

TASMANIA

PRACTICAL HANDGUN RULES

2009

(PROPOSED)

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## SSAA Tasmania Practical Handgun

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## 1. Aims and Objects

Practical shooting is intended to encourage the use of practical shooting equipment and firearms in courses of fire which are deliberately varied from event to event. These courses should be designed by the match organiser to require a shooter to exhibit his/her safe gun handling skills, accuracy of fire, and ability to move safely while negotiating obstacles and barriers in the shooting stages. The shooter must find his or her balance between speed and accuracy. The shooting stages, however, are target shooting stages, not explicitly based on scenarios or tactical situations, real or imagined.

## 2. Range control

The range and its stages must always be under the total control of one or more Range Officers. By entering a range, a shooter is tacitly agreeing to obey the commands of any Range Officer.

Preferably a Range Officer is an experienced practical shooter who has passed the SSAA Range Officers course, or who has alternate Range Officer qualifications from another handgun discipline involving the use of holsters (such as IPSC, NRA Action Match, and Service Match). In the absence of qualified members, experienced club members may stand in as Range Officers.

State sanctioned interclub or championship matches must always be under the control of qualified Range Officers.

**THE ONLY TIME A LOADED HANDGUN MAY BE ON THE RANGE IS WHEN THE SHOOTER IS UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF THE RANGE OFFICER.**

## 3. Handguns

Handguns must be serviceable and safe – the Range Officer will order the removal from the range of any handgun considered unsafe.

All handguns to be holstered must have either a functioning safety, or a functioning hammer block (revolver).

Other handguns (e.g. single action revolvers) may be used from the 45° position only by a beginning shooter who is trying out the discipline. If the shooter wishes to continue on a regular basis then suitable equipment will be required. Under no circumstances may such a handgun be used in State sanctioned interclub or championship matches.

Handgun divisions all compete together over the same courses of fire.

A shooter is classified as competing in the competition division in which his/her handgun fits.

### 3.1. Handgun Divisions

#### 3.1.1. Rimfire

For purposes of learning the sport of practical shooting, and for beginning shooters, .22 rimfire handguns may compete with centrefire handguns over the same courses of fire. However, rimfire division handguns CANNOT be placed LOADED in a holster. Despite this and in the interests of range efficiency, carrying the .22 handgun in a holster is preferable to using a gun bag or box instead of a holster. The shooter starts from the 45° position. The maximum magazine capacity is 10 rounds. The assumption is that, to continue in the discipline seriously, shooters will progress to a centrefire handgun. Rimfire handguns will NOT be accepted in State sanctioned interclub and championship matches.

#### 3.1.2. Standard

Standard handguns are centrefire pistols of 9x19mm (9mm Luger) or .38 calibre. They must use iron sights only (that is, no lenses or batteries), and have functioning safeties. Compensators and barrel weights are disallowed. The maximum magazine capacity is 10 rounds, or as per current legislation. Major power factor may be scored only for .357Sig in standard division. All other calibres are minor power factor.

### 3.1.3. Standard Revolver

Standard revolvers are centrefire revolvers of 9x19mm (9mm Luger) or .38 (.357) calibre. They must use iron sights only (that is, no lenses or batteries), and have functioning safety bars, or as in some older model S&W revolvers, a rebounding hammer. Compensators and barrel weights are disallowed. Major power factor may be scored only for .357Magnum and .38 Super in standard revolver division. All other calibres are minor power factor.

### 3.1.4. Production

Similar to Standard Division, but is essentially as factory-supplied, and **MUST** have **double-action first shot** of minimum 5lb (2.27kg) weight, and barrel length maximum of 5" or 127mm. No obvious modifications allowed. Can only be scored minor power factor.

### 3.1.5. Open

Open handguns are pistols or revolvers of 9x19mm (9mm Luger) or .38 (.357) calibre fitted with optical sights and/or compensators or barrel weights. Laser sights are specifically disallowed. They must have functioning safeties or safety bars, and the maximum magazine capacity for pistols is 10 rounds or as per current legislation. Major power factor may not be scored for 9x19mm (9mm Luger).

## 4. Shooter categories

As well as competing in a particular handgun division, shooters may also be categorised in a division as :

- Lady
- Junior (under the age of 21 years on the first day of a competition)
- Senior (50 years of age, and under 60, on the first day of a competition)
- Super Senior (60 years of age or more on the first day of a competition)

## 5. Ammunition

### 5.1. Calibre

In accord with current legislation, the maximum calibre for handguns used in practical disciplines is 9mm or .38 (.357). All ammunition to be used in practical events must be SAFE and suited to the handgun for which it is used. The decision on safety and suitability is at the discretion of the match organiser or Range Officer. Ammunition deemed unsafe must be removed from the range immediately or may be held by the Range Officer so that it cannot be used inadvertently.

### 5.2. Power factor

For scoring purposes, ammunition is classed as either minor or major power factor.

To calculate power factor, projectiles are weighed in grains, and ammunition is chronographed in feet/second. The factor is then calculated:

$$pf = (\text{Projectile weight in grains}) \times (\text{velocity in ft/sec}) / 1000$$

#### 5.2.1. Major power factor

Major power factor is a minimum of 160. Ammunition designed to score at major in Open division must be loaded with a projectile of minimum weight 120 grains. If ammunition nominated as major is chronographed at less than 160pf (159.999 or less), it will be deemed to be minor so long as it meets the minimum of 125pf.

#### 5.2.2. Minor power factor

Minor power factor is a minimum of 125. If ammunition is chronographed at less than 125 pf (124.999 or less), it will not score. The match may be completed with this ammunition, but will not be scored.

### 5.2.3. Rimfire power factor

Rimfire division ammunition will not be chronographed. For the purposes of scoring, it will be deemed to be minor pf within the rimfire division only.

## 6. Equipment

### 6.1. Eye and ear protection

In the interests of safety, all persons on a practical range (including bystanders and spectators) must wear eye and ear protection (glasses and earmuffs or plugs). It is the responsibility of each individual to protect his/herself from vision and hearing damage. Juniors must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.

### 6.2. Belts

Belts intended to hold holsters and magazine/speed loader pouches must be of solid construction and firmly attached to the waist loops (inner/outer velcro attached belt systems are specifically encouraged). Decisions as to the suitability of belts are at the discretion of the match organiser or Range Officer.

### 6.3. Holsters

Holsters must be firmly attached to the belt on the strong-side of the shooter (e.g. right side for those who draw right-handed), and hold the handgun so that its grip is at or above belt level. When holstered, the muzzle of the handgun must point to the ground within one metre of the shooter's feet. NOTE: specifically disallowed are cross-draw and shoulder holsters, and tie-down rigs. Holsters must cover the full trigger guard of a holstered handgun (preventing access to the trigger when holstered) and retain the handgun securely during normal range activities (e.g. picking up brass, patching, and standing up steel targets). If a handgun falls from a holster (loaded or unloaded), it may be retrieved only by a Range Officer.

6.3.1. Handguns that are not in a holster must be carried to and from the shooting line in a suitable gun bag or box.

### 6.4. Magazine and speed loader pouches

Magazine and speed loader pouches must not be positioned to hinder the draw of the handgun or to make the reloading of the handgun unsafe (e.g. require a change of the handgun to the other hand to enable the magazine/speed loader to be grasped). In general, this means they must **not** be on the **strong** side of the belt.

## 7. Holster skills

Beginning shooters may experience practical pistol for the first time without using a holster – they can start from the 45° position. Then, on obtaining a holster, they may for a short while shoot from the holster under the close supervision and training of a Range Officer.

To be fully qualified to shoot from the holster, however, the shooter will need to pass the SSAA Holster Qualification Course under the direction of a Range Officer. See section 14.

Other discipline holster qualifications may be acceptable as an alternative – such as IPSC, NRA Action Match and Service Pistol.

All shooters at a State sanctioned interclub or championship match must possess suitable holster qualification, and must be suitably equipped (belt, holster, mag pouches and sufficient mags or speed loaders – an absolute minimum of 4 mags or 6 speed loaders).

## 8. Targets

Targets are of two types – paper (cardboard) with scoring zones, and steel which must fall or “ring” (for .22 rimfire only) to score. They may in turn be scoring targets or penalty targets.

### 8.1. Scoring targets

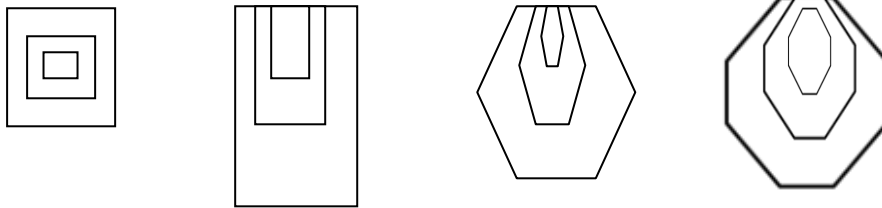
#### 8.1.1. Paper scoring targets

Paper targets may be of any practical size, and of any colour, subject to the following constraints:

- 8.1.1.1. Within a single stage, targets must be of uniform size and shape and uniform colour.
- 8.1.1.2. Targets must have a minimum of four (4) corners and a maximum of eight (8) corners.
- 8.1.1.3. Corners must be external (point outwards) and of minimum 90° angle.
- 8.1.1.4. Targets must be bilaterally symmetrical, with scoring zones also bilaterally symmetrical.
- 8.1.1.5. Targets must have the following scoring zones:
  - A central Alpha zone of substantially the same shape as the exterior of the target.
  - A Charlie zone about the Alpha zone.
  - A Delta zone about the Charlie zone.
  - A non-scoring Beta (border) zone approximately 5mm wide around the edges of the target - to prevent debate about marks on the edge of targets being/not being hits.

#### 8.1.2. All scoring zones must be clearly delineated for scoring purposes.

Some suitable paper target shapes are :

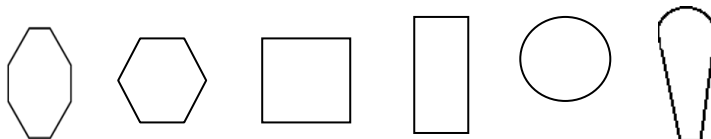


#### 8.1.3. Steel scoring targets.

The whole face of steel scoring targets is of Alpha scoring zone (5 points) only. They may be designed to fall to score, or to “ring” (for .22 rimfire only) when hit to score, as specified in the stage requirements. They may be any practical size, shape or colour, subject to the following constraints:

- Targets must be constructed of sufficiently strong material to withstand the impacts of major loads (10mm thick Bisalloy is recommended).
- Targets must be bilaterally symmetrical.
- All corners must be a minimum of 90° for impact strength.

Some suitable steel target shapes are:



### 8.2. Penalty targets

#### 8.2.1. Paper penalty targets.

Penalty targets may be of any size or shape, and must have a marked Beta zone (non-scoring

5mm approx edge). They must be a different colour distinct from the paper scoring targets in a stage, or marked with a large, painted cross.

8.2.2. Steel penalty targets

Steel penalty targets may be of any size or shape, subject to the same constraints as the steel scoring targets, in addition to

8.2.2.1. Steel penalty targets must be a different colour distinct from the steel scoring targets in a stage, or marked with a large, painted cross.

8.3. Partial targets

Targets may be partially hidden by :

- Placing actual hard cover (preferably steel) in front. Part of the alpha scoring zone must be visible.
- Placing penalty targets in front. Part of the alpha scoring zone must be visible.
- Simulating hard cover by painting and taping in a contrasting colour to the target colour. If the “hard cover” zone is paint only, a 5mm approx non-scoring beta border must be drawn to separate scoring from “hard cover”. If the edge of the “hard cover” is delineated by taping, no 5mm border is necessary. Part of the alpha scoring zone must be visible.
- Cutting away part of the target. A 5mm approx non-scoring beta border must be drawn along the cut edge. Part of the alpha scoring zone must be retained.

8.4. Moving targets

When moving targets stop their motion, they may be left partially visible, or totally disappear.

8.4.1. With disappearing targets, because there is no opportunity for back-up shots, misses are not scored as -10 points – they are ignored. However, “Failure To Engage” procedural penalties will apply. That is, the shooter must attempt to shoot the disappearing target during its motion.

8.4.2. With non-disappearing targets, all normal penalties apply. However, part of the alpha scoring zone must remain visible.

9. Scoring of targets

When a stage is scored, the Range Officer is to settle any scoring disputes at the time. He may request opinions of other experienced shooters or other Range Officers present.

9.1. The zones on a target are scored as following for hits:

	Alpha	Charlie	Delta	Beta	Miss	PT	FTE/Proc
Major pf	5	4	2	0	-10	-10	-10
Minor pf	5	3	1	0	-10	-10	-10
Rimfire	5	3	1	0	-10	-10	-10

9.2. All misses (where there is less than the required number of hits on a target, or where steel scoring targets do not fall or “ring” (for .22 rimfire only)) are to be scored as -10 for all power factors.

9.3. All scoring hits on penalty targets are to be scored -10 for all power factors, up to a maximum of two hits on any one penalty target.

9.4. Where a required paper or steel target is not engaged (fired upon), a procedural penalty of -10 will be imposed as well as any applicable misses.

9.5. Where a stage procedure is faulted (e.g. step over a charge or fault line while a shot is fired), a procedural penalty of -10 will be imposed for the first shot fired in fault, and an extra -10 for each other shot fired in fault where there is an advantage gained by the shooter in committing the fault.

9.6. Where a maximum number of shots is specified in the stage briefing, extra shots will be scored -10.

9.7. Where a hit touches the edge of a scoring zone, it is to score the higher value.

- 9.8. All paper targets are to be treated as impenetrable, so that a bullet hitting one target cannot be also scored on a target behind, except in that:
- 9.8.1. A bullet which hits partially in both Delta and Beta zones may score on a target behind.
  - 9.8.2. Where a bullet passes wholly through a target onto a paper target behind, and it cannot be determined which bullet hit is the relevant one on the rear target, the applicable number of highest-score hits will not be scored.
  - 9.8.3. Where the target behind is steel, and the steel falls or “rings” (for .22 rimfire only), the stage will be re-shot.
- 9.9. All stage props, vision screens, barrels etc are to be treated as impenetrable “hard cover”, unless specifically stated otherwise in a stage briefing. Specifically, full-calibre hits on stage props which produce a ricochet onto a target cannot score. Partial edge hits however may score on a target behind.
- 9.9.1. Where a bullet passes wholly through a stage prop onto a paper target behind, and it cannot be determined which bullet hit is this one on the rear target, the applicable number of highest scoring hits will be ignored.
  - 9.9.2. Where the target behind is steel, and the steel falls or “rings”, the stage will be re-shot.

### 10. Scoring Methods

It is normal (though not exclusive) that paper targets require 2 scoring hits. The minimum or maximum number of scoring hits per paper target is specified in the stage briefing. The scoring methods are:

#### 10.1. Comstock score

The shooter may fire as many rounds as necessary to complete the stage, including back up shots to replace real or suspected misses. Only the minimum number and highest scoring hits as specified in the briefing will be scored. Extra hits will not be scored or penalised.

#### 10.2. Virginia score

The shooter may fire only the specified maximum number of shots. Extra shots will be penalised (-10 per shot). The number of extra shots fired is the sole decision of the Range Officer. Where a paper target has more than the specified number of hits, the specified number of least value hits will be scored. The extra highest value hits are ignored.

### 11. Calculating score

#### 11.1. Individual stage score

A single shooter’s raw score for a single stage is calculated as follows:

- The total of all hit values, less the total of all penalties (including penalty target hits, procedural penalties and target misses) is to be calculated.
- This total is divided by the time in seconds which the shooter took to complete the stage (time from start signal to last shot). This gives a numerical score (hit factor) for the stage.

#### 11.2. Overall stage score

When all shooters in a division have completed a stage, and all hit factors have been calculated, then:

- The highest hit factor for that division is declared to be the stage winner for that division. This shooter is awarded the highest possible score for the stage (100%) – as if the winner had shot all Alphas and no penalties.
- The hit factor of each other shooter in that division is divided by the stage winner’s hit factor and shown as a percentage. The other shooter is then awarded this percentage of the highest possible score for the stage.

For example:

A stage is 8 scoring paper targets and two scoring steel targets (a total of 18 Alpha hits, with a

maximum score of 90 points). The stage winner in standard division scores 80 points in 14.20 seconds – a hit factor of 5.6338. As winner, he is awarded 100% - that is, 90.0000 points for that stage.

Another standard division shooter scores 74 points in 16.58 seconds – a hit factor of 4.4632. This is 79.22% of the winner's hit factor. So this shooter is awarded a stage score of 79.22% of 90 points – that is, 71.2980 points.

### 11.3. Match score

A shooter's total match score is the sum of all his stage scores as calculated above. Handgun divisions are scored separately; there will be a winner for each division, and shooters are ranked according to their total match score order in their respective divisions.

## 12. Stage malfunction

Under certain circumstances, the Range Officer may declare that there has been a stage or range malfunction, and order that the stage be re-shot by the shooter.

Some examples of these circumstances are

- Steel targets fall when hit by shots which pass through paper targets or "hard cover"
- The mechanisms which release moving targets malfunction
- Steel targets which are designed to fall remain upright when centrally hit
- Targets are displaced from their proper position (e.g. wind)

In these cases, the targets are patched and reset, and the falling target checked for adjustment. If, on re-shoot, the same falling target does not fall for the same shooter, then it is declared a "miss".

## 13. Stage Design

A practical pistol match consists of different courses of fire, or "stages", which are shot and scored separately. Each stage is designed by the match organiser to be a different challenge to the shooter. At no time should a whole stage be repeated over and over.

The major concern in the design of stages, however, and in their positioning on a shooting range, is the safety of all involved. Range design should endeavour to prevent inadvertent unsafe actions by the shooter.

The stage designer must always consider

- Positioning of the stage on the range in relation to backstops and berms
- Safe angles of fire
- Possible ricochets
- Minimum distances (7 metres) to metal targets and props
- Under no circumstances will a stage design require or allow a shot to be fired with any part of the shooter's body in front of the muzzle
- Positioning of targets, props and barriers to minimise the possibility of "break 180°" violations
- Positioning of targets to prevent "shoot throughs" (rounds fired at one target unavoidably hitting a target behind) and splatter from steel onto paper targets
- When paper targets are placed close to the ground, they should not be engaged closer than two metres because of possible splatter from gravel etc.
- The condition of the range surface – minimise possible shooter injury

13.1. A stage consists of any safe combination of paper and/or steel scoring and penalty targets, with stage props included to control shooter movement and angles of fire, and to add challenges to the shooter. Within this, the shooter must be allowed to solve the problem of engaging the stage in his own fashion, according to his own abilities and skills. The stage designer should endeavour to design the stage so that targets can only be engaged in a safe manner.

- 13.2. Shooters must be prevented from engaging steel targets at distances less than 7 metres by using charge lines (at least 8m away) or barriers.
- 13.3. The shortest allowable stage should require a minimum of 6 scoring hits, and the longest allowable stage a maximum of 36 scoring hits.
- 13.4. A match should consist of a minimum of 3 stages of varying length.
- 13.5. A stage should not be designed to REQUIRE a shooter to fire more than 9 rounds from a single stationary position. However, it is acceptable for more than 9 rounds to be possible from one position so long as targets can be safely engaged from multiple positions. A single step is sufficient motion to differentiate between two shooting positions.

#### 14. Stage procedure

- 14.1. A practical stage is shot by a single shooter under the direct control of a Range Officer (there may be other Range Officers assisting).
- 14.2. Before any shooter is allowed to shoot the stage, the Range Officer will do a "walk through" of the stage, looking for any problems with the stage design, and any potential safety problems. Then, in consultation with the match organiser and/or stage designer, will rectify any problems found.
- 14.3. It is the responsibility of the Range Officer to explain the stage course of fire (stage briefing) to the group or squad of shooters. This briefing should include a description of the number and positions of targets, both scoring and penalty, the positions of charge lines and shooting areas, start position, the number of rounds required and the scoring method. The squad will then be allowed time (usually 5 minutes) to "walk through" the stage and plan their strategy of engagement.
- 14.4. The stage is cleared of all other persons to a safe distance by the Range Officer in charge before the "LOAD AND MAKE READY" command is issued. No others persons are allowed to enter the stage until after the "RANGE IS CLEAR" command is given.
- 14.5. Before coming to shoot a stage, a shooter must have gone to a designated safe area to debag and holster the (unloaded) handgun. When called to the start position of a stage by the Range Officer, a shooter must arrive equipped suitably to engage the stage – eye and ear protection, sufficient ammunition, handgun UNLOADED and holstered. **THE ONLY TIME A HANDGUN MAY BE LOADED ON THE RANGE IS WHEN UNDER THE DIRECT INSTRUCTION OF THE RANGE OFFICER.**

- **Range commands**

- **"LOAD AND MAKE READY"** (or **"MAKE READY"** if the start position is handgun unloaded)

- While keeping the muzzle pointed safely downrange and finger outside the trigger guard, the shooter may take ONE sight picture at ONE target with the handgun unloaded. Dry firing the handgun is not permitted (procedural penalty applies). The shooter then loads the handgun, applies the safety on a single-action pistol, or fully lowers the hammer on a double-action pistol (or ensures that the hammer is lowered on a revolver) and holsters it. Note: 10+1 is allowed (one round chambered, with a full magazine). When ready, the shooter assumes the start position as specified in the stage briefing.

- **"ARE YOU READY?"**

- If the shooter is not ready, he must say so. The Range Officer will then pause to allow the shooter time to finish preparation. Then ...

- **"STAND BY"**

- The Range Officer will give the start signal (usually a sound from a timer) after a short delay. **BEEP!**

- The shooter can now begin the stage.....

- Observing the following safety rules:

- Trigger finger is to be outside the trigger guard except when engaging targets. The Range Officer will be looking to see the finger visibly outside (preferably straight). This means, keep finger outside trigger guard when loading, when moving without

engaging a target, when reloading, when rectifying a malfunction, and when unloading.

- The muzzle must be pointed safely downrange at all times – that is, never break the line parallel to the backstop (“break 180°”) vertically or horizontally.
- At no time may the muzzle point at any part of the shooter’s body (do not “sweep” the body). The act of drawing the handgun from the holster, or reholstering it, is exempt as far as sweeping the thigh, leg or foot, but not the weak hand (e.g. do not hold down the holster while drawing or reholstering – if this is necessary, the holster is unsafe).
- **“STOP”**  
The Range Officer may give this command at any time, particularly if he sees some unsafe action or condition. On hearing this command, the shooter must immediately stop (“freeze”) while keeping the handgun pointed safely downrange, and await further instruction.  
The Range Officer may also give warning calls  
**“FINGER”** is a warning to keep the trigger finger clear of the trigger guard  
**“MUZZLE”** is a call that the muzzle of the handgun is approaching the 180° direction  
The Range Officer also has the right to intervene to prevent serious range safety breaches. For example The RO may grasp the shooter’s arm or shoulder to prevent the handgun muzzle from pointing in a dangerous direction.
- **“IF YOU HAVE FINISHED...”**  
When the Range Officer sees that you have completed the stage. If the shooter has not finished, he may continue to complete the stage. This call will then be given again.
- **“UNLOAD AND SHOW CLEAR”**  
While keeping the muzzle pointed safely downrange, the shooter must unload the handgun (including removing any magazine) and show the Range Officer that the handgun is clear.
- **“IF THE HANDGUN IS CLEAR”**  
The onus is on the shooter to ensure the handgun is safely unloaded.
- **“SLIDE FORWARD, HAMMER DOWN, HOLSTER”**  
While keeping the muzzle pointed safely downrange, the shooter must ease the slide forward (or close the cylinder), **pull the trigger** to release the hammer (this is the final check that the handgun is unloaded), and holster. The handgun can only be unholstered (drawn) under further direction of a Range Officer, or in a safe area.
- **“RANGE IS CLEAR”**  
At this command, the stage may be scored, targets patched or stood up, and brass collected.

### 15. Match disqualification

When a shooter is disqualified from a match, the reason for disqualification must be written by the Range Officer on the shooter’s scoresheet. Disqualification from the match is usually for serious breaches of range safety, such as:

#### 15.1. Accidental discharge

Upon an accidental discharge, the Range Officer must call STOP immediately. Examples of accidental discharges are :

- 15.1.1. A shot which occurs while loading, reloading or unloading the handgun.
- 15.1.2. A shot which occurs while rectifying a malfunction
- 15.1.3. A shot which occurs when moving, which is not aimed in the direction of a target
- 15.1.4. A shot which occurs while transferring the handgun from one hand to the other

- 15.1.5. A shot which strikes the ground within 3 metres of the shooter, except when engaging a paper target closer than this
- 15.1.6. A shot fired at a metal target closer than 7 metres while the shooter is in breach of a fault line or charge line.

### 15.2. Unsafe gun handling

- 15.2.1. Handling of a handgun at any time except when in a safe area, or under the command of a Range Officer
- 15.2.2. Presenting at the start of a stage with the chamber(s) of a handgun not empty (with live, fired or dummy cartridge in the chamber), or with a magazine inserted (either containing a cartridge or empty)
- 15.2.3. Allowing the handgun muzzle to point uprange at any time during a stage (breaking 180°). This also includes allowing the muzzle to point in an unsafe direction when the shooter stumbles or falls, or collides with a range prop.
- 15.2.4. Dropping the handgun at any time during a stage, loaded or unloaded
- 15.2.5. Allowing the muzzle to point at any part of the shooter's body (except during the act of drawing the handgun from the holster, or re-holstering it, so long as the trigger finger is clearly outside the trigger guard). That is, do not "sweep" the body.
- 15.2.6. Failure to keep the trigger finger outside the trigger guard while loading (except when lowering the hammer on a double-action pistol), reloading, unloading, clearing a malfunction or moving while not engaging a target.
- 15.2.7. Handling ammunition in a safe area, or not observing any local range rule about ammunition in a safe area (some ranges require no ammunition to be present in a safe area).

### 15.3. Failure to comply with an instruction of a Range Officer.

A Range Officer is a Judge Of Fact. When participating in a match, a shooter is agreeing to comply with all instructions and judgements given by the Range Officers in charge. (Don't like it, go home!)

## 16. Holster proficiency qualification

When a shooter has completed a number of matches under training and is considered ready by a Range Officer, he/she will need to do the holster qualification exercise. Until this exercise is completed in a safe manner, the shooter will continue to need close supervision/training whenever on the range.

Before the exercise begins, the Range Officer needs to emphasise the following to the shooter:

- The purpose of the exercise is for the shooter to demonstrate his/her safe gun-handling skills
- The score achieved is irrelevant (in fact, the targets will not be scored)
- Before commencing the exercise, the shooter's equipment will be checked for suitability.
- The following common safety breaches will be specifically looked for:
  1. When loading, the muzzle must be pointed safely downrange, and trigger finger outside trigger guard. The safety must be applied, or revolver hammer lowered, before holstering.
  2. When holstering, do not sweep the weak hand with the muzzle.
  3. While drawing, do not sweep the weak hand with the muzzle. There is no need to hold the holster with the weak hand while drawing.
  4. While re-holstering, do not sweep the weak hand with the muzzle. Safety must be applied before holstering a loaded handgun.
  5. While drawing, do not release the safety catch until the handgun is at least at 45°.
  6. While drawing, keep the trigger finger outside the trigger guard until the target is acquired. This is particularly important when sitting/kneeling or going prone after the draw. The Range Officer will be looking to see the trigger finger STRAIGHT outside the trigger guard.
  7. When sitting/kneeling, take care not to sweep the weak hand, and keep finger outside trigger

guard. Do not wave your weak hand about in the air trying to keep balance.

8. When going prone, take care not to sweep the weak hand, and keep finger outside trigger guard. Take care to draw the handgun clear of the holster before starting to go prone – it is particularly unsafe to end up prone on the ground with a loaded handgun still in the holster (muzzle towards RO and spectators!).

9. When reloading, make sure the trigger finger is straight outside the trigger guard, and the muzzle is pointing safely downrange.

10. When turning (starting back to or side on to the target) make sure to turn before drawing – in fact, it is best at this stage not to touch the handgun until turned.

11. When reloading behind a barricade, make sure you are standing far enough back from the face of the barricade to enable the reload to be completed with the muzzle still pointed safely downrange.

12. Particular care must be taken when changing the handgun from one hand to the other – remember it must still point safely downrange, and finger outside trigger guard.

The range setup is to have 3 targets set side by side, about 1 metre apart. Shooting distances roughly marked at 5 metres, 10 metres and 15 metres. For stage 5 of the exercise, a barricade must be available to place at 10 metres in front of targets 2 and 3.

The holster qualification exercise procedure is outlined on the following page.

### **SCORE SHEET**

On the following page (page 15) is a scoresheet layout which can be printed and used as a generic stage score sheet. It is not compulsory to use this sheet.

## SSAA Tasmania Practical Handgun

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### SSAA Tasmania Inc Holster Proficiency & Safety Test.

STAGE	DISTANCE	PROCEDURE	SEQUENCE	Total rounds	# Of Targets
1	5 metres	Draw & fire a single round at target 1 free style	repeat once	2	1
2	5 metres	Draw & fire two rounds at target 2 free style	repeat once	4	1
3	10 metres	Draw, go to kneeling/sitting pos. & fire 1 round at target 1	repeat once	2	1
4	10 metres	Draw, go to prone & fire 1 round at target 2	repeat once	2	1
<b>For the following sequence the magazines/speed loaders shall be loaded with three (3) rounds only</b>					
5	10 metres	Draw, go to prone & fire 3 rounds at target 1	once only	3	1
	10 metres	Move to kneeling/sitting position, reload & fire 3 round at target 2	once only	3	1
	10 metres	Stand up, reload and fire 3 rounds with the right hand, from the right side of the barricade at target 2	once only	3	1
	10 metres	Change side, reload and fire 3 rounds with the left hand, from the left side of the barricade at target 1	once only	3	1
<b>For the following sequence the magazines/speed loaders shall be loaded with six (6) rounds only</b>					
6	15 metres	Draw and fire 2 rounds at target 1, 2 and 3 free style	once only	6	3
7	15 metres	Draw and fire 2 rounds at target 1 strong hand only, change hands & fire 2 rounds weak hand.	once only	4	1
8	15 metres	Draw and fire 2 rounds at target 1 & 2 weak hand only	once only	4	2
9	15 metres	Back to the targets, turn, draw & fire 1 round at target 1	repeat 3 times	3	1
10	15 metres	Facing 90 degrees to the firing line, turn draw & fire 1 round at target 2	once only	1	1
<b>Test total rounds used</b>				<b>40</b>	

Prepared by V.Merlo

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### 17. Range Officer

The requirements of a Range Officer for SSAA Practical Handgun are different those of SSAA Range Officers in other disciplines. In other disciplines the RO is required, usually, to control a line of shooters where they can all shoot simultaneously because there is no movement of shooters with loaded firearms. A practical RO, on the other hand, usually controls a single shooter, one-on-one, where there is often movement with a loaded firearm. Thus, listed below, are some extra considerations beyond the normal SSAA Range Officer training.

A SSAA Practical Handgun Range Officer MUST

- Be conversant with these rules
- Be himself holster qualified
- Have extensive experience of SSAA Practical Handgun and/or equivalent holster disciplines (IPSC, Service Pistol etc.)
- Be aware of the absolute necessity of promoting and of ensuring that all the safety aspects of these rules are enforced
- Make a reasonable effort to ensure the safety of all on the range
- Be aware that during a stage his task is to WATCH THE SHOOTER rather than watching the shooter's hits
- Be aware that during a stage he must remain within arm's reach (where practical) of the shooter in order to intervene physically if necessary
- Apply these rules consistently to all shooters, and keep the range running safely and efficiently
- Consistently penalise unsafe gun handling
- Be willing to shout "STOP" during a stage – it is easier to apologise to a shooter afterwards, and offer a re-shoot, than to allow a potentially dangerous situation to develop
- Be willing to assist shooters with advice and coaching at any time, but particularly to "friendly chat" at the end of stages about any actions which the Range Officer considers questionable (this is to be considered part of the shooter's ongoing training)
- In the interests of the safety of all, be willing to CONFRONT difficult shooters

There is nothing worse than a nominated Range Officer who does not take RESPONSIBILITY and CONTROL of a stage or a range.

**WE MUST ALWAYS TREAT EVERY FIREARM AS LOADED AND READY TO FIRE!**