

## **Shortage of Range Officers at NGPSA leagues**

### **Introduction**

It is no secret that there exists a major problem to obtain adequate amounts of Range Officers (RO's) to officiate at leagues in NGPSA. In the recent past it was decided to increase the amount paid to RO's for their effort but not even that made any difference to the availability of willing RO's at leagues.

A secondary problem is the unwillingness of shooters to be trained as new RO's and then to do their bit for our shooting community.

Currently we have 32 fully qualified active RO's on the books in NGPSA and yet we struggle to get 16 who are willing to give up their time to officiate as static RO's on a league weekend.

The latest trend is that on average less than 5 are willing to be static RO's and approximately 15 - 20 per weekend are willing to do their bit as roving RO's. Although there is no rule against the use of roving RO's, it does have its limitations and problems.

The ideal situation is to revert back to the old system where only static RO's are used during leagues.

### **Discussion**

During the last SAIRO & I exec meeting (13 October 2005) this issue was discussed at length and numerous ideas were tabled on how to address the two problems (ie. Low availability of RO's at leagues and the slow growth in RO numbers).

General feelings at the meeting concerning the low morale amongst the current RO's were as follows:

- That the RO's are over worked due to the large amount of shoots scheduled per year. For 2006 a total of 14 shoots are scheduled in NGPSA this includes 1xNational and the SAAF champs (The SAAF Champs usually make use of NGPSA RO's), plus the CGPSA National and the Level 4 in Polokwane, giving a total of 16 matches in 11 months (December not included). A typical Nationals in your own province take up 4 full weekends of your time (2xbuilding ranges, 1xpre match and 1xmain match). All RO's are called and asked to officiate at all of the matches and if you say yes to all you will spend a total of 21 out of 52 weekends of the year on the range.
- Most RO's don't want to spend both days of the weekend on the range due to personal reasons.
- Some ROs even refuse to work as roving RO's for various reasons.
- Shooters expect that RO's have to work since they are paid to do so.
- Only shooters get to have fun while RO's have to work and shoot at the same time or not even shoot at all.
- Remember that most RO's are shooters first and RO's second, we are willing to give back to the sport.

Various possible solutions were discussed and in the end it was realized that money alone will not be an incentive enough to get the RO numbers back to acceptable levels.

### **Proposal**

The following system was mentioned by one of the members, I took it on myself to elaborate the idea into the following proposal to the NGPSA delegates meeting:

1. The amount of RO's available to work as static RO's must be determined before the match entries starts. This is currently the case.
2. That the amount of entrants per day be limited according to the amount of available RO's for that day, for example: only 10 shooters (this amount can still be determined

and fixed) per RO be allowed to enter for that day of the match, ie if we have 4xRO's then only 40 entries be accepted for that day. If it is a normal 8 stage league then the 4 RO's can each man one stage and let the 40 competitors rotate between the first 4 stages, on completion of the first 4 stages the RO's then move to the next 4 stages and the shooters then shoot the remaining stages.

3. That any RO who officiates at the match have an automatic slot in the match on the other day of shooting.
4. If the amount of static RO's are equal to the amount of stages then no limit be set on the amount of entries.
5. Since it was seen that money was not an incentive to get more people to RO at matches then hopefully more people will be willing to RO if they see that it will be impossible for everybody to shoot if they do not start to get involved in the leagues.
6. Clubs will also be more proactive to get enough RO's for their leagues since if you are allowed only a low amount of entries in your league then you will make a loss and all of your hard work will be for nothing.

### **Conclusion**

This is a proposal only by myself and is subject to further discussion and approval by the NGPSA delegates committee.

Sarel Crause