



SPORTING SHOOTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) INC.



Recommended
Range Rules &
Procedures

Version II 080519

SSAA NSW Range Officers Information Book

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INTRODUCTION

Most SSAA members attend their local range from time to time to enjoy their favourite shooting discipline, whether it's rifle, shotgun or pistol at a formal event or just casual practice. While the love of shooting and the challenge of the sport keep them coming back for more, the average shooter is probably not even aware of the fact that they would not be able to do so if it wasn't for a small band of volunteers called Range Officers.

Most members are blissfully unaware that each range must conform to the conditions on the Range Approval granted by the NSW Police Firearms Registry which includes things such as calibre restrictions, types of competitions/events that may be conducted and type of projectiles allowed just to name a few. These conditions may change from range to range due to various reasons. Each range must be run in accordance with the Branch Range Standing Orders to ensure its safe and efficient running. All competitions held must be run to the approved rules and in a correct manner. These are things that a Range Officer quietly ensures happen without anyone even noticing.

Range Officers have the vital role of ensuring the safety of all users of the Range, while at the same time ensuring that all of the Range Approval conditions are being met. Without Range Officers, we wouldn't be able to open our Ranges. They are essential to the sport.

Note that Range Officer duties are divided into two categories:

- General range supervision, operations and safety.
- Conduct of discipline specific matches and events (safety and compliance with specific match rules).

Whilst this book covers general range supervision, operations and safety it does not cover the conduct of discipline specific matches or events. A thorough knowledge of the rules and procedures of any match or event is required in order to conduct it, so additional training or advice must be sought from your Branch or Club before proceeding.

SECTION 1: SSAA NSW RANGE OFFICERS CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICS

(Adapted from the Code of Conduct of the Australian Coaching Council)

As a Range Officer, Discipline Captain or other Official of the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (SSAA) you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held by or under the auspices of the SSAA, and in any role you hold within the SSAA.

1. *Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being.*

- Within the context of the activity, treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin or religion.

2. *Ensure the time that a member or visitor spends with you is a positive experience.*

- All shooters are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.

3. *Treat each member or visitor as an individual.*

- Respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each individual.
- If you can't answer their questions, please refer them to someone who can, or find out and get back to them.

4. *Be fair, considerate and honest with members and visitors.*

5. *Be professional in and accept punctuality and responsibility for your actions.*

- Language, manner, preparation and presentation should display high standards.
- Display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved with the sport – this includes participants, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators.
- Encourage participants to demonstrate the same qualities.

6. *Make a commitment to providing a quality service to members and visitors.*

- Maintain or improve your current accreditation and relevant knowledge.
- Seek continual improvement through performance appraisal and ongoing education.
- Provide a service which is planned and sequential.
- Maintain appropriate records.

- 7. Operate within the rules of your Range, Discipline and the SSAA.**
 - Be aware and comply with all safe practices for the handling and use of firearms, ammunition and equipment.
- 8. Any physical contact with participants and visitors should be:**
 - Appropriate to the situation.
 - Necessary for the participant's safety or skill development.
- 9. Avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with persons under 18 years of age, wherever possible** (refer SSAA NSW Working with Children Policy).
- 10. Refrain from any form of personal abuse, whether verbal or physical, towards members and visitors.**
 - This includes verbal, physical and emotional abuse.
 - Be alert to any forms of abuse directed towards members and visitors from other sources whilst they are in your care.
- 11. Refrain from any form of sexual harassment towards members and visitors.**
- 12. Provide a safe environment for training and facilities for competition.**
 - Ensure equipment and facilities meet safety standards.
 - Equipment, rules and the environment need to be appropriate for the age and ability of the participants.
 - Ensure the safety of observers also.
- 13. Comply with non-smoking zones and if you smoke, be considerate of those who do not.**
- 14. Show concern and caution towards sick injured or disabled participants and observers.**
 - Provide a modified environment where appropriate
 - Allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.
 - Seek medical advice when required.
 - Maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured participants as to others.
- 15. Be a positive role model for shooters and the shooting sports.**

SECTION 2: THE RANGE OFFICER

The position of SSAA Range Officer is one of responsibility and importance. The safe conduct of all shooting activities and the running of approved ranges depend upon the knowledge, abilities and people skills of these hard-working individuals.

Range Officers are a special breed of shooter; they volunteer their time, endeavour to help their fellow shooters – both new and experienced and are expected to be role models and ambassadors of our great sport. More often than not you'll find the same faces running shoots or tending to your favourite range year in year out without complaint or fuss, and they find great personal reward in doing so.

A Range Officer may ask other officers to assist in controlling the range. In this instance one Range Officer will be recognised as the Range Captain or Chief Range Officer. The Range Captain will coordinate the activities and calls of the other Range Officers and ensure that they meet the responsibilities listed above. The duty roster may reflect seniority if more than one RO is rostered on.

Conduct

SSAA Range Officers are representatives of SSAA (NSW) Inc. and must behave in an appropriate manner and uphold the values of SSAA (NSW) Inc. Inappropriate conduct will be viewed very seriously and may result in the termination of the offending Range Officers services. The Range Officer Code of Conduct and Ethics are to be followed at all times.

SSAA Range Officers are always expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. They must treat members and visitors with respect and patience as well as obey SSAA Branch Range Standing Orders, all firearm safety rules and State firearms laws. They must have good people skills and the ability to control any likely situation on the range with confidence. The conduct and abilities of Range Officers running a range are on display for all to see so a good and positive example must be set for others to follow.

Characteristics of a good Range Officer

- Committed to the sport of shooting and encourages others to share his/her enjoyment of it.
- A good communicator.
- Has self-confidence and the ability to effectively manage the range.
- Maintains a sense of humility.
- Inspires confidence in range users and visitors.
- Maintains a firm and fair and consistent policy regarding acceptable processes and procedures.

- Leads by example.
- A readiness to share or assist others.
- Makes decisions that can be implemented.
- Independent, yet ready to cooperate with others, providing encouragement, support and advice on the appropriate action required.
- Patient with members and patrons.
- Aware of the Range Officers role and responsibility to all patrons.

What knowledge should a Range Officer possess?

- Operational knowledge of the most likely firearms to be used on the range.
- Knowledge of range safety procedures.
- Up to date knowledge of applicable legislation.
- Knowledge of Branch/Club policies and expectations.

What are Branch/Club expectations of a Range Officer?

- The safe and efficient operation of its range in accordance with the Range Standing Orders.
- Ability to maintain a safe but friendly environment.
- Procedures and policies are abided by.
- Legislative requirements are met.

What are member/visitor expectations of a Range Officer?

- They must maintain a safe environment.
- They must maintain a friendly environment.
- The use of clear and concise range commands.
- Fair and ethical.

What should a Range Officer expect?

- Support & backing from the Branch/Club.
- The confidence of those using the range.
- All range users to behave appropriately.
- All commands to be followed.
- To receive the proper training.

Common managerial errors to avoid

- Misuse of power.
- Failure to exercise control.
- Promoting rivalry.
- Failure to anticipate the inevitable.

- Applying pressure to people.
- Impatience with members and patrons.
- Failure to follow procedure.

Authorisation

It is the responsibility of the individual Branches to choose and authorise their Range Officers. A Range Officer must have the desired level of firearms safety knowledge and the ability to communicate with others to be successful. The Branch Committee must be satisfied that the candidate has the knowledge and ability to do the job competently, confidently and above all safely.

Training

Being a Range Officer is quite a responsibility and no one should be expected to carry out the duties of such a position without the knowledge and training required to do so. Branches will provide the SSAA (NSW) Inc. Range Officer Training Course through their appointed Range Officer Trainers as required for the introduction of new ROs to the Branch.

To maintain currency, it is expected that all Range Officers undergo a refresher course at five yearly intervals. The Branch will provide refresher courses for their ROs at five yearly intervals and maintain a register of its Range Officers and their levels of currency.

At the discretion of the Branch a refresher course may be as simple as resitting the theory component to undergoing the full course dependent upon the experience and frequency of service of the RO concerned.

Recognition

While the qualification gained by successfully completing the SSAA (NSW) Inc. Range Officer Training Course is recognised across this State it must be noted that the authority to act in the position of RO only extends to the Branch or Affiliate Club that nominated the individual.

In an effort to curtail the actions of those few Range Officers who would attend activities at another Branch, Club or range and force their will upon others or decide to conduct the day's events where that is not warranted or wanted this limit has been put in place.

- A Range Officer may offer assistance to the host at any other Branch, Club or range and any such offer of assistance may be accepted or declined at the discretion of the host.
- A Range Officer may be invited to assist at another Branch, Club or range and may accept or decline such invitation at his/her discretion.

Identification

All persons nominated for the position of Range Officer will, upon successful completion of the SSAA NSW Range Officer Training Course, be issued with an ID card which will contain the following information:

- Range Officer's name.
- Category – longarm and/or handgun.
- Branch or Affiliate Club name.
- Issue date.

The ID card remains the property of the Branch or Affiliate Club authorising the Range Officer and must be returned upon resignation or termination of service.

All RO's on active duty must display their SSAA NSW Range Officer ID card and wear the issue hi viz vest so as to be clearly identifiable to all range users at all times.

Powers

The Range Officer has total control over range activities and acts as a representative of the SSAA Branch controlling the range at the time. Anyone who refuses to comply with the Range Standing Orders, safety rules or any reasonable command given by the Range Officer may, at the discretion of the Range Officer, be asked to leave the range.

If any member or visitor refuses to leave the range premises on request the range must be closed. The Range Officer is to have all firearms cleared, racked or removed from the firing point and cease any further shooting. Should the person continue to refuse to leave the range then call the Police. No attempt should be made to remove the person or to argue any point.

A Range Officer must document in detail any such incident including the persons details, name member number, firearms licence number as well as any witnesses to any event and report the matter to the range manager or Branch/Club Executive Committee.

Compliance

It is the responsibility of all Range Officers, Branch/Club Officials and all other licensed firearms owners to be aware of, and comply with, NSW firearms legislation as well as the Range Standing Orders, range rules and any restrictions or conditions applied. Ignorance is not an excuse.

Range Officers should refrain from providing advice on NSW Firearms legislation, instead directing member/visitors to the NSW FAR website or advise seeking independent legal advice.

Range Officers who have face-to-face contact with children such as instructors, coaches, Junior Development Program volunteers or access to confidential records or information regarding children must apply for a Working with Children Check.

General duties Ranger Officers and other officials whose work does not ordinarily involve contact with children for extended periods without other adults being present do not require the check. However, the Branch or Club may insist on all Range Officers obtaining a Working with Children Check.

SSAA NSW is committed to compliance with all relevant laws and standards, including:

- Child Protection (Working with children) Act 2012.
- National Standards for involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations.
- NSW Firearms Laws (Act 1996 & its Regulation).
- WHS Laws (2012).

Working with people

The role of the Range Officer is to ensure that the range functions safely for the enjoyment of all participating shooters and spectators. A successful Range Officer controls the range in such a fashion that shooters want to come back next week. A potential new shooter's first exposure to the sport is often at the range, and first impressions are critical. Branches are encouraged to select Range Officers for their 'people skills' as well as their understanding of firearms safety.

Range Officers should always present a courteous and pleasant disposition to all members and visitors.

Leadership

The Range Officer should have the confidence of the shooters and patrons; control the proceedings, develop an assistance network and identify possible problems. They should establish and maintain management procedures that are consistent and predictable, that work within the established range rules, as well as develop a firm discipline network that ensures range rules are being obeyed without patrons feeling uncomfortable. Work toward an atmosphere of enjoyment where shooters feel welcome while maintaining 100% safety.

Courtesy

Learn the names of regular shooters, develop a working rapport with these regular patrons, respect the feelings of others. Listen to other points of view before making judgements. Members and visitors appreciate a friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

Communication

Give all instructions clearly and precisely, be a good speaker and listener, ensure all requests are understood (this may require personally assisting the patron or shooter, especially newcomers). Take account of the fact that shooters often have damaged hearing.

Criticism

A Range Officer should not criticise a shooter or patron in front of his peers. If someone is observed to be behaving in an unsafe manner, ask or assist them to make their firearm safe and then take them aside quietly and explain what the correct procedure is and why. Public chastisement of patrons is the reason for almost all complaints over the behaviour of Range Officers received by SSAA (NSW). It usually results in the loss of a shooter.

However, if such behaviour continues, and the person has been duly warned of the consequences, then that person may be asked to leave the range.

Maintain a positive approach when explaining safety and other procedures to patrons; encourage rather than criticise.

SECTION 3: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Range Officer is responsible for running the Range in a safe manner, in accordance with the Range Standing Orders, the NSW Firearms Act and the conditions of the range licence. As the location and operation of each individual range will vary the following list of duties will also vary to suit. Duties include but are not limited to the following:

Open and Close procedures

- Unlock main access gate upon arrival & lock upon departure.
- Turn on power or start generator.
- Open amenities building/facilities.
- Do a general walkaround the firing line and other pedestrian traffic areas to ensure there are no trip or other hazards.

Procedures for controlling the Danger Area

- Inspect all areas down range including the RDA for unauthorised persons prior to opening the range for shooting activities.
- Placement of red danger flag at the entrance to the range complex, at the firing point and atop the stop butts.
- Controlling the range by means of clear range calls and the use of flags or other danger indicators provided.

Sighting members or visitors' firearms licence

- Sighting members or visitors' firearms licence and ensuring that they sign in before allowing them to bring firearms onto the range or to shoot.
- All persons using the range must be authorised by a current firearms licence or permit, unless they are provided an exemption prescribed by Section 6B of the Firearms Act 1996 (P650 declaration).
- Collecting range fees.

Documentation:

- Sign on procedure for RO's and other volunteers (refer to Range Standing Orders).
- Range users sign in book or electronic attendance register.
- P650 declarations.
- Incident/accident reports.

Range operation

- All range operations must be conducted with proper regard to the preservation of public safety and the peace.
- Range Officers must ensure that any person possessing and using a firearm on the range complies with the conditions to which the approval is subject.
- Ensuring that all shooters are adopting and using procedures that guarantee the safety of all present.
- Ensuring firearms are cleared before allowing anyone forward of the firing line.
- Ensuring procedures for the safe operation of different types of firearms in the context of approved matches and disciplines shot at that range are adhered to.
- Permit only approved targets to be used.
- Ensuring that all shooters only fire at targets directly in front of their firing Point. Cross firing on a range compromises the danger zone angles and may lead to a projectile escaping from the range danger zone.
- Targets should be placed so the flight path of the projectile is through the target into the stop butt.
- Range Officers must follow the Range Standing Orders.
- All competitions are to be run in accordance with the approved match rules.
- A licensee with the genuine reasons of *recreational hunting/vermin control, primary production, vertebrate pest animal control or animal*

welfare is authorised to use the range for the purposes of sighting in a firearm or patterning a shotgun as prescribed by clause 33 of the Firearms Regulation 2017 where the range approval licence permits the use of that firearm or activity.

- Act on and report any safety hazards immediately. A safe environment must be maintained at all times.

Range Supervision

- There must be a minimum of one (1) Range Officer supervising whenever shooting activities are conducted on a range.
 - The Range Officer is not to participate in shooting activities unless supervision duties can be handed over to another Range Officer.
 - Continued control of the range, including the RDA is imperative during the conduct of any shooting activities.
- Range Officers must constantly monitor the safe handling practices of all shooters with muzzle direction being a major priority. The only safe and acceptable direction for any firearm to be pointed is directly down range towards the targets – no exceptions.
- Range Officers must constantly monitor all areas forward of the firing line.
- A Range Officer should have an uninterrupted line of sight and access to all firing points.
 - The length of some range's firing points may dictate that more than one RO may have to be employed with one of those Officers taking the dominant role.
- All minors using the range must be under direct supervision of a licensed adult and must never be left alone or unattended on the firing line.
- Watch for shooters who move benches, swap firearms or pack their firearm for removal without having firearms cleared.
- Watch for persons deliberately damaging range property by shooting target frames or other fixtures.
- Prevent visitors and other unauthorised people from entering restricted areas or parts of the range where they may be at risk or endanger others' safety and health.
- Report all accidents, incidents and near misses; investigate and record the circumstances of the accident, incident or near miss.

Knowledge of Range Approval Licence conditions

Never exceed the conditions of the Range Approval Licence. All Range Officers must have a working knowledge of the conditions of the Range Approval Licence including:

- Shooting activities available to members on the range.
- Hours of operation.
- Permitted calibres.
- Permitted projectile types.
- Permitted target types (soft – paper or board, or hard – metal).
- Approved matches including their proper setup and conduct.
- Any relevant restrictions.
- Ensure the clear display of the following at the range:
 - Range Approval Licence.
 - Range Standing Orders.
 - Range Rules.
 - Emergency Evacuation site plans and procedures.

Clearing firearms

All firearms are to be cleared in accordance with the Range Standing Orders by a Range Officer before removal from the bench/firing line. This is a major safety rule and applies to all members (and visitors) using an approved range.

All firearms are to be cleared before the “*RANGE CLOSED*” command is given, and range users are allowed forward of the firing line.

All firearms presented for clearing should be in a *Safe Condition* - that is, action opened, unloaded (magazine removed wherever possible) and pointed downrange. Some members will hold their firearm up for clearing when shooting from a bench or leave the firearm on the ground when shooting prone which often makes it hard to see whether or not it is safe to remove from the firing line.

Always take the time to check all firearms thoroughly before declaring them ‘*Clear*’. Some types of firearm and magazine combinations need particular attention when clearing. Lever and pump action longarms with tube magazines are an example of this.

Firearms with tube magazines require additional caution as -

- the ammunition in the magazine cannot be seen,
- may have a round trapped in the tube,
- they are often easier to clear by using a torch to check the chamber and magazine are empty.

Cycle the action several times, inspect the chamber, leave the action open, check the magazine is empty and removed where possible. Check that you can see the magazine follower clearly.

Remind shooters, when necessary, that having their firearm cleared **does not** relieve them of their responsibility to keep it pointed in a safe direction.

The conduct of discipline specific matches

Range Officers running or conducting any discipline specific match or event must be fully conversant in the rules governing that match or event. If in doubt seek assistance from the SSAA NSW Discipline Chairman responsible for that discipline.

Reducing exposure to lead

Individuals using a shooting range, as well as those working at a range can be exposed to lead. Lead exposure at a shooting range can be minimized by following some simple safety practices:

- Wash your hands, neck and face with soapy cold water after shooting.
- Never eat, drink or smoke in the range shooting areas.
- Wash shooting/range clothing separate from general laundry.

The powder residue you get all over your hands also contains a lot of lead. Left on your hands, some of this can be absorbed directly through your skin. Remember to always wash your hands, arms and face before eating, drinking or smoking. Fine particles of lead dust can easily adhere to your skin and hair resulting in the accidental ingestion of lead particles. Shower as soon as you arrive home, as this ensures that any other lead residue is washed out of your hair and off other body parts. Remind range users of their exposure to lead.

Basic coaching

The Range Officer will often be called on to assist a new shooter. They may be required to assist in zeroing a rifle, helping in improving a shooting skill or in providing further information about the sport. Helping new shooters or others with equipment or technique should never be done at the expense of range safety.

A Range Officer on range supervision duty should **not** be concentrating on coaching or conversation with any shooter unless there is another Range Officer controlling all range activities. Continued control of the range, including the RDA, is imperative during the conduct of any shooting activities.

When in the role of coach, the SSAA Range Officer -

- Is a successful coach, mentor or instructor.
- Understands the theory and practice of the skill being performed.

- Can translate their experience and knowledge into step by step instructions to impart the skill being learned.
- Keeps their instruction personal by working with individuals or small groups.
- Involves the student in identifying how their skills can be improved, assessing their ability and developing a plan of action.
- Suggests the student perform the skill slowly at first, concentrating on accuracy, then speed up if required.
- Allows the student to try things on their own and doesn't interrupt unless the student is bogged down or makes a mistake.
- Recognises the fact that students will make mistakes. Always correct them tactfully; never be sarcastic especially in front of others.
- Encourages by complimenting progress.
- Emphasises the need for practice to fine tune the learned skill.
- Is capable of demonstrating the required skills to others.

All Range Officers should be familiar with the steps to sighting in and be prepared to use this skill assist new shooters.

SECTION 4: INCIDENT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If an EMERGENCY arises during a shooting period, the Range Officer is to *call "CEASE FIRE! CEASE FIRE!"* and follow procedures as described in the Range Standing Orders to close the range.

Emergency Range Evacuation

The Branch or Affiliate Club Committee should ensure that procedures for the emergency evacuation of the range (in the event of fire, flood or cyclone for example) are agreed upon and clearly posted at the range. Range Officers should be familiar with the evacuation procedures and able to implement them if needed. Wherever possible the procedures should include alternate exit routes from the range.

- Close range and evacuate if necessary.
- Call the appropriate emergency services.
 - Fire, police or SES.
- Follow established evacuation routes.
 - These should be clearly marked with appropriate signage, kept clear and well maintained.
- Assembly areas.
 - Clearly marked with appropriate signage.
 - Kept clear and well maintained.

Medical Emergency

In the case of gunshot wound, excessive bleeding, heart attack, stay with the person and send someone to notify the Range Manager/Captain to ring 000. Make the person comfortable and try to control any bleeding. Please beware of HIV, Hepatitis B & C and other blood transferable diseases. There should be plastic gloves in the first aid kit for these instances.

In a medical emergency, the Range Officer may delegate another Range Officer or experienced member to complete the procedure for closing the range while he/she commences first aid (or vice versa, if the other Range Officer has greater first aid qualifications or knowledge).

Illness or Injury on the Range

SSAA (NSW) recommends that all approved Range Officers have some form of First Aid accreditation. The Branch or Affiliate Club Committee should ensure that procedures in the event of illness or injury on the range are agreed upon and clearly posted at the range. All Range Officers should be familiar with these procedures. The procedures should include the location of the first aid kit, and information on how to contact emergency services from the range and include information on where mobile telephones will work on the range.

- Heart attack, stroke, seizure, falls etc.
- Administer first aid if applicable.
- Call ambulance if necessary.

Firearms accident/incident resulting in serious injury or death

Accident/self-harm resulting in serious injury or death:

- Ensure the safety of yourself and others.
- Administer first aid if applicable.
- Call ambulance.
- Call local police.
- Close range and preserve the site for investigation and advise all present that they must remain on site until police arrive.
- Advise the Firearms Registry asap.
- Document the accident/incident as soon as is practicable if not immediately.
- Advise range approval holder asap.
- Advise SSAA NSW.

Firearms incident resulting in minor or no injuries

Accidental discharge or firearm malfunction or catastrophic destruction:

- Administer first aid if applicable.
- Call ambulance if situation requires.

- Close the range if circumstances require.
- Prepare a list of witnesses and advise those present that they may be called upon as a witness if situation requires.
- Call local police.
- Advise the Firearms Registry asap.
- Document the accident/incident as soon as is practicable if not immediately.
- Advise range approval holder asap.
- Advise SSAA NSW.

Deliberate misuse of firearms

- Call cease fire, clear firearm and ask the offender to leave the range premises.
- Call local police.
- Advise the Firearms Registry asap.
- Document the accident/incident as soon as is practicable if not immediately.
- Advise range approval holder asap.
- Advise SSAA NSW.

Location of safety equipment

All Range Officers must be aware of location of the following:

- First aid kit(s).
- Firefighting equipment.
- extinguisher(s) and or fire hose(s).

SECTION 5: FIREARM AND AMMUNITION MALFUNCTIONS

From time to time all shooters will encounter stoppages and minor malfunctions. Most will be little more than the failure to feed or to properly eject a round and rectifying either of these can be done by the average shooter in a safe orderly fashion, but sometimes help from a RO will be required. Even in the case of the simplest malfunction the shooter must remain constantly aware of their muzzle direction and the safety of all present. The shooter must advise a Range Officer immediately of any malfunctions.

The Range Officer will assess the problem and decide whether it is safe to assist the shooter while the range is open and may seek the assistance of a Club Armorer or other competent person to safely rectify a simple malfunction. The Range Officer should not be distracted from range supervision unless there is another Range Officer available to control all range activities.

Do Not be lulled into a false sense of security if you notice that the primer has been struck – giving the appearance of a fired round – it may very well be a *misfire* or worse still a *hang fire*. Under no circumstances should you attempt to clarify whether or not the round is live by looking down the barrel from the muzzle end.

Stuck Live Round

A loaded cartridge is stuck firmly in the firing chamber of the firearm not allowing the bolt assembly to close or extraction to take place.

In the event of a shooter experiencing a stuck live round, the Range Officer is notified as soon as possible. The removal of a stuck live round should only be attempted by a competent person, while the range open condition exists – no one forward of firing line.

If the stuck live round cannot be simply removed from the breech end of the barrel, the firearm is to be made safe and removed from the range for repair by a competent person. It is SSAA policy that under no circumstances is an attempt to be made to remove the round by insertion of a cleaning rod, or similar, from the muzzle or front of the cylinder. Where possible the firearm is to be made safe by removing the bolt.

Misfire

One common malfunction is a misfire, when the firearm does not discharge when the trigger is pulled. In this case, wait at least 30 seconds before opening the action as the round may go off unexpectedly. Again, make sure that the muzzle is kept pointed downrange at all times.

Hang Fire

The primer fails to effectively ignite the powder charge when hit by the firing pin causing slow burning and a delay in ignition. Hang Fires are not common however when this happens, keep the firearm pointing down range and do not open the action for a period of not less than 30 seconds. For Muzzle loading firearms follow up action will often be required to fire the round in the barrel.

A hang fire can occur if the firing pin spring of the firearm has been altered, there is not enough powder in the case or old ammunition is used. Inspect the cartridge case on removal from the firearm for signs of damage and pressure. Hang fires can produce high chamber pressures, so if a hang fire occurs, try to determine (by examination of ammunition and/firearm) if the ammunition or firearm is at fault. If this is not possible, stop shooting and seek advice from a suitably qualified person.

If a batch of ammunition is generating hang fires, cease using it and dispose of it safely in accordance with the Range Standing Orders. If the firearm itself is

causing the problem, cease using it until it is checked by a suitably qualified person. (Hang fires may be penalised in some match events; check the rules).

Case Separation

The head of the cartridge case is removed on extraction of the fired round leaving the front section of the case in the chamber. The bolt mechanism should be removed from the firearm when possible or the action locked open and the Range Officer notified before taking any remedial action.

Use of incorrect ammunition

Be Aware - It is possible to chamber and fire ammunition that is incorrect for a firearm, and that doing so may very well cause serious injury or death to the shooter and bystanders. Shooters must only use or recommend the correct ammunition for any firearm. Most firearms have the ammunition type stamped on the barrel.

SECTION 6: GENERAL RANGE SAFETY RULES (as revised by SSAA NSW Board February 2013)

- Red means Danger. A red flag at the entrance gate (and up-range at the furthest line of targets) means that shooters are in attendance at the range and permission from the Range Officer is required before entering the Range Danger Zone (forward of the firing line). A red flag or light on the firing line also indicates that it is not safe to go forward of the firing line.
- No-one may go forward of the firing line without the permission of the Range Officer. The Range Officer will indicate that it is safe for the target crew or other designated persons to go forward of the firing line by calling "*THE RANGE IS CLOSED*" he/she may also display a green flag or green light on the firing line (optional).
- All members and visitors must report to the Range Office upon arrival, register and pay the required fees.
- The Association's Range Officers have total control of the range.
- The SSAA recommends all shooters and visitors wear eye and ear protection at all times when on the range.
- All shooters must wear enclosed footwear.
- Children and Juniors must be supervised at all times.
- Firearms must be removed from vehicles in a safe condition. Unloaded with actions open and magazines removed where possible.

- Firearms are to be carried with muzzles pointed upwards, actions opened, and magazines removed where possible.
- Shooting is not to commence until the “*RANGE IS OPEN*” order has been given by the Range Officer.
- When the “*CEASE FIRE*” order is given, all shooting will immediately stop. All firearms are to be unloaded and actions opened.
- Firearms are not to be removed from the firing point until they have been cleared by the Range Officer.
- Smoking is not permitted in the vicinity of Black Powder or in reloading areas.
- Anyone considered under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted on the Range.
- In the case of a misfire, wait 30 seconds before opening the action. Call the Range Officer if assistance required.
- In the case of a “live stuck round” or malfunction keep the muzzle pointed down range and advise the Range Officer immediately.
- Firearms cleaning and adjustments are only allowed in designated areas.
- There shall be no handling of firearms during target changes. *

* Note: However, SSAA (NSW) Inc. acknowledges that ranges hosting major Regional, State or National tournaments in NSW can, if they so desire, permit competitors to set up firearms and bag rests on benches whilst the range is closed provided the firing line is supervised by a Range Safety Officer. Bolts must be removed from the rifles and contained in holsters or in a box together with the ammunition on the floor. (Adopted by the Association at its Board meeting of 19 September 2004)

SECTION 7: RANGE COMMANDS AND PROCEDURES

Range Officers running club competitions will use ‘*Range Commands*’ appropriate to the discipline or competition being shot. This is the case whenever a competition or other club event is held on any range. The SSAA runs a variety of competitions or events and ROs running them are expected to know the discipline specific Range Commands related to their safe running. All commands and instructions on the range are to be given by the Range Officer in a clear loud voice able to be heard by all shooters present.

Example of generic range commands

The following are generic Range Commands that must be known and understood by all SSAA Range Officers.

- *“THE RANGE IS OPEN”* no one is to go forward of the firing line.
- *“PREPARATION TIME”* shooters to the bench or detail is to make ready.
- *Call out the details of event to be shot if it is a structured shoot.*
- *“LOAD (how many?) ROUNDS”* call as appropriate for the event.
- *“ARE YOU READY?”* shooter to advise if not ready.
- *“COMMENCE FIRE”* shooting may now commence.
- *“CEASE FIRE”* all shooting must stop immediately.
- *“UNLOAD AND SHOW CLEAR”* clear all firearms at this point.
- *“THE FIREARM IS CLEAR”* the firearm may be removed from the firing line.
- *“THE RANGE IS CLOSED”* no handling of firearms.
- *“FORWARD, SCORE AND PATCH”* or *“FORWARD FOR TARGET CHANGE”*.
- *“CEASE FIRE! CEASE FIRE!”* called in an emergency. All shooting is to cease immediately – NO exceptions.

SECTION 8: OPERATION AND SAFE HANDLING OF LONGARMS

The Range Officer should have a working knowledge of the types of firearms that can be used on SSAA Ranges.

The Bolt Action

A bolt action is operated by the bolt handle being pushed forward causing the bolt assembly to slide in the receiver. The bolt face will collect a cartridge and allow it to slide into the chamber as the bolt assembly moves forward. The extractor will be engaged by the cartridge base as it slides up the bolt face. When the round is approximately 5mm from completely being chambered the bolt handle is rotated by a camming action downward, engaging the bolt to receiver locking lugs and cocking the action. The cartridge is now firmly held in the chamber and the firearm is ready to fire.

After firing the bolt is rotated upward, the camming action extracting the empty cartridge case from the chamber. When the bolt is pulled to the rear the empty case will be ejected and the operation can then be repeated.

Note: Some .22 rimfire bolt action rifles are fitted with tube magazines and it is important to ensure the magazine is cleared of all cartridges. Once the firearm has been cleared it can be removed from the firing line.

The Pump Action

The pump action is operated by the bolt assembly being pulled forward in the receiver by the fore-end slide action bars. The bolt face will collect a cartridge from the magazine and allow it to be fed into the chamber as bolt assembly moves forward. The extractor will engage as the cartridge slides up the bolt face. When the round is almost chambered the breech locking mechanism starts to engage. This action is held closed on firing by locking bars or slides located in the receiver or rotary locking cams on the front of the breech bolt. When the slide is fully forward the cartridge is firmly held in the chamber, the firing pin assembly is aligned, and the firearm is ready to fire.

After firing the fore-end slide is pulled rearward unlocking the action and extracting the empty cartridge case from the chamber. When the case is clear of the chamber it will be ejected from the firearm. The action can be recycled after it has reached the rearward position.

Note: pump action firearms have tube or box magazines and it is important to ensure that the magazine of the firearm is cleared of all rounds. Some pump action firearms have exposed hammers - caution is advised when lowering hammers.

Range Officers should be especially careful when inspecting firearms with a tube magazine to ensure it is clear of all rounds. Once the firearm has been cleared it can be removed from the firing line.

The Lever Action

The operation of the lever action is by the bolt assembly being pushed forward in the receiver by the rotation of a lever. The bolt face will collect a cartridge from the magazine and allow it to be slid in to the chamber on forward travel. The extractor will be engaged as the cartridge base slides up the bolt face. When the live cartridge is almost chambered the breech locking mechanism commences to engage and firing pin assembly is aligned. The action is held closed using rear locking bars or rotary locking cams on the front of the breech bolt. When the lever is fully closed the cartridge is firmly held in the chamber and the firearm is ready to fire.

After firing the lever is rotated forward unlocking the action and extracting the empty cartridge case from the chamber. When the case is clear of the chamber it will be ejected from the firearm. The action can be recycled after the lever has reached the forward position.

Note: Lever action firearms have tube or box magazines and it is important to ensure that the magazine of the firearm is cleared of all rounds. Caution is advised when lowering the hammer on ALL lever action firearms with exposed hammers.

Range Officers should be especially careful when inspecting firearms with a tube magazine to ensure it is clear of all cartridges. Once the firearm has been cleared it can be removed from the firing line.

The Break Action

Break open actions are commonly found in Australia in double barrel, under and over shotguns, big game drillings and some air rifles. Double rifles used in Big Game Matches operate in a similar fashion to break action shotguns.

The action is usually opened via the rotation of a release lever located on the top of the action frame. Other methods of opening the action may be by lever located below the trigger guard. Both methods withdraw the locking lever from between the frame and barrel assembly allowing the action to swing open. Hammerless models will cock on opening by the action of push rods pressing against stops located near the action joint pin.

Extraction of cartridges occurs as the action swings open some firearms eject the spent cartridges on opening. New cartridges are placed in the chambers and the action is closed and locked before firing.

Note: Some break open action firearms have exposed hammers. Caution is advised when lowering hammers.

When the Range Officer calls CEASE FIRE, the action is broken open, any live or fired cartridges are ejected and the firearm is laid on the bench or held so that the Range Officer can check that all chambers are empty. Once the firearm has been cleared it can be removed from the firing line.

The Self-loader

A self-loading longarm is operated by the bolt handle being pulled to the rear then released to travel forward causing the breechblock to slide in the receiver. The bolt face will collect a cartridge from the magazine and allow it to slide into the chamber as the bolt assembly moves forward. The extractor will be engaged by the cartridge base as it slides up the bolt face.

This type of firearm will continue to fire and cycle at each squeeze of the trigger without further assistance from the shooter.

There are three main types of self-loading operation:

1. Simple blowback where the breechblock is held closed under spring pressure. It is operated directly by the force of recoil on the breechblock which drives it rearward ejecting the spent cartridge, then once the end of travel has been reached the breechblock moves forward under spring pressure, picking up and chambering the next round from the magazine.

- In this type of action, the breechblock is generally not locked into battery.
2. Gas operated, where high pressure gas generated during firing is tapped off from the bore and used to unlock the action and push the breechblock rearward ejecting the spent cartridge, then once the end of travel has been reached the breechblock moves forward under spring pressure, picking up and chambering the next round from the magazine.
 - In this type of action, the breechblock is locked into battery.
 3. Recoil operated, where recoil generated during firing is used to unlock the action and push the breechblock rearward ejecting the spent cartridge, then once the end of travel has been reached the breechblock moves forward under spring pressure, picking up and chambering the next round from the magazine. The barrel and action remain locked together for a short duration until the breechblock is unlocked.
 - In this type of action, the breechblock is locked into battery.

Important: The operation and lock up of self-loading firearms vary across different makes and models so the RO should make him or herself familiar with any such firearm that they encounter.

Note: Some .22 rimfire self-loading rifles and most self-loading shotguns are fitted with tube magazines and it is important to ensure the magazine is cleared of all cartridges. Range Officers should be especially careful when inspecting firearms with a tube magazine to ensure it is clear of all cartridges.

When the Range Officer calls *CEASE FIRE*, the bolt must be locked to the rear and magazine must be removed (where possible) from the firearm and laid on the bench or held so that the Range Officer can check that all chambers are empty. Once the firearm has been cleared it can be removed from the firing line.

The Muzzleloader (longarm and pistol)

The operation of the muzzleloader

- Muzzle loading firearms used on SSAA ranges are Matchlock, Wheel Lock, Flint Lock and Percussion.
- Muzzle loading firearms vary with the method ignition of the powder charge.
- The match lock is fired when a lighted fuse called a match is lowered into the priming pan. Ignition of the priming charge in the pan fires the gun.
- A Wheel Lock uses a shower of sparks from suitable flint rubbing against a rotating wheel to ignite a priming charge in the pan.

- A Flint Lock uses a flint held in the hammer falling against a metal frizzen to cause sparks that will ignite the priming charge in the pan.
- Percussion uses a percussion cap placed on the nipple to ignite the powder charge.

Loading a muzzle loading firearm

- **Only** load blackpowder firearms with Blackpowder or Pyrodex (see manufacturer's manual for particular powder to be used). The firearm is held barrel up and a measured powder charge is poured down the barrel.
- **Never** pour powder into a firearm from the flask.
 - **Always** use a powder vial with a single charge load in it.
- **Never** smoke near Blackpowder, Pyrodex or a Muzzleloader.
- No opened containers of gunpowder shall be left exposed on the range and or on the firing line. Powder flasks and other powder except single charge containers and or priming flasks shall be removed from bench tops during a course of fire.
- A lubricated mini ball (projectile) or a cloth patch and ball are forced down the barrel with a ram rod until seated firmly on the powder charge. The firearm is now loaded. Muzzle loading firearms should be left in the half-cocked position when loaded.
- Priming and capping shall only be carried out at the firing line.
 - All priming/capping of muzzle loading firearms must be done with the firearm pointed down range.

A muzzleloader should never be loaded until the range is *OPENED* by the Range Officer. Percussion firearms should not be capped until the shooter is in the firing position.

The shooter should ensure that the firearm, if loaded, is discharged when the command to fire your last round is given. When the Range Officer calls "*CEASE FIRE*", the hammer is left in the half-cocked position. If the loaded firearm has not been discharged by the time the "*CEASE FIRE*" is called, the shooter should call the Range Officer over and arrange to be permitted to fire the shot.

The Range Officer is to clear the firearm before removal from the firing point. As it is not possible to clear a muzzleloader by looking through the barrel, the shooter will demonstrate that the firearm is not loaded by gently placing the ramrod into the barrel. The entire length of the ramrod will disappear down the barrel of an unloaded muzzleloader, whereas if it is loaded a portion of the rod will remain out of the barrel. Some rods will have a "chamber loaded" marker – always check with the owner. Of course, it is not desirable to drop a ram rod into a loaded firearm, so it is important that the shooter keeps track of the state of his/her firearm.

SECTION 9: OPERATION AND SAFE HANDLING OF PISTOLS

Due to the short barrel and the fact that a pistol is usually held or used single handed it is possible to point it in an unsafe direction very easily. A Range Officer must remain vigilant of safe handling and muzzle control by range users at all times.

The Range Officer should have a working knowledge of the types of firearms that can be used on SSAA Ranges.

The three main categories of pistols in use are air, rimfire and centrefire. Target air pistols are most commonly single shot designs although some are available as repeaters. The most commonly used rimfire and centrefire pistols are revolver and self-loading. All pistols consist of three major components: the frame, the barrel and the action. Although both revolvers and self-loadings have these three main parts, some of these components have a slightly different function between the two. Single shot rimfire and centrefire pistols are also available.

For black powder pistols refer to the muzzleloader section above.

Revolver

A revolver is a handgun that has a rotating cylinder designed to contain cartridges. The action of the trigger and/or hammer will rotate the cylinder and fire a cartridge.

1. **Single-Action** revolver: The trigger performs only one action - releasing the hammer. The trigger does not “cock” the hammer. The hammer must be cocked with the thumb and will stay in a cocked position till the trigger is pulled to release it.
2. **Double-Action** revolver: The trigger performs two tasks. When it is pulled, it will cock and release the hammer, firing the revolver. Most double action revolvers can also be fired in single action mode by manually cocking the hammer with the thumb. The hammer will stay in the cocked position until released by pulling the trigger.

Self-loading Pistol

A self-loading pistol differs significantly from a revolver in its operation. After a cartridge is fired by pulling the trigger the empty “case” is extracted and ejected and a new cartridge is inserted into the chamber. Because a new cartridge is automatically “loaded” or placed into the chamber, this type of pistol is sometimes referred to as an “self-loader”.

Although the basic operation of a self-loading pistol differs from that of a revolver, (one of the reasons for the name “pistol” as opposed to the “revolving”

operation of a revolver) it still has all the same major components of the revolver, except for the cylinder. There are also some additional components on a semi-auto pistol as well as some differences in the operation of some components.

Types of self-loading pistol

There are four different types of self-loading pistols: Single action, double action and double action only and striker fired. These actions rely on the function of the trigger for their different operations.

1. **Single Action**, self-loading pistol: The trigger performs a single task, releasing the hammer or the firing mechanism so that the firing pin hits the cartridge.
2. **Double Action**, self-loading pistol: The trigger performs two tasks. It cocks and releases the hammer or internal firing mechanism for the first shot. After the first shot is fired, the movement of the slide will cock the hammer or internal firing mechanism for all successive shots and the trigger will be used only to release the hammer or internal firing mechanism. (Returns to a single-action function).
3. **Double Action only**, self-loading pistol: The trigger will cock and release the hammer or internal firing mechanism on the first and all successive shots. The slide will chamber a new cartridge after each shot, as it does for the other types of semi-automatics, but it will not cock the firing mechanism.

The cock-and-release action is accomplished by pulling the trigger for each shot. In this way the action of the trigger is similar to that of a double-action revolver. However, in most double-action-only semi-automatics, the hammer cannot be manually cocked to a single-action position as it can in a double-action revolver.

4. **Striker Fired**, self-loading pistol: The trigger serves the function of completing the cocking cycle and then releasing the striker. While technically two actions, it differs from a double-action trigger in that the trigger is not capable of fully cocking the striker. It differs from single-action in that if the striker were to release, it would generally not be capable of igniting the primer. This type of trigger mechanism is sometimes referred to as a striker fired action.

Some self-loading pistols may vary from the above descriptions due to the large variety of mechanical designs available today. Always be sure to carefully read and understand the instruction manual for each pistol wherever available. If you are unsure or questions still exist, be sure to consult a knowledgeable person.

Air Pistol

The different methods of powering an air pistol can be broadly divided into 3 groups: spring-piston, pneumatic, and CO₂.

1. **Spring-piston:** Spring-piston guns operate by means of a coiled steel spring-loaded piston contained within a compression chamber and separate from the barrel. Cocking the gun causes the piston assembly to compress the spring until the rear of the piston engages the sear. The act of pulling the trigger releases the sear and allows the spring to decompress, pushing the piston forward, thereby compressing the air in the chamber directly behind the pellet.
2. **Pneumatic:** Pneumatic air guns utilize compressed air as the source of energy to propel the projectile. Single-stroke and multi-stroke guns utilize an on-board pump to pressurize the air in a reservoir. Pre-charged pneumatic guns' reservoirs are filled using either a high-pressure hand pump or by decanting air from a diving cylinder. This design, having no significant movement of heavy mechanical parts during the firing cycle, produces lower recoil.
3. **CO₂:** Most CO₂ guns use a disposable cylinder containing pressurized carbon dioxide, although some, usually more expensive models, use larger refillable CO₂ reservoirs like those typically used with paintball markers. CO₂ guns, like compressed air guns, offer power for repeated shots in a compact package without the need for complex cocking or filling mechanisms. The ability to store power for repeated shots also means that repeating arms are possible.

SECTION 10: RIFLE RANGES

Rifle range capabilities will vary from range to range depending upon design and the safety template applied. Many will have features in common such as benches placed at the firing line for seated benchrest shooting and provision for 3P events, while some will be limited to benchrest only. Most will have specific calibre restrictions.

Many of the ranges used by SSAA NSW Branches and Affiliate Clubs either belong to or are shared with other shooting organisations, which may mean working to Range Standing Orders devised or authorised by the body holding the Range Approval Licence which is external to the Branch/Affiliate using a range.

Safe handling of rifles

Refer to Section 8 for further information on the operation and safe handling of the various rifle action types.

Target placement

Targets should be placed -

- so that the shooter can see them;
- directly in front of the shooter parallel to the centre line of the range;
- so that projectiles come to rest in the stop butts.

The conduct of discipline specific rifle matches

Range Officers running or conducting any discipline specific rifle match or event must be fully conversant in the rules governing that match or event. Seek assistance from the SSAA NSW Discipline Chairman responsible for that discipline if you are in doubt.

Outdoor restricted target ranges (NATO template)

The Range Officer must be aware of the type of template in use and ensure that all shooting activities and firearms used comply with the conditions of the Range Approval Licence.

Baffled ranges

The Range Officer must ensure that no shooter can see sky above the stop butt when in the permitted shooting position. This may mean adjustment of either the baffle or firearm height.

Fullbore classification ranges (Classification template with markers gallery or butts)

From time to time SSAA Branches and Affiliate Clubs will conduct shooting at ranges which have a markers gallery (butts). The operation of a range utilizing a markers gallery presents a Range Officer with additional responsibilities to those required for the operation of a regular non-butts type range.

An important consideration for a Range Officer officiating at a butts range is that they must always be conscious of the fact that there is a group of people forward of the firing line manning the butts. The Range Officer must consider the safety of the people in the butts as well as shooters on the mound or firing point and needs to constantly scan between the firing line and the butts as well as watching the firing line.

It is of utmost importance that the Range Officer knows and understands the safe operation of such a range setup. The Range Standing Orders must be adhered to at all times.

SECTION 11: PISTOL RANGES

Pistol range capabilities will vary from range to range depending upon design and the safety template applied. Whilst some may have provision for shooting competition such as Single Action or Service in front of the established firing line this will not always be possible at all. Most will have specific calibre restrictions.

Many of the pistol ranges used by SSAA NSW Branches and Affiliate Clubs either belong to or are shared with other shooting organisations, which may mean working to Range Standing Orders devised or authorised by the body holding the Range Approval Licence which is external to the Branch/Affiliate using a range.

Safe handling of pistols

Refer to Section 9 for further information on the operation and safe handling of the various pistol action types.

Due to the short barrel and the fact that a pistol is usually held or used single handed it is possible to point it in an unsafe direction very easily. A Range Officer must remain vigilant of safe handling and muzzle control by range users at all times.

- A Range Officer must clear each pistol before removal from the firing point. Once the Range Officer calls “*RANGE CLOSED*”, Pistols are not to be handled. Shooters may score and patch or reset targets.
- No Pistol is to be loaded until the range open condition exists or the competitor has been instructed to load by the Range Officer.
- Pistol magazines are not to be loaded other than at the firing line after the command to load has been given by the Range Officer (see rule books).
 - Particular pistol disciplines may be exempted from this rule.
- Holstered pistols cannot be taken from the holster unless instructed to do so by the Range Officer, or in a safe area designated for cleaning or storage.
- Loaded Pistols must be handled with particular care because of the short barrel. The muzzle of a loaded pistol must be held pointed down range at 45° with the shooter facing the target, with the finger off the trigger until the call “*ARE YOU READY*” has been made.
- No loaded pistol is to be placed on the bench.
 - Particular disciplines may allow a loaded pistol to be placed on the ground or other designated surface under direct supervision of the Range Officer (see rule books).

Target placement

Targets should be placed -

- so that the shooter can see them;
- directly in front of the shooter parallel to the centre line of the range;
- so that projectiles come to rest in the stop butts.

The conduct of discipline specific pistol matches

Range Officers running or conducting any discipline specific pistol match or event must be fully conversant in the rules governing that match or event. Seek assistance from the SSAA NSW Discipline Chairman responsible for that discipline if you are in doubt.

Only suitably holster accredited Range Officers may conduct or oversee a match or event requiring the drawing of a loaded pistol from a holster by competitors.

Holster use

In addition to competition use, Branches and Affiliate Pistol Clubs may allow members to use holsters as a means of handgun security whilst on the range under the SSAA NSW "Handgun Holster Policy". Adoption of this policy is at the discretion of the Branch or Affiliate Club.

In any areas that handguns are required to be bagged or cased whilst not in use, holstered carriage will be deemed an infraction of the Branch or Affiliate Club rules and may lead to disciplinary action.

Range Officers must be aware of the authorised use of holsters on their range and remain vigilant in regard to safe handling at all times.

- **Accredited holster users**

The use of holsters in competition is permitted by suitably trained and accredited persons only. A valid holster proficiency card must be presented or visibly displayed/worn whenever competing or practising with a holster. Any person unable to produce proof of valid holster accreditation will not be permitted to shoot from a holster in competition or practice.

- **Non-accredited holster users**

Under no circumstances is a non-holster accredited person to participate in any match, practise session or other shooting activity involving the drawing or carrying of a loaded handgun from a holster.

SECTION 12: SHOTGUN RANGES

Most shotgun ranges will have layouts, shooting positions and general features in common.

Many of the shotgun ranges used by SSAA NSW Branches and Affiliate Clubs either belong to or are shared with other shooting organisations, which may mean working to Range Standing Orders devised or authorised by the body holding the Range Approval Licence which is external to the Branch/Affiliate using a range.

Most shotguns used on the range are break action shotguns, either over and under or less often side by side or single barrel.

Category C shotguns, pump and/or self-loading may be used in clay target events (only) provided the user holds a valid *category C* target licence issued under the genuine reason of target shooting and the firearms are registered for that purpose. *Category C* shotguns may be loaded with no more than 2 rounds of ammunition at any time.

The circumstances under which pump action or self-loading shotguns may be used are extremely limited. *Category B* lever action shotguns are commonly used in Single Action events and hunting activities, but not in clay target events.

Safe handling of shotguns

Refer to Section 8 for further information on the operation and safe handling of the various shotgun action types.

Shotgun events involve the shooter moving between shooting stations during an event. Range Officers must ensure that guns are unloaded prior to turning from the shooting platform and not be loaded until the shooter is standing on the shooting platform and facing downrange.

The conduct of discipline specific shotgun matches

Range Officers running or conducting any discipline specific shotgun match or event must be fully conversant in the rules governing that match or event. Seek assistance from the SSAA NSW Discipline Chairman responsible for that discipline if you are in doubt.

Range setting and targets

Set up and operation will be dependent upon which event is to be shot and will include but not be limited to the following:

- All shooting layouts should be equipped with sufficient traps to conduct a competition that complies with the rules for that championship.
- All targets should be set within the effective range of a 12-gauge shotgun, when loaded with the maximum permissible load 7 shot size.
- All targets must be set to be shootable within 40 metres of the competitor's position and be visible for sufficient time for a competitor to fire up to two aimed shots at each one.

Targets are to be set so that they are clearly visible against the background. Careful consideration needs to be given to the colour of the clay target used, the shooting background and expected light conditions. Where possible, the colour of the targets should contrast with the background. Traps should be set

so that clay targets show sufficient face to competitors to make them readily visible. Targets that remain side on to competitors should be avoided.

Targets should not be set to end their flight in trees. When establishing a layout, traps are to be positioned, and targets presented in such a way, that they afford maximum safety to the trapper, competitor, referee/scorers and any spectators. Targets and fragments should fall well clear of all participants. Shooting cages should be suitable for right and left-handed competitors of all heights.

When establishing layouts consideration should be given to sun position throughout the competition.

Traps

Any trap that will throw a clay target the required distance may be used. In the event of any layout being equipped with a hand cocked or hand loaded trap the Referee must ensure the trapper has sufficient time to reload the trap before the next call is made.

The Shoot Director or Range Officer shall ensure all traps, whether they are manually operated or automatically operated shall have appropriate safety procedures in place. The attention to safety for the manual trap operator and the access of approach to any automatic traps shall be specifically addressed.

While most 'traps' now are operated remotely, on ranges still using manually operated traps there is the added responsibility of ensuring that any persons operating the 'traps' are always in a safe position and protected from falling shot. The Range Officer must also ensure that the spectators are not in an area where they can be injured by pieces of broken clay targets.

In events where the clay target passes over the heads of the shooters, the shooting station should be constructed in such a manner that the shooter cannot swing his gun around to any position which could endanger trappers or spectators.

SECTION 13: DISCIPLINES

The SSAA's shooting competitions - commonly referred to as 'disciplines' - are the backbone of the Association. Our disciplines include the use of many different types of firearms such as shotguns, pistols, revolvers and rifles in rimfire, centrefire, air and black powder configurations, and a variety of targets, depending on the discipline and competition concerned.

The SSAA conducts shooting competitions in all Australian states and territories on a club, state and national level. In addition to this, the Association regularly hosts international shooting competitions in Australia and supports member participation in a large number of international competitions around the world.

The SSAA has developed rules for shooting events across a range of disciplines, including the SSAA Standard Rules and other guides. The SSAA Standard Rules are common to all SSAA disciplines and the current version of the SSAA Standard Rules has precedent over the relevant rules in a SSAA discipline rule book. All current SSAA rule books are available on their respective discipline pages and we encourage members and clubs to download, print and refer to these rule books as needed.

SSAA Range Officers need to understand rules and procedures used in the various disciplines to enable them to run or assist with running of competitions. For further in-depth advice regarding any discipline or match rules it is advised that the Range Officer contact the SSAA NSW Chairman responsible for the discipline to be conducted.

Registered Matches & Championships

All SSAA (NSW) Disciplines hold an annual State Titles. SSAA (NSW) Branches and Affiliate Clubs may apply to host any of these State Titles.

The written application must be received by the Discipline Chairman not later than two (2) days before the date of the SSAA (NSW) Discipline State Titles and annual discipline meeting. The applying Branch or Affiliate Club must be able to prove that the necessary facilities required are available to host the event.

SSAA (NSW) Discipline State Titles are not the property of any SSAA Branch or Affiliated Club and should be held by a different host Branch each year if possible.

SSAA (NSW) Discipline State Titles are advertised in the Australian Shooter and/or State Newsletter.

Sanctioned Competitions

Team selection for some SSAA disciplines requires the competitors to compete in nominated competitions. These matches are identified as sanctioned matches. Some may be State Titles, others may be just registered matches. The NSW Discipline Chairman keeps all information on State Titles, Sanctioned and Registered Matches.

SSAA (NSW) Discipline Chairman is to review the discipline schedule and sanctioned matches that can be used for the selection of the SSAA (NSW) State Team and fulfil selection criteria for SSAA National Teams.

SSAA Discipline Awards

Badges or patches may be claimed for particular levels of achievement in various disciplines. Awards are claimed by application to the relevant SSAA NSW or National Discipline Chairman.

SECTION 14: BRANCH OR CLUB “TRY SHOOTING” EVENTS

In addition to its use in allowing unlicensed persons the ability to handle firearms for training during the licencing process, the P650 declaration is used by shooting organisations across NSW to conduct “Try Shooting” events where unlicensed persons may participate under the direct supervision of a Range Officer or other authorised Branch or Affiliate Club Official.

A person who does not have either a Firearms Licence or a Minor’s Permit may shoot under supervision but must first complete a P650 Declaration Form and be signed off as authorised to shoot by a Club Official or approved Instructor before they can handle a firearm or ammunition. The P650 Form must be signed by a Club Official or approved Instructor upon his/her sighting the photographic ID of the applicant (or in the case of a minor, of the ID of the parent or legal guardian, who must also sign the form).

This offers a great opportunity for Branches and Clubs to hold “Try Shooting” days where members of the general public can be invited to the local range to see what the sport is all about.

Use of the P650 Declaration

The ability to try the sport before committing to the process of licencing is important in attracting new members to the sport. They can observe first hand that shooting is a safe, fun and inclusive sport to all those who participate.

The minimum age permitted is 12 years. Minors must be accompanied by a **parent or legal guardian** whose identification details and consent will be recorded.

Under no circumstances can any person answering YES to any of the compulsory questions handle any firearms or participate in any shooting activities. In this case the form is to be forwarded to the Registry for adjudication. All P650 basic safety lectures conducted are to be restricted to using an unloaded firearm. Once the basic safety lecture and firearm familiarization procedures have completed and the Range Officer considers that the participant is ready for the shooting activity, then both Supervisor and participant may proceed to the firing line and commence that activity.

Remember that all participants are not necessarily the same. Some may have a physical disability, some may have difficulty with language, literacy or numeracy, yet others may have specific learning style preferences. It is of the

upmost importance that all participants are catered for accordingly and that they clearly understand all safety requirements and instructions.

Prior to commencing the basic safety lecture and any shooting activities the Range Officer must inspect the areas to be used for any potential hazards to both the participants and members.

The P650 Declaration form is a legal document. The information contained on a completed P650 Declaration form is personal and confidential and must be kept securely by the Branch or Affiliate Club conducting the P650 activity. Completed P650 Declaration forms must be kept for a minimum of two years and may be requested for inspection by the NSW Police Firearms Registry any time during this period.

P650 Supervision requirements

- Direct supervision must not exceed a ratio of one unlicensed person to one licensed supervisor.
- The licensed supervisor must be present at the firing line and not leave whilst shooting activities are being undertaken by the unlicensed person.
- The licensed supervisor must be able to immediately render assistance to the unlicensed person if required.
- The licensed supervisor must personally convey the firearm and ammunition to be used by the unlicensed person from its place of storage to the firing line.
- The licensed supervisor must personally convey the firearm and ammunition from the firing line to the place of storage upon the conclusion of shooting activities.

Direct supervision (one on one) must always be maintained during any shooting activities.

Never leave any unlicensed persons alone or unattended with a firearm or ammunition under any circumstances.

As a P650 participant Supervisor, safety is your responsibility – the safety of the participants, your safety and public safety. When the participant is shooting, stand next to or slightly behind them on their strong side (preferably) and be ready to render assistance or take control of the firearm immediately if required.

- P650 Supervision requires full attention so do not take your eyes off the participant while ever they are in possession of a firearm. Do not get distracted.

When 'authorising' a suitably licensed person to give direct supervision to someone shooting under a P650 the Range Officer, Branch or Club Official signing off on the form must be confident that the nominated Supervisor is competent, won't leave the unlicensed person alone at any time in possession of firearms or ammunition, and is fully aware of their responsibility. The supervising person must be appropriately licenced and authorised by a Club or Range Official.

The use of any prohibited firearm is not permitted under a P650.

The person supervising a P650 participant is responsible for the safe keeping of any firearm(s) and ammunition used in a P650 basic safety lecture and subsequent shooting activities so be sure to follow proper safe storage as well as safe handling procedures.

The person supervising a P650 participant must always only issue the amount of ammunition to be used at that time and keep all firearms and ammunition under strict supervision . Advise participants that they must not handle or touch any firearm or ammunition until the Supervisor hands it to them or instructs them to pick it up.

Advise all participants that under no circumstances are they to take any live ammunition from the range. They may however take empty brass from the firearms used as a memento, but only with the Supervisor's permission.

A P650 form must be completed on the first occasion by an unlicensed person. Where the person seeks to attend the shooting range on more than one occasion, the Club or Range Official can:

- maintain a register to record the name, address, date of birth and details of photo identification of the unlicensed person, and
- the register must record that there has been no change to the circumstances of the person which would affect the responses provided on their initial P650 form.

You are an ambassador of the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia and our much-loved sport. It is important that each participant has a safe and fun experience. Be positive and always show enthusiasm.

SECTION 15: SSAA INSURANCE COVER

SSAA (NSW) Branches and Affiliated Clubs are covered by a Public Liability Insurance policy held by SSAA (NSW) Inc. A certificate of currency is available from the SSAA (NSW) Inc. office. The Policy covers member to member liability, coaches' indemnity and covers all Club and Branch Officials, as well as

all SSAA organised and controlled events and activities. It is recommended that SSAA Insurance Brokers be contacted on (08) 8332 0281 for further information or insurance advice.

SECTION 16: CONSTITUTION

Each SSAA Branch has its own constitution, modelled on the Model Branch Constitution provided by SSAA (NSW) Inc. Changes to the constitution are required to be endorsed by SSAA (NSW) Inc. before becoming effective.

SECTION 17: GENERAL RANGE INFORMATION*

More often than not a SSAA NSW Branch or Affiliate Club will be sharing or using a range that belongs to another organisation or as a guest of another shooting body. It is most important that the Range Standing Orders provided by the host club for use on that range are read, understood and complied with by all SSAA NSW Range Officers. This also applies to the range approval licence and any conditions placed upon the use of the range.

What is a shooting range?

A shooting range is defined as an area, provided with a firing line, targets and a stop butt, for the controlled practice of shooting and is inclusive of the range danger area template. An approved shooting range is a shooting range approved by the Commissioner of Police pursuant to Part 8 of the Firearms Regulation 2017 and it is an offence to alter an approved shooting range without the approval of the Commissioner of Police.

A shooting range includes the range complex, the firing line, the target area and the range danger area. A range danger area includes those areas of land or water, together with a specified air space, within which danger to life, limb or property may occur arising from the firing of specified ammunition. The dimensions of the range danger area template are dependent on the type of ammunition to be used, the propellant and charge being used, the degree of accuracy of the firearm, the degree of accepted human error and the ground conditions of firing (wind, rain etc).

Ranges are designed to allow shooters to enjoy their sport in safety. This section is a brief overview of this topic, which is discussed in detail in the "Range User Guide", a publication available from the NSW Firearms Registry (available from the police website).

Use of an Approved Range

While safety is the bottom line at all ranges, you will find some differences in range procedures and operation from range to range. A lot depends upon the 'Range Approval' licence as to what calibres, projectile types and events are allowed. Many ranges only allow single loading of firearms and some allow

shooters to clear their own firearm without a Range Officer. It is the responsibility of the shooter to be aware of and comply with the rules of the range that they shoot at.

Shooters should always check with the Range Captain/Manager or Range Officer upon arrival as to what procedures are to be followed on their range and should do this before bringing firearms onto the range. They must comply with any instruction given by a Range Officer.

NSW Range Approval Licence

Each range must have individual approval from both the NSW Police Firearms Registry and the local council in order to operate. Wherever the RDA extends across neighbouring property 'Permissive Shooting Rights' provided by the legal owner of that land is also required.

A NSW Range Licence Approval Licence contains the following:

- Licence number.
- Licence expiry date.
- Licence holder's details.
- Location of the range.
- Length of range fairway(s).
- Type of safety template employed.
- Conditions of approval.
 - Firearm calibres permitted for use on that range.
 - Matches approved for use on that range.
 - Types of targets.
 - Type of projectile.
 - General and/or specific conditions applicable to the range.

The Range Officer should be familiar with the content of this document. A copy of the range approval licence must be clearly displayed at the range. The conditions of this approval must always be abided by.

EPA Controls on the Range

Pollution Control Approval - a copy of this information should be available or displayed at the range. EPA approval is usually contained in the Council DA approval conditions noting operating times of the range, maximum acceptable noise limits and any other conditions. The Range Officer should be familiar with the content of this document.

Range Danger Areas (safety templates)

The purpose of the Range Safety template also known as the Range Danger Area (RDA) is to provide a buffer zone between the range's shooting activities

and local human activity. It provides an area in which overshoots and ricochets can intrude without causing any harm.

An RDA includes those areas of land or water, together with a specified air space, within which danger to life, limb or property may be expected to occur arising from the firing of specified ammunition. The distance a projectile will travel varies according to several factors including ballistic co-efficient, projectile weight, muzzle velocity, calibre, projectile shape, angle of elevation, relative humidity and height above sea level.

Firing Point

The firing point is the position from which firing occurs. It may take the form of a point for an individual firearm, a line for a number of firearms or an area for one or more firearms firing from different positions.

Impact Area

An impact area is an area having designated boundaries within the limits of which all ordnance is to make contact with the ground.

An impact area consists of:

- the target area, which is the point or location at which fire from the firearm is directed;
- the dispersion/human error angle which delineates an area on both sides of the line of fire to cover such eventualities as human error which may include unsteady aim or the effects of meteorological conditions;
- the ricochet area, which is the area in which ricochets of ammunition may be expected to travel.

Stop Butts

It is a general requirement that all ranges apart from shotgun ranges employ some form of stop butt. Their use allows a firer to observe the fall of shot, they ensure that the majority of the lead is captured, simplify the removal of lead residue and the range is made inherently safer because stray bullets are kept to a minimum.

The material used in a stop butt is normally debris free earth. Hard deflective material, such as rocks, is not to be used unless they are covered by at least 1 metre of debris free earth on the forward face. Exposed tyres are prohibited on the forward slope of any stop butt.

Markers Gallery (Butts)

Classification ranges will have a markers gallery located immediately behind the mantlet which houses the target mechanisms. The gallery is protected from small arms fire by an earthen mound known collectively as the mantlet. The gallery provides a protected area for the butts party.

Mantlet

The mantlet is an earthen mound which provides protection to the gallery and reduces the number of ricochets from low shots. The mantlet must be maintained to prevent the formation of scoops caused by low bullets cutting the earth away.

Range Fairway (Floor)

Ideally the range fairway between the firing point/s and the target line should:

- Be level as practical,
- Be free of any large obstructions,
- Be free of any large exposed rock outcrops,
- Not contain any unsheltered bodies of water or rivers/steam,
- Not contain any manmade structure and
- Be clearly marked or identifiable.

Range fairways are not to be used to store any unused targets or extraneous materials. The Range Operator is to ensure that areas devoid from the active range areas are allocated for this role.

Target Line

The target line should be as close as possible to the stop butts to ensure all rounds are captured in that stop butt. Where mid-range targets are employed the targets are to be so positioned that all rounds that pass through the targets culminate in the stop butts. If this criterion cannot be met, then it may be necessary to provide ground baffles to capture these rounds to prevent them ricocheting over or to the sides of the stop butts.

Earthen Berms/Dividing Walls

A berm is described as a manmade mound of earth that is designed to perform some or all of the following roles:

- Prevent the casual movement of people/animals onto the active range area,
- reduce the possibility of an errant shot escaping the active range area,
- separate ranges and adjacent areas to protect people from the activities of an individual range and
- protect buildings or equipment (e.g. Target Sheds).

Red Warning Flags

Cloth Red Warning Flags of a minimum size 120 x 90 cm are to be flown on days of live firing at the entrance to the range complex, at the firing point and atop the stop butts. Permanent red warning flags of any other shape or construction are to be removed or painted a different colour.

Signage and Fencing

The active range area should be fenced, and warning signs provided. The signs should be placed on the fence at distances so set apart so that when standing at one sign, the signs to the left and right of that sign are visible. By doing this it is reasonable to assume that anyone approaching the fence will see at least one sign if not two.

The fence should be that of the standard required of a normal rural fence. This standard can be lowered if the Range Operator can show just reason. It is strongly recommended that a sign depicting the Club's title and a warning "Caution When Red Flag is Flying Shooting is in Progress" is positioned at the entrance to the range to warn any unsuspecting person who inadvertently wanders into the area.

Range Design

Range design will be dependent upon SSAA Branch needs, available area and the range danger zone template that can be used.

If a Branch is considering extending or modifying a new range then contact the SSAA (NSW) Executive Officer who can advise on the selection of acceptable Range Safety Templates, gaining NSW Firearms Registry Approval, EPA approval and completion of required noise pollution tests.

SECTION 18: RANGE TYPES*

Indoor Range

Indoor ranges consist of firing lines, an active range area with a down range Protected Zone (PZ), a ventilation system and a bullet trap (backstop) all of which are contained in a building designed not to allow the escape of any product of shooting a firearm.

Indoor ranges have been designed to allow firearm sports to be carried out in urban areas and afford the shooter maximum shelter. Targets are placed at 25m, 50m or exceptional cases 100m. The interior has been designed to assist in noise control with sound baffling and the target area has an effective bullet entrapment media or mechanism. Most Indoor Ranges cater for pistols, air rifles and small-bore rifles.

Gallery/Mobile Range (Mobile Air Rifle Range or MARR & SHOT Expo range)

Shooters will find examples of this type of range at country shows or fairs with Air Rifles chained to the counter. Projectile entrapment on the air rifle range is by hanging loose heavy weight canvas behind the targets so the energy of the projectile is dissipated by having a flexible loose back drop. Metal Plate targets incorrectly constructed can cause a projectile to rebound.

Baffled Range (Limited danger & no danger area ranges)

Where insufficient land area is available to accommodate a full danger area template, a limit to the free flight of projectiles must be constructed, which must totally impede the passage of projectiles into areas outside the range property boundary.

To create a limited danger or no danger area range there must be a stop butt or wall, either of natural or artificial composition, used in conjunction with a restricted arc of fire. Lead catchers may also be constructed in front of the stop butt in order to reduce pollution and allow for ease of projectile collection and removal. Eyebrow and overhead baffles are constructed to capture inadvertent high shots in conjunction with ground baffles to capture low shots and ricochets. It is a requirement that sidewalls be constructed on both sides of the Range extending from the firing point to and extending into the stop butts.

Outdoor Restricted Target Range (NATO - 7.62, BGR, pistol/rimfire templates)

Their lengths normally vary between 25m and 300m and cater for different type of firearms such as pistols and rifles or in some cases a combination. These ranges have a formal structure such as defined firing points, target lines and a suitably marked active range area/s.

There are a number of these ranges in NSW where, due to the reduced firing angle from the shooter to the target and available safety corridor, only specific firing positions and/or targets are able to be used.

Fullbore Classification Range

Classification ranges allow for a reduced danger area due to the nature of their construction. The template has been reduced in size based on the premise that all firing will take place on a limited arc of fire, from prepared firing points and at penetrable targets. The safety of such a reduced template also depends on a high degree of range discipline, as a bullet in free flight which passes over the crest of the stop butt could exit the RDA by up to 1000m.

Shotgun Ranges

Many shotgun ranges are licensed to the flight characteristics of Number 6 shot and the danger area in this instance is considered by NSW Police Firearms Registry to be an arc of 300 metres in front of the shooter.

Definition of Terms used

<i>Range</i>	The rectangular area where targets are placed having width and distance, e.g. 65m wide x 300m long
<i>Firing Point</i>	The position from which shooting occurs. It may be called a firing mound or firing line.

<i>Target Area</i>	The area of the range where the targets are set up.
<i>Impact Area</i>	The area where the projectile falls to the ground. Stop butts are required here to ensure the projectile does not leave this area.
<i>Line of Fire</i>	The path that projectile will follow when fired down the range.
<i>Dispersion Angle</i>	The angle to the left and right of the central axis of the firearms barrel in front of the shooter to allow for human error.
<i>Ricochet Angle</i>	The angle to the left and right of axis of the firearm barrel in front of the shooter.
<i>Ricochet Boundaries</i>	The width of the danger zone required for projectiles that do not satisfactorily impact with the stop butt. This increases with use of metallic/hard targets.
<i>Ricochet Distance</i>	The total distance a ricochet will travel.
<i>Air Danger Height</i>	The height a ricochet can travel in the air.
<i>Range Templates</i>	Map overlays used to define a danger zone area within which a projectile fired from a firearm on the firing line will finally come to rest. The following possible events are considered when danger zones are designed: primary projectile path, stable ricochet, unstable ricochet and secondary projectile.
<i>Stable Ricochet</i>	Projectile that passes through soft target and impacts with the ground with an exit angle of up to 10°. Further impacts (for 2 nd & 3 rd time) may lead to increased instability due to distortion and flight path variation up to 10° from initial line of flight. A maximum distance of 2.8 km from firing point is possible with very large heavy projectiles.
<i>Unstable Ricochet</i>	Projectile impacts with a solid object causing maximum distortion and fragmentation. The fragments radiate out from the point of impact and can rebound up to 50m meters back toward the firing point. The size, structure, weight and velocity of the projectile affect the behaviour of the ricochet.
<i>Secondary Projectile</i>	Projectile impacts with the remains of a stationary projectile or hard material in a stop butt. The energy on impact causes the stationary object/projectile or fragments to be dislodged and fly in any direction from the point of impact. Rebounded secondary projectiles have been recorded up to 100 meters from the stop butt.

SECTION 19: NSW FIREARMS LEGISLATION – GENERAL INFORMATION*

Many members and visitors believe that Range Officers have a good understanding of NSW firearms legislation and that they can give the correct information when asked questions by patrons at the range. If a Range Officer is unable to correctly answer any question posed by a member or visitor, they must never take a guess or relay hearsay as being the answer. An incorrect answer could cost someone their licence.

If a Range Officer cannot answer any question with certainty, then they must endeavour to find the correct information or direct the person with the question to a reliable source.

All Range Officers should become familiar with the NSW Police Firearms Registry website at www.police.nsw.gov.au/online_services/firearms.

General range supervision requirements

Legislation requires supervision of range users and overall observation of a range whilst ever shooting activities are being conducted.

- A person being supervised must at all times be in the direct line of sight of the supervisor (Range Officer) who must at all times be ready and able to give directions and render immediate assistance to a person being supervised.
- Supervision is to be at a level that the supervisor (Range Officer) reasonably considers to be adequate taking into account all relevant factors.
- The following factors are relevant factors to be taken into account in deciding what is an adequate level of supervision:
 - The general competency of persons being supervised.
 - The proficiency with firearms of persons being supervised.
 - The number of persons being supervised and the number who are actively engaged in shooting.

The effect of the landscape and range configuration on the ability of the supervisor to maintain direct line of sight observation of persons being supervised and to give directions and render immediate assistance.

Offence of trespassing on a shooting range

A person must not enter a shooting range unless the person is the owner or occupier of the shooting range or has the permission of the owner or occupier to enter the range or does so with a reasonable excuse or for a lawful purpose. Unlawful trespass is an offence.

A Range Officer may ask any uninvited persons or anyone behaving in a manner likely to cause harm to themselves or others to leave the range facility and call the police for assistance if necessary.

Minors Permits

This permit authorises the minor to possess and use firearms under the direct supervision of a firearms licence holder for the purpose of receiving instruction in the safe use of firearms or competing in shooting events. This permit does not authorise the acquisition of firearms.

The applicant must be aged between 12 and 18 years of age and the permit will be issued subject to the consent of the parent or legal guardian of the applicant. Proof of legal guardianship is required.

A minor's permit will expire when at 18 years and 3 months of age. An application for a firearms licence will be forwarded before the expiry of the minor's permit.

- The holder of a minor's permit must be supervised at all times whilst shooting or on the firing line.
- There are no attendance requirements attached to a Minors permit.

Firearms Licences

The *NSW Firearms Act 1996* makes it an offence to possess or use a firearm without an appropriate licence or permit. Applicants for a firearms licence must be at least 18 years old and must satisfy the Police Commissioner that they have passed an approved course in firearms safety and that they have a genuine reason for having a licence and they are a fit and proper person to have possession of firearms.

It is the responsibility of all firearms licence holders to be aware of and comply with the firearms laws of NSW and any other state that they may travel to or through. It is an offence to contravene the conditions on the licence.

Personal history checks are conducted on all applicants to ensure that provisions within the legislation, including provisions with respect to public safety are met. Certain criminal history may prevent a person from obtaining a firearms licence in NSW.

The validity of a firearms licence can be checked online by visiting the Registry website.

Genuine reasons for obtaining a firearms licence

Licence holders who use club membership to support their genuine reason must maintain their membership for the duration of their licence otherwise the genuine reason no longer applies, and loss of licence may occur. Club attendance is a condition of the licence and noncompliance may result in loss of licence.

- ***Sport/Target Shooting*** - target shooting activities as a club member on an approved target shooting range.
- ***Recreational Hunting/Vermin Control*** - hunting and vermin control on rural land where the person is the owner/occupier or has permission to shoot from an owner/occupier or an authorised Government Agency or is a member of an approved hunting club.
- ***Primary Production*** - for the business of Primary Production.
- ***Vertebrate Pest Animal Control*** - Contract shooters or officers of prescribed government agencies needing to suppress vertebrate pest animals or primary producers participating in an authorised eradication campaign.
- ***Business or Employment*** - Security Business, security guards, commercial fisherman or other businesses who can demonstrate a genuine occupational need for a firearms licence.
- ***Rural Occupation*** - a person employed or engaged in a rural occupation and who requires the use of firearms
- ***Animal Welfare*** - RSPCA or Animal Welfare League employees, Veterinary Practitioners, employees of the Department of Lands or Livestock Health and Pest Authorities, Owner, transporter, drover or other handler of animals which require the use of firearms.
- ***Firearms Collection*** - a person who is a club member wishing to collect firearms or a genuine historic, thematic, financial or commemorative value.

Licence Categories

Category A covers air rifles, rimfire rifles (other than self-loading), shotgun/rimfire combinations and shotguns (other than self-loading or pump action). Any or all of the above genuine reasons can be used when applying for a Category A licence.

Category B covers muzzle loading long arms, centre-fire rifles (other than self-loading), lever action shotguns (up to 5 round magazine) and shotgun/centre-fire

rifle combinations. Any or all of the above genuine reasons can be used when applying for a Category B licence.

For Licence Categories A & B, target shooters must be a member of an approved target club. Recreational hunters must either be a member of an approved hunting club, and/or submit to the Registry written permission from a landowner giving the licence applicant permission to hunt on their property.

Category C covers self-loading rimfire rifles with a magazine capacity of no more than 10 rounds and pump action and self-loading shotguns with a magazine capacity of no more than five rounds. The only genuine reasons for this category of licence are primary production or clay target shooting (shotgun only).

Category D covers all firearms covered in category C, plus self-loading rimfire rifles with a magazine capacity of more than 10 rounds, self-loading centrefire rifles, and pump, lever or self-loading shotguns with a magazine capacity of more than five rounds. The only genuine reason for this category of licence is vertebrate pest control and applicants must be a professional contract shooter, a primary producer or employed or authorised by a government body.

Category H covers all handguns. The only genuine reasons for an H category licence are target shooting or business or employment. Target pistol shooters must maintain membership of an approved pistol club.

Category G covers a number of firearm categories. This category of licence does not permit the licensee to use or fire any firearms held under this licence. The only genuine reason for this class of licence is collecting, and the applicant must be a member of an approved firearms collecting club. More information on this licence category and other licence categories can be found on the NSW Police website.

Attendance Requirements

Licence holders who use their SSAA membership to support their genuine reason of target shooting, hunting or collecting for their A and/or B category licence are required by the Firearms legislation to make a minimum number of attendances at an appropriately approved club during any twelve-month period.

For target shooting the minimum number of attendances is four, for hunting it is two, and one for collecting. A licensee who is a member of more than one approved club must notify the Police Commissioner in writing of the club with which the member will mainly be involved (their principal club). A licensee participating in activities at a club other than their nominated principal club must notify their principal club, in writing, of those activities within the annual return period of that club (by 31 March each year for SSAA NSW).

Participation in a competitive shooting match, including officiating in such a match, and training or target practice at the club's range can all be counted toward participation requirements.

A person holding a H category licence must maintain membership of an approved pistol club, and make a minimum of six attendances at that, or any other approved pistol club. The persons nominated principal pistol club is responsible for reporting on these attendances.

Approved clubs are required by law to submit an annual report on the attendances of members, as well as to notify the Registry of changes to the register members.

Transportation of Firearms

All licence holders in NSW are subject to the general requirement for safe storage of firearms under the *Firearms Act 1996*. Any person in possession of a firearm must take all reasonable precautions to ensure the firearm is kept safely, is not lost or stolen and does not come into the possession of an unauthorised person.

The Commissioner has determined that 'all reasonable precautions' have been met if category A & B firearms are conveyed in the same manner as category C, D & H firearms.

NOTE: At no time should a firearm be left stored unattended in a motor vehicle unless the firearms are stored in accordance with the requirements of category C, D & H firearms and no other alternative safe storage is available.

- Ammunition is to be kept in a locked container separate from the firearms.
- All category A, category B or firearms must be conveyed in a manner that ensures compliance with legislation.
- The firearm must not be loaded with any ammunition while it is being conveyed.
- While the firearm is being conveyed in a vehicle it must not be visible from outside the vehicle.
- Category C, D & H firearms must be conveyed in accordance with the following requirements:
 - The firearm must not be loaded with any ammunition while it is being conveyed, and it must be kept separate from any ammunition, while the firearm is being conveyed.
 - It must be rendered temporarily incapable of being fired (for example, by removing the bolt or the firing mechanism or by using a restraining device such as a trigger lock), or

- It must be kept in a locked container that is properly secured to, or is within, the vehicle being used for transporting the firearm.

Reasonable precautions to prevent loss or theft would include the security of the vehicle in general; security of the vehicle when left unattended and how long the vehicle is left unattended. Leaving the firearms unattended overnight or for extended periods of time without added security or locking the vehicle in a secure compound would not be considered to be reasonable precautions to prevent loss or theft.

Storage of Firearms

All licence holders in NSW are subject to the general requirement for safe storage of firearms under the *Firearms Act 1996*. Any person in possession of a firearm must take all reasonable precautions to ensure the firearm is kept safely, is not lost or stolen and does not come into the possession of an unauthorised person.

When any firearm is not actually being used or carried, it must be stored in a locked receptacle of a type approved by the Commissioner of Police and that is constructed of hard wood or steel and not easily penetrable. There are specific requirements for the safe storage of firearms for the category A B and C D H licence holders and these may be obtained from the Safe Storage page on the NSW Police Firearms Registry website.

Any ammunition for the firearm must be stored in a locked container of a type approved by the Commissioner. Ammunition may be kept in the receptacle with the firearms but must be kept in a separate locked container within the receptacle.

Failure to meet these requirements is a serious offence with a loss of licence and all firearms, heavy fine and/or 12 months imprisonment as penalty.

Any receptacle must be secure enough to prevent unauthorised entry. If police determine, upon inspection, that the receptacle is easily penetrated, due to the material used, or the type of lock, or the ease of using a crow bar or similar to jemmy open the door, or the positioning of the receptacle, police will not pass the inspection and will advise on the alterations required to make the receptacle compliant.

It is a condition on a licence that the licensee allows inspection by police of the safe keeping and storage facilities for the firearm at a mutually agreed time. If your safe storage requires inspection, police will contact you to arrange a time for the inspection. Upon successful completion of the inspection, police will notify the Firearms Registry and issue you with an inspection event number.

Acquiring and Disposing of Firearms

All firearms (other than some particular types of antique firearm) must be registered, and all transfers of ownership must be processed through a licensed firearms dealer. Before acquiring or purchasing a firearm, you must have an appropriate firearms licence and a permit to acquire that type of firearm. Permit to acquire application forms are available from clubs, firearms dealers or by contacting the NSW Police Firearms Registry on 1300 362 562 or email at http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/online_services/firearms The legislation imposes a 28 day cooling off period for the issue of a permit to acquire, however the waiting time has been reduced in certain situations.

- Unregistered firearms must be immediately surrendered to police. It is unlawful to be in possession of an unregistered firearm.
- It is an offence for a person to possess or use a firearm without the authority of a licence or permit.
- A person must not supply, acquire, possess or use a firearm that is not registered.
- It is an offence if the firearm is used for any other purpose than the genuine reason for obtaining the licence.

Acquiring and Disposing of Ammunition

You cannot purchase or possess ammunition unless you are over 18 years of age and hold a licence or permit authorising you to possess or use a firearm that takes that ammunition. All ammunition sales and purchases must be conducted through a licensed firearms dealer or the Club Armourer, or ammunition may be purchased from the holder of an Ammunition Purchase and Sell permit (e.g. sports store).

Penalties for Breach of the Act and Regulation

Penalties for breaching the Firearms Act or Regulations are severe, ranging from fines to suspension or revocation of a firearms licence for a period of 10 years, to imprisonment for up to 20 years.

SECTION 20: RANGE OFFICER ACCREDITATION

Competencies Required

- Demonstrate knowledge of the safe operation and clearance of a magazine rifle, muzzle loading rifle, break action rifle or shotgun (category A & B licensees), revolver and self-loading pistol (category H licensees).
- Demonstrate control of the danger area of the range through the appropriate use of the correct signs, calls or flags; clear and understandable range open and closed procedures, correct target placement and knowledge of range danger zone boundaries.

- Demonstrate knowledge of the responsibilities and powers of a Range Officer.
- Demonstrate knowledge of NSW Police Firearms Registry Shooting Range Approval details regarding permitted calibres, projectile types and target materials and placement and any other conditions.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the content and relevance of Environmental Protection Agency approval, including hours of operation and acceptable noise limits.
- Demonstrate knowledge of firearms licensing law in NSW in regard to obtaining a licence, attendance requirements, safe storage requirements and transportation of firearms.

Assessment

Assessment will include both theory and practical components.

The theory component of the assessment will be conducted by the instructor at the conclusion of the course. It will comprise a theory exam comprised of multiple choice questions.

The practical assessment will need to be conducted by either the Range Officer trainer or a Senior Range Officer at the student's home range. The student will be observed running a range, and the assessor will make observations and mark competencies observed on the check list provided.

The practical assessment is to occur over a period of 3 separate range control activities.

SECTION 21: IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

[SSAA \(NSW\) Inc.](#)

For general shooting and club related information SSAA (NSW) Inc. can be contacted at:

Postal address: PO Box 1001 St Mary's NSW 1790

Phone: (02) 8889 0400

Email: admin@nsw.ssa.org.au

Website: <http://www.ssaansw.org.au/>

[NSW Police Firearms Registry](#)

For general shooting and club related information the NSW Police Firearms Registry can be contacted at:

Phone: 1300 362 562

Email: clubs@police.nsw.gov.au

For further legislative information and fact sheets please visit the NSW Police Firearms Registry website at -

http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/online_services/firearms

*Acknowledgement**

- *Sections 17 & 18 contain excerpts from NSW FAR Range Users Guide*
- *Section 19 contents are excerpts from NSW FAR fact sheets and legislation*