

# Pistol New Zealand (Inc)

## Members Handbook



# January 2024

# SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION TO PISTOL NEW ZEALAND

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# AN INTRODUCTION TO PISTOL NEW ZEALAND

(THE NEW ZEALAND PISTOL ASSOCIATION Inc)

## INFORMATION FOR THE NEW PISTOL SHOOTER

Pistol NZ (known then as the NZPA) was founded in 1969, incorporated in 1970 and since that date has introduced, promoted, and administered pistol shooting throughout New Zealand.

In the beginning there were no provisions in New Zealand Law for target shooters to have pistols; we had to make great efforts to change the firearms laws of New Zealand and progress slowly and carefully.

Over many years Pistol NZ has advanced the sport of Pistol Shooting from using only single-shot .22 cal pistols, through the range of ISSF style shooting, until today when we shoot a wide variety of matches using pistols of many styles and calibres. The effort to gain acceptance for this was considerable.

In 1983 Pistol NZ, working in co-operation with other shooting organisations, successfully changed the very high annual Government costs for pistol licences to a reasonable fee which was intended to cover a shooter's entire lifetime. We also changed Government Policy that prevented the import of pistols to a policy where Clubs, Dealers and individuals may now import these with minimum trouble and licensing.

Unfortunately, with very little consultation with the shooting sports, this was all reversed in 1992 when the Government scrapped the lifetime licence and introduced a new ten year licence at a heavily increased fee.

Pistol NZ is a democratically constituted Association with equal rights and opportunities for all pistol shooters. Council members are elected annually by the affiliated Pistol Clubs.

Pistol NZ has over 85 affiliated clubs which are in every major town and city in New Zealand. We have a total membership more than 4600 pistol shooters of which more than 3500 have Police issued Category B (target pistol) endorsements to their firearms licence.

Pistol NZ has committees and Sections to attend to all facets of pistol shooting. These include National Magazine (Bullshooter) Production, Competitions, Coaching, Finance, Team Selection, Police Liaison, Range Safety, Range Development and Target Manufacture.



# BRIEF HISTORY OF PISTOL SHOOTING IN NEW ZEALAND

**1922** Registration of firearms and restriction placed on ownership of handguns.

**1955** First submissions made to Government to allow the possession of pistols for the sport of target shooting.

**1960** Approval given to a small bore rifle club to allow a 12 month trial shoot with .22 calibre single shot pistols.

**1962** First trial shoot takes place.

**1969** The NZ Pistol Association is formed, its objective being to administer the sport of pistol shooting nationally on behalf of the Police, and to extend the use of handguns from single shot .22 pistols to all calibre self loading pistols and revolvers. All clubs (7) join.

**1970** Police agree to allow revolvers and self loading pistols conforming to ISSF specifications to be used by clubs affiliated to the NZ Pistol Association Inc under very strict conditions.

**1995** Greg Yelavich awarded an MBE for service to pistol shooting. Greg has won more Commonwealth Games medals than any other athlete. (2 Gold, 5 Silver, 5 Bronze)

**1996** Graeme Anderson wins a Gold medal in the Big Bore Revolver event at the IMSSU World Championships in South Africa.

**1999** Cowboy Action Shooting section formed.

**1999** Hamilton Pistol Club host the 3rd World NRA Action Pistol Championships, NZ Team take the bronze medal.

**2002** NZPA adopts PISTOL NEW ZEALAND as its new public name, to further increase marketing opportunities, and improve alignment with other sporting bodies in New Zealand and overseas.

**2003** Practical Pistol event introduced to Oceania Championships shooting program, NZ shooter Phil Dunlop wins the inaugural Gold medal in the Standard Division.

**2008** Hamilton Pistol Club host the 6th World NRA Action Pistol Championships, NZ Team take the bronze medal.

**2009** Revised Constitution approved which provides for changes in the way Pistol NZ administers and provides services to its member clubs.

**2010** Executive Officer appointed.

**2013** Largest International Pistol Competition shot in New Zealand took place in Rotorua. (IPSC Australasian Level 4 Championship).

**2018** Kiwi Rooster wins the Junior World Cowboy Championships in the USA.



## 1. WHAT EVERY MEMBER SHOULD KNOW

This booklet is intended to help pistol shooters to be aware of both the responsibilities and rights of being affiliated to Pistol NZ. Additional information is available on the Services page of the Pistol NZ website - [www.pistolnz.org.nz](http://www.pistolnz.org.nz)

From the start, when a person visits a pistol club, they come under laws and regulations expressly covering the use of firearms and, particularly, the use of pistols. On a second or third visit a decision must be made as to whether that person intends to join a club or not. Club officials must offer the visitor membership, or advise the person concerned that the number of visits is limited to three.

### UPON JOINING

Given that membership is sought, the club committee will normally decide whether the applicant is suitable and, if so, a PistolNZ application form (FM1) will be completed and fees paid. The club may ask the applicant for references of their good character. The new member, in applying, undertakes to abide by the rules of both the club and Pistol NZ. The practical side, such as instruction in pistol shooting technique, safety and conduct on the range etc, is a matter for the club to carry out as part of the normal induction process.

### THE CLUB

When a member has joined a club, interest should be taken in its organisation. It must be an incorporated society and is bound to observe certain procedures as laid down by law. There will be a constitution and it is important that a member be familiar with this document as it states the objectives of the club, the manner in which it operates and the rules controlling its members. Pistol NZ also has a constitution (which is available online to members), which is similar to a club constitution but covers the activities of the National Association.

Members will be informed by the officials of their club regarding competitions, changes in rules, fees and other information sent to each club by the Executive (Council) of Pistol NZ. Dissemination of this information is vital to the well-being of the Association. Pistol shooters should ensure that they receive such information by checking that the minutes of Council meetings (which are also available online to members) and other bulletins from Pistol NZ are displayed on their club notice board.

### THE WEBSITE

Members should also access the PNZ website to keep up to date with the latest information, Online Trading Post, Online Shop, Coming Events, articles from recent events and much more.

**Access requires a logon (e-mail address) and password for security reasons, which is obtainable from the PNZ Executive Officer at [exec@pistolnz.org.nz](mailto:exec@pistolnz.org.nz)**

### BULLSHOOTER

The official magazine of Pistol NZ is published bi-monthly. The magazine is available in hard copy and/or electronically to all senior financial members of Pistol NZ. As new membership registrations occur throughout the year, the new members are automatically placed on the mailing list. Those members on a reduced fee (e.g. spouse, Junior and Intermediate) do not receive an individual copy of Bullshooter if there is another member at the same address. The reduced fee is in recognition of this. Bullshooter covers items of general interest to pistol shooters, local and international news, current Pistol NZ and Council activities, photographs, competition results and general advertising.

Bullshooter is funded by an allocation from each Pistol NZ member's affiliation fee, plus revenue derived from advertising. Advertising enquiries, rates, contracts, etc, are obtainable from the Executive Officer. Entry forms for the National Open Championships of all Sections, are published free of charge in the cover page of one issue of Bullshooter.

## 2. BECOMING A PISTOL SHOOTER

### PROBATIONARY PERIOD

A probationary period for induction and training in the use of firearms and safety is mandatory for all new members. During this probationary period the new member:

1. must obtain a firearms licence if one is not already held (where a new member is under 16 years of age, they must obtain a firearms licence within six months after their 16th birthday)
2. must attain a satisfactory standard of range behaviour and be able to demonstrate basic knowledge of range rules and safety standards
3. may not purchase a pistol

### JUNIOR PROFICIENCY BADGE AND JUNIOR HOLSTER QUALIFICATION

Junior members, up to the age of 16; who wish to obtain their Holster Qualification must sit the Junior Proficiency badge test to allow them to shoot pistols while under immediate supervision of a licence B endorsement holder. (Details can be found on the PistolNZ website under holster training).

### ATTENDANCE

Attending the club means: being at the range, signing the attendance book, paying the range fee (if one is required) and participating in the club activity of the day (whatever advertised activity has been decided by the club committee).

### LICENCE ENDORSEMENT TO ACQUIRE A PISTOL

To obtain the B endorsement an applicant must have satisfactorily completed the probationary period. Obtain the B endorsement form, FRM29TS, at the nearest Police Station or from the PNZ or Police website to begin the process of applying for a Pistol Endorsement (B). The supplementary form, FRM29NP needs to be completed by the Club Secretary, then forwarded to Pistol NZ with a completed Club Range Officer and Safety test form for validation, before being returned to the Police or member for consideration. (Refer to the process of obtaining a B Cat on the PNZ website)

This form recommends and certifies that a member is competent and safe with a pistol, has attended and participated in activities, induction and training and is familiar with all requirements pertaining to belonging to Pistol NZ and the club. After the Police have granted a B endorsement to the member's Firearms Licence, the member may arrange for the purchase of a pistol.

### SECURITY

Before granting a B endorsement, the Police will inspect the member's home to ensure that security is adequate for the retention of pistols. Security normally takes the form of an approved steel safe or lockable steel container. Specifications can be obtained from your local Arms Officer.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

When a member changes his or her address they are required by law to advise the Police (<https://www.firearmssafetyauthority.govt.nz/>), and to have their pistol security checked at the new address before pistols can be stored at that address.

A member should also notify their club and Pistol NZ of a change of address. For PNZ this can be done by either emailing the new address details to the Executive Officer at [info@pistolnz.org.nz](mailto:info@pistolnz.org.nz) or online at the Pistol NZ website - [www.pistolnz.org.nz](http://www.pistolnz.org.nz)

## CARRYING A PISTOL

When a member with a B endorsement wishes to personally transport a pistol to an approved range, to the Police station, or to a dealer or gunsmith (these are the restrictions imposed on a licence holder) it must be carried in a stout, locked container OR soft case with a trigger lock and stowed separate from any ammunition. At the range the pistol must at all times be under the control of the owner unless handed to the club armourer. If the pistol is to be taken away from its usual security overnight (e.g. to a competition) then the responsibility for its safe storage rests entirely with the member against who's licence the firearms is recorded.

### **3. YOUR CLUB'S RESPONSIBILITY**

1. To always be prepared to listen to the needs of the members and promote healthy communication channels so members can offer ideas and new concepts that will benefit the club.
2. The Club's prime objective is to promote the safe use of firearms in the sporting environment and to provide training and coaching opportunities.
3. To keep their members well informed of all club activities and competitions, meeting dates, committee responsibilities etc. Healthy communication means a healthy atmosphere within the club.
4. To provide the opportunity for members to become familiar with the rules and regulations governing the particular section of the sport they are interested in.
5. Many in the club have special qualities and a good administrator will recognise these and delegate to their strengths. Be prepared to help as a good club member should.
6. To promote a friendly atmosphere in the club, and encourage administrators to have a high profile so the members can approach them at any time.
7. To attract members, the image the club portrays is vital. The high profile club generally attracts people into it.

The club should have:

- a good reputation within the community
- a good presentation of club activities to the public
- a PO Box number is recommended and/or email address; so that when the secretary changes, mail does not get lost - this is most important
- adequate range equipment and club firearms in good order
- good coverage in the media
- a club may also have a website and/or a secure email contact list

What sort of long term planning does your club do, i.e. setting goals for membership growth, project development, improvements in the level of coaching? This is a very important aspect for laying the foundations of the club.

## ARMOURERS

Club armourers are appointed by the club to retain club pistols and any pistols which an owner requires to be held in safe custody. The Police recognise club armourers and allow them to hold all club member B category pistols if necessary. A Permit to Possess is needed if a member wishes to transfer a pistol to the club armourer for any length of time and a Permit to Possess is again needed when the armourer transfers pistols back to a member.

## RANGE OFFICIALS

On the range, all shooting must be under the control of a Range Officer and all safety provisions must be observed. Training of Range Officials is administered by Pistol NZ and information on courses available can be obtained from your club Secretary or on the Pistol New Zealand Executive Officer at [exec@pistolnz.org.nz](mailto:exec@pistolnz.org.nz)

## **4. THE ROLE OF PISTOL NEW ZEALAND AND ITS COUNCIL**

The annually elected Council of Pistol New Zealand is charged with protecting and promoting the interests of pistol shooters within its member clubs.

To this end the Council:

- Maintains an important liaison with the NZ Police through the Officer in Charge, Arms Act Service Delivery Group, Police National Headquarters
- Sets the standards and policies of Pistol New Zealand
- Promotes the sport of Pistol shooting through media contact and through the active encouragement of its member clubs to attract membership
- Supports and maintains a Range Development Committee made up of qualified Range Inspectors to monitor and assist clubs to maintain the approved standards on their ranges
- Provides coaching opportunities
- Supports the pistol shooting disciplines that are popular amongst its members by way of funding and contact with the shooters who participate in those disciplines. The Council also supports financially, the annual National and Island Championships through the provision of free advertising in the Bullshooter, provision of medals and attendance badges for those who turn up to compete as well as help with administration costs.
- Maintains a members website and a Match Entry website
- Produces a bi-monthly pistol shooter's magazine (The Bullshooter)
- Contracts an Executive Officer and other officers to implement Council policies and targets, and administer the day to day running of PNZ
- Contracts people or organisations to operate the Pistol NZ Online Shop and Target Distribution

## COMPETITIONS

In order to know and understand the events in which competitions are held, a member must obtain and learn the Rules applicable to each style of shooting. Rule books are obtainable from Section Directors, the PNZ website and/or from the international websites of the relevant parent body.

Training and practice will ensure competence in an event. Expertise comes with experience and this is acquired in competition. Pistol NZ is committed to encouraging competition in all events.

Competition is the foundation of our sport and apart from club and inter-club competitions there are Regional, Island and National open and graded competitions, which allow members of a particular standard to compete with others of the same standard. Grading of members requires a return of scores shot to be supplied to the discipline Section Director or Section grading officer after each event.



National Championships are held each year in every event, and clubs need to apply to host these as well as the North Island and South Island Championships. Pistol NZ approval is required and application forms are available from the Pistol NZ Executive Officer and/or the Pistol NZ website.

Further competitions planned by clubs (which do not require Pistol NZ approval) can be notified to the Executive Officer for inclusion in the website and Bullshooter 'Coming events' and thus made known to all other clubs, providing the match complies with a basic set of entry conditions. There are also opportunities to shoot internationally.

#### TRAVEL OVERSEAS TO INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

##### PEI/1 and INCOMING SHOOTER FORMS

Shooters travelling out of the country with pistols to attend overseas competitions are required to file form PEI/1 (Importing your firearms back into NZ) and MFAT (Exporting your firearms out of NZ) export form not less than 21 days before their departure from New Zealand. Form PEI/1 is available on request from the Pistol NZ Executive Officer or may be downloaded from the Pistol NZ Website at [www.pistolnz.org.nz](http://www.pistolnz.org.nz). Shooters not using form PEI/1 will experience difficulty in bringing their pistols back into the country on their return from overseas.

Shooters coming to New Zealand for competitions are advised to visit the PNZ website for information relating to the required forms for completion.

#### TEAM SELECTION

Selectors are appointed and criteria set for standards required for selection to represent Pistol NZ at international competition. The selection process is usually under the control of the relevant Section Director, unless that person is also seeking selection, in which case Council will approve an alternative manager of the selection process. As a member of the NZ Shooting Federation, Pistol NZ has access to entry in the Commonwealth Games, Olympic Games and World Championships in a number of events. Pistol NZ has sent representatives overseas to all of these at different times and assists wherever possible with financial support. Pistol NZ has also been involved in the hosting of major world events in New Zealand.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

Internally, your club has its Annual General Meeting and elections each year to elect a President, Secretary, Treasurer Etc., plus the members of your club committee. In the same way, Pistol NZ at its AGM elects pistol shooters to positions on the National Council. Nomination forms are issued to clubs, in May each year calling for nominations. Any financial member can be nominated as President or to any other position on Council, and great care should be taken to see that those who are selected are the most suitable, because members on Council represent all pistol shooters, not just their own club or area.

Council is a court of appeal to which members can turn if they have problems or feel that they are unable to resolve pistol shooting and competition related issues within their club.

The Annual General Meeting of Pistol NZ is the supreme constituted body of the organisation and this is where the membership expresses its opinions and gives the Council its direction. Members are represented by delegates from each club. Each club carries one vote. If delegates from a club cannot be present, a person present at that meeting may represent that club by proxy (by completing the proxy voting form included with AGM information and sending to the Executive Officer prior to the meeting).

#### GENERAL INTEREST ITEMS FROM PISTOL NZ POLICY

**AGE LIMITS:** There is no minimum or maximum age at which persons may become affiliated to Pistol NZ. Clubs may set their own minimum age limit under the terms of their constitution.

**REMITTS AND/OR NOTICES OF MOTION:** Are to be submitted to the Executive Officer prior to the end of the financial year, as per the Pistol NZ Constitution.

**AGM VOTING:** All clubs who are financial as of the AGM may vote at the Annual General Meeting of Pistol NZ, as per the Pistol NZ constitution.

**FINANCIAL YEAR:** The Pistol NZ financial year is from July 1st to June 30th of the following year.

**AFFILIATION FEES:** These are set at the Annual General Meeting for the following year. Affiliation fees are due for payment not later than the 28th day of July in each year.

**APPROVED PISTOLS:** Any pistol used on a Pistol NZ range must be approved for such use by Pistol NZ, as part of International and local rules and the NZ Police.

**B ENDORSEMENTS:** The minimum age for B endorsement is 16 years. New members are required to attend shooting meetings, induction and training at their club before applying for a B endorsement. In order to maintain a licence to carry pistols a member must participate in a minimum of 12 club activities each year. This may be at the members own club or another club, providing BOTH clubs have the same events listed in their annual activities calendar and the member informs the Secretary of their club of the activity.

**PROBATION PERIOD FOR NEW MEMBERS:** Commences from the date of acceptance as a financial member of a Pistol NZ club, providing the club sends in the required affiliation fee within 28 days of the member joining.

**CONSTITUTION:** A copy of the current Pistol NZ Constitution can be downloaded from the Pistol NZ website.

**COUNCIL:** The Executive which governs Pistol NZ, elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.

**NATIONAL and ISLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS:** Member clubs may apply to hold National or Island Championships for any event in co-operation with the appropriate Section Director. Applications for National Champs in any discipline are required one year in advance. The application forms are available on the Pistol NZ website.

NATIONAL and ISLAND CHAMPIONSHIP MEDALS: Pistol NZ recognises winners of National and Island Championship events and supplies Championship medals to the organising club to present on behalf of Pistol NZ.

TROPHIES: There are trophies for the National and Regional Championships of most Pistol NZ disciplines and events. Many of these have been generously donated by pistol shooters and other sponsors. These trophies must be returned to the organisers of the event held the following year or to the Section Director or Executive Officer, at least one month prior to the event.

POLICE: All matters relating to the Police and pistol shooting are handled by the Pistol NZ Police Liaison Committee. For information relating to Police matters refer to the Members Area listed on the Pistol NZ website.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: It is the responsibility of all pistol shooters and clubs to maintain a good public relations image. On the range it is expected that members will dress in a manner appropriate to a civilian sporting group and avoid projecting a para-military image. Be careful what you post and say on Social Media as often these views are seen by many members of the public.

PISTOL SHOOTING RECORDS: Pistol NZ maintains a register of National and International match records and as new records are achieved and approved by the Section Director they appear on the PistolNZ website. National Records can be set by a Pistol NZ shooter at a National, Island or International or approved Championships.

SECTIONS & SECTION DIRECTORS: Shooting Sections are formed from time to time by Council to represent bodies of shooters shooting specific disciplines. Section Directors are appointed (elected by the section membership) to co-ordinate the operation and promotion of shooting matches for their discipline, and to administer the rules and safety for each match nationally.

TARGETS: These are printed and supplied to clubs by a Pistol NZ contractor using an on-line ordering system found on the Pistol NZ website. Targets are delivered after being paid for or are invoiced to a member club.

## 5. THE RULES AND REGULATIONS

### REGULATIONS GOVERNING PISTOL SHOOTING

These general conditions have been agreed between the NZ Police and Pistol NZ and apply to all pistol shooting. These can be found here on the NZ Police website: [www.firearmssafetyauthority.govt.nz](http://www.firearmssafetyauthority.govt.nz)

Further details relating to the agreement can be found in the Letter of Understanding which is available from the Pistol NZ Website at [www.pistolnz.org.nz](http://www.pistolnz.org.nz)

- All shooters are to be financial members of a pistol club.
- All clubs shall be Incorporated Societies and must be affiliated to Pistol NZ.
- All new members are to serve a probationary period of six months and a minimum of 12 attendances. The names of all applicants are to be forwarded to Pistol NZ with their FM/1 form and affiliation fee within 28 days of joining a club.
- Pistol shooting may take place only on a Police approved pistol range.
- All shooting is to be under the control of a qualified Range Officer, and Pistol NZ approved range commands and safety practices to be applied at all times.
- Police have the right to inspect the range at any time.

1. Applications to import or to procure target shooting pistols shall be accepted only from members of pistol clubs affiliated with Pistol NZ and conforming to the rules laid down. In general, no pistol, unless purpose built for target shooting competition, shall have a barrel less than 101mm (4 inches) long, and it must be safe, serviceable, and appropriate for the type of matches the purchaser wishes to use it for.
2. All applications must be made to the member's local District Arms Office.
3. An armourer must obtain a Permit to Possess to hold a pistol in his possession (excepting while carrying at the club's range and the owner of that pistol is present).
4. Members of pistol clubs may be approved for a B endorsement of their firearms licence under the following conditions:
  - (a) Applications to be lodged on form FRM29TS, available from the Police. Club approval needs to be carried out via form FRM29NP, signed by the shooter's Club Secretary / President and the Pistol NZ Executive Officer.
  - (b) The applicant must be a current financial member of an approved pistol club.
  - (c) New applicants must have completed a probationary period before an application will be considered. (Refer to the Police website for details).
  - (d) The applicant must comply with attendance requirements, display an interest in pistol shooting and demonstrate safe handling of pistols on the range.
  - (e) A firearms licence endorsement may be suspended/revoked if the licensee fails to retain current membership of a pistol club or comply with the Law and Regulations. An applicant must have attended and have participated in pistol shooting activities, induction and training at a pistol club prior to the application, and must attend and participate in a club's activities no less than 12 times, annually after obtaining the B endorsement. (Annually means from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July to 30<sup>th</sup> of June each year).
  - (f) The Secretary of a pistol club is required to promptly notify Clubs and Ranges ([ClubsandRanges@police.govt.nz](mailto:ClubsandRanges@police.govt.nz)) within 28 days when a club member issued with a B endorsed firearms licence fails to maintain full membership of a pistol club or when conditions relating to the licence are not complied with by the licensee. Where the member's licence endorsement is cancelled, and with permission of the Club, the pistols may be transferred to the club armourer by a Permit to Possess for selling.
  - (g) Pistols included on a B endorsed firearms licence may be carried only by the person named on the licence to and from their home directly:
    - (i) to and from an approved pistol range and Arms Dealer or Gunsmith
    - (ii) to and from a Police station
  - (h) The pistols must at all times be carried in a locked stout container OR in a soft bag providing the firearm has a trigger lock.
  - (I) Police have the right to inspect pistols, containers and ammunition

#### SAFETY AT HOME

- It is important to ensure that your pistols and equipment are kept in safe locations at all times.
- Make sure that your pistols are locked away in an approved safe at all times when you are not cleaning them or doing dry-firing practice.
- If you are going out immediately after arriving home from the range, put your pistols away first.
- The safe must be secure and in an inconspicuous location. While a safe may cost a few hundred dollars, Police require that a minimum standard be met. Remember that you are protecting possibly several thousand dollars worth of investment.
- Consider fitting a burglar alarm to the safe and preferably to the house. There are alarm units available at a reasonable price, and this will provide protection to the rest of your property. Your insurance cover may require this. Also check your house locks to make sure they are secure.
- Ammunition must be stored in a secure location separate to the pistols.

## RELOADING COMPONENTS

- Storing flammable materials such as bulk powder for reloading, or bulk primers, in your dwelling place may invalidate your house insurance. You should check this, and in any case consider storing these materials in an outside location such as your garage or shed, in a damp-proof non-metallic box, with a "blow-off" (weak) side or lid.

## PROTECT YOUR SECURITY AND PRIVACY

- Do not show your pistols to, or discuss them with, people you do not know.
- Be wary of letting people; who do not need to know, your street address.
- Make sure that your name and address are not displayed on a club notice board.
- If you have pistols for sale either show only a cell phone number or email address for contact. Avoid any publicity in which you are shown with a pistol AND your name and address is given. If possible use your first name only during the sale process.
- IF YOU NEED TO SELL A PISTOL, due to leaving the sport or any other reasons The pistol should be disposed of in the following manners:
  - private sale to another PNZ member (or C Cat holder)
  - via advertisement in the PNZ Online Trading Post or a suitable gun magazine.
  - sell through or to a suitably licensed Gun shop
  - sell through a suitable auction house certified to handle pistols
- Members should leave clear instructions as to how to dispose of a restricted firearm in the case of an untimely death.
- If you are looking to send a pistol away for repairs to a Dealer or Gunsmith, the pistol must be transferred to that persons licence for the duration it is in their possession. The Dealer or Gunsmith will need to send you a Permit to Possess to fill out and send back with the pistol.

## GETTING TO AND FROM THE RANGE

- When taking pistols to and from the range they must be kept unloaded in a locked box in the locked boot of your car OR in a soft case providing the pistol has a trigger lock.
- Magazines may not be loaded when you are carrying them to and from the range.
- Ammunition must be carried in a separate container from the pistol.
- You should carry your firearms licence with you, or you may be required to produce it at a police station.
- Pistols may not be carried to the range in a holster unless both the pistol and the holster are in a locked box.
- Don't put your name and address on the outside of any box or container in which you transport your guns.

## PISTOL NZ STANDARD RULES FOR SAFETY AND CONDUCT ON PISTOL RANGES

Immediately upon entering the club facilities:

- Every member or visitor shall sign the range attendance book. (Membership #, First name).
- Every person entering the range (whether member or visitor) places themselves under the control of the Range Officers or their assistants and must at all times comply with their instructions and these rules for safety and conduct.
- No person shall enter or leave the range with a loaded gun.
- No firearm will be loaded until the competitor is instructed to do so by the Range Officer.
- When not at the firing point, guns and magazines will be unloaded at all times. Cylinders will be open or slides back and magazines out, unless the gun is boxed or holstered.
- No firearm may be removed from the firing point until it has been checked as clear by the Range Officer.



## PISTOL RANGE APPROVAL

Pistol shooting by Pistol NZ members may take place only on ranges approved by the Commissioner of Police. ***You must be aware of the Range Standing Orders for use of ranges at your club, which must be posted on each range, together with any additional club rules.*** The club Secretary should also have copies of the Range Standing Orders, which should be issued to all new members at the time of joining the club.

Information on the development and alteration of shooting ranges is contained in the Pistol NZ Range Guide which is held by the Executive Officer and available on the Pistol New Zealand website.

## **6. RANGE PROTOCOL**

Standards of behaviour are important on all ranges and information relating to the expectations of club personnel of visitors and new members can be found in further detail in the Safety Section of this Handbook.

It is compulsory to wear safety glasses (shooting glasses permitted) and hearing protection (ear plugs or earmuffs) during firing on a pistol range. This includes spectators. Consideration for others who may be shooting and respect for other people's property is important. Never touch a firearm belonging to another person without them being present or having given their consent.

New shooters are encouraged to assist with patching targets, picking up brass and generally assisting with the 'chores' of the range. It is always appreciated when people offer to help put away the targets and frames and clear the range before leaving for the day. Our clubs are built on the tireless contribution of many experienced members who are always the first to arrive and the last to leave. All help is most appreciated.

## FIRING POINT COMMANDS

It is important that shooters make themselves familiar with range commands for the various styles and matches they participate in. Match Rules are available from the relevant Section Director, and on the Pistol NZ website, or from the relevant international governing body. (Check the PNZ website for links.)

- No person on the firing line shall touch a pistol whilst any other person is forward of the firing line. The Range Officer shall personally check all guns are clear before allowing personnel forward of the firing point.
- The safety of competitors, range personnel and spectators requires continual attention by all to the careful handling of firearms and movement about the range. Self-discipline is necessary on the part of all competitors, range personnel and spectators. Where such self-control is lacking it is the duty of the Range Officer to enforce it and the competitors to assist in such enforcement.
- The firing point will be kept clear at all times except of competitors actually firing and such range personnel as may be necessary. Any person, competitor or otherwise, who interferes with or annoys any other competitor will be warned to desist and if they do not comply, will be ordered off the range.

It is the duty of competitors to clean up their firing points at the completion of the match. Competitors will act as scorers and patchers when asked to do so by the Range Officer. The firing area is under the control of the Range Officer and such assistant Range Officers as may be required. The Range Officer is responsible for the safety and discipline of range staff, competitors and spectators. It is their duty to be completely familiar with the shooting program, club and event rules. They must be constantly alert, impartial and firm but courteous.

No person shall be admitted to the range when apparently under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Any person who consumes alcohol at a range facility will not be permitted to shoot thereafter on that day.

## 7. PISTOL NZ SHOOTING STYLES and MATCHES

We are fortunate, here in New Zealand, to be able to shoot almost all of the styles and matches that are shot worldwide. It is not possible for all clubs to be able to stage all the various types and styles of matches. It might well be that your club only shoots one style of match due to space considerations or the specific wishes of your fellow club members.

The following information is intended as a guide only and further information and rules for each style or match can be obtained from the Section Director or the downloads section of the website [www.pistolnz.org.nz](http://www.pistolnz.org.nz)



### **ACTION PISTOL MATCHES**

The Action Pistol rule book contains matches from which a number can be selected to make up a competition. Most matches consist of strings of 6 shots, making them suitable for revolver and semi-automatics.



### **SERVICE PISTOL MATCHES**

The match consists of 48 to 150 shots fired at ranges from 50, 25, 10, and 7 yards, with series of 3-6 shots fired from different positions at a group of two to four targets.



### **SPEED (STEEL CHALLENGE)**

This competition consists of a selection of separate stages, all of which involve shooting at a number of steel targets as quickly as possible. This match favours semi-automatic pistols. The main matches are shot from the holster. (.22 And Pistol Carbine matches are started from the 45 lowered position) Courses are shot at 5 steel targets, at distances ranging from 7 to 35 yards. The object is to obtain the best time for shooting all targets. The matches involve Centrefire, .22 Pistol, Pistol Carbine and .22 Rifles.



### **COWBOY ACTION MATCHES**

Cowboy Action Shooting (CAS) is action shooting with either original or replica firearms of the period pre 1899. CAS is a three gun event which involves the use of lever action rifles, double barrellled or pre 1899 pump shotguns, one or two single action revolvers and in the Wild Bunch matches 1911 style pistols. A big part of cowboy shooting is the adoption of a shooting alias and wearing of period dress.

CAS is shot to Single Action Shooting Society (SASS) rules. There are many different categories, which cover several age/gender groups, as well as shooting styles and types of firearms.



## **HMS (HANDGUN METALLIC SILHOUETTE) MATCHES**

All rules for matches and specifications for handguns are set out in the IHMSA Official Rules, IMSSU Rules and the NRA Silhouette Rules.

### **General**

All categories have five targets of each: chickens, pigs, turkeys and rams set at the following distances:

Air Pistol, shot out to 18 yards (Targets 1/8ths Big Bore Size).

.22 LR: 25, 50, 75, and 100m/yds. (Targets are 3/8ths Big Bore size).

FIELD PISTOL: 25, 50, 75 and 100m/yds. (Targets are 1/2 Big Bore size).

BIG BORE: 50, 100, 150 and 200m/yds.

A match consists of 40 shots at 40 targets in each category, 10 shots being fired at each distance.

A competitor's grading in any category is determined by his/her first score shot at a sanctioned match.



## **ISSF MATCHES**

The full match rules, courses of fire, regulations governing the size, weight, barrel length and sight specifications for all pistols used in ISSF competition are contained in the ISSF rule books.

All ISSF pistol events are shot single handed, standing, unsupported. These matches are ideal for paraplegic or disabled shooters as the International rules allow for various forms of support for those with recognised disabilities. See the Section Director for further information. Air pistol matches are shot at 10 metres, the other matches at 25 and 50 metres.



## **MUZZLE LOADING MATCHES**

Two main styles of Muzzle Loading matches are shot; MLAIC (Muzzle Loaders Association International Committee), and PA (Pistol Australia).

MLAIC Events are identical in form, only the style of firearm changes - 13 shots are fired in 30 minutes with the best 10 counting: for Flintlock Single Shot (Cominazzo - NZ Class 1), Percussion Single Shot (Kuchenreuter - Class 2), Percussion Cap and Ball Revolver (Mariette/Colt NZ - Class 3), and Matchlock Pistol (Tanzutsu-class 6)

In addition Pistol NZ have two matches for Single Shot and Revolvers of "modern design" or altered original design. These shot in the MLAIC style.

More detailed information on Muzzle Loading matches are available from the Section Director.



## **PRACTICAL (IPSC) MATCHES**

These matches are shot to the rules of the International Practical Shooting Confederation. Matches consist of a number of courses of varied content. The objective is a combination of speed, power and accuracy, and scores depend on both a quick time and high scoring hits on the targets. Separate scoring "divisions" are held in each match for Open Class (any pistol, can be scoped, with compensator etc), Standard Division (pistol must fit in a prescribed box with magazine fitted, and have no optics or compensator), Production Division (limited to specifically approved double action semi auto pistols), Production Optics Division (same as the Production Division but with Electronic sights), Classic Division (limited to single stack semi-automatic pistols), Revolver Division (6-9 shot iron sighted revolvers), and Pistol Calibre (Pistols fitted to a frame that can be shot from the shoulder). The matches favour semi-automatic pistols as a fairly large number of shots are often needed in each stage.



There are also specific categories provided for:

- Lady
- Junior: Under 21 years of age on the 1st day of the match
- Senior: Over 50 years of age on the 1st day of the match
- Super Senior: Over 60 years of age on the 1st day of the match



## **MULTIGUN**

Multigun combines the use of pistols with rifles and shotguns. These are shot together or in combinations during a 'Stage'. Multiple 'Stages' make up a match. The total combined lowest times in a match determines the winners.

## **8. COMPETITIONS - GRADING**

### **GRADING**

To enable shooters to compete against others of a similar level of skill, many Pistol NZ matches operate on a graded awards system in addition to the open awards.

Because of the diverse nature of the matches shot, grading differs from match to match. While grading lists are listed on the Pistol NZ website, grading lists are held by the relevant Section Director. Contact them directly for information on grading in the match you are interested in.

In some cases a shooter can apply to be re-graded downward, in accordance with the rules for the match being shot, and with the approval of the Section Director. In most cases shooters are moved up a grade after shooting the higher score at a regional or national competition.

There is no grading system employed in CAS matches but there are a wide range of shooting categories based on age, equipment, shooting style and other factors.

## **9. COMPETITIONS IN NEW ZEALAND**

### **ANNUAL PISTOL NZ COMPETITIONS**

Pistol NZ will hold National and North and South Island Championships annually in each of the disciplines. These competitions are promoted in the Bullshooter magazine and entry details on the Pistol NZ website.

### **SAFETY**

A range must be controlled by a Range Officer. Clubs must provide a safety zone for holstering and drawing practice (where applicable) and the cleaning and inspecting of guns.

### **HOLSTERS**

Certain disciplines require the shooter to use a loaded gun from the holster. Shooters are required to have passed a Pistol NZ Holster Course. These courses are run by qualified holster Instructors. Most clubs have one or more instructors, or there will be one at a nearby club.

Many holsters are not suitable for target pistol shooting. Before buying a holster, check with a local Holster Instructor or the Section Director as to its suitability. (More Information is available on the Pistol New Zealand website "Holsters" Page).

## AMMUNITION

Jacketed projectiles will do no more damage to steel plate than hard cast lead and most events will allow the use of either type except for Service Pistol and CAS.

Magnum loads should not be shot at steel targets unless the targets are specifically designed for heavy loads, such as in HMS Big Bore and IPSC.

## **10. INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION**

### INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION SELECTION

Any NZ pistol shooter can attend "open" shooting matches overseas, completing the relevant export/import paperwork available on the PNZ website or from the Executive Officer. Pistol NZ will also send official teams to some international events.

10.1 "The New Zealand Pistol Team" is the officially selected team of pistol shooters chosen to represent Pistol NZ at any international competition.

10.2 To become a member of "The New Zealand Pistol Team" all individuals must be properly selected in accordance with the Pistol NZ Rules and selection criteria.

10.3 Every Pistol NZ shooter shall be eligible for selection to The NZ Pistol Team, however no person shall be selected unless that person:

10.3.1 is a current financial member of Pistol NZ and where necessary, is affiliated to the International body responsible for the shooting style in which the team will compete.

10.3.2 is in good standing with Pistol NZ (including acceptance of any "Athletes Agreement")

10.3.3 is likely to represent New Zealand and Pistol NZ with distinction in regards to general demeanour as well as shooting ability.

10.4 Selection shall be based on the member's provable shooting standards, measured by way of a selection criteria. Misfortunes such as illness, accident and unavoidable firearms or equipment malfunction, shall be taken into consideration when selections are made. An individual's ability to pay for all or part of the costs to attend any international competition or trial shall never be a prerequisite for selection or non-selection.

10.5 Each Section will appoint its own selectors who will monitor the standards of their shooters and maintain records of such standards in relation to any international competitions they plan to attend.

10.6 Programmed national events (South Island, North Island and National Championships) will always be used for selection purposes and if deemed necessary selectors will set dates for the holding of further selection trials. Details of such further trials must be advised to all Clubs and competitors in contention for selection no less than 90 days in advance.

10.7 Council will be responsible for final approval of all selections to The NZ Pistol Team.

10.8 On advice of their selection, all members of The NZ Pistol Team will be required to sign an "Athletes Agreement", and place themselves under the control of the Team Manager (who may or may not be shooting in the event as well) appointed by Council.

# SECTION TWO - SAFETY AND BASIC MATCH RULES

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(The Club Range Officer and Safety plus the Junior Proficiency Badge tests relate to this section)

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## 11. SAFETY

Safety is the most important aspect of taking part in shooting. You will hear about it regularly from a number of different people, particularly the Range Officers. Please heed what they say - if any person acts in an unsafe manner, we are all at risk.

### 11.1 General Points

- Never point a firearm at any person, or handle the pistol in such a way as to appear to be pointing it at someone.
- You may only load the firearm on the range, at the firing point and under instruction from the Range Officer.
- All new shooters, visitors and children, must be kept under strict supervision while on the range.
- Anyone participating in shooting on a range must wear eye and ear protection.
- Any member or visitor who does not hold a "B" endorsed firearms licence may only shoot a pistol if they are under the immediate supervision of a "B" endorsed licence holder.

### 11.2 Seven Basic Rules of Firearm Safety

(Remember these from the MSC training for your firearms licence?)

#### 1. TREAT EVERY FIREARM AS LOADED

- Don't take it for granted – check it yourself
- Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot
- If you don't know how to check a pistol is safe, seek the help of a Range Officer
- Don't touch anyone else's firearm without permission

#### 2. ALWAYS POINT FIREARMS IN A SAFE DIRECTION

- It doesn't matter if it is unloaded – ALWAYS point firearms in a safe direction (ie muzzle pointing down range)
- Be aware of safe direction limits at your range and make sure your pistol muzzle always stays pointed within it

#### 3. LOAD A FIREARM ONLY WHEN YOU ARE GIVEN THE INSTRUCTION TO DO SO BY A RANGE OFFICER

- Don't load the pistol until you are at the firing line and are under the supervision of a range officer
- Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot

#### 4. IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET

- Make sure that you understand the course of fire, and which target(s) you are shooting at
- Make sure that you are shooting at your target, and not someone else's

#### 5. CHECK YOUR FIRING ZONE

- Make sure the range is clear of people and animals forward of the firing line before you shoot, and stays clear while you are shooting

#### 6. STORE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION SAFELY

- There are special legal requirements for the storage of pistols. Make sure that you are aware of these (refer to Section 5)
- Store your firearms and ammunition separately
- Check that the gun is not loaded before you put it away in your safe

## 7. AVOID ALCOHOL AND DRUGS WHEN HANDLING FIREARMS

- You may never consume alcohol prior to or during shooting
- Don't allow others to drink before or during shooting
- Avoid shooting when you are tired or ill - this reduces your concentration

### 11.3 Protective equipment and recommended clothing

Anyone participating in shooting activities (including spectators) on a shooting range must wear eye and hearing protection.

#### 11.3.1 Hearing protectors

It is mandatory to wear hearing protection on pistol ranges. All pistol shooting other than air pistol shooting is noisy, and loud enough to damage hearing if ear protection is not worn at all times when shooting is in progress. Choose earmuffs or earplugs of good quality with a good "noise reduction rating". We recommend Grade 4 earmuffs as a minimum. If your hearing is especially sensitive you may wish to use earplugs as well as earmuffs.

#### 11.3.2 Safety glasses

The use of safety glasses or goggles is mandatory for all shooting on Pistol NZ ranges. If you wish to wear your prescription glasses while shooting, make sure they have safety glass or safety plastic lenses. Tinted glasses may be worn to accommodate different light conditions.

#### 11.3.3 Footwear

Special pistol shooting shoes do exist (made to comply with ISSF rules). For all disciplines, you should wear enclosed shoes with reasonably flat soles, such as running shoes. These provide good stability, and will protect you and others from your reaction if a hot shell case lands on your foot. For disciplines requiring movement, you need footwear which will provide good grip in all weather. Individual discipline rules allow shooters with disabilities and medical issues to wear uncovered and special footwear. In each case, the shooter and club should refer to the Section Director to explain your special requirements.

#### 11.3.4 Recommended clothing

Wear clothing that is comfortable and which covers you reasonably well. There are few things more uncomfortable than having a hot case slide down inside your shirt. Avoid wearing tight or restrictive clothing. As well as being uncomfortable, it may prevent you assuming a correct shooting position. Ensure your "match" clothing complies with the rules for that discipline.

Note: Pistol club members and guests attending club activities are prohibited from wearing clothing that, when considered as a whole bears a conspicuous resemblance to military or police tactical clothing. "Para-military" clothing or clothing carrying offensive slogans are not allowed on Pistol NZ ranges.

### 11.4 Safety on the Range

This manual covers two broad styles of pistol shooting:

"Bench or Static shooting" where pistols are placed on a bench or table when not being fired, and in which a number of shooters are supervised by one Range Officer and fire during the same time period at fixed targets. This includes ISSF, Muzzle Loading and HMS matches in this manual.

"Field or Dynamic shooting" where pistols are normally kept in holsters on the shooter's belt when not being fired, and are drawn from the holster as part of the shooting sequence; one or only a small number of shooters are supervised by one Range Officer. This includes Action, Service, Speed, Practical (IPSC), Cowboy and Three Gun and Multigun matches.

While “field” shooting requires some extra safety precautions, and has greater Range Officer involvement, in this manual the contents are arranged with ISSF “bench” shooting first and variations for all other types shown after. “Field” shooting training is covered briefly, as it is covered in detail in the Holster Training Course which you must pass to take part in these matches. For non-holster trained people, as all new pistol shooters are, any “field” shooting that is allowed is done from the 45° position, and the majority of the information relating to “bench” shooting is relevant. You will not be able to shoot whilst moving with a loaded pistol in these events until you obtain a Holster Badge.

#### 11.4.1 The Range Officer

A Range Officer or “RO” will look after each range. This person controls the shooting on the particular range, and his/her instructions must be obeyed immediately and without question. Range Staff are here for your safety - make sure you follow their instructions.

The Range Officer will usually be able to answer general questions about shooting and pistols, and will also be able to answer questions that you may have on the particular discipline that is being shot on a particular range. All shooting must be under the control of a Range Officer.

**Note: Range Officials should only be approached when they are not busy.**

When only two or three shooters are present and having a non-shooting RO may not be practical, one of the shooters must be in charge of the range. This person shall issue the instructions before shooting.

#### 11.4.2 Safety Envelope

On any range and at any firing point, there is a “Safety Envelope” outside which the pistol must never be pointed at any time during the match or practice. This includes when the pistol is being loaded, rested on a bench, placed into or drawn from a holster or unloaded. While actually engaging a target the pistol must be pointed downrange in a direction such that any accidental discharge will hit only the target backstop area or the ground in front of the targets.

Pistols must not be pointed at the roof or the sidewalls of the range structure, at the sky or at the shooter’s feet.

When a pistol is open on the bench with its magazine [if any] out, it should be placed with its muzzle pointed down range.

Using the proper “Ready” position, in which the barrel of the pistol is at approximately 45 degrees below the horizontal line to the target and directly on a line between the shooter and the target area, will help to ensure that the shooter stays within the safety envelope.

**Note: For more details on your range safety envelope, please refer to the RANGE STANDING ORDERS. These are posted on your club notice board and give information on the safe use of pistols on the range.**

#### 11.4.3 Range Etiquette and Safe Behaviour

Bench or Static Shooting (ISSF, HMS and ML)

Most of these items are common to ISSF and M/L, and there are a few extra considerations for M/L and HMS as well.

When you enter a range, you must make the RO aware of your presence on the range, and ask if you may take part in whatever activity is going on before you do anything else. After this you may select a firing position, and under the instruction of the RO, unpack your pistol, and prepare to start shooting. If you turn up during a match, or while other people are shooting, the RO will probably require you to wait for a break in the shooting (end of a series) before moving to a shooting bay. Note: If you are participating in an organised match, the RO will call shooters to the line for preparation time.

Once you have the Range Officer's permission to set up, you may get a club gun from the Armourer, or you take your own pistol out of your gun box. You may also set up your spotting scope etc at this time.

When first unpacking your pistol, and at any other time when it is not actually being used, it must be placed on the shooting bench, with the muzzle pointed down range, the action open, and with any magazine removed and unloaded. Revolvers should have the cylinder open. The box should also be at the shooting position to have the pistol removed from it, not on the seat behind you!

All pistols must be unloaded, and be checked by the RO as empty, before anyone goes forward of the firing line. You must check with the Range Officer before going forward of the firing line to put up a target, to pick up spent brass or for any other reason. You may not handle any pistol or ammunition while any person is forward of the firing line - this includes removing your pistol from gun boxes prior to placing on a shooting bench.

During a match shooters remaining on the range during scoring must stand back from the firing line, and not handle any equipment. You may not load, make ready or fire a pistol without the Range Officer's permission – given as a standard command (covered later). Only one magazine may be loaded, and only when the command is given to load. Avoid placing your finger on the trigger until you are ready to fire at the target.

Loaded pistols must be pointed downrange in a safe direction at all times. If you want to rest your arm, for instance to look through your spotting scope, rest the barrel of the pistol on the front of the shooting bench with the muzzle pointed safely down range. When you have finished shooting a series, or when you want to have a break from shooting, you must unload your pistol, place it on the shooting bench with the muzzle downrange, the action open, with any magazine removed and unloaded. The magazine should sit with the open end of the magazine pointed away from the targets, so that the RO can see clearly that there are no rounds in the magazine. A revolver should be placed so that the cylinder is extended and the empty chambers can be easily seen. You should then stand back from the bench.

If you wish to fire a shot at any other time than during a series or course of fire, you must have the permission of the RO. If it is necessary to handle a pistol between series to make some adjustment or repair, the RO must be asked for permission to remove the pistol from the shooting bench or range after they have cleared the gun. It may not be placed back on the shooting bench until permission is again given by the RO. Sights may be adjusted at the firing line while shooting is in progress.

Note that pistols are not to be worn in a holster on the range except under controlled conditions or in the appropriate matches. You must have your pistol (and magazines) checked ('cleared') by the RO as being unloaded before they can be removed from the shooting bench and put away. Pistols should never be left unattended. If you need to leave the range briefly, you must tell the RO that you want to leave and ask the RO to look after your pistol while you are gone. If pistols are left unattended in a shooting bay when a match is finished, the RO will clear the pistols for removal and call the club armourer to remove them.

Your pistols must always be kept in a box or case with you, or locked away securely. Do not leave your pistols (even in a locked box) in one part of the range while you are elsewhere. If you are going to have lunch, either take your pistol with you in its box, or put it back in the locked car.

You should keep shooting gear you are not using locked in the boot of your car or in a secure area at the range if one is provided. It is preferable to take into a range building only that equipment you are

using in that place and to take it with you when you leave. If you are moving onto another range, you must have your pistol cleared and carry it unloaded, in its box.

If you want to show someone a pistol, or before you hand anyone a pistol, make sure that it is unloaded, and prove this to that person. This is done by:

- pointing the pistol in a safe direction, then
- for a single shot - opening the action;
- for a revolver - swinging out the cylinder;
- for a semi-auto - removing the magazine, opening the slide and locking it back,
- THEN showing the other person that the pistol [and the magazine, if any] is empty.

If someone is about to hand you a pistol, ask them to show you it is unloaded. Never pull the trigger on another person's pistol without asking.

If you have a misfire and need another person's assistance (such as the RO), take your finger off the trigger, and keep the muzzle pointed downrange (resting the barrel if you need to). Then signal for the RO's attention, by raising the non-shooting arm above shoulder level, so that it is a clearly visible signal.

Avoid disturbing other shooters by talking or making undue noise. Spectators should be made welcome, but must remain behind the firing line, and not distract the shooters.

### **Special Safety Requirements for Muzzle Loading**

#### Dealing with Misfires

Precision: If a cap fails to fire the charge, point the pistol downrange for 15 seconds (10 seconds for MLAIC) and then repeat firing. If cap still fails to ignite, replace it carefully and try again. No time is allowed for rectifying ignition failures.

Rapid-fire (PA only): If cap fails, hold the pistol down range for at least 5 seconds, and re-cock for subsequent exposures. Call a misfire at the end of the series. A re-shoot of all non-fired shots is allowed. The re-shoot is done after the same series. Only one re-shoot is allowed per series, and any misfires in the re-shoot series are not re-shot.

#### Loading

- Projectiles may be lead only.
- Powder must be in single charge containers, and may be black powder only. No bulk containers are allowed on the range.
- Mouth (front) of revolver chambers to be sealed with grease after loading.
- Patches are not allowed for revolvers.
- Safety glasses must be worn while loading, as well as when firing.
- The safe loaded condition is with 5 chambers loaded (or one less than the maximum the pistol will take), and hammer down on the empty, uncapped, chamber.

**ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING ON THE RANGE BY ANYONE,  
AND NO NAKED FLAMES ANYWHERE**

### **Special Safety Requirements for Handgun Metallic Silhouette (HMS)**

Although this is not a fast match, some of the pistols can use very powerful loads. The rules include some specific precautions to avoid any hazards arising from these sources. Some of these are common to other matches.

- The muzzle of the pistol must point downrange at all times.
- A pistol only to be handled after command "LOAD" is given.



- Extra care is sometimes required to ensure the pistol is not pointed at any part of the shooter's anatomy, and that the muzzle is always in a safe direction. No part of the shooter's body may be in the "Danger Zone", a cone of 45° from the muzzle of the pistol.
- The muzzle of the pistol must not be allowed to recoil beyond the vertical.
- Ammunition must be safe, and able to be extracted by the internal extractor of the pistol.

### **Range Etiquette and Safe Behaviour**

#### **Field or Dynamic Shooting (Action, IPSC, Speed, Service, Multigun & CAS)**

Many of the safety and etiquette requirements for "field" shooting are basically the same as for "bench" shooting. Placing guns on benches may not be relevant but most other information is the same, particularly for non-holster trained shooters. However, each match does have its own specific rules for safe behaviour.

#### **Action/IPSC/Speed/Service Shooting/Multigun**

This shooting as a class includes the use of centre fire and .22 pistols and/or shotguns and rifles, some using powerful loads usually fired quite quickly. The RO to shooter ratio is higher to reflect this, and there are a number of safety and pistol handling items that are specific to these matches.

Detailed instruction is provided in the Holster Training Course (for pistols), so the information in this manual consists of more general items which will allow new shooters to participate safely in these events, with restrictions. Non-holster qualified shooters must hold the pistol in the 45° Ready position to start, and may only shoot from a fixed position (ie no movement of the feet whilst shooting). Only holster qualified shooters may draw from the holster.

After arrival at the range, pistols must be transferred from the carrying box to holster or to a carry pouch if this is how the shooter prefers to carry the pistol when not shooting. This may only be done in a safety zone or on the firing line (and then only with the permission of and under the direct supervision of the RO). There will also be times when it is necessary to clean or repair a firearm at the range, or when you wish to show someone else the firearm for some reason. These activities may only take place in a Safety Zone. In matches involving rifles and shotguns, these must be cleared by an RO prior to shooting, long guns are stored in racks or carts, and carried with a safety flag inserted and muzzle towards the sky. All clubs will have at least one Safety Zone. This is the only area other than the firing point in which firearms may be handled. You may not take a firearm from its box or sleeve and holster (pistol) it at your car.

The Primary Safety Zone (which must be provided) is an area with benches on which pistol boxes may be placed while removing the pistols for holstering. Note that on a 'field' range, all firearms are considered to be in a permanently cleared condition, as they should have been cleared before being holstered or 'bagged', and always after being used. Nevertheless, it is still sensible to check a gun is unloaded every time it is removed from its box or sleeve. Firearms are not allowed to be carried around a range with a magazine inserted, whether the magazine is loaded or not.

Ammunition may be taken into a Safety Zone, but it must not be handled. Loaded magazines may be worn on the belt or in a shooting bag, but must not be handled in a Safety Zone.

While not actually shooting or at a firing point a pistol must either be kept in a closed bag or box, or in a holster worn on the person, and not handled except in a Safety Zone. We recommend that pistols and shotguns/rifles should be bagged when shooters have to wait between shooting stages. If the pistol is placed back in a bag or box, it can only be transferred to the holster again in a Safety Zone (or at the firing point with under the direction of the Range Officer).

All holsters for semi-auto pistols and double action revolvers must cover the trigger. The holster must be “serviceable and safe” and must retain the pistol during movement, and during a retention test if applied.

Most ‘field’ events allow for magazines to be loaded at any time, and may be worn on the holster belt, or carried in a bag, or pocket. A shooter should arrive at the Firing Point with enough ammunition to complete the stage. All magazines needed should be loaded and easily available. No, spare magazines can be ‘tabled, elsewhere in the COF (IPSC) unless specified.

At each stage or course of fire there will be at least one Range Officer, and they are in charge of all the shooters on that range, and responsible for their safe behaviour while shooting. Once a shooter has been called to the Firing Point, they will follow the RO’s instructions.

### Cowboy Action Shooting (CAS)

In addition to the safety items covered under Action, IPSC, Speed, Service and Multigun Shooting, there are some specific points for CAS. Only holster qualified shooters may draw from the holster and the only handguns which may be used are single-action revolvers and 1911 style semi-automatics. The safe loaded condition is with 5 rounds loaded, and the hammer down on the empty chamber.

The shooting hand should not be used to cock a revolver unless the course of fire, the class being shot or physical impairment requires it. The RO will closely supervise this aspect of the shooting. “Fanning” of the hammer is prohibited under all circumstances.

Two revolvers may be used in one stage. The second revolver may be carried in a cross-draw holster, but strict safety precautions apply to the use of such holsters. In three gun stages, rifles and shotguns must be cleared before and safely staged before the shooter moves on. Prior to shooting, long guns are stored in racks or carts, and carried action open and muzzle towards the sky.

Ammunition for revolvers and lever-action rifles must be loaded with lead projectiles and have a minimum velocity of 650 and maximum of 1000 fps for revolvers and 1400 fps for lever action rifles. Single shot rifles have no maximum. Shotguns may only be loaded with two rounds.

#### 11.4.4 Dud or “Squib” Loads

In practically all matches this means a round of ammunition (or load for muzzle loaders) in which the projectile does not leave the barrel of the pistol after the trigger has been pulled. This is usually (but not always) because of an incorrect amount of powder (or no powder at all) and is usually associated with a hand-loaded centre-fire round, but it can occur with a muzzle loaded charge, or even with rim fire .22 ammo.

Squib loads can be annoying, and cause unwelcome time delays while being attended to. The dangerous element is that if you fire another round into the blocked barrel, it is possible for the gun to break up, sending bits of metal in several unplanned directions. In a well made guns with fairly low-powered ammunition, it is more likely to bulge the barrel, which, while less dangerous, can still ruin the gun.

So, it is important to be aware of this possibility, and if you suspect a “soft” load, i.e. one in which there is less recoil than usual, (or you can’t see the shot have any downrange effect), STOP. Range Officers are prepared for this, and in all matches it is required that you stop if this happens; if you don’t, the alert RO will stop you if he believes a squib load has been fired. If he is wrong you will be able to reshoot that course of fire.

Once you have discovered this problem, you have to get the projectile out, and this will always involve the RO's permission (and possibly assistance). The first thing to do is to stop and alert the RO (hold the firearm at 45°, and hold up your other hand if you are bench shooting). The RO will supervise your clearing the gun, or do it for you if you are uncertain or a learner.

You unload the firearm, open the action and using a rod, push the projectile either forwards or backwards out of the barrel (depending on the type of firearm). With revolvers it is possible that the projectile is half in the barrel and half in the chamber, in which case you have to ram it back toward the case. Do this only under RO supervision, because any other unfired rounds are still in the cylinder – be extra careful about direction and not pointing at anyone or anything. A muzzle loading single shot pistol cannot generally be opened at the breech and so a ball part-way up the barrel must either be extracted with a special screw, or fired out with a small amount of powder added through the flash-hole (a practised job).

## 12. SHOOTING TIPS FOR ALL DISCIPLINES

### 12.1 Basic Shooting Tips

Shooting, or the art of getting a good shot every time, can be broken down into the simple statement:

Align the sights correctly, on the correct part of the target, and allow the shot to break without altering that alignment. Simple, but not necessarily easy! There are a number of basic techniques that go into making this alignment happen, and they are part of any kind of shooting. Your coach will be able to go through these with you, but as a guide, there is a summary below for pistol shooting.

### 12.2 Stance

Your stance has a lot to do with how well you shoot. Human beings are not actually well designed for pistol shooting, so we need to make an effort to produce a good stable shooting platform.

For shooting one handed in a standing position, a good stance to start with is with your feet about shoulder width apart, the toes turned slightly out, and with all of you turned at about 45° to a line coming directly at you from the target.

In general for one-handed shooting (ISSF and ML and sometimes in 'field' matches) your leading foot will be the same as the hand with which you are holding the pistol; ie right foot if you are right-handed; left foot if you are left-handed.

You may need to adjust this to suit yourself (and your stance will probably need to change slightly over the course of a day). To do this, try this simple test:

Set yourself up in the "starting" stance. Close your eyes. Lift your shooting arm (and gun if you can) toward the target. Open your eyes and check where you are pointing. Are you pointing at the centre of your target? The centre of someone else's?? If you need to change your stance, move the BACK foot around, by a very small amount, until your arm is pointed directly at the centreline. Then repeat the procedure. Keep doing the test until your arm comes smoothly up the centreline of the target!

It is a good idea to check your stance for each series you shoot. For shooting two handed in 'field' matches there are two basic positions – the "Weaver Stance" and the "Isosceles Stance". In the first the non-shooting foot is forward; the shooting arm is straight out and braced by the bent non-shooting arm. In the latter stance, you stand with feet apart, on a line parallel with the targets, both arms in a similar position, bracing each other. The main purpose of either is to make sure you have a steady platform for the pistol.

### 12.3 Grip

A good consistent grip is essential to firing accurate shots. Your grip will determine how the sights are presented to your eye and how good your sight alignment will be, which along with good stance, allows you to get that part of the statement above sorted out.

Holding the gun by the barrel in your non-shooting hand, fit the gun into the web of your shooting hand. Wrap your fingers around the grip and allow your trigger finger to sit in the trigger guard. Your thumb should be relaxed, either just touching the grip, or sitting slightly away from it. Your fingertips should be loose - if the tips of your fingers are white - you are holding the gun too tightly!!

You should hold onto the pistol firmly and evenly, with the pressure being applied between the web of the hand/base of the thumb area, and the joints of the second and third fingers. This is called a “fore and aft” grip.

To test your grip; take up your normal stance, fit the gun into your hand, lower your arm to the 45° degree position, and then raise the gun up to the target. You should see the front sight neatly bracketed by the rear sight. If the front sight is to the right or left of where it should be, adjust the gun in your grip, using your non-shooting hand, and do the test again. Keep doing this until you get a consistent sight alignment (see below).

For a two handed hold; punch the shooting hand into the other hand and check your sight position as above. If the front sight is too high or too low, you will need to adjust the angle of your wrist!

### 12.4 Sight Alignment

For almost all pistols you will ever come across, the front and rear sights should be aligned so that the sight blades are all level across the top and the front sight is bracketed by the rear sight with equal amounts of light on either side.

This will make sure that your shots are centred in your aiming area.

### 12.5 Sight Picture

This includes “what you see” when you are looking at the sights and the target. As you can only focus on one thing at a time, the front sight should be where you concentrate. You cannot see the rear sight, the front sight and the target all clearly at one time — the human eye is not capable of it!

The front sight is the most important feature of your sight picture, and therefore it should appear most clear in your vision — try to see the grain in the metal! The white bits between the rear sight and the front sight blades (what isn't there!) are also important.

The target is least important of all — your stance should make sure that you are “on target”. However, you need to make sure that you are aiming at the right part of the target. It is recommended that you use an area (rather than a point) to aim at, and that this area should be centred about half way between the bottom of the black area on the target, and the bottom of the target. (If your sights are too close to the black area of the target [this is commonly called “six o'clock hold”], an optical illusion may make it difficult to see the sights clearly.) As it is physically impossible for any person to hold a pistol absolutely still, you must accept that there will be some movement. (Don't try to concentrate on a point, let the sights move within the area of aim.) The target and the rear sight should both be in your peripheral vision, and thus be rather fuzzy.

Note that nearly all people have one eye stronger than the other. This is called the master eye and it governs the alignment of objects with your eyes. For most purposes it doesn't matter which it is, and most people don't know which is their master eye is. As soon as you do directional things with your eyes, like shooting, it is important. Most people find that they need to use their master eye to shoot with, even if it means using the eye different to the strong hand. A simple test will determine which eye is which for you. To check this - look at a point in the medium distance eg a spot on the wall, and holding a finger at arms length line up the finger with the point with both eyes open. Now close each eye alternately. You will find that with one eye open the finger and the point will still line up, and with the other open the point will "move" in relation to the finger. The eye for which the point does not move is your master eye.

If you are right-handed and left-eyed, as quite a few people are, you should use your left eye for sighting with (unless you shoot with both eyes open), but still hold the pistol with your right hand. Vice versa if you are right-eyed and left-handed of course! This is definitely better than forcing yourself to use the wrong hand or the wrong eye.

You may find that the master eye is the one which you can keep open on its own anyway. An alternative is to keep both eyes open but "blank out" the non-master by applying patches (or "invisible" adhesive tape) to the shooting glasses.

### 12.6 Trigger Control

The next basic technique to master is control of the trigger. This is one of the major factors in whether you are able to "allow the shot to break" without messing up the perfectly good alignment that you have worked so hard to develop!

There are two parts to this:

- You need to have the right part of your finger on the trigger
- You need to be able to move the trigger straight back into the area of support (in your grip!)

In order to test whether your finger is on the right part of the trigger, take up your grip, hold the pistol out in your normal shooting position, watch your sights and carefully bring your finger back until it just touches the trigger surface. If the front sight moves one way or the other, your finger isn't in the right place. If the front sight stays put, everything is great!

This is where things differ for left and right-handers. For **right handed people** - if the front sight moves to the left, you do not have enough finger on the trigger. Move your finger through the trigger guard a bit, and try again! If the front sight moves to the right, you have too much finger on the trigger, and need to pull your finger back a bit.

For **left handed people**, it is exactly the opposite. If the sight moves to the left, you have too much finger on the trigger. If it moves right, then you need to put your finger a bit farther into the trigger guard.

Remember to control your trigger after each shot, too. When you are practising, or shooting individual precision shots, keep the pressure on the trigger even after the shot has gone and as you "follow through" (see below). As you lower your arm to the 45°, release the trigger. **Don't take your finger completely off the trigger** though - otherwise you will lose the position that you have just carefully set up!!

### 12.7 Breathing

Breath control is also important. Your breathing basically moves all the bones and muscles in the top half of your body each time you breath. This does not make it any easier to hold the sight picture or control your trigger. The recommended way of dealing with breathing is to continue breathing normally as you prepare for the shot (like doing all the “tests” outlined above). As you lift your arm to take aim, breathe in (in your usual way). When your arm is pointing at the target, let out a small amount of air, then hold your breath until the shot is fired!

### 12.8 Follow through

Once you have fired the shot, let the pistol settle back into your grip from its recoil position. If your grip is steady, the position of the sights in the follow through will give you a pretty good idea of where the sights were when you triggered the shot. Look at the sights and see where they are! Then lower your arm and release the pressure on the trigger!! Be prepared to realign the sights for the next shot if they are not pretty well on the target.

Please note: There are really excellent reasons (generally from human physiology or from physics) for all of the above. If you want to know more, or to discuss other ideas, talk to your coach.

### 12.9 Additional Tips

Like any other sport, the skills that you need to be a good shot, in whatever discipline, must be learnt thoroughly and then practised. The amount of practice that you need to do depends on your ultimate goal. If you wish to shoot for relaxation, then your only practice may be your trips to the range. If, however, you decide that you wish to be a serious competitor, then your practice commitment will reflect this, not only in your time at the range, but through "dry firing" at home or even working out at the gym.

Shooting is rather unusual in that, unless you have a physical limitation, the level that you achieve is limited only by your drive to succeed. If you set a goal to shoot at the Olympics - you can! - as long as you are prepared to put in the time. The only thing that can hold you back is your own willingness to put in the effort required.

- Keep a notebook, and note down anything that you have learned during your coaching or practice sessions, any questions that you want to ask, and a record of how your shooting is progressing. At first, you might only want to note down the size of each 5-shot group and the group’s position on the target.
- Every month or so, shoot a group of 20 shots, without checking the target. When you have fired all of the shots, check the target. Ignore the 3 shots that are farthest from the centre of group. Check the group of the other 17 shots, and take a note of it in your shooting notebook. This is your “current” group.
- Now and then, set yourself up in your stance, the gun up onto the correct area of the target, and then close your eyes. Count to 20, and then open your eyes again. Where is the gun pointing? How are the sight/s aligned?
- **Hint:** It helps to “visualise” what you expect to see when you open your eyes again!
- Don’t be surprised if your group size or your score sometimes slips back a bit. It is quite normal for new shooters to increase their ability for a while, then for things to go backwards, then start getting better again. At first, there is so much to learn that concentration on one thing may disturb your concentration on other things - causing shots to go astray. Once you get used to what you are doing, things will come back into line.
- Any time that you “plateau” - that is when you don’t appear to be getting better - go back to concentrating on “The Basics” ...Chances are that you have skipped something.
- Celebrate your successes!! As a generalisation, we don’t really allow ourselves to take credit for

something we have done well. About the most we will ever admit to is “That wasn’t too bad...”. Well, now is the time to give yourself a break. If you shoot well, tell yourself “That was great!”. Enjoy the feeling when it goes just right - then remember what it felt like to shoot the shot, and do it again!

### 13. DEFINITIONS

Like any other sport, we use a fair amount of jargon. Some of the more basic terms are defined below. If you hear any other words or phrases that you are not precisely sure of, please ask a Club member to explain.

**Muzzle:** The business end of any firearm (the end of the barrel from which the bullet exits)

**Front sight:** The sight element above the muzzle.

**Rear Sight:** The sight element nearest your hand (and eye).

**Cartridge:** A loaded “round” of ammunition.

**Projectile/Bullet:** The bit that flies to the target.

**Ready position:** The position from which all timed events must start. This varies according to which discipline or match you are shooting.

**Power factor:** The momentum of the bullet – measured by weight multiplied by speed and used to determine your class in some Action matches.

**Gauge:** A device to assist in assessing the value of a shot hole.

**Skid:** An oblong hole in a target caused by the bullet hitting it at an angle. In most matches, there is a maximum width allowed for this before it is scored as a miss.

**Malfunction:** When the pistol does not fire after one pull of the trigger.

**Re-shoot:** This is allowed after a malfunction in ISSF and PA Muzzle Loading matches.

**HMS:** Handgun Metallic Silhouette

**CAS:** Cowboy Action Shooting

#### Shooting Organisations

**ISSF** - International Sport Shooting Federation (until 1998 called UIT).

International body controlling world-wide all the Olympic shooting matches, and other matches associated with its name. The most internationally recognised and senior international shooting body. Based in West Germany and founded in 1907. ([www.issf-shooting.org](http://www.issf-shooting.org))

**PA** - Pistol Australia.

Controlling body for international pistol shooting in Australia. Pistol NZ has a close relationship with this body and has adopted its Muzzle Loading and Service Pistol matches. ([www.pistol.org.au](http://www.pistol.org.au))

**MLAIC** - Muzzle Loaders Associations International Committee.

An international body founded in 1971 to run international muzzle loading rifle, pistol and shotgun competitions to rationalised rules. We have incorporated their pistol matches into our muzzle-loading programme. Based in France. ([www.mlaic.org](http://www.mlaic.org))

**NRA** - The National Rifle Association

Refers to the NRA of the USA (founded in 1872) which promotes many different shooting disciplines. In New Zealand we use the Action Pistol matches. ([www.nra.org](http://www.nra.org))

**IPSC** - The International Practical Shooting Confederation

Is the international body which promotes and controls Practical shooting of pistols, shotguns and rifles, and in New Zealand we follow its principles and we are a member (a Region) of IPSC. It was set up in 1976. The New Zealand affiliate is Pistol NZ. ([www.ipsc.org](http://www.ipsc.org))

**IHMSA** - The International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association.

The major international body for HMS shooting, although primarily based in the USA. ([www.ihmsa.org](http://www.ihmsa.org))

**IMSSU** - The International Metallic Silhouette Shooting Union

This is a smaller but more international HMS body based in Paris. ([www.imssu.org](http://www.imssu.org))

**NZPA** - The New Zealand Pistol Association

The national association to which you now belong. Established in 1969 it controls all the international pistol matches shot in New Zealand, and the vast majority of New Zealand pistol shooters belong to this association. The NZPA is now known as Pistol NZ.

**(SPEED)- Steel Challenge Shooting Association (inc)**

Is the international body which promotes and controls speed shooting of pistols, Shotguns and rifles and is based in the USA.

New Zealand has adopted these rules to run speed matches and use the international courses of fire developed by SCSA. ([www.scsa.org](http://www.scsa.org))

**PNZ - Pistol New Zealand**

The name that the New Zealand Pistol Association has adopted for its day to day use and operation. The decision to change the name brings the identification into line with Pistol Australia as the prime pistol shooting association in the country. ([www.pistolnz.org.nz](http://www.pistolnz.org.nz))

**NZSF** - The New Zealand Shooting Federation

Is the ISSF affiliate for New Zealand and is formed of all the shooting associations which follow ISSF shooting including Pistol NZ. ([www.nzshootingfed.org.nz](http://www.nzshootingfed.org.nz))

**SASS** – Single Action Shooting Society

PNZ shoots Cowboy matches to these rules. ([www.sassnet.com](http://www.sassnet.com))



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