

MoD / NRA AGREEMENT FOR CIVILIAN USE OF MoD RANGES BY CLUBS AFFILIATED TO THE NRA

The MoD Requirements

1. Safe Shooting System (SSS)

The NRA is to introduce and maintain a system for the safe civilian use of MoD Ranges to be called "the NRA Safe Shooting System" based upon the Army Safe System of Training (SST). The Army SST is based upon; Safe Person; Safe Equipment; Safe Practice; and Safe Place. The NRA SSS is included as Appendix 1; it must be implemented by 1st July 2008.

2. Certification

- a. From 1st January 2009, each civilian shooting on an MoD range is to carry a certificate of safety and competence signed by the chairman of a club of which he is a member and which is affiliated to the NRA, stating that he is safe and competent to use the type(s) of firearm concerned.
- b. The NRA is to require the chairman of each club affiliated to the NRA to certify annually all those members who request to be certified, and who they judge to be so, as safe and competent.
- c. The NRA is to specify the format of the certification to be used by club chairmen.
- d. The Chairman of the NRA may appoint a suitable officer for the certification of NRA members.

3. New Shooters

- a. The NRA is to require that any shooter who is neither a full member of a club affiliated to the NRA nor a full member of a Home Office Approved club by 1st July 2008 must complete one of the training schemes listed below before they can be certified as safe and competent to shoot on MoD ranges.
 - i. The NRA Probationary course.
 - ii. A Club Probationary Course accredited by the NRA.
- b. Exceptions to 3a above include serving military or police personnel who have been certified as safe and competent for that type of firearm(s) by their Commanding Officer / senior officer or former military or police personnel whose competence can be tested by an assessment and certified by their club chairman.

4. Auditing

- a. The NRA is to maintain sufficient records for, and cooperate fully with, MoD audits of the SSS.
- b. The NRA is to instruct club chairmen to maintain sufficient records for, and cooperate fully with, MoD audits of their training and member certification systems.

5. Investigations and Inspections

- a. Investigations of incidents will be led by the MoD. The NRA is to require the chairmen of clubs affiliating to the NRA, and whose clubs use MoD ranges, to sign an agreement with the NRA undertaking that their club will take part in any discipline / accident investigation conducted jointly by the NRA and the MoD following an incident on an MoD range and to require their members to assist fully in such investigation.
- b. The NRA is to instruct the chairmen of affiliated clubs to require their members to allow an official of the NRA or the MoD to select at random rounds being used on an MoD range so that such rounds can be inspected and/or tested.

6. High Muzzle Energy Ammunition (4500J – 7000J)

The NRA is to introduce, by 1st July 2008, special procedures for anyone using ammunition which generates muzzle energy in excess of 4500J. (Note: no firearm with a muzzle energy exceeding 7000 J may be used on an MoD range). These procedures are included as Appendix 2.

7. Exceptions

Known exceptions to the above requirements will be catered for by special procedures included as Appendix 3. Any others must be specifically agreed between the MoD and the NRA.

Appendix 1: The NRA Safe Shooting System (SSS)

1. The MoD requires all civilian organisations using military ranges to have an auditable system of training based on a specific risk assessment. In response the NRA has developed a Safe Shooting System (SSS), which has been approved by the MoD. All clubs affiliated to the NRA who use military ranges must adopt the NRA Safe Shooting System, to be introduced by 1st July 2008. By 1st January 2009, civilian shooters must also have an annual certificate of competence signed by their Club Chairman.
2. Organisations with existing MoD-approved Codes of Practice (e.g. BDS and MLAGB) are not required to follow the NRA SSS. Other groups, however, will need to adopt the NRA system or have their training approved by the NRA. The NRA SSS is based on four elements: safe person, safe equipment, safe practice and safe place.

A. Safe Person

The safe shooter is someone who has received the information, training and supervision to enable them to acquire knowledge and develop the skills necessary to demonstrate that they can handle firearms and ammunition safely. The NRA probationary course provides this training.

B. Safe Equipment

The NRA Rules of Shooting, published annually, define the types of firearms and ammunition that may be used for target shooting. The individual shooter is responsible to his Club Chairman for ensuring that his firearm is properly maintained and that the ammunition used is in every way safe and within the range parameters for muzzle velocity (MV) and muzzle energy (ME). Only copper or steel jacketed lead core or solid lead rounds may be fired by civilians on MoD ranges.

C. Safe Practice

The NRA Rules of Shooting contain detailed regulations concerning the conduct of shooting for all its shooting disciplines. Qualified NRA RCOs are responsible for the safe running of MoD ranges for civilian shooters. Additional RCO qualifications are required if Sporting Rifles, Muzzle loading firearms or ammunition developing an ME > 4500J are being used on MoD ranges. A specific zeroing practice will also be required for those using ammunition with an ME > 4500J. In the event of an incident on military ranges involving a civilian shooter a joint MoD /NRA inquiry will take place and the club will be required to assist with the investigation.

D. Safe Place

A safe place is one in which the controls which are necessary to enable shooting to be conducted safely have been identified by a site-specific risk assessment and directed through the Range Standing Orders. All MoD ranges have site specific range standing orders which must be complied with at all times. MoD ranges are maintained by the range administering unit and are subject to regular inspections. The NRA RCO running the range for a civilian club must sign for the range on the MoD Form 906, thus certifying that he is qualified to conduct the shooting practice and that he has read and will comply with the range standing orders. An RCO (HME) must annotate the MoD 906 if ammunition with an ME > 4500J is used.

The NRA and NSRA have produced guidance material on the Construction of Ranges and the Safe Management of Ranges for clubs which own their own ranges.

High Muzzle Energy Procedures

From 1st July 2008, National Rifle Association and MoD approved procedures must be used on MoD ranges when civilians are shooting with firearms where muzzle energy is greater than 4500 joules. These are:

1. The shooter is to be authorised in writing by the Chairman of the appropriate club to fire the specific type of firearm using ammunition generating over 4500J muzzle energy. This will be satisfied by the Certification process that is being implemented from 1st January 2009,
2. For the Zeroing procedure outlined below, the RCO is to be qualified under the NRA RCO (HME) course to conduct civilian shooting on ranges involving firearms and ammunition which generate muzzle energy in excess of 4500J. (Note: no firearm using ammunition with a muzzle energy exceeding 7000J may be used on an MoD range).
 - a) The RCO (HME) is to record in the MoD Form 906, Land Range Log, when a firearm is being used which generates a muzzle energy of more than 4500J.
 - b) Only the issued NRA / MoD approved target is to be used at 200 yds / m or the Bisley Zero Range as appropriate.
 - c) The target is to be attached such that the target centre line is set on the target screen centre line.
 - d) The shooter is to clarify to the RCO (HME) the rifle type and technique he is using.
 - e) A spotter must be appointed to observe the initial fall of shot until the initial strike on the target screen is identified:
 - i. If the strike off the target screen is clearly identified the shooter may adjust and re-fire.
 - ii. If no strike is identified the shooter is to cease fire and report to the RCO (HME) who will not allow the shooter to continue until the weapon has been re-collimated or bore sighted to the RCO (HME)'s satisfaction.
 - f) Rounds on target may be adjusted but only the 5 final rounds are to be counted for the group, one of which may include the final adjusting round.
 - g) All 5 rounds of the final group must be within the box before the shooter may move to a different distance.
 - h) The butt marker is to identify clearly and mark those rounds which were used as sighting rounds and not to be included in the qualifying group.
 - i) Guidance is provided on the NRA/ MoD approved target for sight adjustment for different distances subject to achieving a successful group.
 - j) The zeroing procedure is to be carried out on each day the shooter wishes to shoot unless the zeroing is part of an official competition or training where firing is carried out on consecutive days.
 - k) After qualification the target is to be completed and signed by the shooter and the RCO (HME) and retained by the Club for 12 months.
3. Once zeroed using the procedure in 2, the shooter can shoot under the direction of a qualified NRA RCO who may or may not have the HME qualification.

Exceptions to Certification and Training Requirements

The following defined exceptions apply to the requirements for certification and training:

1. **Club Guest Days.** All Home Office Approved Clubs are entitled to hold a maximum of 12 Guest Days per year (The NRA as a National Governing Body is entitled to 40 per year). At these events, all guests will use firearms which have been zeroed by National Governing Body qualified coaches or competent Club members and will be supervised one-to-one by competent Club members. Ammunition and firearms that generate a muzzle energy in excess of 4500J will not be used. All loading and unloading of the firearm will be done by the competent coach or club member.
2. **NRA Open Days.** By arrangement with the Home Office, the NRA holds up to 3 Open Days per year. At these events, all guests will use firearms which have been zeroed by National Governing Body qualified coaches or competent Club members and will be supervised one-to-one by competent Club members. Ammunition and firearms that generate a muzzle energy in excess of 4500J will not be used. All loading and unloading of the firearm will be done by the competent coach or club member.
3. **Foreign Shooters.** All foreign shooters wishing to shoot on MoD ranges will be required to produce evidence that they have been certified as safe and competent by the relevant National Governing Body for shooting in their home country and sponsored by the NRA or a club affiliated to the NRA.