

Chief Firearms Office of Ontario Shooting Clubs and Ranges—Newsletter

Spring 2008



On August 2nd, 2006, the Chief Firearms Office began the process of conducting range inspections across the Province of Ontario utilizing the *Canadian Firearms Centre Range Design and Construction Guidelines (September 1999)*. At that time, a copy of the range *Guidelines* was sent out to all approved shooting ranges with an accompanying letter stating all future range inspections will be inspected based on the *Guidelines*. If your organization requires additional copies do not hesitate to contact our office.

As of May 1st, 2008, the *Canadian Firearms Centre Range Design and Construction Guidelines (1999)* are available **on line at cfc-cafc.gc.ca**.

Range Inspections

The goal of the Chief Firearms Office is to schedule an inspection of each range every two (2) years, with the possibility of additional unannounced visits.

At the time of your next scheduled inspection, your organization will be required to provide the range inspector with a copy of a location certificate or land survey of your range property.

Proposed Changes

Prior to implementing any proposed changes at your current range location, your organization must **submit a proposal in writing** to the Chief Firearms Office. At that time, our office will assess your proposal to determine if a range inspection will be necessary.

Additional Shooting Disciplines

Each approved shooting range has been given a range approval certificate that outlines, on page three, the shooting ranges and disciplines currently approved on each range. If your organization would like approval of additional disciplines, you are required to submit this request in writing for review by our office. This review may require a shooting range inspection prior to a revised approval certificate being issued. Until a revised approval certificate is issued, the range may only be used for the disciplines listed in the current certificate.

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Insurance Coverage

It is required by regulation that each organization must **maintain** at least \$2 million commercial general liability insurance coverage on an occurrence basis.

This requirement is outlined on your shooting club and/or shooting range approval certificate.

Therefore, your organization is no longer required to send evidence of insurance to the Chief Firearms Office.

Club Executive Changes

Enclosed is the Chief Firearms Office form “*Annual Club Executive Notification*”. This form is to be completed and submitted to our office at least **annually**, and more frequently if there are any changes to your executive throughout the year.

Succession Planning

When changes occur in Club Executive, please ensure all documentation is handed over to the incoming Executive. This will result in a smooth transition period.

Authorization to Transport (ATT) – Shooting Clubs – Ontario

Enclosed is a **revised** Authorization to Transport - Shooting Clubs – Ontario, Chief Firearms Office form letter. In order to process an ATT for your members, the ATT – Shooting Club Representative is required to complete and submit this form for any **new or renewal** members. When completing this form, please ensure you have included the members **Firearms Licence number, last name and first name**.

In order to process your ATT requests in a timely manner, each Shooting Club should submit the request forms *four (4) to six (6) weeks prior* to your Shooting Club expiry date. Incorrect or incomplete forms will be returned to your ATT – Shooting Club Representative for correction.

Commencing June 1st, 2008, this revised form is the only form our office will accept for processing.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q Can a shooter carry a firearm in a holster from one range to another?

A Our office has received a number of inquiries from organizations and individuals regarding when and where it is acceptable to carry a firearm at an approved shooting range. Section 19 of the Firearms Act and the Authorizations to Transport Restricted Firearms and Prohibited Firearms Regulations deal with ATTs. Specifically, Section 3(b)(iii) of the Regulations provides that a reason to transport the firearm must be provided. Clearly, the reason to have an ATT for the transportation of a firearm to a range is to enable the authorization holder to get the firearm to a place where shooting activity may lawfully be pursued, and for no other reason. Firearms may only be loaded or carried on your person while actively engaged in target practice or a target shooting competition on an approved shooting range.

Permission to carry a firearm while anywhere on a premises other than the firing range would have to fall under the provisions of section 20 of the Firearms Act and the Authorizations to Carry Restricted Firearms and Certain Handguns Regulations. The law provides that an ATC may be issued for the Protection of Life (Regulations Section 2) or for use in connection with a Lawful Profession or Occupation (Regulations Section 3), but does not provide for the issuance of an ATC for the purposes of target shooting. By legislating in relation to the matters separately, and through distinct regulations, it would seem that Parliament's separation of firearms carrying, on the one hand, and firearms transportation, on the other hand, was a deliberate legislative choice. Therefore, you may not leave the range with a holstered handgun for any reason. A clubhouse parking lot, washroom or common area are not approved ranges and therefore, moving a handgun to any of these areas must comply with the Firearms Act and the Criminal Code of Canada.

A number of Ontario club and range operators have expressed interest in discussing with the Chief Firearms Office an expansion of the areas in which active shooters may be authorized to carry firearms at their facilities. Given the variety in physical range design, in the province and nationally, and the importance of ensuring that, where possible, national consistency is achieved, there is no simple response to your questions.

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Holstering Firearms Question continued

Please be assured that we at the Chief Firearms Office are aware that this is an issue of importance to you and to the shooting community generally. The Chief Firearms Office will provide some firm direction as soon as we are able. In the interim, as we study the question and the applicability of the relevant portions of the *Firearms Act* and regulations, target shooters using your facility are required to secure their firearms in appropriate receptacles when moving from range to range on the property.

Q When Police Officers attend a range to shoot what rules do they have to follow?

A Police Officers attending a Section 29 range, whether attending with their service issued firearm or their own personal firearm, must follow the same rules as other range users and must stay in compliance with the shooting range approval. Police training is limited to what is listed on the shooting range approval. A Police Officer who is transporting his or her personal firearms for target practice or shooting competition must possess an Authorization to Transport issued through an approved Shooting Club. This does not apply if transporting an issued agency firearm and magazines.

Q Our organization is concerned that we are providing too much personal information in our sign-in log book. Is this necessary?

A For security reasons our office suggests that your organization consider using a sign-in system, for example, using a member's first name and their membership number.

Although unlikely, should the sign-in book ever fall into criminal hands, a member's full name could be used to lead the criminal to the member's home with the potential for firearms theft.

Please refer to the section pertaining to Record Keeping in the *Canadian Firearms Centre Range Design and Construction Guidelines (September 1999)*, Shooting Club and Range Regulations, Page 194; Records 14(1) for further information.

Q When a Range Inspector attends a range location to conduct an inspection, at the end of the day, the Range Inspector discusses the range safety recommendations with the range contact. Should we make the changes, or should we wait for the range inspection report and direction from the Chief Firearms Office?

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- A** The range inspector conducts the range inspection utilizing the *Canadian Firearms Centre Range Design and Construction Guidelines (September 1999)* and as a result submits a range inspection report to the Chief Firearms Office for review and approval based on their observations at the range. You are free to commence repairs without delay, or you may choose to await receipt of the final report from the Chief Firearms Office.
- Q** **The range Guidelines do not elaborate on the subject of ventilation. Where can we obtain further information?**
- A** Ventilation is regulated by the Ministry of Environment. To ensure the safety of all users of the range, your organization should be aware of lead contamination as it is a health hazard, and take steps to communicate with your members. Our office recommends that you start by reading Page 121 of the *Guidelines*.
- Q** **Does the Chief Firearms Office have a form letter for a Land Use Agreement? If there isn't one, what should it indicate?**
- A** There is no standard form for a Land Use Agreement. A Land Use Agreement should state that the land owner is aware of the shooting range location, the shooting range activities, and that shot may fall on their property. The Land Use Agreement should be signed by both parties and dated.
- Q** **Is it possible for the Chief Firearms Office to provide a list of all the shooting clubs and representatives and contact information?**
- A** Due to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, our office is limited as to the information we are able to provide. There are many avenues available to you to search for the information you are requesting. The website firearmscanada.com allows shooting clubs or ranges to add and/or retrieve information, and the Canadian Shooting Sports Association also has a list of all shooting clubs/ranges which have joined their organization.
- Q** **Does the Chief Firearms Office plan to hold information days in other parts of the Province?**
- A** The goal of the Chief Firearms Office is to meet the needs of all our clients. Our office will look at moving venues to different parts of the Province in the future.