

SPORTING SHOOTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA. (TASMANIA) INC.



RANGE OFFICER MANUAL. Ver. 01/2011

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RANGE OFFICER MANUAL.

CONTENTS.

	INTRODUCTION.	Pages	2 - 4.
Section 1.	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RANGE OFFICER.	Pages	5 - 8.
Section 2.	RANGE COMMANDS.	Pages	9 - 11.
Section 3.	CLEARING OF FIREARMS.	Pages	12 - 16.
Section 4.	RESPONSE TO RANGE INCIDENTS.	Pages	17 - 19.
Section 5.	VARIATIONS FOR RIFLE, SHOTGUN AND PISTOL.	Pages	20 - 22.
	CONCLUSION	Pages	23 - 24.

Appendices

- A) Range Officer Information and Guidelines**
- B) Range Officer Registration Form**
- C) SSAA (Tas) Inc. Accident / Incident Notification Form**
- D) SSAA (Tas) Inc. Standard Range Rules**

ABBREVIATIONS USED

Act	Tasmanian Firearms Act 1996 (as amended)
Regs	Regulations made under the Firearms Act
RO	Range Officer
Range Approval	Range Approval issued under the Tasmanian Firearms Act 1996
SRO	Senior Range Officer
Sect	Section of the Act
SSAA	Sporting Shooters Association of Australia
SSAA (Tas) Inc	Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Tasmania) Inc

REFERENCES

Tasmanian Firearms Act 1996 (as amended)
SSAA Discipline Rule Books
SSAA Insurance Manual

FOREWARD

As a volunteer organisation involved in the management of property and activities, it is essential that risk management be applied and managed effectively and that safe practices are adopted and maintained on the Associations firing ranges.

A core function of this is the supervision by appointed people of on range activities using firearms. The people thus appointed require experience and appropriate training to achieve the level commonly referred to as Range Officer (RO).

This course emphasises the primary role of an RO; the management and conduct of safe, orderly target shooting on a firing range. This goal can only be achieved by standardisation of training, the inclusion of relevant occupational health and safety practices and the acknowledgement of a “duty of care” on the range

RANGE OFFICER MANUAL.

INTRODUCTION.

This Manual has been produced in order to standardise the training of Range Officers (RO) for the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Tasmania) Incorporated (SSAA (Tas) Inc).

The Manual is designed to be used as an aid for Qualified Senior Range Officers (SRO) from each Branch throughout Tasmania in the training and qualification of Range Officers (ROs) at Branch level.

In utilising this Manual and following the procedures and instructions contained herein, a consistent standard will be maintained and all ROs will give Range Commands in the same form and manner. This will result in shooters being able to attend at any Range in Tasmania and be familiar with the procedures followed at that Range.

The manner in which ROs conduct their Ranges will directly affect the image our Association projects to the users of our facilities and the enjoyment or otherwise of people who attend our Ranges. It is incumbent on us to maintain a high and consistent level of skill in our ROs to ensure that we provide a safe and enjoyable environment for shooting at our Ranges.

To facilitate the effective use of this Manual all Branches will be required to nominate an existing RO with appropriate experience as the **Senior Range Officer** for that Branch. For those Branches without any ROs they can send the nominated person to the nearest Branch who has a SRO who will, using the information in this Manual, qualify that person, who can then utilise the Manual to further qualify persons at their home Branch. In this way it should be possible for each Branch to train a sufficient number of ROs to effectively run their respective Ranges without having to continually rely on a small number of ROs to run the Ranges as is the current practice.

It is stressed that this Manual is designed to train and qualify persons to act as ROs and is not designed or intended to teach persons in-depth details of the workings of firearms or the procedures for running individual disciplines. The purpose of this Manual is to give the basic knowledge necessary for an RO to safely supervise a match in any discipline or with any type of firearm.

It is NOT the prime function of the RO to actually run the shoot; that is the function of a Referee supplied by the discipline involved. In fact in a number of disciplines the person running the event is required to leave the Firing Line / Shooting Area to check targets, etc, and this is not consistent with the duties of an RO.

One of the main problems experienced by Branches is getting people to become ROs. This has at least in part been due to having expected ROs to also know the intricacies of various disciplines. By separating ROs from discipline referees the duties of an RO are simplified and more related to safety on the Range and Branches should have more members prepared to take on the duties of ROs. By utilising this Manual and giving the Branches the opportunity to train their own ROs without having to travel long distances for instruction the other main problem is also hopefully overcome in gaining sufficient numbers of ROs.

The number of shooters to be under the control of an RO on a particular Range shall be at the discretion of the SRO nominated on the day.

This number may vary with the physical characteristics of the particular Range, Disciplines being shot and the type and skill of shooters utilising the Range on that occasion.

It has for some time been the responsibility of each Branch which has access to a Range to have a set of Range Rules applicable to the particular Range that they utilize. A copy of those Rules should be posted on each Range and a copy **must** be available for the use and information of ROs either operating from or visiting that Range and likely to be utilised as ROs. This is most likely to happen for larger shoots conducted by Branches having limited numbers of qualified ROs. If all future ROs are trained using this Manual then they should be able to operate on other Ranges in conjunction with local ROs without any problems arising from different commands, methods, etc.

Prior to commencing instruction of prospective ROs the Instructor (SRO for the Branch) should introduce themselves to the class if not already known and explain the layout of the course and that at the completion of the Theory section they will be tested on their knowledge. After successful completion of the Theory component each person will be required to run a Firing Line under the observation of the Instructor prior to being passed an approved as an RO.

It is envisaged that there will be a controlling body at State level which will periodically check the level of ability of ROs throughout Tasmania, improve the courses available and deal with any problems or queries in relation to the Instruction and Approvals of ROs.

The Manual itself is set out with the information to be given to the classes followed by a précis for the Instructor of what **must** be known by the class at the completion of each Section.

SECTION ONE. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RANGE OFFICER.

No shooting may be conducted on a S.S.A.A. (Tas.) Range unless a qualified RO is present and has given the appropriate approval to commence. The RO must be immediately identifiable to persons on the Range, preferably by an RO jacket or similar.

The RO must ensure that the Range Attendance Book has been filled out by all Range attendees

The RO, or (where more than one RO is needed for the Firing Line) the designated SRO for that Firing Line, has the final responsibility for the safe and efficient conduct of shooting on the Range.

In relation to Safety matters the RO has total authority on the Range and has the power to expel any person or persons who do not obey all Range Rules or who jeopardise the safety of any person on the Range. It should be remembered, however, that expulsion would be utilised as a last resort after first having cautioned the offender and that caution having failed to be effective in remedying the situation.

Any dispute with a decision or instruction of the RO must in the first instance be brought to the attention of the SRO for the Branch. If the dispute cannot be resolved there then it must be brought before the Committee of the Branch for resolution.

On commencement of duty at a Range it is the responsibility of the RO/SRO for the day to check the physical features of the Range and ensure that it is safe to use. They must check that all flags are displayed and other visual and / or audible warning devices as required by the Range Rules or Range Approval are operative.

If the Range is fitted with flashing lights or audible signals for Cease Fires, check that they are functioning correctly and that they can be operated from a position where the RO has a clear and unobstructed field of view of the firing line.

The RO should confer with the discipline referee in relation to any matters affecting the running of the firing line, such as shooting from various positions. It is the responsibility of the discipline referee to conduct the competition side of the shoot but the RO has final say in matters of Safety. Regardless of the discipline being conducted the RO must remain on the Firing Line at all times during the running of a shoot when firearms are on the Line.

The RO is responsible for the calling of all Cease Fires and other instructions to shooters. Where a particular discipline is being conducted this may be delegated to the Referee by the RO but the RO must ensure that safety procedures are not breached and may override the Referee in the event of any breach of safety. The RO must be familiar with the layout of the particular Range prior to commencing duty there.

It is acceptable for an RO to also be the Referee as long as the referee duties do not require the RO to leave the Firing Line and the referee duties do not interfere with the RO duties. For example in timed shoots the RO must be watching the shooters, **not** the timer.

The RO is also responsible for the reporting of any Range incidents as per the S.S.A.A (Tas.) Policy on Range incidents.

In the event of an incident / accident on the firing line the RO will **immediately** call a **Cease Fire** and render such situation as safe as possible for all concerned.

If such an incident results in personal injury medical assistance shall be rendered as soon as possible. Range Rules should lay down the responses required and Emergency Services contact telephone numbers. The Range address and directions on how to find it may need to be included to aid Emergency vehicles ability to respond. It may be prudent to send someone to the front entrance to ensure Emergency vehicles find the Range quickly.

Make no promises to bystanders, victims or perpetrators during or after an incident. It may prejudice any claim and render the Club liable.

Write up a brief and accurate recollection of the incident as soon as possible in the Range Report book.

The RO shall within seven (7) days of the incident, forward to the State Secretary a written report of such an incident together with any corroborative evidence and / or names and addresses of any witnesses.

Where a breach of Safety has been committed by a shooter the RO shall issue a warning to the shooter.

Should such a warning be ignored or the breach of safety be repeated the RO shall immediately order the offender from the Firing Line and, if necessary, off the Range.

A report of the incident and the name and address of the offender (with membership number if applicable) shall be forwarded to the State Secretary within seven (7) days.

It is the responsibility of the RO to ensure the firearms of each shooter on the firing line are checked and cleared prior to any person moving forward of the firing line or any person removing a firearm from the firing line. This may be done by delegated persons reporting to the RO

When calling a Cease Fire for any reason other than for persons to go forward of the Firing Line it is the ROs discretion whether shooters must clear their firearms and move back from the Firing Line. In cases such as prone shooting such a command can cause considerable delay to shooting and if shooters are to clear their firearms and move back, that instruction should be included with the Cease Fire instruction.

Unlicensed and beginner shooters should have One on One instruction and supervision while shooting and guidance on range etiquette when not shooting. If being sponsored by a member that person should be briefed to maintain the guest's safety, answer questions and provide general guidance.

The RO is also responsible for the safe conduct of shooters off of the Firing Line, and when not actually engaged in duties in relation to shooters on the Firing Line a look around the Range area in relation to the carriage of firearms, etc, should be conducted.

Most Range Rules should refer any problems found on the Range to an RO in the first instance. The RO should check that a copy of the local Range Rules is clearly displayed around the Range and that they are conversant with these Rules. It is good policy if conducting duties on an unfamiliar Range to request a copy of the local Range Rules from the Branch where you are conducting RO duties.

MUST KNOWS FOR SECTION ONE.

The RO has total control on the Range in relation to matters of Safety.

The RO may caution any person they believe may have contravened, or know to have contravened any Range Rule or breached any safety matter.

The RO may also expel any person from the Range if they believe such action is necessary in the circumstances.

Any problems with a decision of an RO shall be taken up firstly with the SRO for that Branch and if the matter cannot be resolved then it must be referred in writing to the Committee of the Branch at an ordinary meeting for a decision.

The RO must check the physical layout of the Range and the Safety equipment prior to the commencement of shooting and familiarise themselves and others with the Range Rules.

The RO must ensure that the Range Attendance Book has been filled out by all Range attendees

The RO should confer with the discipline referee in relation to any specialised shoots to be undertaken on the Range.

The RO has precedence over the discipline referee on matters affecting safety.

The RO is responsible for safety and compliance with Range Rules on and off the Firing Line.

SECTION TWO. RANGE COMMANDS.

It is of the utmost importance that the Range Commands given on all S.S.A.A (Tas.) Ranges are consistently given in the same format. If this is not done then members and other shooters who visit more than one Range may become confused about what to do in different situations.

A variance in commands given will also make it very difficult for an RO from one Branch to conduct duties at another Branch where there are different commands routinely given and the local shooters have become used to the local version of the commands.

As an organisation projecting an image of professionalism it is incumbent on the S.S.A.A. (Tas.) to have consistent commands used on all Ranges and in fact the commands set out in this Section shall be stipulated by S.S.A.A. (Tas.) for use on affiliated full member Ranges.

Generally, ranges and disciplines will operate on a safe time principle. This will involve the regular calling of Cease Fires to enable the targets to be scored/ patched/changed. During these Cease Fires all firearms must be rendered safe by leaving open the actions and removing all magazines and ammunition. At all times the barrel must be pointing down range towards the targets. During a Cease Fire where participants move forward of the firing line, all other shooters must move away from firearms left on the firing line, preferably beyond a marked line on the Firing Line. **Firearms must not be handled.**

On the return of all persons from down-range of the shooting line a further command may be given to allow the removal of firearms and the rotation of shooting squads from the Firing Line.

A **Standard Course of Fire** should be conducted using the following Commands and Procedures.

Prior to the commencement of fire explain any special rules that may apply.

Where a competition is being run in a particular discipline then the discipline referee will give instructions on the next course of fire for the competitors.

The Range Officer or delegated persons will then conduct a thorough visual check down range to ensure it is clear of all people and announce **in a loud clear voice:**

"RANGE OPEN "or "THE RANGE IS OPEN"

This indicates that the Range has been checked and is safe for use. Firing may commence in accordance with the rules of the discipline being conducted

When a normal Cease Fire is to be called, operate the audible alarm and / or visual alarm if available and wait for a few seconds for the final shots. Then announce **in a loud clear voice:**

"CEASE FIRE"

"Unload and show clear"

Conduct a check of all firearms at the Firing Line to ensure all firearms are unloaded and safe. Take special note of non-removable magazines and self-loading firearms without a hold open device, these should have a coloured peg or block inserted to hold the action open. If necessary a

manual as well as visual check should be conducted. The Range Officer or delegated person should call "**Clear**" after checking each firearm and when satisfied that it is in an unloaded and safe condition.

When satisfied that all firearms are in a safe condition, that all shooters are clear of the firearms and the range is safe, announce **in a loud clear voice**:

"RANGE CLEAR."
"RANGE CLOSED"
"Move forward score and patch"

"Range Clear" indicates that the range is safe, all firearms are unloaded and no one is at their firearms.

"Range Closed" indicates the range is not in use. It is safe to move forward when commanded

It is good practice to remind shooters to change their targets and return as quickly as possible. Arguments or disagreements should be removed from the firing line/ target area. Most disciplines have a protest action within their rules.

Once all persons have returned from down range of the Firing Line and the Range is safe shooters can be given permission to remove their firearms and squads can be rotated.

Announce **in a loud clear voice**:

"RANGE CLEAR"
"Remove firearms from the Firing Line. Next squad move forward."
"RANGE OPEN"

In the event of an **emergency**, such as a person entering the impact area, **immediately** call out **in a loud clear voice**:

"Cease Fire. Cease Fire. Cease Fire."
Any audible and/or visual warning devices should be activated.

In the running of a discipline competition the calling of Cease Fires may be given in conjunction with the discipline referee. This will particularly apply to timed events.

All commands given by the RO must be given in a loud clear voice. All persons on the firing line should be wearing ear protection so it is extremely important that commands are given in a manner that all shooters can hear and understand. If more than one RO is being utilized then commands should be repeated by the other ROs to the shooters for which they are responsible. This is another reason that Range Commands must be consistent.

When more than one RO is required on the Firing Line, those ROs must report to the designated SRO that all firearms checked by them are clear.

The manner in which the RO conducts the Firing Line will have a great effect on the enjoyment or otherwise for the people using our Ranges. At all times the RO should be polite and courteous. When action must be taken regarding a breach of rules the RO should be firm and fair in dealing with the offender. A reasoned, firm approach is much better than shouting at the person at fault and if the error is due to lack of knowledge or experience, then remedial action may be as simple as some advice on proper conduct to prevent future incidents.

MUST KNOWS FOR SECTION TWO.

Range commands must be consistent across all ranges.

Cease Fires must be called regularly to allow for scoring/changing of targets and rotation of shooting squads.

The Standard Course of Fire Commands and Procedures

Emergency Cease Fire Procedure.

All firearms must be checked by an RO and where necessary a manual check should be conducted to ensure the firearm is unloaded and in a safe condition.

All commands must be given in such a manner that all shooters on the Firing Line can hear and understand them.

SECTION THREE. CLEARING OF FIREARMS.

ROs are required to be capable of checking firearms on the Firing Line and other areas of the Range to ensure they are in a safe condition and clear of ammunition. You are not expected to be an expert on makes and models of firearms. You are expected however to have a basic knowledge of the different types of firearm actions, their basic functions and states of readiness and how to clear and make them safe.

All firearms can be operated safely provided they are safely constructed and in good condition, with their firing and safety mechanisms adjusted to operate correctly and loaded with the correct ammunition. It is dangerous to use any firearm not in safe working order, check safety catch function, trigger engagement/pressure, barrel condition and general firearm condition if you have doubts.

However, variations in the design of actions, magazines, safety catches and firing mechanisms make some firearm designs more prone to accidents if handled carelessly or without adequate knowledge of their mechanical functions. These differences in design may also make it more difficult for the RO to check the firearms for safety and to clear the firearms on the Firing Line.

LOCK, STOCK AND BARREL.

This is a commonly used expression to describe the different parts of a firearm.

LOCK: This is the mechanism which fires the cartridge. Today this is more commonly referred to as the ACTION.

STOCK: This is the part by which the firearm is held and comprises of the butt and fore-end. Most commonly made of wood but synthetic materials are becoming more common.

BARREL: This is the steel tube through which the projectiles are fired.

BASIC FUNCTIONS OF FIREARMS.

There are **seven basic functions** of a firearm and these basic functions can be applied to all of the different action types available.

FEEDS: Inserts a live round or cartridge into the chamber.

COCKS: Compresses the firing pin main spring and engages the firing pin to the trigger mechanism.

LOCKS: Locks the bolt tight to the breech ready to fire when the trigger is pulled.

FIRES: Discharges one round.

UNLOCKS: Unlocks the bolt from the breech face.

EXTRACTS: Removes the case (fired or unfired) from the chamber.

EJECTS: Throws the case (fired or unfired) clear of the firearm.

The following lists are of different design features commonly found in modern firearms, in order of ease of safe operation and ability to be simply cleared.

BREAK ACTION - SINGLE SHOT.

Once fired this action is safe until reloaded. It can be easily checked and carried safely. It has the added advantage of being able to be seen to be safe from a distance. This action should be carried 'broken' at all times on the Range when not at the Firing Line prepared to commence shooting.

BOLT OR LEVER ACTION - SINGLE SHOT.

Once fired this action is safe until reloaded, which requires the manual placing of a cartridge in the breech. These actions should be carried on the Range with the actions 'open' and in the case of a bolt action the bolt should be removed if possible. Lever action firearms do not have removable bolts so if possible a coloured peg or block should be placed in the open action to show the firearm is safe.

BOLT, PUMP (SLIDE) OR LEVER ACTION REPEATING.

Once fired these firearms only require the action to be cycled to chamber another round from a number of rounds stored in a magazine. It is easy for the shooter to cycle the action and then forget they have done so. More modern actions of these types have become quite well enclosed and this creates two problems. Firstly, it becomes more difficult to check if the firearm is loaded. This can involve attempting to look into dark internal areas to ensure that the magazine is empty. In some cases it is impossible to check that the magazine is empty without stripping the firearm. Secondly, whilst they may be better protected from rain or dirt, they are harder to clean and any stuck rounds are more difficult to clear. If this involves live ammunition, extreme caution must be exercised.

These actions are harder for the RO to deal with. Some of these actions cock on opening and some cock on closing. For this reason, among others, it is important that if the bolt can be removed then this should be done. If not then the action should be locked open where possible or held open by means of a coloured peg where not possible manually. They should always be carried with the action open and bolt removed where possible. The bolt action repeating firearm will be the most common rifle ROs will be involved with on our Ranges.

BREAK ACTION - MULTI SHOT. (HAMMERED & HAMMERLESS)

Once fired these actions still have another round loaded ready to fire without any working of the action.

These are a very common action amongst shotguns, but are also available in rifles and rifle and gun combinations. They only require, especially in the case of single trigger firearms, the trigger to be pulled to fire a second shot.

This is probably the most common action used in old shotguns so it is important to note that many old shotguns still in circulation were not manufactured to use modern smokeless powders.

Some have old 'Damascus' type barrels which will not stand up to modern cartridges. If, as RO, you are doubtful as to whether an old shotgun is suitable for use on the Range then insist on a Certificate from a licensed Gunsmith stating that the firearm is suitable for use with modern cartridges before allowing its use on the Range.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC OR SELF LOADING ACTION.

Once fired this action automatically reloads ready to fire the next shot until the magazine is empty. This is the most difficult firearm for the RO to deal with. Due to their means of operation the action is enclosed and difficult to check to be clear of ammunition. The difficulty with these firearms is compounded by the fact that some self-loading firearms are cocked and ready to fire with the action open (eg. Gevarm) whilst most are cocked and ready to fire with the action closed. ROs must note the type of firearm mechanisms on their range and have them carried and handled accordingly. In general they should be carried with the actions open and if not able to be manually locked open then held open with a coloured peg or block.

BLACK POWDER MUZZLE LOADING

Self explanatory. Generally Flint or Percussion

MAGAZINES.

There are three main types of magazines utilized by modern firearms. They are listed below in order of preference for safe handling.

BOX - REMOVABLE: As the magazine can be removed from the firearm this type allows for much easier unloading and checking of the safety of the firearm.

BOX - FIXED. This type can be fairly easily checked but is harder to unload, especially if it is a fixed-base type which may require the cartridges to be cycled through the action.

TUBULAR. This type of magazine is hard to unload and very often requires the cartridges to be cycled through the action. It is also usually very difficult to verify that they are unloaded - the cartridge follower must be sighted - as they are prone to hanging up a cartridge through either damage or fouling. This cartridge can later be bumped free allowing the firearm to be inadvertently loaded. When clearing firearms on the Firing Line it is often necessary to work the action a number of times to ensure the firearm is unloaded as it is not always possible to sight the cartridge follower.

As can be seen from the information already given, the utmost care must be taken when ROs check and clear firearms on the Range. For this reason it is stressed that both a **visual** and **manual** check may be needed if the RO is to be satisfied that each firearm is unloaded and safe. Look first, then if possible, feel with a finger to be sure. In this way each time you check a firearm you are actually double checking it. Some actions are difficult to check visually so by also conducting a manual check by feeling inside the action the check is more thorough and reduces the likelihood of mistakes.

AMMUNITION.

It is important that ROs are aware that many incorrect calibre cartridges can be chambered and fired in a rifle and to a lesser extent in a pistol. This can cause results ranging from split case necks and gas leaks to totally demolished firearms and extensive injuries to any person in the immediate area.

The mixing of different gauges of shotgun ammunition can also have catastrophic results as some of the smaller gauges can slip down into the forcing cones of a 12 gauge, allowing a 12 gauge cartridge to chamber. Firing can cause both extensive damage and serious injury if the shotgun is fired in that condition.

Many Range Approvals issued under the Act have velocity and calibre limits imposed as part of the approval. ROs must be aware of such restrictions.

Tracer, Armour Piercing and similar ammunition types are strictly prohibited on most SSAA Ranges.

SAFETY CATCHES.

Safety Catches are often incorrectly believed to be the basis of firearm safety. They are at best a supplement to safe handling. Safety Catches are mechanical devices and as such are prone to wear and failure. A firearm can only be considered safe when it is unloaded and the action is open. As an RO, every firearm must be treated as if it does not have a safety catch and, in fact, a number of competition firearms do not possess a safety catch. Until physically checked treat every firearm as loaded.

MUST KNOWS FOR SECTION THREE.

ROs are responsible for checking each firearm on the Firing Line, EITHER personally or by delegation.

Seven Basic Functions of Firearms.

Differences between the different types of actions.

Differences between different types of magazines.

Be aware that mixtures of ammunition can be dangerous.

Safety Catches are not to be relied on.

Actions must be open at all times off the Firing Line.

When clearing firearms both a VISUAL and MANUAL check may be required, depending on the firearm type. The RO must ensure that each firearm is clear.

SECTION FOUR. RESPONSE TO RANGE INCIDENTS.

This matter has already been discussed in Section One - Responsibilities of the RO. However this area involves certain administrative procedures to be followed in accordance with the S.S.A.A. (Tas) Policy on Range Incidents. That policy is detailed below.

1. All firing Ranges are to be under the control of a Qualified RO whilst in use, unless other arrangements are made in the following situations.
 - (a) Where the Range is utilised by individuals alone - may only apply in country branches.
(The Range Rules of most country branches would preclude this from happening)
 - (b) Where Ranges are used by other bodies for shooting sports. (Item 2 below applies)
(i.e. T.S.A.R.A, A.C.T.A., Pistol Clubs and / or Police - Commercial users.)
2. IRRESPECTIVE of what group is using the Firing Line an RO shall observe the range rules and control the safety aspects of shooting on that Firing Line.
3. In the event of an incident / accident on the Firing Line the RO will immediately call a Cease Fire and render such situation as safe as possible for all concerned - common sense shall be the rule.
4. If such an incident results in personal injury, the injured person or persons shall be made comfortable and stabilised (within constraints of the environment).
5. Medical assistance will be rendered as soon as possible.
6. The RO shall **within seven days** of the incident, forward to the State Secretary a **written report** of such incident together with any corroborative evidence and / or names and addresses of any witnesses. *The report shall remain the property of the Association and shall not be provided to any other party without the permission of the Insurer or a legal requirement to do so.*
7.
 - (a) Where a breach of safety has been committed by a shooter the RO shall issue a verbal warning to the shooter.
 - (b) Should such a warning be ignored or the breach of safety is repeated the RO shall immediately order the offender from the Firing Line and off the Range premises.
 - (c) A written report, including the name and address of the individual (Membership number if applicable) shall be forwarded to the State Secretary **within seven days of the incident.**
8. The RO shall be the final arbiter of safety whilst in charge of the Firing Line.

As can be seen from the Range Incident Policy there are a number of occasions where the RO may have to make out a report detailing the circumstances surrounding incidents on the Range, and their responses to these incidents.

For this reason it is good practice at all times whilst acting as an RO to carry a small note book and pen so as to be able to take notes of any incidents whilst they are still fresh in your memory. This will also be invaluable in recording details of any witnesses.

In cases where a minor breach of the Range Rules is detected or minor safety breaches and the RO believes it is due to lack of knowledge or experience, a quiet explanation of the correct procedure will usually correct the situation.

It is important that ROs carry out their duties in a friendly manner and that commands and instructions are given clearly. You are an ambassador for the S.S.A.A. and your actions will reflect on the Branch and the Association.

One of the most difficult and dangerous situations that an RO may have to deal with is a **stuck live round** in a firearm. If a live round becomes stuck in a firearms chamber, the worst thing you can do is try to bump it out with a cleaning rod, a length of wire, or a similar implement.

This practice can cause the cartridge to ignite. The projectile will then impale itself on the rod at some risk of injury to the holder. Fragments of brass, powder particles and hot gas may be forced from the open breech. The case head in particular can become a lethal projectile. Since the mid 1980s at least two people have died after being struck by one.

Obviously we need to know two things: How to eliminate the common causes of stuck cartridges and what to do if presented with one on the Firing Line.

Avoid the use of cartridges loaded by other people.

Watch for shooters using excessive force to chamber or extract rounds. If it is difficult to chamber then it could be difficult to extract, and a stuck cartridge could result.

If the ejector breaks or pulls away leaving a live round jammed in the chamber, keep safety paramount and proceed carefully.

S.S.A.A. Policy on stuck live rounds as set at the National Conference in March, 1995, is as follows:

“In the event of a shooter experiencing a jammed live round (stuck live case), the firearm is to be made safe by removal of the bolt if applicable, or by some other method if the firearm is not a bolt action. The Range Officer is to ensure that the firearm is immediately removed to a safe place. Where applicable, the bolt is to remain out of the firearm whilst the stuck case is in the chamber. It is recommended that the firearm be taken to the nearest gunsmith as soon as possible. Under no circumstances is the removal of the case to be attempted or undertaken on Range property.”

This Policy must be complied with on all SSAA Ranges.

MUST KNOWS FOR SECTION FOUR

All firing Ranges are to be under the control of a qualified RO.

S.S.A.A. (Tas) Policy on Range Incidents.

Policy for dealing with a stuck live round.

SECTION FIVE.

VARIATIONS FOR RIFLE, SHOTGUN AND PISTOL.

RIFLE.

The information in this Manual is generally based on rifle shooting

The particular disciplines shot will not affect the relevance of the basic information contained herein as to the duties of the RO. In events run in disciplines where the shooters move position rather than the targets being set at varying distances (such as Big Game Rifle Club events or Service Pistol match) then the Firing Line becomes the position at which the shooters are firing for that particular part of the event. The safety rules do not change and the role of the RO is identical regardless of the point where the shooters are firing from.

The RO will have to be even more vigilant, particularly when moving back from the closer ranges to the further ranges. However, if the basic rules outlined in this Manual are followed, then the firearms, when carried between firing positions will have been cleared and carried in a safe and proper manner.

When disciplines involve shooting from the prone position ROs should take into account the difficulty of taking up a proper prone position when calling for Cease Fires which involve the moving away from firearms. At no stage, however, shall persons be allowed to move down range whilst shooters or other persons are handling firearms.

SHOTGUN.

Most of the shotgun events conducted on S.S.A.A. (Tas) Ranges involve the shooter moving between shooting stations during the course of an event. In events such as Trap (DTL), High and Low Field, and Tower, the Firing Line includes Firing Positions 1 through 5.

ROs must ensure guns are broken after each target has been taken and the shooter moves from /to each firing point 1 through to 5

ROs must ensure gun is broken and cartridges removed when shooter moves from Firing Position 5 back around to Firing Position 1.

In Sporting Clays the RO must ensure the gun is broken and all cartridges removed before the shooter turns and moves from the Firing Position at each Station

Generally shotguns must be unloaded prior to turning from the shooting platform and not loaded until the shooter is standing on the shooting platform and facing down range

Shotgun events are one area where the RO can also be the referee without any conflict with his primary duty as in both instances he is required to be in position to observe all shooters and the manner in which they handle their firearms.

There is often the added responsibility of ensuring that any persons operating the 'traps' are at all times in a safe position and protected from falling shot.

In some events where clay targets pass over the heads of the shooters the shooting station should be constructed in such a manner that the shooter cannot swing his gun past the 12.00 o'clock position or around to any position which could endanger trappers or spectators.

In such events the RO must also ensure that the spectators and other shooters are not in an area where they can be injured by pieces of broken clay targets.

PISTOL.

There is no real difference in the safety procedures for pistol shooting from rifle shooting. The important difference is that due to the shorter length of hand guns in comparison with long arms, the danger of the handgun being pointed in an inappropriate direction is greater. Therefore, ROs must be extremely vigilant when conducting disciplines involving hand guns.

Another area which must be closely monitored by the RO is the 'Ready Position' used in some hand gun disciplines. This should be at 45 degrees to the vertical out in front of the shooter and facing directly down range. If the handgun is allowed to be brought any lower then there is a danger to the feet and legs of the shooter.

Disciplines which use holsters such as Practical Pistol/ Action Match/ Single Action/ Service Pistol etc may also require different hand start positions.

Some Action disciplines also require a rear safety line which extends forward of 180 degrees

The use of steel fixed and reactive targets requires ALL competitors and spectators to wear safety glasses when they are engaging in or observing shooting on the range

The ground surface must also be considered and the rest position if used, must have the firearm pointing towards a ground surface which is not likely to cause a ricochet. Many shooting platforms have concrete bases and as such the shooter must be positioned so that the rest position has the hand gun pointing forward of this concrete base.

The S.S.A.A. (Tas) Inc. Rules for Pistol Shooting also stipulate that only those ROs who are qualified for Holster Competitions can be used as ROs in any competition involving the shooters drawing from a holster.

MUST KNOWS FOR SECTION FIVE.

Events involving moving the Firing Line instead of the targets require extra care particularly when moving to longer ranges.

In shotgun events where the shooters move between shooting stations the RO must ensure guns are broken after each target is taken and that the gun is broken and cartridges are removed when moving from firing position 5 back to firing position 1.

The safety of spectators and others behind the shooters must be considered in relation to fallout from broken clay targets.

The safety of shooters, spectators and others behind the line must be considered in relation to the use of steel targets. Eye protection MUST be worn.

ROs must be careful of the 'ready' position in relation to handgun shooting as to the correct angle and the shooting platform surface.

ROs must be holster qualified to run hand gun events involving the use of holsters.

CONCLUSION.

The persons selected for training as ROs should have some previous experience with firearms and have demonstrated an ability to safely handle firearms on the Range. When selecting persons for training the SRO should look to persons who have a temperament suitable to the duties they will have to carry out on the Range.

The successful use of this Manual is based on the premise that each Instructor will follow the contents and ensure at the end of each Section that the "Must Knows" for that Section have been imparted to the students. To ensure the consistency of commands it is imperative that the proper commands as listed in the Manual are passed on to the prospective ROs and that their use on the Range is monitored to avoid local changes becoming common practice.

The information in the Manual has been designed to be easily covered in a four hour period. This would include time for demonstration of different action types if the instructors have access to firearms of these types for use in the training. Copies of Sections One to Five of the Manual should be made available to applicants in advance of the date of actual lecture time as there is a large amount of information to be absorbed prior to the Theory Examination.

The Theory Examination will be administered by the Instructor at the completion of the lecture time. This must be done in one sitting and with no prompt material available to those being tested. **At the completion of the Test the papers will be marked by the Instructor and then forwarded to the State Secretary for recording and checking.** In this way a consistent level of results will be maintained.

On successful completion of the Theory Examination the prospective ROs will then be required to attend at their local Range on a date agreed between the Instructor and the candidate and will there be required to run a Standard Course of Fire under the supervision of the Instructor. During this Course of Fire the Instructor may pre-arrange for between three and five minor safety breaches to occur. This must be arranged in such a way as to ensure that there is **no actual danger** to any person on the Range.

It is suggested that such incidents as handling a firearm during a Cease Fire and an apparently loaded firearm being pointed in an inappropriate direction could be simply arranged beforehand with someone (preferably another Range Officer). The manner in which the student identifies and deals with these incidents will be assessed by the Instructor and a decision on the person's suitability to be accredited as a Range Officer should then be made.

A report will then be sent to the State Secretary on the attached pro-forma and accreditation documentation will be forwarded to the Instructor for issue to the successful student.

DISCIPLINES CONDUCTED BY SSAA

3 POSITION RIFLE
MILITARY RIFLE
BENCHREST
FLY SHOOT
METALLIC SILHOUETTE
COWBOY LEVER ACTION SILHOUETTE
BIG GAME RIFLE
AIR RIFLE
SHOTGUN
BLACK POWDER
IHMSA
IPSC/ PRACTICAL PISTOL
ACTION MATCH
SERVICE PISTOL
NATIONAL TARGET PISTOL
SINGLE ACTION
COLONIAL ACTION
AIR PISTOL