



SHOOTING RANGE SAFETY RULES AND STANDARD COMMANDS

These “Range Safety Rules for Participants” and “Standard Commands on the Shooting Range” will be compulsory from 1 October 2013 on all shooting ranges managed by branches of SA Hunters and Game Conservation Association (SAHGCA) and will be available to every visitor to these ranges in pocket size format.

The purpose of the abovementioned rules regarding firearms being stowed away in bags/cases is to ensure that firearms are handled only on instruction and under the supervision of a Range Officer. It limits any unauthorised handling of firearms on the shooting range inasmuch as:

- A shottist arrives at the firing point with a firearm in a bag or case and leaves the firing point, after the completion of an exercise, again with a firearm in a bag or case. The firearm will have been inspected and certified safe by a Range Officer/Assistant Range Officer both at the start and the end of a shooting exercise;
- It is a universal practice followed world-wide;
- The branches of SAHGCA especially, work with new and inexperienced members on shooting ranges on a regular basis. The diligent application of the rules regarding firearms being in bags or cases improves the ability of the Range Officer to ensure safety on the shooting range;
- The practice creates an atmosphere of safety for all participants on the shooting range.

These “Range Safety Rules for Participants” and “Standard Commands on the Shooting Range” will simplify the proceedings on shooting ranges to the point where everyone involved – Range Officers and participants – will know exactly what to expect next. The consistency of commands will contribute to greater clarity and safety on shooting ranges.

SHOOTING RANGE SAFETY RULES FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. The Range Officer has the final authority on the shooting range and has the right to act against unsafe and disobedient participants.
2. The instructions of the Range Officer must be executed unconditionally and immediately.
3. Participants are subject to the relevant shooting range’s rules and must sign the Range Register and Indemnity form.
4. No person under the influence of alcohol or narcotics may enter the shooting range.
5. No alcohol may be consumed during the shooting exercise or on the shooting range.
6. Firearms should arrive at the shooting range complex unloaded in a purpose-built bag or case.
7. Firearms may only be removed from their bag or case at the direct command of the Range Officer at the firing line and must always be pointed in a safe, i.e. down-range direction.
8. Firearms may not be handled on the firing line while any person is in front of the firing line.
9. Participants who are carrying a side arm must declare it to the Range Officer, make it safe under the supervision of the Range Officer and place the side arm back in its holster. The weapon may only be loaded again after the participant has left the shooting range and is busy leaving the shooting range complex.
10. Declared safe firearms must be in bags or cases during movement between shooting points.
11. Hearing protection is mandatory and eye protection is recommended.
12. Spectators and participants awaiting their turns should remain at least 10 meters behind the firing line or behind the Range Officer if he/she is 10 meters or more behind the firing line. They should also wear hearing protection and remain quiet during the exercise.

STANDARD COMMANDS ON THE SHOOTING RANGE

No shottists may move to or equipment may be taken to the firing line before the Range Office gives the relevant command:

1. *"Shooters/shottists to the firing line. Firearms to remain bagged or cased until further commands"*.
2. *"The range is closed/hot"*.
3. The Range Officer will visit each shottist individually and order *"Unbag and show me a safe gun"*.
4. The Range Officer explains the shooting exercise and allocates a target to each shottist.
5. *"Take up your shooting position and adjust your sights/scopes"*.
6. *"Eye and ear protection on"*.
7. *"Load and make ready"* (load magazine/chamber of a single-shot firearm, bolt stays open).
8. *"Is everybody ready?"* – shottists who are not ready to indicate.
9. *"The detail is not ready"* – if appropriate.
10. *"Everybody is ready – close bolts and stand by"* – trigger finger to remain outside the trigger guard.
11. *"Blow whistle"* or give command *"fire"* (during sighting-in, shottists may exchange firearms, within the time limit of the exercise).
12. After the time is up: Blow whistle or give command *"stop/cease fire"*
13. *"Unload and make safe"* - After the process of unloading and making safe, the shottist may put his firearm down with the muzzle pointed in a safe direction, but he/she must remain with the firearm and wait for inspection.
14. In the case of the exercise requiring a change in position while the shottist remains at the same firing point, the commands are repeated from point 4.
15. Before there may be moved to the next firing point, the Range Officer must move to each individual shottist in his area and command; *"show safe/ show me a safe firearm"*. After inspection, the Range Officer will then give the command: *"You may bag your firearm"*. The firearm may then be stowed in the bag/case with a safety flag inserted, or bolt removed; or bolt closed with firing pin released.
16. After all the firearms have been inspected, the Range Officer declares: *"The range is safe/clear, pick up cases and move to the next firing point"*
17. On successive firing points of the same exercise, the commands are repeated from point 4 above.
18. After completion of the shooting exercise, all firearms must be safely stowed away in bags/cases, before scores are taken or shottists return to the initial firing point.

Notes:

1. In case of emergency – *"CEASE FIRE, CEASE FIRE!"* or a long whistle blast
2. The Range Officer may indicate the time remaining if required.