



South African Institute of Range Officers and Instructors

POLICY ON HANDLING LONG GUNS AT MATCHES

Introduction and Background

SAIRO&I is concerned about the handling of long guns at matches. It appears that our competitors perceive that an inserted chamber safety flag allows them any action in handling a long gun outside of a safety area. This is clearly not the intention of the IPSC Competition Rules. Competitors have been observed to check the sights of their long guns in the parking area, showing off their prized possession to fellow competitors and generally being negligent about muzzle angles.

It is unclear why rifle and shotgun shooters act like this, as most of them shoot handguns as well, where they do comply with rules for handling of the firearm.

Policy

1. The vehicle parking area at a rifle or shotgun match is considered a part of the shooting range proper, similar to handgun, and rule 5.2.1 needs to be applied in all instances:

“5.2.1. Carry and Storage – Except when within the boundaries of a Safety Area, or when under the supervision and direct command of a Range Officer, long guns must be unloaded and held, shouldered or slung (or placed in a rack), with the muzzle pointed skywards. Long guns placed in a slip or case are not required to be pointed skywards. The action may be open or closed, but a chamber safety flag must be fitted at all times when the firearm is not in use. Detachable magazines must be removed. Failure to comply may be subject to the provisions of Rule 10.5.1.”

“10.5.1. Handling a rifle or shotgun at any time except when in a designated Safety Area, or elsewhere deemed safe by a Range Officer, or when under the supervision of, and in response to a direct command issued by, a Range Officer may invoke a disqualification. This does not apply to the carrying of rifles or shotguns where Rule 5.2.1 will apply. Violation of Rule 5.2.1 may invoke a disqualification.”

2. If gun racks are not provided by the hosting organisation, long guns must remain in their slip, bag or case until the competitor is in the safety area, or instructed by the RO to un-bag. After completing a stage, long guns must be fitted with a chamber flag, and either placed in a slip, bag or case before leaving the shooting line, or carried muzzle pointed skywards to the next stage/gun rack/table or safety area. Checking of sights may only be done on the firing line or in a safety area. If carried in a bag or slip, long guns should have the muzzle covered

3. Any further handling of a long gun of any kind is to be done in the safety area.

Please note the last sentence of 10.5.1: “Violation of Rule 5.2.1 may invoke a disqualification.” In all cases where carry/storage/handling isn't carried out conscientiously according to rule 5.2.1, the Range Officer seeing this must warn the competitor, note such warning on his score sheet and inform the Range Master.

4. Range Officers must rigorously apply this policy.