

## VOLUME 2 – THE NRA RULES OF SHOOTING

### SECTION 52 – SAFETY RULES

110 Throughout this section the expression “CRO” includes the Head of Shooting and Training or his appointee at Bisley whenever a Chief Range Officer is not formally appointed.

111 If any person on the range considers that there is a potential or actual breach of safety which urgently requires all firers to stop firing he will immediately give the order “Stop, Stop, Stop”. All firers must immediately stop firing, take their finger off the trigger, keep their firearms pointing at the target and await further instructions. No-one may unload or move off the firing point. The person ordering the stop, if not himself the RO, must immediately explain his action to the RO so that the RO may take effective control of the situation.

112 It is the responsibility of the participant to ensure that, to the extent required for the role that he will undertake, he is fit, competent, safe, legal and authorised to participate in range activity with firearms. The (C)RO or any official acting with the authority of the CRO may prohibit any person from such participation if in that official’s opinion a person is not fit, competent, safe, legal or authorised. If the opinion giving rise to a prohibition stems from a perceived deliberate act by the person prohibited, including intoxication or misuse of drugs, the official shall report the matter to the Secretary General for consideration of disciplinary action.

113 When at the firing point a participant must comply with all orders for the due carrying out of the NRA Rules and Regulations given by the CRO or any official acting under orders of the CRO. Without prejudice to the authority of the CRO or RTC, all persons on or in the immediate vicinity of a range element under the control of an RO are to obey the instructions of the RO. For the purpose of this paragraph any sign, notice, marker, barrier or similar, indicating required or prohibited behaviour, is an instruction of the RO.

114 No participant may move himself or his equipment forward onto the firing point until authorised to do so by the (C)RO.

115 No round may be placed on the loading platform or in the firearm, nor may it be fired, until the RO has given the order to do so (see Para 280 and 546c).

116 A firer is responsible for ensuring that his firearm and ammunition are safe to use individually and in combination. It is prohibited to use ammunition that does not conform to the standard of proof of the firearm eg cartridges loaded with modern nitro propellants in firearms proofed for black powder only. In the case of firearms which are not proofed, eg temporary imports from a country where there is no statutory requirement for proof, the term “standard of proof” is deemed to be that to which they would be subject under CIP rules. A firer must submit his firearm and ammunition for inspection and testing whenever requested by an official of the NRA.

No ammunition of a dangerous character may be used. For definition of dangerous ammunition and instructions for ROs see Appendix VI and Paras 288, 545 and 546.

117 Firers may only carry out actions of closing or opening the bolt (or equivalent working part in other types of firearm) on a live round if: the barrel is elevated less than 70 mils (approximately 4°) above the horizontal; and nothing (except the trigger) is within the trigger guard.

In practice this means that when closing or opening the bolt with a live round in the chamber the barrel should be horizontal and laterally aligned within the target lane and the firer’s trigger finger should be clear of the trigger outside the trigger guard.

#### 118 Pointing of loaded firearms and firearms in a condition to fire

##### a Firearms in a condition to fire

Unless explicitly briefed otherwise eg on an event-specific course involving movement, a person in control of a firearm that is in a condition to fire must, to the greatest extent practicable, keep it pointed directly at the intended target. For this rule only, a firearm is “in a condition to fire” when the action or equivalent part is closed or cocked on a live round or primed charge.

##### b Loaded firearms

A person in control of a firearm with live round(s) in or on it must keep it pointed:

On a No Danger Area range, within the boundaries of the stop butt.

On a range set out for an event-specific course of fire, within the limit marks set and briefed for the course.

On any other range, within an angle of 200 mils (11.25° or 1 in 5) left or right of the line from the assigned firing point to the corresponding target.

##### c Muzzle loading firearms

For this rule, a muzzle-loading firearm contains a “live round” when and only when charged and primed. A muzzle loading firearm may only be charged on the firing point or at a position designated by the RO for charging and may only be primed on the firing point. Once charged, a muzzle-loading firearm should be kept pointing in a safe direction and only moved directly from the charging point to the firing point.

##### d Definitions and exceptions

A moving clay target layout is an “event-specific course”. A field firing area with targets irregularly positioned is “an event-specific course” notwithstanding that the targets may be in position for an indefinite period. A stop butt does not include defensive structures on the flanks of the range designed to capture only infrequent impacts. Paras a-c do not prohibit:

- The adoption of a ready position specified in discipline-specific rules.
- In a supported deliberate discipline, closing the bolt with the firearm approximately level on the ground or a bench, which action constitutes “adoption of a ready position”.
- Movement of a firearm from such ready position to take aim at the target.
- Cross-shooting – in error, taking deliberate aim at a target other than the one corresponding to the assigned firing point.
- The necessary steps to execute a misfire procedure.
- Action by an armourer or other competent person to resolve a malfunction at the request of an RO.

#### 119 Pointing and other handling of firearms in other circumstances

a A person in control of a firearm must not intentionally or recklessly point it at another person.

b While on or in the vicinity of a range (for the avoidance of doubt including, on Bisley Camp, any open public space except when being used for a formal course of instruction) neither aiming nor dry firing an unloaded firearm is allowed except when in the firing position on the firing point, and then only if it would be in all respects safe actually to fire and provided it causes no delay. This rule does not prohibit decocking of an unloaded firearm by firing off the action with the firearm pointed in a safe direction.

c Firers shooting muzzle loading firearms may, after the order has been given by the RO, “cap off” to clear nipple vents prior to loading for fouling shots. During capping off the firearms must be pointed down range or into the ground immediately in front of

the firing point. When firers have completed capping off they must retire from the firing point to their designated loading location behind the firing point.

120 A firer who neither observes nor receives any indication of the impact of his first shot, or in a practice where shots are not signalled individually of at least one shot in the first string, may only continue if one of the following applies:

- a The firer identifies and rectifies a fault or error (eg mis-set sight) that would reasonably account for the miss.
- b There is reasonable evidence (eg an unexplained shot on the next target) that the firer has crossfired.
- c There is reasonable evidence (eg based on the advice of other competitors, which advice shall not be considered to be in the nature of coaching) that the wind allowance applied was such as to account for the miss.
- d With the permission of the RO (eg as in Para 301). A firer acting as his own RO may not authorise himself to continue.

#### 121 Misfire Procedures

- a Bolt-action centrefire rifles. If a misfire occurs the firer must remain on aim for at least 30 seconds (in case of a hangfire) and inform the RO. Under the supervision of the RO the firer should tilt the rifle to the side and open the bolt, ensuring that his hand is not behind the bolt and that no one is standing behind the rifle. He must ensure that the cartridge comes out complete with the bullet.
- b Gallery Rifle. In accordance with the procedures in the NRA Gallery Rifle and Pistol Handbook (published separately).
- c Other types of firearm. As specified in the procedures for the relevant discipline.

#### 122 Clearing, Proving Clear and Inspection of Firearms and Magazines

- a A firearm is 'clear' when there are no live rounds, misfires or fired cases in or on it.
- b A person taking or relinquishing control of a firearm (Para 108) must prove the firearm clear by carrying out the appropriate unload actions from c (i)-(iv) below. If relinquishing control to another person they must pass the firearm with the working parts open or removed and confirm verbally to the recipient the state of the firearm, using the words "firearm is clear" or similar.

##### c Firers' responsibilities

Firers are responsible for ensuring both that their firearms are clear and that they are independently inspected in accordance with this rule before they are removed from the firing point. The action of "unloading" in this rule requires that, before inspection, such of the following actions as are possible and within the designers intent for the firearm type have been carried out:

- i Safety catch applied.
- ii Magazine removed.
- iii Integral magazine / cylinder emptied.
- iv Chamber and action cleared of rounds, misfires and empty cases.
- v Working parts fully open and locked.

The formal unload procedure for a Service Weapon may require additional steps after the inspection. Any firer who fails to present a firearm for inspection whether called to do so or not, or who presents a firearm for inspection in an unsafe condition, may be considered as "acting in a way that might prove dangerous" and be dealt with as in Para 546.

##### d Person Designated to inspect

The responsibility to carry out inspections falls to a specific individual. By default, the inspection should be carried out by the CRO or a member of the range staff to whom the CRO delegates the responsibility. The following concessions are permitted, subject to any overriding instruction by the CRO or range staff:

- i In a team event (whether or not competitive), or individual training where a coach is present on the firing point, the coach or any team member may carry out the inspection.
- ii In individual competition, or in team competition if no other person is with the firer, the register keeper may carry out the inspection.
- iii Individuals outside competition may have their firearm inspected by any competent person available.
- iv An individual, having completed firing and finding that no other person is available to carry out an independent inspection, must diligently follow the relevant unload and clearance procedure for the firearm concerned before removing the firearm from the firing point.

In all cases where a concession is invoked, the person inspecting must confirm that the chamber, action, boltface and magazine (if one is fitted) are clear, and the firer must dismantle the firearm to the extent necessary to enable that. It remains the firer's responsibility to ensure that the person inspecting does so.

##### e Procedure

On the conclusion of a shoot or stage, or on the order of the (C)RO, all firers must:

- i unload their firearm and inspect the chamber, action, boltface and magazine (if one is fitted) to ensure that the firearm is clear,
- ii if requesting inspection by a person other than the CRO or a range official, dismantle their firearm to the extent necessary to permit a clear view of the action and chamber,
- iii present their firearm to the designated person on the firing point and have them inspect and confirm that the firearm is clear,
- iv for a Service Weapon complete the unload in accordance with the current Service procedure,
- v either keep the bolt removed or insert a breech flag (or both) for any bolt-action rifle, or carry out the equivalent procedure for other firearms (which may include casing in accordance with GR&P procedure)

before removing the firearm from the firing point and before anyone goes forward of the firing point.

##### f Comment

The practical results of the above rule are that any firearm other than a bolt-action or break-action firearm should for simplicity be inspected by the CRO or an official on his behalf, and that if a firer requires a bolt-action firearm to be inspected by anyone other than the CRO or an official on his behalf, the firer must remove the bolt.

123 A person in control of a bolt-action rifle must carry it either with the breech open and a breech flag, which must protrude into the chamber, clearly inserted, or with the bolt removed from the rifle, except when on the firing point. Para 114 applies.

As an exception to the above civilian service rifles or practical rifles which are able to utilise a magazine fitted loading block which locks the working parts to the rear may do so.

Unless GR&P rules apply, a person in control of a self-loading rifle must carry it unloaded, ie no magazine on it, no round in the chamber, working parts forward, not cocked and safety catch at 'safe'.

Firearms specified in the NRA GR&P, TS and CSR/PR Handbooks (published separately) must be carried in accordance with relevant rules.

All other firearms must be carried in a manner such that they are as clearly unloaded as is possible for that type of firearm.

#### **124 Firearms that cannot be unloaded as designed**

If a firearm cannot be unloaded in the normal manner, the firer must inform the RO immediately. The firer must remain on the firing point and keep the firearm pointing towards the target until instructed otherwise by the RO.

The RO must treat the matter as a range occurrence (Para 109 and 126b), being mindful that a technical investigation may follow. The RO must require the firer to leave the firearm in position on the firing point until the area is cleared of other firers, then detail a competent person to make or confirm, as appropriate, the firearm safe on the point. On Bisley ranges the RO must report the situation to Range Safety staff, who will normally attend with an NRA Armourer but may alternately permit a professional gunsmith to make the firearm safe. Once the firearm is made or confirmed safe a competent person may move the firearm if necessary to resolve the situation. However, a firearm with a live round in the breech or the mechanism may only be moved on the advice of an NRA Armourer or professional gunsmith; such advice may be obtained remotely if suitable communication can be established.

As an exception, once the RO has determined that: the chamber contains only a fired case; the firer can open the bolt or equivalent working part; and there is no evidence of an ammunition fault; then the RO may permit the firer or another competent person to attempt to remove the case using such tools as may be available.

As a further exception, if removal is accomplished and the difficulty can be attributed to the extractor mechanism and there is no indication of any other problem, the RO may permit the firer to continue in order to complete a formal course of fire, using any effective means that does not inconvenience other participants to extract cases.

125 A firer acting in a dangerous manner will forthwith be forbidden to fire again until the circumstances have been investigated and decided on, or referred to higher authority, by the CRO.

#### **126 Powers and Duties of the Range Officer**

##### **a Powers**

During the period that a range is open for use, and at any time that the firing point is occupied by people or equipment prior or subsequent to the range being open for use, and subject to any restriction imposed by or on behalf of the Chief Range Officer or Range Template Controller, the appointed Range Officer (RO) is in sole charge of that element of the range he has accepted responsibility for. The RO may issue such instructions as he deems necessary for the operation of the range element under his charge both in safety and within the published rules and range regulations.

##### **b Duties**

The RO is only to permit live firing when he has satisfied himself and remains satisfied that it is safe and within applicable regulations to do so.

The RO is to remain sufficiently close to the firing point to enable him to observe, give instructions to and respond to requests from all firers under his control.

If the RO finds it necessary to leave his post, he is either to stop all firing and clear the firing point of firers and firearms, or appoint another person, qualified competent and experienced to the standard required by the Range Operating Authority, to act as RO in his place, handing over the duty in accordance with the procedure required by the Range Operating Authority.

The RO is to deal with range occurrences, accidents and incidents in accordance with the procedure set out by the Range Operating Authority.