

11 Medium and Long Courses. Points to bear in mind when designing a medium or long course are, amongst others:

11.1 tunnels etc., where the competitor is required to crawl with his gun holstered, which will then be pointing straight back if the tunnel is not properly angled,

11.2 any physical obstacle that the competitor has to go over or under,

11.3 falling plates and other metal equipment which may cause a ricochet or splinter,

11.4 any target so placed that a competitor who "loses his cool" under the stress of competition may be inclined to overrun and then shoot back at or a target placed close to a line along which a competitor is likely to move and which is not close to a side stop, and

11.5 weak hand shooting

12 Potential Danger Areas. This list of potential danger areas that the course designer has to bear in mind is not complete, these are simply the most common ones. Nor is it suggested that all danger areas should be avoided at all costs, for that is clearly not always practical. But the course designer should at least have been aware of the potential danger and weighed this against such factors as the experience of the shooters, the competence of the RO concerned, the number of spectators, etc.

## **CLARITY**

13 Rationale. One unfortunately often sees courses which are unsatisfactory simply because the course designer himself was not clear on what he wished to achieve. This happens when there is no rationale behind the design of the course.

14 Procedure. For this reason it is strongly recommended that the course designer goes about the design of a course in the following way:

14.1 find a real life situation (in broad outline) which you regard as being adaptable to a practical shooting course,

14.2 analyse this situation and determine what skills you would test (shoot from an uncomfortable position, crouch, etc),

14.3 define the rationale most suitable to such a course, and

14.4 then design the course on paper

Unfortunately our first world society does not allow you to put this on paper anymore, as it is shooting at people (horror of horrors!!!) and this is a sport!

15 The course designer should have a clear picture in mind of the basic types of courses with their variations. These are set out clearly in chapter 1 of the Rules.

## **PRACTICALITY**

16 The name "practical shooting" should be paid more than just lip service. Your aim should be to take a situation that may arise in real life and to reduce this to a course of fire. One is naturally handicapped to a very large extent by 3 factors, namely:

16.1 restrictions imposed by safety considerations,

16.2 the challenge faced by each competitor must be the same which in turn makes it difficult to introduce an element of surprise, which to a restricted degree can be overcome with reactive targets etc., and

16.3 the number of shooters involved, as owing to the time involved with scoring and patching, the course itself has to be kept short and sweet.

17 Apply the Rules. However, because concessions have to be made to strict practicality, it does not mean that practicality goes by the board; if anything it means that greater effort must be made to achieve it.

18 DVC. Remember that the sport developed from and is based on balancing accuracy, power and speed.

18.1 Power more or less takes care of itself. The scoring values presently used ensure this and encourage the use of guns that meet major power factor.

18.2 The emphasis should be on the balancing of the speed and accuracy and as a rough rule of thumb it can be taken that a 25cm group within the A in 5 seconds is preferable to a 5cm group in 8 seconds. With the Comstock scoring method of score divided by time this is more or less automatically accommodated.

Example. Using the rule of thumb above and taking a situation where 2 targets side by side are engaged. Let us assume that competitor "A" when shooting in 5 sec. spreads his shots and gets 2 As and 2 C' as opposed to competitor "B" who shoots 4 As in 8 sec.

Competitor	Points major	Factor	Points minor	Factor
A	18	3.6	16	3.2
B	20	2.5	20	2.5

This illustrates the advantage of major power factor and the balance between time and score.

18.3 Herein lies the principal difference between practical shooting and precision shooting. In precision shooting the entire emphasis is placed on accuracy. In practical shooting considerable concessions are made to accuracy, provided it does not fall below the level where an opponent would be incapacitated and the element of speed is brought in with equal value (leaving aside the question of calibre for the moment).

As Cooper puts it, "A shot that hits but does not stun is better unfired. A powerful blow that does not hit its target is a joke and the ability to deliver a heavy blow precisely but too late is of only speculative value". (Cooper on Handguns, Page 102)

18.4 Emphasize speed of shooting with accuracy rather than deliberate type shooting, although all shooters should be capable of deliberate placing of shots in their own time.

19 Reloads. Forced reloads should be limited to practice and standard exercises in order not to limit the firepower of a weapon or interfere with a shooter's natural training. It is bad practice to empty the gun. This is true for most conditions, not all. Care should be taken not to force a competitor to empty his gun.

20 Improvisation. As few restrictions as possible should be placed on technique, stance, etc., in order not to limit freedom of improvisation. The shooter should rather be asked to solve a given problem as best he can, which means that the following should be avoided as far as possible:

#### Fixed Firing Positions

\*This is something else which can often be avoided and which does nothing for a freestyle approach to the problem. In a real life situation nobody is going to run up to an armed opponent before engaging him.

\*By simply using vision barriers, simulated and real hard cover, and other props that restrict the movement of the competitor, while still allowing options, regarding the manner or sequence in which the problem can be overcome, impractical competitor behaviour can be obviated, while still retaining the approach stipulated in the freestyle principle of the IPSC rules.

\*If the beginner does not feel confident to hit A's beyond 5m it is just as well that he knows this. If the experienced shooter is good enough to engage targets at an acute angle, or score on difficult shots at greater distances, this will be the reward for his ability, while the beginner can still fulfil the stage requirements, albeit in a longer time, when having to move closer to the barriers to get the shot. This course design allows shooters to compare their ability with others in their own grades, (A, B, C or D) while clearly still taxing the ability of the experienced shooter. In this manner the sport will develop

21 Freestyle. Bear in mind the IPSC principle of freestyle:

"IPSC matches are freestyle. Competitors must be permitted to solve the challenges presented in a freestyle manner, and to shoot targets on and "as and when visible" basis ...

22 Emphasis. The emphasis should be on shooting, not on

22.1 athletic feats such as a long sprinting course, scaling of high walls, crawling underneath a very low tunnel etc.

22.2 technicalities" such as overstepping a line by a fraction, etc., or

22.3 involved, detailed instructions which make the test more one of memory than of shooting.

23 Weak Hand. If weak hand only is called for

23.1 this should be at the end of the course,

23.2 from that point onwards the competitor should continue with the weak hand, performing all functions without any assistance from the strong hand or arm, until the course is completed, because his strong hand is supposedly incapacitated, and

23.3 Handling the gun or equipment with the strong hand does entail very heavy penalties (procedural error for every occurrence). See rule 10.2.8 for exceptions.

24 Concealed Targets. Concealed or partially concealed targets (hard and soft cover) are permissible, in fact even desirable.

25 Penalty Targets. Where penalty targets are used, be aware of shoot throughs. Remember targets are impenetrable and shots that pass through one target and go on to strike another cause endless problems for the RO. Avoid this situation at all costs. Bear in mind that not all competitors will approach the problem in the same way, so get a few extra opinions from other shooters when placing penalty targets.

26 Club Level. The RO on club level is really in a far stronger position to apply practicality than the course designer for leagues, provincial and national events, for

26.1 the time element is normally not as critical,

26.2 if he does make a mistake (for instance that the challenge faced by all competitors is not exactly the same) this is not likely to lead to recriminations or to have far reaching effects, and

26.3 he is not restricted to regulation targets as in competition

With the club shoots he can and should be bold and include new concepts.

Example. A "hypothetical situation in which weapons should reasonably be used" is not restricted to human antagonists, what about the vicious dog, for instance? In this manner the club range becomes the place where new concepts, which may later be adopted on the competitive scene, are tested and proved. This leads to development

## **VARIETY**

27 Little can be added to what was said in Chapter 4: Providing a Firm Foundation for the Sport above, other than to stress the importance of avoiding stereotype courses.

28 Old Courses. There is no objection to using old courses provided that:

28.1 no course is shot repeatedly ad nauseam and allowed to become a definitive measure of practical skill. This applies to the classification course in particular- if this is constantly practised it loses all value;

28.2 if a course, which is not included in the SAPSA library of shoots, is used, it is scrutinised fully, and if necessary amended to comply with the principles of course design.

29 Fun Shoots. On the club range "fun shoots" should not be neglected. Balloon, numbers, dart board shoot, etc., as well as falling plates, the night shoot, car shoots, etc., keeps alive the interest of the ordinary club member who is not a contender on the competitive scene. Those ordinary members are in the broad concept just as important as the top contenders on the competitive scene.

## **DEVELOPING SKILL**

30 Purpose. The purpose of developing practical shooting skills is to

30.1 to improve proficiency in the handling of the specific firearm used,

30.2 to fix a pattern of automatic reaction, in other words, to train the shooter to react subconsciously, and

30.3 to develop engagement logic.

31 It is therefore immediately apparent

31.1 that standard exercise shoots are necessary and provide the foundation of shooting proficiency but are a means to an end and not an end in itself, and

31.2 that long courses, the man vs. man, short shoots, etc., together with standard exercises form an integrated whole and should be viewed as such.

32 Responsibility for Developing Skills. The club RO is usually responsible for the developing the skills of his club members and this should be taken into account in designing courses and exercises. In order to be effective, course design (standard exercises included) should cater for progressive improvement. When the club does not have a CRO, it is desirable that the various ROs on an ad hoc basis, or the committee, make some arrangement to ensure planned co-ordination to provide progressive training.

33 Statistics. In order to do this effectively the RO or training officer needs statistics reflecting what progress is made, identifying weaknesses, etc. The simplest way to obtain this information is to use score sheets.

34 Development Program. A program may be undertaken as a specific project. This will probably be done as a matter of course in the case of beginners in the established clubs and also by the newer clubs that are not yet fully committed to competition. It will normally be found that the RO has to take the initiative and somehow integrate the league, practice of published courses for matches, championships, etc., into such a program.

35 To achieve this it becomes doubly important

35.1 that the RO is conscious of the problem,

35.2 analyses the results of shoots to identify areas of weakness which require special attention, and

35.3 designs courses and exercises that supplement the league, etc.

Example. Assume that it is noted that accuracy is declining. Courses that include many partial targets, partly obscured, longer distances etc., are now indicated.

36 The average club member may not even be aware that he is, in effect, being put through an advanced training course if the RO does his homework and introduces courses and exercises dictated by the needs, but the results will be there.

## **GENERAL**

37 Promotion Of The Sport. A very important point in promoting the sport is course design. All the aspects mentioned here are to be borne in mind when designing a course of fire, together with aspects that may improve the spectator appeal of the course being designed.

38 Public Appeal. In order to interest potential sponsors etc., the sport must appeal to the public. It is sponsorship that will eventually enable the association to increase its facilities and membership. A vital issue in obtaining better spectator appeal is the use of reactive targets, which obviously register when hit. This enables spectators to follow a competition and observe the difference between individual skills

39 Placing Targets

- 39.1 Place targets as close to the backstop as possible.
- 39.2 Ensure shots don't result in direct hits on concrete, rocks and inadequately stacked tyres
- 39.3 All shots at the target from any possible shooting position must be contained in the shooting bay, especially shots fired from kneeling and prone positions.
- 39.4 Shots fired by shooters of all physical heights must be contained in the shooting bay.
- 39.5 A line passing through the uppermost part of the target will impact against the backstop or berm at least 600mm from the top.
- 39.6 Steel targets must be placed at least 7m from the closest overrun of the competitor. The steel must be placed square to the shooting position to prevent ricochets. Splatter to the sides and front will cause raggedness in targets placed close to the steel. Place solid traps to catch possible side splatter from the steel. This is why shooting glasses is essential to ROs, competitors and spectators.
- 39.7 Ground level targets placed away from the backstop or berm must have adequate bullet traps placed to catch any possible ricochets. This can be in the form of sand filled tyres, sandbags, hay bales, etc. Check for the bullet strike and adjust the bullet traps if they until they adequately contain the shots.

Target frames are ideally constructed of wood. Keep metal to a minimum especially the close range targets. Metal frames holding the wood must be kept as far away from the shootable areas as possible

40 A Final Comment. Course design is more than just placing a number of targets around at random, adding a number of ingredients to give it "spice". There should be method in your madness.

## CHAPTER 8: RANGE PROCEDURE

### FIREARMS AND CALIBRES

1 Practical shooting is not restricted to handguns. The sport consists of three disciplines, which are practical pistol/revolver, rifle and shotgun. It must, however, be accepted that most events are restricted to handguns and shotguns as rifle ranges are less common than pistol ranges. The pistol, rifle and shotgun rules and the tournament rules are available from the SAPSA and IPSC websites.

2 Power. The minimum power accepted in competition is called minor and is specified in each set of the IPSC Rules. The power is expressed in the term factor, which is calculated for every gun at each major match, often on a sample basis at smaller matches too.

3 Factor. The factor is calculated as follows: (bullet weight in grains x velocity in feet per second [fps]) divided by 1000

Example: A 9mm bullet weighing 121 grains travelling at 1100 fps will have a factor calculated as follows:

$$\frac{121 \times 1100}{1000} = 133.1$$

4 Calibre. The only restriction on guns is the calibre. This is in recognition of the fact that practical shooting is designed to balance the three elements - power, speed and accuracy. Any of the accepted calibres can be classified as major should they meet the requirements for major factor. There are restrictions in the various divisions for good reasons.

5 All guns, be they revolvers, semi-automatics, single action, double action, single shot, pump action, bolt action, falling block, etc may be used in the sport. Practice has, however, proven that the semi-automatic's fast reloading ability has taken over in especially the open division, with the other actions prevalent in the other divisions.

6 The velocity of a bullet is measured with a chronograph.

### TARGETS AND SCORING METHODS

7 **Targets**. The official targets that are used in matches are:

7.1 the IPSC "classic" or "metric" cardboard/paper target,

7.2 the pepper popper, "classic" popper, 20cm round and 15cm square metal targets.

8 In any competition conducted under IPSC rules only the official IPSC targets may be used. For this reason it is suggested that only these targets are used so that shooters are familiar with the targets when competing in any match or tournament.

9 The IPSC targets and their scoring are clearly indicated in each copy of the rules.

10 The lines on all targets must not be visible beyond ten metres, preferably a perforation method of marking the lines. All targets, including penalty targets, are to have a non-scoring border of 5mm in width.



## **PENALTIES AND DISQUALIFICATION**

- 11 The RO must make a clear distinction between penalties and disqualification.
- 12 Penalties. Penalties are simply that. The shooter is penalised for making a procedural error, dropping shots etc., resulting in penalty points being deducted from his score.
- 13 Disqualification. Completely different from the penalty, the disqualification is a disciplinary measure for a major transgression, usually an infringement of safety rules. This usually entails losing the score for the entire match, literally "being sent off the field".
- 14 To talk about being "disqualified" where a shooter's arm protrudes over a firing position is incorrect, he is in fact penalised even if it is to the extent that the penalties nullify any score he may have obtained. In the interest of range discipline the expression "disqualified" should carry a stigma, which will have the effect of making the shooters far more careful.
- 15 Another instance where a shooter is not disqualified but is stopped from shooting is where he is injured during a stage, and the RO considers it dangerous to allow him to continue, or the RO suspects that a bullet may be stuck in the barrel. This has to do with competitor safety.

## **SCORERS, PATCHERS AND DOPPIE PICKERS**

- 16 RO Responsibility. Scorers and patchers assist the RO, which means
- 16.1 that he remains responsible for their actions and, therefore, for their mistakes, and
- 16.2 has an obligation towards them.
- 17 Scoring and Patching. Scoring and patching are both tedious and thankless jobs and the RO should ensure that
- 17.1 patchers are changed after every few competitors
- 17.2 there are sufficient people in his club or on the range in case of a match who understand and have experience of scoring so that this duty may be rotated, and
- 17.3 the scorer gets recognition for the work and that it is not simply taken for granted.

It is a small courtesy that takes no effort specifically to introduce a scorer by name at the start of the stage briefing.

- 18 Scorers. If more than one scorer is going to be used in any event (and this is desirable) the RO should get together with the scorers before the event and make sure:
- 18.1 that they understand how the score sheets are to be completed,
- 18.2 that the same method of scoring will be used by all, and
- 18.3 that they understand the signals the RO will give for penalties, procedurals, etc.

19 Scoring from the Start. With patching and scoring on a long course the scorers and patchers often start working from the start while the competitor is still shooting, particularly where the event is run to a tight time-schedule. There is no objection to this **PROVIDED** that the detail is briefed accordingly, it is ensured that they do not move into a danger zone, for instance where the course entails shooting in the direction of the berms, and that a nominee of the shooter accompanies the scorer to verify that the score is recorded correctly.

20 Doppie pickers. "Doppie pickers" are something of a problem, firstly as far as safety is concerned and secondly administrative. Safety wise

20.1 on a long course doppie pickers should be controlled to ensure that they do not get over zealous and ahead of the RO, which principally happens where the terrain is such that cases may easily be lost. This requires the RO staying with the competitor and he cannot amble along at his leisure.

20.2 on a standards stage they must stay 10m behind the firing line and not move up before the "range clear" command has been given.

Administratively because the time taken to hunt the missing few doppies can make a stage run behind schedule quite quickly. Picking up cases can always be done later and must not delay the running of the stage.

## **SCORESHEET CHECKLIST**

21 Below are some best practices to help ensure accurate and complete scoresheets.

22 Write CLEARLY.

23 Always use numbers, NEVER use hash marks.

24 Repeat Calls. Verbally repeat ALL scoring calls (hits or penalties) and time so the RO knows you recorded them correctly.

25 Total. Total all the columns.

26 Cross Total. Cross total the total hits, misses, PT and procedural to make sure they correctly add up to the stage round count.

27 Circle. After you cross total the hits, CIRCLE the shot count number to show you checked this.

28 Procedurals. If procedural are recorded, write down the reason for the procedural penalty with the rule number to avoid questions later.

29 Penalties. Do NOT write anything in the penalty boxes except penalties!

30 **FOCUS** on the scoresheet, NOT on the target! The easiest way to avoid scoresheet errors is to focus only on the scoresheet and avoid looking over the RO's shoulder while he scores a target. Always let the RO do his job and call the score, while the scorer does his job and writes down the accurate score.

31 Alterations. Initial any alterations you might have made on the scoresheet and ensure the shooter also initials the alterations.

32 Once you have completed and checked the scoresheet, talk the shooter through it. Put the completed scoresheet in front of the shooter, and then call everything out. For example, *12 Alfa, 2 Charlie, total of 14 hits. No penalties, and your time was 5.73 sec.*

33 Signature. After the shooter has reviewed the scoresheet, have them sign it. Make sure that YOU sign the scoresheet and record the time of day, especially with DQs and penalties.

34 This all seems so simple, but we make far too many errors on scoresheets. The shooter showed up to shoot, paid his entry fee, shot his match and deserves an accurate accounting of his score. Scoring is often approached more casually at leagues, but this is where good habits start. Taking a little more time to double check makes the stats job easier and ensures the shooter gets an accurate score.

## CHAPTER 9: FIREARMS AND RELOADING

1 Introduction. It is accepted that the candidate RO presenting himself for assessment is an experienced shooter who is familiar with the working principles and has practical knowledge of the firearms he is likely to encounter on the range, as well as the principles and practice of reloading. This basic knowledge is not covered in these notes but the candidate may expect questions in these fields in the examination.

### INTRODUCTION

2 Focus. In this manual we are concerned with the malfunctions in handguns that are likely to occur on the club range. The following safety precautions are recommended and club shooters should be trained accordingly:

3 RO Responsibility. The primary responsibility to ensure that his gun (and ammunition) is in safe working condition rests on the shooter but guns also fall under the blanket authority of the RO and he may declare any firearm unsafe and therefore ban it from the range.

4 Benefit of Doubt. In the interest of safety, the benefit of the doubt, if any, is NOT given to the shooter. A firearm that has malfunctioned is suspect! Satisfy yourself completely that it is functioning properly before giving it the OK.

4.1 You are entitled to rely on the assurance of an experienced competitor that his gun is now in order.

4.2 To satisfy yourself that a gun is in safe working order:

4.2.1 work the action by hand with the gun empty,

4.2.2 pay particular attention to trigger pull and make sure that the hammer is not slipping,

4.2.3 if deemed necessary, fire, or have the shooter fire, a few shots.

5 Competitor Experience. On club level the RO will of necessity be guided in his conduct to a degree of the experience of the shooter. In the case of an inexperienced competitor the RO should, if the shooter appears to be in doubt how to handle the problem, take the malfunctioning/jammed gun from the shooter and himself clear it or check it, whether he is asked to or not and explain to the shooter what the malfunction was, why it occurred and demonstrate how it was rectified.

6 Standards Shoot. In the case where a gun malfunctions during a standards shoot:

6.1 the shooter should under no circumstances fiddle with the gun but simply stand still and raise his weak hand to draw the RO's attention to the problem (except in the clear case of a jam);

6.2 once the detail has shot the exercise, the other shooters should be made suitably safe and the competitor with the errant firearm - which he will still have in his hand, pointing down range - be asked to step 1 or 2 paces forward with the RO and be given permission to rectify the malfunction.

6.3 Once the malfunction is rectified, the shooter should then be allowed to continue. The RO should watch the functioning of the suspect gun closely.

## **MALFUNCTIONS**

### **7     Revolver Jams**

7.1     Under recoil an improperly crimped bullet may move forward in the case.

7.1.1   In the Colt and similar actions where the cylinder rotates clockwise, the cylinder may be opened and the defective round ejected without problems.

7.1.2   A bullet may be jammed between the cylinder and the barrel straddling the flash gap. This bullet will have to be pushed back into the case and this should NOT be done in haste on the line. In the case of the Smith & Wesson where the round comes up from the opposite side, the protruding bullet will have to be pushed back into the case far enough to get past the barrel before the cylinder can be swung out and the round ejected.

7.2     A small foreign object (shaving of lead, etc.) may be lodged between the cylinder and the barrel; normally a little force will allow the cylinder to rotate.

7.3     Proud Primers may prevent the cylinder from revolving.

### **8     Semi Auto Jams**

8.1     Normally a jam is the result of failure to feed or eject. The steps to be taken are:

8.1.1   Ensure that the gun is pointed down range.

8.1.2   Remove the magazine.

8.1.3   Open the action and lock open.

8.1.4   Remove the jammed case or round.

**NB.** Since it is necessary to get the action open and considerable force is sometimes required, a common error is that the shooter may turn the arm in line with the barrel or even turn the gun sideways and drop his elbow or forearm in line with the barrel or even turn the gun to point at another person. Ensure that the gun always remains pointed in a safe direction.

8.2     Action not closing properly is commonly caused by

8.2.1   a bullet not seated deeply enough. When attempting to eject this round, the bullet may remain stuck in the barrel and pull out of the case, spilling the powder charge into the working parts of the gun. The gun should be cleaned thoroughly before further use.

8.2.2   a build-up of foreign matter (dirt, lead, shavings, etc.) against the ridge of the chamber;

8.2.3   a loose primer may fall out and prevent the action from opening all the way.

8.2.4   the case may exceed the chamber dimensions and thus fail to chamber fully.

### **9     Misfires**

#### **Revolvers**

9.1 A weak main spring. This can be felt when cocking the gun. A shooter sometimes deliberately slackens off the tension.

### Semi Auto Guns

9.2 A weak hammer spring.

9.3 A proud primer. This may also occur in the revolver but is not common owing to the revolver's stronger hammer action and the fact that a proud primer would usually cause the cylinder to jam.

9.4 Certain primers may cause misfires as they are either too hard or too soft for use in a particular gun.

10 Machine-Gunning In Semi-Auto's. The following are causes of the gun firing full automatic:

10.1 A defective sear.

10.2 Proud primers.

11 A loose primer may also cause a premature shot as the action slams closed, although this will be a single shot and not machine-gunning.

12 Broken Parts. This subject is far too wide to cover in these notes and is in any event not a subject for the RO, other than to be able to identify a gun that is out of action owing to a broken part. The most common are:

Firing pin  
Blown barrel  
Extractor  
Sights  
Sear  
Slide stop

### **WHEN TO DECLARE A GUN UNSAFE**

13 Trigger Shoe. A gun fitted with a trigger shoe wider than the trigger-guard (or a trigger wider than the trigger-guard). This is mandatory in terms of the IPSC Rules.

14 Broken Parts. A gun with any broken part and in particular semi auto guns with defective sear which fires double or a string, or

14.1 hammer follow, and

14.2 malfunctioning safety catch.

15 Revolvers. A revolver with play in the fore and aft movement of the cylinder, or with excessive rotational play in the cylinder.

Note. It is peculiar to revolvers occasionally to spit lead to the side, even with a gun in good working order.

16 Borderline Cases. Certain guns may be regarded as borderline cases and should be considered with caution. While these guns are ostensibly safe, the RO should in any event bear in mind that his first responsibility is to safety!

16.1 A gun which was malfunctioning and repaired in haste on the range premises (presumably under the supervision of an RO) without proper facilities. The RO should in any event satisfy himself that the gun is safe.

16.2 Guns of poor quality, particularly revolvers that may have badly aligned chambers.

## **RELOADING**

17 Introduction. Candidate ROs should be familiar with the common principles of reloading, in particular common mistakes in reloading. RO's should also be familiar with the calibres normally encountered on the range.

18 Advice. An RO who is not perfectly familiar with the load for a particular calibre and bullet weight should under no circumstances advise a competitor on reloading the cartridge but refer them to an experienced reloader or to the reloading tables.

19 Chronograph. Although the RO might not be expert in identifying a heavy load by sound and by pressure signs on a fired case, he should know the formula to compute F factor ratings and the use and operation of a chronograph. Every RO should make a point of running the chrono at a major match for the wealth of experience gained from it.

20 New Reloaders. When a club member starts reloading, the RO should by way of a friendly, informal chat, satisfy himself that the new reloader does not constitute a potential danger. A wary eye should also be kept on reloaders known to have a tendency to use hot loads.

21 On the Line. On the line the RO should be alert to:

21.1 Overloads.

21.2 Uncharged rounds.

While the experienced competitor will probably immediately detect this, the inexperienced shooter will not and the RO should be alert to this potential problem and stop a shooter immediately he notices a problem. In a detail shoot, detection by sound may be impossible. Watch for the shooter who lowers his gun with a puzzled expression.

21.3 Split cases.

Most shooters reserve these for the jungle lanes, etc. A split at the mouth of the case of a millimetre or two but not more than half the distance the bullet is seated in the case may be passed. This will depend on the calibre and pressure the cartridge is loaded to.

## **HOLSTERS/BAGS/CASES AND EQUIPMENT**

22 Match Transport and Carry. Most shooters transport their guns in a bag or case. In any match the gun is readied in a safe area close to the stage to be fired. Pistols are then usually carried in the holster to the end of the match. Rifles and shotguns are cased or bagged

immediately after finishing the stage, preventing shooters tampering or playing with them between stages.

23 Safety. Holsters must be practical and safe. The holster should hold the pistol firmly in position at all times. The RO is entitled to check a holster at any time during a match. Bags or cases must similarly hold the gun safely and securely.

24 Equipment Check. Holsters, trigger pull and equipment for standard, modified and production divisions must be checked before a match starts. Identify a specific person for this, preferably an RO who knows what to look for. See the Appendices to the Rules for the detail.

25 Holster and Equipment Position. Range officers must particularly note the position of holsters and allied equipment that they comply with the rules. Do not hesitate to request a shooter to rectify any such equipment before they attempt the stage. Do this consistently from the Level I Match up and the equipment will always be correct right up to Level V Matches.

26 Rules. For a detailed description of the holster/bags/cases and similar equipment rules, refer to IPSC Rules Chapter 5.



## CHAPTER 10: BUILDING A SHOOTING RANGE

1 Range Requirements. What constitutes a safe range is another subject that is not capable of exact definition as there are an infinite number of variable factors that have to be taken into account. Broadly speaking, however, the following apply:

- 1.1 Stray shots must not be capable of doing damage.
- 1.2 Directed shots must be contained.
- 1.3 The range must be capable of spectator control.
- 1.4 The range, as a danger area, must be clearly identifiable.

Each one of these is discussed below and must be read in conjunction and not in isolation.

2 Assessing Safety. The RO should be capable of assessing the safety of a range and should be able to advise a club on measures and precautions to be taken in order to ensure the safety of the range and its environs. The freestyle approach of practical shooting necessitates vetting every stage and course of fire for range safety every time.

3 Inspections. A CRO might, from time to time, be asked by SAIRO & I to inspect new ranges and to advise SAIRO & I when a safety certificate may be issued.

4 Government Regulations. ROs must also be conversant with the government regulation for shooting ranges as this has to do with safety. At the time of writing it is not applicable to sport shooting, but might possibly be made applicable. (Gazette 26375 of 28 May 2004. Notice no 643).

### STRAY SHOTS MUST NOT BE CAPABLE OF DOING DAMAGE

#### 5 General Considerations

5.1 It must be accepted that even on a well controlled range a stray shot may happen from time to time - accidental discharge. Out in the bundu this probably does not matter, while it certainly does in an area frequented by people (e.g. a highway or built-up area).

5.2 As a rough but conservative rule of thumb it may be accepted that a range is safely situated if there is no such "danger point" closer than 4 000m behind the back stop, that is, in the direction of fire although the gazette only requires 2 500m.

5.3 If the backstop is high enough that a stray bullet can expend its energy in a relatively sharp "critical" angle, the safe area behind the backstop may be proportionately reduced. Provided that strict control and range discipline is maintained, the safe area in directions other than the firing directions may be less than the distance stipulated above. In practice it will probably be found that in most instances objections to the noise factor will in any event ensure that the range is located a safe distance away from any built-up area.

6 The Site. Selecting a correct site is important as it will to a large extent determine how popular the venue will be. The following can serve as guidelines in selecting the site.

6.1 The types of weapons to be fired on the range. A range for three gun will require a different safety area to that of pistol and shotgun only.

6.2 The number of bays planned for the range. This will depend on the size of the competitions to be hosted that in turn determines the number of competitors to be accommodated at any one time.

6.3 The lie of the land. Ideally the direction of shooting should be to the south in the southern hemisphere for the best use of available sunlight.

6.4 The bays should slope down to the mouth of the bay for good drainage.

6.5 The soil should not be too rocky. This constitutes a safety risk from bullets breaking up on the rock in the berms and backstop and spraying metal and rock. Covering all the rocks with soil is expensive.

6.6 Stay away from built up areas owing to noise pollution and encroaching urbanisation. You might have to relocate in a few years' time.

6.7 Access to the range should be easy to all types of vehicles, and preferably from the shooting side of the range, thus the rear of the firing line.

6.8 Availability of infrastructure such as power, sewage and water.

## 7 Potential Danger Areas

7.1 In the vicinity of many ranges there may be back roads, tracks and paths which are not in normal use but where the odd "wanderer" may be encountered.

7.2 This brings us into the realms of "legal considerations" where the "reasonable man" in the position of the RO should have foreseen the possibility of a dangerous situation arising.

7.3 Application of principle "D" (the danger area being clearly identifiable) should cater for this eventuality but the RO should, nevertheless, at all times remain aware of the problem.

## **DIRECTED SHOTS MUST BE CONTAINED**

8 Control over Shooting Area. Irrespective of any other considerations, such as the location of the range, etc., all directed shots (and allowing for a reasonable margin of error) should be safely contained in an area that the RO can control directly.

9 The reason for this is that the RO cannot later simply say that "the person should not have been there: we had warning flags up, etc." The human animal often acts stupidly and while the odd bundu-basher who ignores warning flags, etc. and is hit by a stray shot is probably a chance so remote that the reasonable man would ignore it (not to do so would simply mean that we could not do our chosen sport) it is a different matter where you are directing deliberate fire in a given direction. This is the kind of situation in which the reasonable man would foresee danger and take appropriate steps to counter it. The solution is an effective backstop.

10 Where shots are fired in more than one direction (and practical shooting allows shooting in at least 2 directions 90 degrees apart) this applies to all directions in which controlled shooting is done.

11 Backstop. The backstop may be a natural barrier such as a hill, sand dune, mine dump, etc., or failing this, a construction specifically erected for this purpose. The backstop should be:

11.1 High enough to stop any bullets in a direct line from the muzzle to the point of aim with a reasonable margin of safety. The margin of safety here means simply that any bullet passing over the backstop cannot hit any person behind it.

Example. Shooting is done from 50m. Shooters are prone and the target is man height just ahead of the backstop. A 3 - 5m high backstop should be sufficient.

11.2 Wide enough to stop any bullet in the direction of fire, with a reasonable margin of safety, which in this case is taken as a 12-degree safety angle to either side of the line of fire.

Example. Shooting is again done at 50m. The backstop should therefore allow for 8m on either side of the line of fire.

11.3 Soft enough to absorb any bullet hitting it without damage to the backstop itself by continuous use. Earth is the natural choice.

Example. Although a wall constructed of ash blocks would absorb a bullet, it would eventually defeat its own purpose by the continuous damage done to it. On the other hand, if you have an earth bank formed by an excavation 2m deep and require an additional 1m to provide the "margin for error", there would be no objection to using such a wall erected above the excavation.

11.4 Prevent any possibility of a ricochet. This means that an earthen backstop should not contain stone or rock on or near its face.

11.5 Oriented away from inhabited areas.

12 Natural Barrier. If a natural barrier is used, it must also be close enough to ensure that:

12.1 the RO can at all times see what is between the firing point or firing line and the backstop, and

12.2 it forms a safe area small enough that he can control it, (e.g. anybody in that area would hear him if he shouted).

The use of a mountain 500m away (although it would effectively stop all shots fired in that direction) may, therefore, not qualify as a backstop within the meaning of this discussion, depending on the circumstances.

## **THE RANGE MUST BE CAPABLE OF SPECTATOR CONTROL**

13 Spectator Space. Sufficient space must be available at each shooting bay to accommodate about 15 competitors and spectators safely about 10 metres from the firing line.

14 Spectators. Spectators inherently constitute a danger as they are:

14.1 the only non-competitors in the immediate vicinity of the range,

14.2 not under the direct control of the RO when they are not on the range proper, and

14.3 often occupied with something which draws their attention away from the range and what is happening there, e.g. children playing, (bored) people moving around, etc.

15 Casual Shooters. Such people may easily wander into a danger area unless they are confined to a safe area with a safety officer keeping watch. Keep a register signed by all casual shooters and their guests with a disclaimer displayed prominently.

16 Mark Safe Area. This safe area should be demarcated in some clear manner. The entire complex should be fenced in to prevent unauthorised entry by man or animals. Fix appropriate signs to the fence at least every 50m.

## **THE RANGE AS A DANGER AREA MUST BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE**

17 Notices. The usual manner in which this is done is by

17.1 erecting a permanent notice board with an appropriate warning at all entrances to the range, and

17.2 by displaying warning flags while shooting is in progress.

18 Flags. With regard to warning flags, the following are applicable:

18.1 The flags should be **clearly identifiable as such**. This means that:

18.1.1 They should be of a brilliant red.

18.1.2 Large enough to be visible from a distance; a size of 1.2m x 1.8m is recommended..

18.1.3 Displayed on a flagpole high enough for the flag to be visible above any visual obstruction.

18.2 The flags should be visible from all approaches to the range.

18.2.1 The recommended minimum number and positioning of warning flags is:

\*1 at the entrance of the range

\*1 on either side of the backstop

\*1 some distance beyond the backstop to indicate the direction of fire.

18.2.2 A warning flag should be displayed:

\*where it is visible from a direction in which a person may approach the range on foot or otherwise;

\*where it is recognisable from a distance far enough still to be beyond the danger zone, and

\*which enables an intruder to retreat in the same direction from which he came, to cover every possible approach to the range.

19 Roads. Every road, whether used or not, which passes through the danger area, should have a warning flag displayed at a safe distance from the range.

## **SHOOTING BAYS**

20 Size. The size of the bays will depend on the available space but should be at least 10m wide and 12m in length.

21 Long Courses. At least one bay should be about 30m wide by 50m long to accommodate long courses easily and for training for groups. It will allow the RO a clear view of the squad.

22 Backstop. The backstop should be high enough so that a shot from a kneeling person firing from 10m at a target 1.7m high will impact at no higher than 600mm from the top of the backstop. Similar for a shot from a prone person at 25m on the same target.

23 Material. The material for the berms and backstop should not contain rock and other similar solid objects such as building rubble. The core of the berm can be of any material as long as the outer 500mm is rock free soil or sand. It must also be well compacted to prevent settling.

24 Berms. The berms should not be lower than 2m. You should never be able to see the shooters in the bay next door over the top of the berm.

## **MATERIALS**

25 Material. The normal materials for constructing the backstop and berms are earth, soil, sand, construction rubble, etc. Alternatives are walls built of tyres or blocks or precast slabs.

26 Earth Walls. Earth walls should be well compacted to minimise settling. They must be maintained regularly as erosion and shooting will degrade the protective outer layer quickly. A 2m high earth wall will be about 6m wide at the base.

27 Core. A rock, rubble or tyre core is inexpensive but requires an outer covering of at least 500mm soil or sand. Even a well compacted wall like this will lose about 500mm in height in the first year owing to settling.

28 Concrete and Block Walls. Precast concrete or block walls save considerable space but are not bullet proof. They should not be used to contain shots and are also prone to ricochets. They are easily damaged and require constant maintenance. However, they are easy to build and relatively cheap. This type of range requires constant supervision as many a shooter is tempted to test his ammunition's penetration capability.

29 Tyres. When using tyres as construction material, remember to use at least two rows of staggered tyres to prevent gaps through which bullets can pass. They should ideally be staked to the ground and filled with soil or sand to provide a solid base, contain any shots and prevent movement. A high velocity bullet will probably penetrate at least two rows of car tyres, so preferably use the heavy gauge truck or solid tyres. They also stack easier and don't fall over easily. Tyres are cheap to obtain but labour intensive to build. Do not use damaged tyres or those of which the sides have given in.

With acknowledgement to Hein Kruger

## CHAPTER 11: LEGISLATION

1 Introduction. This chapter is only a short overview and not intended to make a lawyer of the RO. Competent legal advice should be sought for specific problems. We are all law-abiding citizens and it is our duty to uphold the laws of the land, including firearms legislation. The Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000 and Regulations can be downloaded from the government website [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za) or the police website [www.saps.gov.za](http://www.saps.gov.za), or purchased from the Government Printing Works.

2 Legislation. The FCA is many faceted and requires that any firearm owner read it and the Regulations at least once to get the gist of his responsibility to adhere to the law. Pay special attention to the penalties for the various offences. In the law are many aspects where you are presumed guilty until you prove yourself innocent. This alone makes it essential to read it. The RO should at least be familiar with selected sections to be able to assist novices to act within the law. Various publications regarding the gun owner and the law should shortly (in 2005) be available from bookstores. All clubs should be urged to obtain copies of these books for reference by the members.

3 In this regard membership of SAGA is recommended not only within the shooting sport fraternity but also for all owners of firearms.

### THE POSSESSION, SAFEGUARDING AND HANDLING OF FIREARMS

4 Introduction. The FCA regulates the possession of firearms. Ignore it at your peril. It defines our relevance as sports shooters in Section 1 as follows:

*(x) 'dedicated sports person' means a person who actively participates in sports-shooting and who is a member of an accredited sports-shooting organisation;*

*(xxii) 'occasional sports person' means any person who, from time to time, participates in sports-shooting but who is not a member of an accredited sports-shooting organisation;*

5 What is a Firearm? The definition of a firearm and those devices not regarded as firearms are defined in Section 1 of the Act:

*(xii) 'firearm' means any-*

*(a) device manufactured or designed to propel a bullet or projectile through a barrel or cylinder by means of burning propellant, at a muzzle energy exceeding 8 joules (6 ft-lbs);*

*(b) device manufactured or designed to discharge rim-fire, centre-fire or pin-fire ammunition;*

*©) device which is not at the time capable of discharging any bullet or projectile, but which can be readily altered to be a firearm within the meaning of paragraph (a) or (b);*

*(d) device manufactured to discharge a bullet or any other projectile of .22 calibre or higher at a muzzle energy of more than 8 joules (6 ft-lbs), by means of compressed gas and not by means of burning propellant; or*

*(e) barrel, frame or receiver of a device referred to in paragraphs (a), (b), ©) or (d),*

#### **Devices not firearms for purposes of this Act**

**5. (1) For purposes of this Act, the following devices are not regarded as firearms:**

*(a) Any explosive powered tool manufactured specifically for use in industrial application, including line-throwing guns and impex-type building pistols;*

*(b) any explosive powered tool manufactured to split rock or concrete by means of discharging an explosive cartridge;*

*©) any industrial tool manufactured for use in the mining and steel industry to remove refractory material;*

*(d) any captive bolt gun manufactured for use in an abattoir in the humane killing of animals;*

*(e) an antique firearm; (note: manufactured before 1 Jan 1900 or a replica)*

- (f) an airgun;
- (g) a tranquilliser firearm;
- (h) a paintball gun;
- (i) a flare gun;
- (j) a deactivated firearm; and ....

**6 Licensing, Self Defence and Sports Shooting.** To obtain a license to possess a firearm, you must first meet the requirements set in the FCA. Thereafter you must pass a proficiency test to obtain a competency certificate to be able to get a licence. There are various requirements to be met before deciding to embark on the adventure of applying. Most of them are listed in the various sections below. Where the detail is not really relevant to this manual, it has been omitted and indicated with a series of dots ....

**Application for competency certificate**

9. (1) *An application for a competency certificate to possess a firearm, to trade in firearms, to manufacture firearms or to carry on business as a gunsmith must be delivered to the Designated Firearms Officer responsible for the area in which the applicant ordinarily resides or in which the applicant's business is or will be situated, as the case may be.*

(2) *Where a person has not previously obtained a competency certificate, a competency certificate may only be issued to such person if he or she-*

(a) *is 21 years or older on the day the application is received by the Designated Firearms Officer;*

(b) *is a South African citizen or a holder of a permanent South African residence permit;*

(c) *is a fit and proper person to possess a firearm, to trade in firearms, to manufacture firearms or to conduct business as a gunsmith, as the case may be;*

(d) *is of stable mental condition and is not inclined to violence;*

(e) *is not dependent on any substance which has an intoxicating or narcotic effect;*

(f) *has not been convicted of any offence under or in terms of this Act or the previous Act and sentenced to a period of imprisonment without the option of a fine;*

(g) *has not been convicted, whether in or outside South Africa, of an offence involving the unlawful use or handling of a firearm by him or her or another participant to the offence, whether committed in or outside South Africa;*

(h) *has not been convicted, whether in or outside South Africa, of an offence involving-*

(i) *violence or sexual abuse, whether committed in or outside South Africa, and sentenced to a period of imprisonment without the option of a fine; or*

(ii) *physical or sexual abuse which occurred within a domestic relationship as defined in section 1 of the Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act 116 of 1998), whether committed in or outside South Africa;*

(i) *has not been convicted of fraud in relation to, or supplying false information for the purposes of, obtaining a competency certificate, licence, permit or authorisation in terms of this Act or the previous Act;*

(j) *has not been convicted, whether in or outside South Africa, of an offence involving the abuse of alcohol or drugs, whether committed in or outside South Africa, and sentenced to a period of imprisonment without the option of a fine;*

(k) *has not been convicted, whether in or outside South Africa, of an offence involving dealing in drugs, whether committed in or outside South Africa, and sentenced to a period of imprisonment without the option of a fine;*

(l) *has not been convicted of an offence in terms of the Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act 116 of 1998), and sentenced to a period of imprisonment without the option of a fine;*

(m) *has not been convicted of an offence involving the negligent handling of a firearm;*

(n) *has not been convicted of an offence in terms of the Explosives Act, 1956 (Act 26 of 1956), and sentenced to a period of imprisonment without the option of a fine;*

(o) *has not been convicted, whether inside or outside South Africa, of an offence involving sabotage, terrorism, public violence, arson, intimidation, rape, kidnapping or child stealing, whether committed in or outside South Africa;*

(p) *has not become or been declared unfit to possess a firearm in terms of this Act or the previous Act;*

(q) *has successfully completed the prescribed test on knowledge of this Act;*

(r) *has successfully completed the prescribed training and practical tests regarding the safe and efficient handling of a firearm; and*

(s) has, where applicable, successfully completed the prescribed training and practical tests for firearms dealers, manufacturers, gunsmiths, security officers or other persons who use firearms in the course of their business.

(3) Any offence referred to in subsection (2) includes any conspiracy, incitement or attempt to commit such offence, ....

#### **Licence to possess firearm for self-defence**

13. (1) A firearm in respect of which a licence may be issued in terms of this section is any-

(a) shotgun which is not fully or semi-automatic; or

(b) handgun which is not fully automatic.

(2) The Registrar may issue a licence under this section to any natural person who-

(a) needs a firearm for self-defence; and

(b) cannot reasonably satisfy that need by means other than the possession of a firearm.

(3) No person may hold more than one licence issued in terms of this section. ....

#### **Licence to possess firearm for occasional hunting and sports-shooting**

15. (1) A firearm in respect of which a licence may be issued in terms of this section is any-

(a) handgun which is not fully automatic;

(b) rifle or shotgun which is not fully or semi-automatic; or

©) barrel, frame or receiver of a handgun, rifle or shotgun contemplated in paragraph (a) or (b), and which is not a restricted firearm.

(2) The Registrar may issue a licence in terms of this section to any natural person who is an occasional hunter or occasional sports person.

(3) (a) Subject to paragraphs (b), ©) and (d), no person may hold more than four licences issued in terms of this section.

(b) If a person holds a licence issued in terms of section 13, he or she may only hold three licences issued in terms of this section.

©) A person may not hold more than one licence in respect of a handgun contemplated in subsection (1) (a).

(d) If a person contemplated in paragraph (a) holds any additional licences contemplated in section 12 in respect of a firearm contemplated in this section and section 13, the number of licences which that person may hold must be reduced by the number of such additional licences held. ....

#### **Licence to possess firearm for dedicated hunting and dedicated sports-shooting**

16. (1) A firearm in respect of which a licence may be issued in terms of this section is any-

(a) handgun which is not fully

(b) rifle or shotgun which is not fully automatic;

©) any semi-automatic shotgun manufactured to fire no more than five shots in succession without having to be reloaded; or

(d) barrel, frame or receiver of a handgun, rifle or shotgun contemplated in paragraph (a), (b) or ©).

(2) The Registrar may issue a licence in terms of this section to any natural person who is a dedicated hunter or dedicated sports person if the application is accompanied by a sworn statement or solemn declaration from the chairperson of an accredited hunting association or sports-shooting organisation, or someone delegated in writing by him or her, stating that the applicant is a registered member of that association. ....

(4) Every accredited hunting association and sports-shooting organisation must-

(a) keep a register which contains such information as may be prescribed; and

(b) submit an annual report to the Registrar which contains such information as may be prescribed.

### **SCHEDULE 1 TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Existing licence to possess an arm**

1. (1) Subject to subitem (2) and item 11, any licence which was issued in terms of the previous Act and which was valid immediately before the date of the commencement of this Act, remains valid for a period of five years from the date on which this Act comes into operation, unless such licence is terminated, cancelled or surrendered in terms of this Act.



(2) (a) *The holder of a licence to possess an arm contemplated in subitem (1) must, before the end of the period contemplated in that subitem, in a lawful manner dispose of any firearms in his or her possession in excess of the number that he or she may lawfully possess in terms of this Act. ....*

7 Ammunition. The provisions for ammunition are straightforward and easy to apply.

**Prohibition of possession of ammunition**

90. *No person may possess any ammunition unless he or she-*

(a) *holds a licence in respect of a firearm capable of discharging that ammunition;*

(b) *holds a permit to possess ammunition;*

(c) *holds a dealer's licence, manufacturer's licence, gunsmith's licence, import, export or in-transit permit or transporter's permit issued in terms of this Act; or*

(d) *is otherwise authorised to do so.*

**Restrictions on possession of ammunition**

91. (1) *The holder of a licence to possess a firearm referred to in Chapter 6 may not possess more than 200 cartridges for each firearm in respect of which he or she holds a licence.*

(2) *The limitation in subsection (1) does not apply to-*

(a) *a dedicated hunter or dedicated sports person who holds a licence issued in terms of this Act or any other holder of a licence issued in terms of this Act authorised by the Registrar to possess more than 200 cartridges for a firearm in respect of which he or she holds a licence on good cause shown; or ...*

**Loading or reloading of ammunition**

93. (1) *Section 45 (1) (note: manufacturing ammunition) does not apply to the loading of ammunition by the holder of a licence to possess a firearm for use in his or her licensed firearm.*

(2) (a) *A holder of a licence contemplated in subsection (1) may not have more than 2 400 primers in his or her possession for each firearm in respect of which he or she holds a licence.*

(b) *The limitation in paragraph (a) does not apply to a dedicated hunter or dedicated sports person who holds a licence issued in terms of this Act or any other holder of a licence issued in terms of this Act authorised by the Registrar to possess more than 2 400 primers for a firearm in respect of which he or she holds a licence on good cause shown. ....*

8 Lending a Firearm. This section is quite clear. If an underage person participates in practical shooting, the license holder of that firearm is required to be in his immediate vicinity.

**Holder of licence may allow another person to use firearm**

22. *Despite anything to the contrary in this Act but subject to section 120 (5), any person who is at least 21 years of age and the holder of a licence to possess a firearm issued in terms of this Act may allow any other person to use that firearm while under his or her immediate supervision where it is safe to use the firearm and for a lawful purpose.*

9 Carrying a Firearm. Nothing much has changed in this section.

**Carrying of firearm in public place**

84. (1) *No person may carry a firearm in a public place unless the firearm is carried-*

(a) *in the case of a handgun-*

(i) *in a holster or similar holder designed, manufactured or adapted for the carrying of a handgun and attached to his or her person; or*

(ii) *in a rucksack or similar holder; or*

b) *in the case of any other firearm, in a holder designed, manufactured or adapted for the carrying of the firearm.*

(2) *A firearm contemplated in subsection (1) must be completely covered and the person carrying the firearm must be able to exercise effective control over such firearm.*

10 Offences and Penalties. You will see that this lengthy section covers just about anything that the police can think of that can be related to a firearm offence. It also covers all the normal

questions you might ask about the use of firearms. Therefore, be very careful as an RO before becoming involved in anything illegal to do with firearms as the penalties are quite harsh. Your licenses are also at stake. Advise the novices and experienced shooters similarly.

### **Offences**

120. (1) A person is guilty of an offence if he or she contravenes or fails to comply with any-

(a) provision of this Act;

(b) condition of a licence, permit or authorisation issued or granted by or under this Act; or

©) provision, direction or requirement of a notice issued under this Act.

(2) (a) Any person who is aware of the existence of a firearm or ammunition that is not in the lawful possession of any person and fails to report the location of the firearm or ammunition to a police official without delay, is guilty of an offence.

(b) A police official to whom a person has made a report contemplated in paragraph (a), must immediately provide the person with written proof that the report has been made or, in the case of a telephonic or similar report, with the official reference number of the report.

(3) It is an offence to-

(a) cause bodily injury to any person or cause damage to property of any person by negligently using a firearm, an antique firearm or an airgun;

(b) discharge or otherwise handle a firearm, an antique firearm or an airgun in a manner likely to injure or endanger the safety or property of any person or with reckless disregard for the safety or property of any person; or

©) have control of a loaded firearm, an antique firearm or an airgun in circumstances where it creates a risk to the safety or property of any person and not to take reasonable precautions to avoid the danger.

(4) It is an offence to handle a firearm, an antique firearm or an airgun while under the influence of a substance which has an intoxicating or a narcotic effect.

(5) A person is guilty of an offence if he or she gives control of a firearm, an antique firearm or an airgun to a person whom he or she knows, or ought reasonably to have known-

(a) to be mentally ill; or

(b) to be under the influence of a substance which has an intoxicating or a narcotic effect.

(6) It is an offence to point-

(a) any firearm, an antique firearm or an airgun, whether or not it is loaded or capable of being discharged, at any other person, without good reason to do so; or

(b) anything which is likely to lead a person to believe that it is a firearm, an antique firearm or an airgun at any other person, without good reason to do so.

(7) It is an offence to discharge a firearm, an antique firearm or an airgun in a built up area or any public place, without good reason to do so.

(8) A person is guilty of an offence if he or she-

(a) fails to lock away his or her firearm or a firearm in his or her possession in a prescribed safe, strong-room or device for the safe-keeping when such firearm is not carried on his or her person or is not under his or her direct control; or

(b) loses a firearm, or is otherwise dispossessed of a firearm owing to that person's failure to-

(i) lock the firearm away in a prescribed safe, strong-room or device for the safekeeping of a firearm;

(ii) take reasonable steps to prevent the loss or theft of the firearm while the firearm was on his or her person or under his or her direct control; or

(iii) keep the keys to such safe, strong-room or device in safe custody.

(9) It is an offence to-

(a) add any word, figure or letter to a competency certificate, licence, permit or authorisation as issued, without the Registrar's permission;

(b) alter or erase any words, figures or letters from any competency certificate, licence, permit or authorisation, without the Registrar's permission;

©) use or possess any competency certificate, licence, permit or authorisation-

(i) to which any words, figures or letters have been unlawfully added;

(ii) from which any words, figures or letters have been unlawfully erased; or

(iii) on which any words, figures or letters have been unlawfully altered;

(d) part with a competency certificate, licence, permit or authorisation in order that it may be used by any person other than the person to whom it was issued or granted;

(e) use a competency certificate, licence, permit or authorisation issued in the name of another person to procure possession of a firearm or ammunition;

(f) supply particulars, information or answers in an application for a competency certificate, licence, permit or authorisation in terms of this Act, knowing them to be false, incorrect or misleading or not believing them to be correct;

(g) make a false entry in a register which is required to be kept in terms of this Act; or

(h) furnish false information in any return required to be submitted in terms of this Act.

(10) It is an offence to-

(a) sell, supply or in any other manner give possession of a firearm or ammunition to a person who is not allowed in terms of this Act to possess that firearm or ammunition; or

(b) be in possession of any firearm, imitation firearm or ammunition, with intent to commit an offence or to use the firearm or an imitation firearm to resist arrest or prevent the arrest of another person.

(11) Any holder of a licence, permit or authorisation to possess a firearm, and any other person who was in possession of or who had control of a firearm when it was lost, stolen or destroyed and who fails to report the loss, theft or destruction to the police station nearest to the place where it occurred, within 24 hours after having become aware of the loss, theft or destruction of the firearm, is guilty of an offence. ....

11 What must I do if I lose a firearm? Report it to the police as outlined in Sec 120 of the FCA.

## 12 Obligations

### **Notification of change of address**

25. (1) The holder of a licence, permit or authorisation issued in terms of this Chapter must in writing notify the Registrar of any change in his or her physical or postal address within 30 days of such change occurring.

(2) The Registrar must within 30 days after receiving a notice referred to in subsection (1) acknowledge receipt of that notice in writing.

### 26 Notification of change of circumstances

(1) The holder of a licence, permit or authorisation issued in terms of this Chapter must notify the Registrar in writing within 30 days if there is any change with regard to any information which was submitted in respect of the application for the issue of that licence, permit or authorisation.

(2) The Registrar must within 30 days after receiving a notice referred to in subsection (1) acknowledge receipt of that notice in writing.

### **Period of validity of licence or permit**

27 A licence or permit mentioned in Column 2 of the Table below remains valid for the period mentioned in Column 3 of that Table.

TABLE - PERIOD OF VALIDITY OF LICENCE OR PERMIT

Section number	Type of licence or permit	Period of validity
13	Licence to possess firearm for self-defence	Five years
15	Licence to possess firearm for occasional hunting and sports-shooting	Ten years
16	Licence to possess firearm for dedicated hunting and dedicated sports-shooting	Ten years

13 Can I loose the right to possess arms? Yes, one can loose the right to possess firearms very easily for many reasons to do with offences related to firearms and violence, drugs, etc as listed above. These are all contained in the FCA and are too many to repeat here. Most of these carry a mandatory cancellation or suspension of licenses and possible confiscation of firearms. See paragraph 6 above.

## 14 Other provisions of the Act of interest

### **Prohibition of possession of firearm parts**

94. (1) For purposes of this section, 'firearm part' means a slide, bolt or breech-block of a firearm.

(2) No person may possess any firearm part unless he or she-

*(a) holds a licence in respect of a firearm capable of bearing that firearm part; ....*

*(4) (a) The Minister may, by notice in the Gazette, prohibit or restrict the acquisition, disposal, possession or use of firearm parts ....*

## THE USE OF A FIREARM FOR SELF DEFENCE

15 Introduction. There are fundamentally only two occasions in which the private citizen may use his firearm against another person namely when acting in self-defence and when effecting a citizen's arrest. Both are fraught with peril and an incorrect decision can result in one's conviction of serious crimes and the resulting punishment and even being held liable for large amounts of damages in a civil case.

16 Private (Self) Defence. It is one of the age old and inherent rights of man that he may act in self-defence to protect himself (and others) from attack by third parties. This right is recognised by our common law and over the centuries certain requirements and limits have evolved in our law. These are not in the form of set rules that may be applied in any situation where you may shoot but in the form of general principles.

It must be borne in mind that the use of a firearm is merely one manifestation of the use of force, in principle no different from the use of a club, knife or even a fist. In considering when the citizen may use force for self defence, regard must be had to the two sides of the coin namely the attack and the defence.

The two elements of self defence are the attack and the defence against the attack.

### 17 The Attack

17.1 The attack must be **unlawful** ie illegal or wrong. This means that you cannot act in self-defence against a policeman who is trying legally to arrest you.

17.2 The attack must have **commenced** or be **imminent** ie just about to start and not merely likely to materialise some time in the future.

17.3 The attack must be directed at some or other **legal interest** of the victim eg **life, physical integrity, freedom** and in certain circumstances **property**.

### 18 The Defence

18.1 Must be **directed against the attacker** (and not some other person).

18.2 Must be **necessary to avert the attack**.

18.3 Must be **reasonable under the circumstances** ie proportionate to the attack.

18.4 The defence against the attack must be **immediate**, not at some later date.

### 19 Using a Firearm in Self Defence

19.1 We have already noted that the use of a firearm is merely one manifestation of the use of the force. The rule relating to the reasonableness or proportionately of the defence to the attack will dictate that the legal interest being defended would have to be correspondingly high, such as life or serious physical injury. It is obviously completely disproportionate to gun a man down in "self defence" when the attack consists of a threat to slap you in the face.

19.2 The requirement that the force used must be necessary to avert the attack implies that if there is any other way of averting the attack such as fleeing then this should be utilised. This does not mean that you must flee - there are times when turning your back or attempting to flee can merely place you in more danger, it does however mean that if the attack can be safely averted by fleeing then this is the route that must be followed. Secondly, this requirement means that the **minimum** force required to avert the attack must be utilised. Any force over and above the minimum would be unnecessary to avert the attack and would mean that you are "**exceeding the bounds of self defence**". Once you are exceeding the bounds you are no longer acting lawfully but unlawfully and if you unlawfully and intentionally kill another you have committed murder, if you unlawfully and intentionally injure another you have committed the crime of assault; if you unlawfully and negligently kill another you have committed the crime of culpable homicide.

## **CITIZENS' ARREST AND THE USE OF FORCE**

20 Introduction. As has been shown above the use of force in self-defence is fraught with difficult decisions and dire consequences for wrong decisions. If that is so, then the use of force during citizen's arrest is a possible nightmare. As can be understood from the difference in circumstances the requirements are very much more strict and a heavier onus is placed on the person claiming to act on this basis. The provisions regulating this aspect of the law are various provisions of the **Criminal Procedure Act, Act 51 of 1977**, which are reproduced and considered below.

21 When May the Private Citizen Effect an Arrest? This regulated by Section 42 of the Act that stipulates as follows:

### **Arrest by private person without warrant-**

42. (1) Any private person may without warrant arrest any person:

a. Who commits or attempts to commit in his presence or whom he reasonably suspect of having committed an offence referred to in Schedule 1;

b. Whom he reasonably believes to have committed any offence and to be escaping from and to be freshly pursued by a person whom such private person reasonably believes to have authority to arrest that person for that offence;

c. Whom he is by any law authorised to arrest without warrant in respect of any offence specified in that law;

d. Whom it sees engaged in any affray.

(2) Any private person who may without warrant arrest any person under subsection (1) (a) may forthwith pursue that person, and any other private person to whom the purpose of the pursuit has been made known may join and assist therein.

(3) The owner, lawful occupier or person in charge of land on or in respect of which any person is found committing any offence, and any other person authorised thereto by such owner, occupier or person in charge, may be without warrant arrest the person so found.

The above section is clear in intent but must be applied circumspectly. When in doubt don't, report to the closest policeman or police station immediately. That is why we all carry cell phones.

22 How Does One Effect an Arrest? Sections 39 reproduced below regulates this:

### **Manner and effect of arrest**

39. (1) An arrest shall be effected with or without a warrant and, unless the person to be arrested submits to custody, by actually touching his body or, if the circumstances so require, by forcibly confining his body.

(2) *The person effecting the arrest shall, at the time of effecting the arrest or immediately after effecting the arrest, inform the arrested person of the cause of the arrest or, in the case of an arrest effected by virtue of a warrant, upon demand of the person arrested hand him a copy of the warrant.*

23 When may one use force (and how much) in effecting an arrest? This is governed by Section 49 that reads:

***Use of force in effecting arrest***

49. (1) *If any person authorised under this Act to arrest or assist in arresting another, attempts to arrest such a person and such person*

*a. resists the attempt and cannot be arrested without the use of force; or*

*b. flees when it is clear that an attempt to arrest him is being made, or resists such attempt and flees, the person so authorised may, in order to effect the arrest use such force as may in the circumstances be reasonably necessary to overcome the resistance or to prevent the person concerned from fleeing.*

*c. where the person concerned is to be arrested for an offence referred to in Schedule 1 or is to be arrested on the ground that he is reasonably suspected of having committed such an Offence, and the person authorised under the Act to arrest or assist in arresting him cannot arrest him or prevent him from fleeing by other means than killing him, the killing shall be deemed to be justifiable homicide.*

The moral behind these sections is that if you are not absolutely certain of what you are doing, or able or willing to use force in arresting someone, do not attempt it at all. After the arrest you must take that person to the police, explain to them in the cold light of the charge office why you did this and also explain the injury to the arrestee in the face of his protestations of innocence.

24 It is emphasised that you should be absolutely certain that you are within the law when you attempt a citizen's arrest. You may also only use the minimum amount of force necessary to overcome any resistance or prevent the flight. Only when the arrest cannot be effected by any other means than killing the person to be arrested may he be killed and then only if the offence is one of those listed in Schedule 1. The powers granted the citizen are very sweeping, and this places a tremendous moral responsibility on the individual to act responsibly and with circumspection. Always remember that taking a life except when yours or your loved one's are in danger carries tremendous responsibility. My advice is if in doubt don't. However, if your life or those of you loved ones are at stake, don't hesitate.

Example 1. Theft is a Schedule 1 offence and thus it is legal to arrest a person who has shoplifted a R1,20 chocolate and even within the letter of the law to use lethal force if that was the only way to overcome his resistance or prevent his flight. In such a case you are sentencing to death someone who would in most cases get a fine of between R100 - R300 in court. Could you live with that on your conscience?

Example 2. It is late at night and you hear screams outside in the street, grab your gun and investigate. You see a man bending over a bleeding women lying on the ground with her clothes torn and double tap the man without further ado. Investigation proves the man had come to the woman's aid and chased her attacker away. You now have to explain your actions to the magistrate in the cold light of court as well as to the man's dependents.

## **AFTER THE ECHOES DIE DOWN, AFTER THE SHOOTING INCIDENT**

25 What Happens After a Shooting Incident? Obviously there is an investigation by the police after every shooting incident that is brought to their attention. The nature and extent of the investigation will obviously depend on the type of incident and the consequences. The firearm involved in the incident will probably be confiscated or at the very least, be taken for forensic tests and as evidence.

26 Cases Where Death Results. In each case in which a person dies an unnatural death the Police are under statutory duty to investigate. If a crime is suspected a murder investigation will be opened. Even if no crime is suspected and no trial follows, the Inquests Act, Act 58 of 1959, stipulates that a police investigation shall take place and the statements shall be laid before a magistrate who must hold a judicial inquest to determine the cause of the death and whether the death is the result of crime by any person. In practise what happens is that the police almost invariably open a murder docket with the person who did the shooting as the prime suspect. The police will collect statements from all witnesses or potential witnesses, may seize the firearm used as an exhibit and subject it to certain tests and will almost certainly request the suspect to give a statement. Once the investigation is complete, the docket will be placed before the public prosecutor who will study the evidence and will then decide whether to institute criminal proceedings against the person involved. The charges may range from murder (intentional unlawful killing), culpable homicide (negligent killing), assault, pointing a firearm, negligent handling of a firearm etc in any combination.

27 If the prosecutor is satisfied that no crime has been committed, he forwards the statement to a magistrate for an inquest to be held. If the magistrate disagrees with the prosecutor whether a crime has been committed, the matter is referred to the Attorney General who will finally decide whether to prosecute.

28 One is entitled to the assistance of an attorney or advocate as an accused in a trial, or even if one is an "interested party" at an inquest. The services of such are not cheaply come by. Even if one is innocent of any wrong doing in a shooting incident it may cost you dearly to establish that innocence. Alternately the failure to establish that may lead to one's conviction at devastating personal consequence.

29 Where Death Does Not Result. The procedure is much the same although one does not face the prospect of the serious offences of murder or culpable homicide and there is no inquest held should be prosecutor decide not to prosecute. The possible criminal charges of assault, pointing a firearm, negligent handling of a firearm etc in any combination may still be laid against the suspect.

30 What should one do after a shooting incident? Obviously it is in your best to co-operate as fully as possible with the police in their investigation. Hand over the firearm used to the police if requested to do so. Comply with other reasonable requests. However, one should be aware of one's rights. You are under no obligation to make a statement to the police.

31 Statement. You should also be aware that if you do make a statement, written or not, it may be used against you in evidence. Obviously if one has acted lawfully it is to your advantage to make a statement presenting your version of the events to the police. This may influence the prosecutor to decline to prosecute and may enable the inquest magistrate to decide that no crime was committed. This obviates much needless emotional stress and financial outlays. On the other hand, if one says something ill advised or rash you may be tightening the noose around your own neck.

31.1 Any statement should be carefully considered and preferably made with the help and advice of a skilled attorney. The very last place and time to make a statement is at the scene of the incident immediately after the shooting. If, for example, you acted in self-defence you would have been in a very stressful situation, the adrenaline would be flowing and you may be in a state of shock at having to shoot someone and then see him die in front of you. You will most certainly not be in a fit state to make a considered and rational statement.

31.2 It is your right to say to the police: "I acted in self defence (or I tried to arrest him and he resisted or what ever the case may be) but I am too upset to make a statement now. I'll make one tomorrow (or after I have seen my attorney or what ever)". The policeman may not like you for it but in this case you must remember that his interests (finalising the investigation, getting you convicted, gaining his promotion or whatever) do not coincide with yours. Thereafter think about the matter once you are rested and calm and if you think it necessary consult an attorney and submit any statement decided upon to the police.

32 Conclusion. It is to be hoped that the need never arises for you to use a firearm against another person. If the situation does arise, however, we hope that these short notes will enable you to make the correct decision and act firmly and decisively yet within the law. You will notice that no examples or situations are discussed in these notes. This has been done deliberately. Half remembered situations can only lead to trouble. Know the law and the principles and you will not be likely to make a mistake with terrible consequences for yourself and some other unlucky person.