

HONG KONG POLICE
WEAPONS TRAINING DIVISION
NOTES FOR APPLICANTS OF RANGE OFFICER

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NOTES FOR APPLICANTS OF RANGE OFFICER

RANGE OFFICER

The responsibilities of a Range officer are to ensure firing practice is conducted in a safe and professional manner. He/She should familiar with all working procedures in a firing range and exercise the appropriate supervision of firers at all times.

Range Order (General)

2. The purpose of the Range Order is to ensure that all necessary precautions are taken to prevent accidents either to those people either using the range, or outside the range, and by implementing the instructions set out in the shooting club by-laws. The Order also seeks to ensure maximum use is made of the range space available, and provide guidance on the use of the facility and other amenities provided on the range.

3. The Range Order should provide the following information relating to the range:

- Arms, ammunition and targets that may be used;
- Range discipline/safety of the Range;
- Arc of Fire;
- Security of the range;
- Authority and duty of Range staff;
- Procedures in case of an accident;
- Hours of operation and intended uses of the range;
- Description of the range.

Safety precautions

4. Before using a firing range, it is required to know the safety precautions of the range. Range officers should check the range to ensure it is safe to conduct firing. He/she should have knowledge on the eyes and ears protection requirements (Remarks: for air gun ranges, ear protection may be optional.)

5. Other safety precautions to be noted, are :

- Control of access to the range;
- Control of drawing or presenting, loading and unloading of weapons;
- Control of arc of fire;
- Control of the type of arms/ammunition approved;

- Condition of firearms carried by the firers;
- No live rounds allowed within dry firing area;
- No consumption of alcohol within the range;
- Muzzle discipline down range;
- Trigger finger discipline;
- No smoking within the range;
- Make sure ventilation is functioning properly;
- Make sure all persons follow the Normal Safety Precautions

Normal Safety Precautions

6. The Range officer must ensure a notice of Normal Safety Precautions (NSP) is prominently displayed at the firing range. NSP includes :

- a) Treat all firearms as though they are loaded;
- b) Always put your trigger finger outside the trigger guard until you have decided to shoot;
- c) Be sure of your target and its background;
- d) Never point a firearm towards anybody or any thing you do not intend to shoot or destroy.

Range Commands

7. A Range officer must be fully conversant with Range Commands. Below are the action(s) a shooter should carry out upon the following range commands:-

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Load | - Ammunition can be loaded into a firearm. The chamber is empty and the firearm is not cocked; |
| Load and Ready | - Ammunition can be loaded and chambered into a firearm, and the firearm can be cocked. |
| Cease Fire | - Stop shooting immediately with the trigger finger off the trigger. Apply safety and remove magazine if applicable. Point the weapon down range and wait for further instructions. |
| Unload | - Remove all ammunition from the firearm and check clear. |
| Show Clear | - Keep the action open and show the empty chamber. |
| Check Target | - The line is clear and you may check the target now. |

8. Before conducting shooting practice, a range officer must properly and safely set up the range to ensure it is ready to be used. To set up the range, there are certain things that must be checked and prepared prior to live firing:-

- Clearance of firing area;
- Condition of targetry to be used;
- Hoist red flags/ put on red lights;
- Check type and serviceability of arms and ammunition;
- Check type and condition of facilities including target/bullet trap, safety precautions when metal targets are used;
- Availability and condition of eye/ear protection;
- Shooters and staff are clearly briefed what to do (and what not to do) (Range Discipline).

Arc of Fire

9. During shooting practice, the arc of fire must be strictly controlled. Range officers must ensure shooters only fire toward the correct direction. He/She should be aware of the factors affecting the arc of fire on a shooting range:

- a) Location and position between target and shooter;
- b) Muzzle direction;
- c) Type of shooting practice;
- d) Whether moving targets are used;
- e) Shooting stance (standing/kneeling);
- f) Height of bullet trap, sidewall, side berm.

Ricochets

10. Ricochets are one of the potential dangers on any firing range, as they may lead to serious injury or death. To avoid this, range officers should take into consideration different factors that would affect the risk of ricochets:

- a) Type of target to be used
 - (i) Metal target - would it fall or turn when hit;
 - (ii) Soft target - would it be penetrated when hit;
- b) Height and position of target;
- c) Type and power of ammunition to be used;
- d) Type of bullet trap;
- e) Condition/maintenance of bullet trap;
- f) Other facilities, fixtures or objects in or near the range that may cause a ricochet.

Firearms Stoppages

11. From time to time, shooters may experience a firearms stoppage. One of the duties of a range officer is the safe handling of a stoppage.

12. When a round inside a semi-automatic weapon fails to be extracted, the following procedures are to be adopted:-

- a) Muzzle pointing down range (NSP);
- b) Finger off trigger. Apply safety (if it does not block the slide action);
- c) Do not open the action immediately, wait for a reasonable time;
- d) Remove magazine;

- e) Pull slide backwards and clear the chamber;
- f) Inspect the chamber to make sure it is cleared before releasing the slide forward and easing the spring;
- g) If the round cannot be extracted, keep action open and seek armourer's assistance.

13. When a round cannot be fed inside a semi-automatic weapon, the following procedures are to be adopted:-

- a) Muzzle pointing down range (NSP);
- b) Apply safety (if it does not block the slide action);
- c) Remove magazine;
- d) Pull slide backwards, clear the chamber and inspect it for any obstruction;
- e) Inspect the round to make sure it is compatible with the weapon;
- f) Remove any obstruction from the chamber, replace any damaged magazine or replace with compatible rounds;
- g) Attempt to feed the pistol again. Seek assistance from an armourer if the weapon still fails to be fed.
- h) **Do not attempt** to fire another round if one is trapped inside the barrel.

14. When a stoppage may be attributed to either a misfire, hang fire or squib load, the following procedures are to be adopted:-

- a) Muzzle pointing down range for a reasonable amount of time (in case of hang fire);
- b) Apply NSP and keep the action open;
- c) Remove magazine, if any, and unload the firearm;

- d) Ascertain the cause of the stoppage;
- e) Visually inspect the barrel (from the chamber towards the foresight) to make sure it is clear (in case of squib load) before continuing to fire;
- f) If the problem still exists, keep action open and seek the assistance of an armourer.

Actions in the event of an accident

15. When there is an accident on the range, the Range officer is to take all necessary actions to ensure the safety of all persons on the range. In the case of an accident involving any weapons or ammunition, the following immediate actions are to be taken:-

- a) Immediately cease fire;
- b) Control the shooters;
- c) Control the weapons and ammunition on the range (unload all firearms);
- d) Segregate arms and ammunition involved;
- e) Render first aid to any casualty, summon an ambulance if necessary;
- f) Make a note of any witnesses present where applicable;
- g) Do not interfere with evidence;
- h) Notify the range management as soon as practicable.
- i) Do not continue to fire if cause of accident may attributable to -
 - (i) The construction and/or maintenance of the range;
 - (ii) Condition of arms and/or ammunition
 - (iii) Improper operation of the range.

Range Clearance Procedure

16. Upon the conclusion of a shooting session, a list of clearance procedures is to be followed:-

- a) Unload and inspect all firearms on the firing line;
- b) Remove all firearms, live rounds and spent cases from the firing area;
- c) Secure all arms and ammunition;
- d) Remove warning red flag(s) or switch off red warning light(s) where applicable;
- e) Check and note down any defects observed or maintenance requirements;
- f) Debrief shooters that unlawful possession of arms and ammunition is an offence;
- g) Advise shooter to wash hands;
- h) Complete Range Clearance Certificate if applicable;
- i) Secure the range, if applicable.

Security of Firearms and Ammunition

17. Firearms and ammunition must be properly secured at all times, or under the direct supervision of a responsible person.

18. Firearms and ammunition must be guarded by an adequate number of (depending on the quantity of firearms and ammunition involved) responsible persons when being used or transported. When not being used, firearms and ammunition shall be stored separately in a strong metal container securely bolted to a solid wall of the premises, or in an armoury in accordance with the requirements as specified by the Licensing Office. The key(s) to the box/armoury shall only be kept by a responsible person.

19. Firearms and ammunition in transit must be locked in a strong metal box or container. An Arms License issued by the Commissioner of Police for possession of firearms and ammunition is required, including during transportation. Use of motorcycles for the transportation of arms and ammunition is prohibited.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR AIRGUN RANGE OFFICER

20. When checking an airgun, the Range Officer must follow proper procedures in order to make sure it is clear of ammunition:

- a) Gun pointing down range (safety direction) with trigger finger off the trigger;
- b) Open loading mechanism if applicable and visually inspect for presence of any projectile;
- c) Inspect bore from breech end if possible, otherwise insert a cleaning rod into the bore to detect;
- d) Never look into the muzzle end of the barrel.

21. Procedures for unloading an airgun

- a) Airgun pointing down range (at a safe backstop) and trigger finger off the trigger.
- b) Unload -
 - (i) For types of airguns that cannot be unloaded:
Fire to remove the projectile. If it is equipped with a detachable clip or magazine, be sure to remove it from the gun prior to firing. If the gun has a non-detachable magazine or projectile reservoir, be sure to remove all projectiles from the areas before firing the gun.
 - (ii) For models of airguns which use a loading gate:
It may be possible to unload a projectile - open the loading gate and use a blunt object to gently push the projectile out of the loading gate.
- c) To conduct final check -

Open the loading mechanism of the airgun, visually inspect for the presence of any projectile. Inspect bore from breech end if possible, otherwise insert a cleaning rod into the bore to detect. Never look into the muzzle end of the barrel.