

Melton Pistol Club

Range Rules (Bylaws)

This document is an extension of Club Rule 39.

Rules and Procedures

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Melton Pistol Club Incorporated Statement of Purpose.

- Encourage competitive target pistol shooting.
- Provide suitable facilities for members to engage in pistol shooting.
- Promote knowledge and skill in the art of target pistol shooting.
- Encourage social activities amongst members.

1. Overview:

The following rules and procedures were developed to provide a safe and friendly environment for our club members. In circumstances not covered by these rules common sense must prevail.

It is expected that all members will conduct themselves in a courteous and friendly manner. Discrimination and bad manners shall not be tolerated.

All members are expected to contribute to the maintenance and running of the club.

2. Security:

All members are responsible for the security of their firearms at all times. Firearms must not be left unattended. Only persons with a current pistol licence may mind your pistols for you. Whilst at the club and when you are not actually using your pistol you may consider locking them away in the boot of your vehicle.

Any member who signs out a club pistol is responsible for the security and care of that pistol. The club pistol is not to be removed from the club premises nor is it to be further lent to another club member without having been signed out to that club member appropriately.

Members are to wear their VAPA Identification Name Tags whilst on the club premises. Identification tags assist members identify each other and reduce the risk of a non-member wandering into the premises unnoticed.

3. Attendance Sheet:

All members entering the pistol club premises must immediately attend at the club house and sign the attendance sheet. Where members are attending at the club outside normal operating hours members must sign the 'Mid-Week' attendance sheet which is kept in the target room in Range 4 (next to the red flag).

There is a requirement to maintain accurate attendance records;

- For insurance purposes.
- To comply with conditions of our liquor licence.

4. Visitors:

All persons who are not members of the Melton Pistol Club must in the first instance be escorted to the club house where they are to sign the visitor's book. Prospective members are to be brought to the attention of a committee member where possible¹.

5. Safety:

Whilst firearms safety is paramount – members must also be mindful of other hazards that may from time to time exist around the club. For example a garden rake left lying on the ground is a hazard and must therefore be put away. Every member has a duty to take reasonable action to minimise the risk of injury.

All breaches of safety (relating to firearms or otherwise) must be reported to committee. If you see a breach of the safety rules and you can reasonably take action to prevent the continuance of that safety breach then you should do so. This includes calling a 'Cease Fire' if you believe that a breach of safety is imminent.

E.g. you **must** call 'Cease Fire' if you were to see that someone was about to walk into the line of fire.

6. Basic Firearm Safety:

- **Always handle a firearm as if it is loaded.**
- **Never** accept receipt of a firearm **until the firearm is shown to be unloaded.** Whilst the person handing you the firearm is obliged to show you that the firearm is clear (i.e. not loaded) it is your responsibility to ensure that you do not accept a loaded firearm.
- Always ensure that you are completely familiar with the safe operation of the firearm before you handle it. If you are not sure about something you must ask.
- **Never point a firearm at anyone.**

7. Range Rules:

Range rules are displayed in each range. Some rules vary from range to range. The range rules were developed to ensure the safety of everyone – including members of the public. Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that the ranges operate safely. The Range Rules are a condition of approval of the Club by the Licensing Services Division (LSD). To break the range rules is to risk closure of the Club and therefore shall not be tolerated.

All members are expected to make themselves familiar with the range rules. All members are to obey and enforce all range rules.

Each range (with the exception of the Air Pistol range) have coloured lines painted on the floor. The yellow line (closest to the targets) is the 'Firing Line'. Shooters are to be behind this line (yet as close as possible to this line) when discharging their

¹ Refer to 'Procedures regarding New Members'

firearms. Under no circumstances are you permitted to shoot forward of the 'Firing Line'.

There is also a red line behind the yellow firing line. The red line is the 'Safety Line'. Spectators are not permitted to cross the 'Safety Line'.

There should be no more than one shooter per shooting bay at any one time. As stated above – spectators are never allowed to be in the shooters bay. Supervisors (including Range Officers) are however allowed to enter the shooters bay as required.

If there is more than one member shooting on a range, then one of them must assume the role of Range Officer. The Range Officer has the authority and the responsibility to ensure that the range is run in a safe manner.

Firearms are not to be brought to the 'Firing Line' unless with the expressed permission of the Range Officer. Firearms are not to be removed from the 'Firing Line' without first being cleared by the Range Officer **and** the Range Officer has given permission to remove that firearm from the 'Firing Line'.

Once the Range Officer has cleared the firearm and instructed that it be put away the firearm is not to be further handled.

Firearms are not to be handled within the range unless the shooter has been given permission by the Range Officer **and** the shooter is on the 'Firing Line'.

Before anyone can move forward of the 'Firing line' (e.g. to score, patch or set up a target) the Range Officer shall issue an order for all shooters to unload their firearms. The Range Officer shall then inspect each firearm to ensure that they are in a safe condition (i.e. actions open and there are no rounds in the chambers or magazines etc).

Once the firearm has been cleared by the Range Officer the shooter must step back from the shooters bay and keep back behind the red line. No person is allowed to reenter the shooters bay (or in any way handled any firearm on the range) until the Range Officer has given permission to do so.

No person is allowed forward of the 'Firing Line' line without first being given permission from the Range Officer.

All members must familiarise themselves with the range rules for each range.

Examples of the different rules between ranges are as follows;

Range 2 and Range 3 – shooters may shoot from either the **standing, kneeling** or **prone** position.

Range 4 – shooters are only allowed to fire from the **standing** position. Other shooting positions (kneeling & prone) are prohibited on Range 4.

8. Basic Range Rules:

The following rules apply on all Ranges:

- Loaded firearms are not to be carried within the precincts of the club.
- The handling of firearms after the consumption of alcohol is totally prohibited.
- Appropriate ear and eye protection must be worn by all persons on the range (includes spectators).
- All firearms are to be unloaded unless you are;
 - On the firing line
 - **AND** the red flag is raised
 - **AND** you have been instructed to load by the Range Officer.
- You must first seek permission from the Range Officer **prior to placing a firearm on the firing line.**
- Firearms are not to be handled on a range unless;
 - You are on the firing line
 - **AND** you have been given permission to do so by the Range Officer
 - **AND** it is safe to do so.
- Any person may call for a ‘**Cease Fire**’ if they see a potentially dangerous situation. In fact everyone has a responsibility to prevent breaches of safety.
- Upon anyone calling ‘**Cease Fire**’ everyone must **immediately**;
 - Stop firing.
 - Unload the firearm
 - Place the firearm on the firing line
 - Step back from the firing line and stand behind the red line.
 - Await further instructions from the Range Officer.
- Once the firearm is loaded, it must be retained in your hand (or holster if applicable to the competition being shot). **The firearm must not be laid down on the bench in a loaded condition** (so put your hearing protection on BEFORE you load).
- Muzzle direction means safe direction, so that even if the gun was to discharge, it would not cause injury or damage, the range is constructed to contain fired projectiles beyond the targets, therefore, **raising the pistol above the level of the rear earth bank is not a “safe direction” and is not permitted.**
- If for any reason the firearm fails to operate or “jams” then you must maintain a hold on the firearm, **keeping it pointed downrange in a safe direction.**
 - If you are participating in a competition that allows you to claim a malfunction you should raise your free arm to the rear, this indicates to

the Range Officer that you have a malfunction and that you may require assistance. In any case you must remain in this position until the Range Officer attends to you.

- If you are not claiming a malfunction but are unsure how to clear the jammed pistol you can still raise your free hand to gain attention from the Range Officer and subsequently receive assistance.

*Note: It is expected that you should know how to clear a jam in the type of pistol you are using. However if you do not know you **must** ask.*

- When clearing semi-automatics you should first remove the magazine (keeping the pistol pointing down range) before attempting to clear the breech.
- Once firing has ceased and firearms have been examined and found “clear” the Range Officer will then allow shooters to proceed downrange to examine targets etc during this time, no person is permitted to be within the confines of a shooting bay, and of course the handling of firearms is **strictly prohibited**.
- You are not permitted to handle another shooter’s firearm at any time, unless invited to do so.
- Ear and eye protection must be worn at all times whilst the range is in operation. i.e. Whilst shooters are at the firing line.

9. Range Commands:

Some range commands will vary slightly from one type of competition to the next. The following are some of the typical range commands given;

“Preparation Time” - allows you to remove firearms from their cases & place them on the shooting bench. You may adjust sights etc. The firearm is to remain unloaded.

“Load” – permits you to load the firearm (but you are **not** allowed to fire the pistol).

“Start” or **“Commence Firing”** - You may commence the sequence of fire.

“Stop” or **“Cease Fire”** – you must immediately cease firing. There are no exceptions when this instruction is given.

“Unload” – You must unload the firearm. This includes emptying all magazines of any rounds. The firearm is to left with the action or cylinder open so that it may be inspected. At this time you must leave the shooting bay and stay behind the red line. You are **not permitted** to re-enter until the Range Officer gives the order to **‘Load’**.

10. Pistols:

Only appropriate target pistols are to be used on the club ranges. Appropriate pistols would include any pistol authorised by the LSD to be issued to a pistol club member for competition shooting. It would **not** include a pistol which could only be obtained under a Private Agents licence e.g. a pistol that had a magazine capacity of greater than ten rounds or a pistol with a short barrel (i.e. a revolver with a barrel shorter than 100mm or a semi-automatic with a barrel less than 120mm).

11. Range Sheets:

Each range has its own Range Sheet folder. Shooters must record their details on the range sheet each time they participate in a club competition or a club practice shoot. This is the method used to record your participations. These records are subsequently forwarded to the LSD and are used to determine if you have fulfilled your obligations under the Firearms Act for the purposes of retaining the handguns that you own and maintaining your handgun licence. i.e. if you do not properly record your details on the Range Sheet then that participation may not be acknowledged by LSD.

12. Ammunition:

Certain types of ammunition are not allowed to be used on the club's ranges. The following ammunition is **prohibited from use**;

- Pistol ammunition which is;
 - Fully Jacketed or armour piercing
- Rifle ammunition which is;
 - Jacketed or armour piercing
 - Not sub-sonic (.22 Calibre rimfire are exempt)
 - Not a 'lead' projectile. (.22 Magnum Jacketed Hollow points are allowed)

13. Red Range Flag:

The red flag is used to warn both club members and members of the public that the pistol range is in use. The red flag **must always be raised on the flag pole whenever the range is in use**. When the flag is not flying people expect that the range is closed.

The flying of the red flag is not only a club rule but is a legal requirement. Failure to comply with this rule would be a breach of the conditions of the range permit issued by the Licensing Services Division (Victoria Police). This would result in the closure of the range and hefty penalties against the club.

Members are warned that breaches of firearm safety, including operating the range without the red flag, may result in expulsion from the club.

- The flag pole is situated between the entrances of Range 2 and Range 3.
- The red flag must always be raised any time that any of the ranges are in use (with the exception of the Air Pistol Range).

- Prior to raising the red flag **you must** check that no one is working on the range. In other words there may be a reason why the range is closed.
- Whilst any club member may raise the red flag – **it is the responsibility of all shooters to ensure that the red flag is raised on the club flagpole prior handling or discharging firearms on the range.**
- You must raise the red flag even if you are the only person at the range.
- It is the responsibility of the last club member using the range to ensure that the red flag is lowered and stored securely in the target room within Range 4. The target room is to be locked prior to leaving the range.

14. Safety Courses:

Members need to familiarise themselves with the various safety courses run by the pistol club. The safety courses are run by volunteers who are usually Committee members or other experienced pistol shooters. The club will endeavour to ensure all club members are suitably trained however it is every member's responsibility to;

- Ensure that they successfully completed all relevant safety courses.
- Make themselves available for relevant safety training.

15. Club Safety Exams:

The club safety exam is a test of the members' knowledge of the club's rules including general firearm safety.

All members must have successfully completed the club safety exam **prior to**;

- Being allowed to use a pistol whilst unsupervised.
- Their pistol licence applications being endorsed by committee.

16. Handgun Safety Course:

Members may only use pistols for which they are qualified to handle. A committee member (or someone authorised by the committee) shall check that the member can safely handle a specified class of pistol. If the member is found to be competent with the class of pistol the member's 'white card' shall be appropriately endorsed.

Endorsement of the 'white card' signifies that;

- The member has demonstrated that he/she can handle that class of pistol in a safe manner.
- The member does not require strict supervision whilst using that class of pistol.
- The member may use a club pistol of the class specified on the 'white card' whilst on the club's range without strict supervision.

17. Semi-Automatic Centre Fire Pistols:

The club has special rules in relation to the use and purchase of semi-automatic centre fire pistols. Members must be assessed by the Chief Range Officer (or his delegate) as being safe to use a semi-automatic centre fire pistol prior to;

- Being allowed to use such a pistol unsupervised.
- Considering any application to purchase such a pistol.

Members wishing to purchase their first semi-automatic centre fire pistol must;

- First have competed in three (3) club competitions where they have used a centre fire pistol.
- Be a mature and experienced pistol shooter with a demonstrated record regarding the safe handling of firearms.

Once a member has purchased their **first** semi-automatic centre fire pistol that member will not be allowed to use that pistol without first being assessed by the Chief Range Office (CRO) or his delegate. The CRO must be satisfied that the member;

- Can safely handle the pistol – which includes;
 - **Safely** loading and unloading the pistol
 - Operate the pistol safety catch and otherwise have a good knowledge of the operation of the pistol.
 - **Safely** Clear a miss fed or jammed round
 - **Safely** and **Confidently** fire the pistol

Only in exceptional circumstances will the Committee consider an application for a semi-automatic centre fire pistol when the application relates to a members' first pistol. In these circumstances the Committee **must** consider factors such as;

- Maturity of the applicant.
- Prior experience with firearms (e.g. a qualified firearms instructor).
- Demonstrated safety record at the pistol club.

Note: In the above circumstances the member must still have previously competed in three (3) centre fire club competitions.

18. Police Handgun Safety Course:

The Police Handgun Safety Course must be successfully completed prior to applying for a pistol licence. Check with committee to ascertain whether there is a club member available who is qualified to conduct these courses.

19. Holster Qualification:

Only members who have attained a holster qualification are allowed to draw a handgun from a holster. Once qualified you will be issued with a 'Holster Qualification' card which you must be able to produce on demand at the range.

20. Competition Restrictions:

Certain competitions, such as Service Match, Practical Pistol, 25 Metre Service and Action Match etc are classified as non ISSF competitions. These matches are restricted to experienced pistol shooters. Members must have competed in at least five (5) club centre fire competitions prior to being allowed to participate in any **non** ISSF competition.

21. Purchasing a Pistol:

All applications to purchase pistols must be approved and endorsed by the club committee. All paperwork, including the '**Permit to Acquire a Handgun**' application and the **Form 3** must be delivered to the club Secretary seven (7) days prior to the monthly committee meetings when they will be assessed. Committee meetings are currently held on the first Saturday of the month. Incomplete or inaccurate applications will **not** be considered.

22. Club Firearms:

- Club Firearms;
 - Are available for club members on 'club' Saturdays.
 - The firearm will be signed out to the club member who will ensure;
 - The safe handling of that firearm.
 - Security of that firearm
 - That firearm is not handled carelessly in a way that might cause it damage.
 - That the firearm is not lent/given to another person.
 - That in the case of a centre-fire pistol – only ammunition sold by the Melton Pistol Club is used.
 - That the firearm is cleaned prior to being returned.
 - That the firearm is returned to the Senior Duty Person (or Committee member) at the completion of the competition/practice shoot – in any case prior to the cessation of the days club activities.
 - Club pistols will not be issued after 2.30pm.

23. Club Ammunition:

- Centre-Fire ammunition
 - Both empty and unspent cases must be returned to the Duty Member at the end of the club day. Members will be reimbursed for any unspent cases.
 - Care must be taken not to loose any cases.
 - Any cases that are lost are to be reported to the Duty Member.
 - Under no circumstances is anyone to substitute club cases with privately owned cases.

24. Roster Duty:

All members are required to performed rostered duty as required. Members are rostered on a needs basis. Basically the more members the club has the less often individual members are rostered. If you are unable to perform your rostered duties on a particular day you must arrange a substitute member. You must also notify the roster keeper (or other Committee member) of any changes to the roster.

Due to the onerous duties required of the Club Secretary – the Club Secretary is not required to perform rostered duty.

25. Range Duty:

Start time is 10am unless notified otherwise.

You are expected to;

- Assist with the setting up of the ranges for the competitions of the day. (Including raising the Red flag).
- Perform general maintenance duties as directed by the Duty Committee Member.
- Assist with the packing up of the range. (Includes ensuring that the Red flag is put away **if shooting is completed for the day**).

Members rostered on for range or kitchen duty are allowed to shoot the match of the day as well as performing their duties as required.

If you don't turn up for duty you will be fined (currently the fine is set at \$50) and you will be re-rostered for duty.

26. Working Bees:

Traditionally the club will hold at least three working bees a year where general maintenance is performed or other special tasks as required.

All members are expected to attend and contribute to a **minimum of two (2)** club working bees each year.

The club constitution allows for a small percentage of the members to apply for exemption from the requirement to attend club working bees. The exemptions are considered on the basis of a member's physical ability to contribute to a working bee.

All members given an exemption from club working bees must pay an additional annual fee which is set by committee from time to time.

General Rules:

27. Smoking:

To ensure the safety and comfort of members restrictions have been placed on smoking. Smoking is banned within the club house and any enclosed structure (including the shooting range sheds). Those that wish to smoke may only do so when;

- Outside of club buildings. E.g.;
 - Between the club house and the ranges.
 - When patching their targets etc as long as they do not smoke whilst under the range sheds.
- During inclement weather people may smoke whilst under the club house veranda.

28. Club House Rules:

- Firearms are not to be brought into the club house².
- Smoking is not permitted within the club house.

29. Club Bar:

- **No one is permitted to handle any firearms after having consumed any alcohol.**
- Members are not to consume or possess alcohol outside the designated area. Generally speaking alcohol may only be consumed within the precincts of the club house (extending to the veranda area in front of the club house).
- The club bar operates only to allow members (and guests) to have a social drink. Intoxicated persons are not allowed on the pistol club premises.
- The club has a limited liquor licence and the rules pertaining to that licence shall be adhered to at all times.
- There is an expectation that members (and their guests) shall behave responsibly at all times.
- Members who breach the rules of the club bar shall be brought before the Club Committee where they risk severe penalties – including expulsion from the club.

² Members participating in 'Practical Pistol' matches are exempted from this rule as long as the pistol is securely holstered and not loaded.