



GOLD COAST PISTOL CLUB LTD. RTO 45819

**COURSE IN FIREARMS SAFETY
(APPROVED FOR FIREARMS LICENSING IN QUEENSLAND)
COURSE CODE – 11029NAT**

STUDENT COURSE INFORMATION BOOKLET

**The purpose of this course is to meet the minimum safety standards in Qld.
Shooters are encouraged to practice and obey the firearm safety rules that are
contained in this information**

Below are the relevant links to maintain currency on legislation:

<http://www.police.qld.gov.au/programs/weaponslicensing/>
(Weapons Licensing Branch)

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/W/WeaponsA90.pdf>
Weapons Act 1990 Qld Current as at 1 November 2013

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/W/WeaponsR96.pdf>
Weapons Regulation 1996 Qld Current as at 1 July 2013

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/W/WeaponsCatR97.pdf>
Weapons Category Regulation 1997 Qld Current as at 1 November 2013

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/E/ExplosivesA99.pdf>
Explosives Act 1999 Qld Current as at 1 November 2013

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/E/ExplosivesR03.pdf>
Explosives Regulation 2003 Qld Current as at 1 July 2013

Contents

STUDENT INFORMATION BOOKLET	1
INDEX.....	2
GENERAL INFORMATION	3-4
CATEGORIES OF FIREARMS.....	5-7
RECOMMENDED SEQUENCE TO OBTAIN A LICENCED FIREARM IN QUEENSLAND.....	8-10
STORAGE OF FIREARMS.....	11
TRANSPORT OF FIREARMS	11-12
BASIC FIREARM SAFETY RULES	13-14
SIGHTS.....	15
FIREARMS SAFETY RULES EXPLAINED	16-23
FIREARMS INCIDENTS.....	24-25

GENERAL INFORMATION

Ammunition extract taken from Queensland Police Service web page

As a result of changes to the explosives legislation, from 1 July 2003 a person requires a licence or authority issued under the *Weapons Act 1990 Qld* to possess ammunition. A dealer must be satisfied that the person who is purchasing the ammunition is the holder of a licence or authority. The only way a dealer can be satisfied is to sight a licence.

Ammunition stills falls under the *Explosives Act 1999 Qld and Explosives Regulation 2003 Qld*.

The following extract has been taken from the Queensland Government Mining and Safety web page. <http://mines.industry.qld.gov.au/safety-and-health/688.htm>

The transport of explosives in Queensland is administered under the *Explosives Act 1999 Qld and Explosives Regulations 2003 Qld*.

A person transporting an explosive in a vehicle, train or boat in a public area must comply with Australian Explosives Code 3rd edition (AEC3) for a class 1 explosive, or the Australian Dangerous Goods Code 7th edition (ADG7) for a class 2 to 9 explosive. A class 2 to 9 explosive means a dangerous good classified under the UN model regulations as Class 2 to 9 that has been declared an explosive under the *Explosives Act 1999 Qld*.

The transport of explosives must be undertaken by the holder of a licence to transport explosives. Limited quantities of explosives may be transported by licensed explosives users under their user licence without the need for a licence to transport explosives. This applies to shot firers, fireworks operators and others with a licence to use explosives. The Explosives Regulation 2003 Qld identifies exemption provisions from a licence to transport explosives for limited quantities of low risks explosives.

Ammunition should be stored in its original packaging and separate to the firearms.

Safety Course & Training

Following extract taken from Queensland Police Service web page.

To obtain a licence to possess and/or use firearms in Queensland, you have to satisfy the authorised officer that you have an adequate knowledge of safety practices for the use, storage and maintenance of a weapon, or category of weapon, the possession of which is to be authorised by a licence. For the issue of a licence other than a security licence (guard) you must, on application present a statement of attainment showing you have completed an approved safety training course for weapons within the previous 12 month period.

This requirement does not apply if you:

- i. Are the holder of a current licence authorising you to possess and use the category of weapon issued interstate or overseas; or
- ii. Are applying for new firearms, collectors, concealable firearms or minor's licence within 12 months of the expiry of a former licence of the same type with the same categories

The Queensland Police Service **cannot recognise prior experience or learning** you may have with the safe use of firearms. Prior military, police, security industry or other experience can only be assessed by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) guidelines. To have your previous experience assessed you must contact a Registered Training Organisation. You must provide a copy of your statement of attainment with your application.

What is the Course in Firearms Safety?

The Course in Firearms Safety (approved for firearms licensing in Queensland) is a competency-based course with units of competence related to categories A & B, C, D, H firearms and category M (crossbows). Units of competence related to categories A & B, C, D and H firearms are drawn from the Outdoor Recreation Industry Training Package (SRO03). The unit XBOWS001A is an enterprise unit developed by the Queensland Police Service that relates specifically to Category M (crossbows).

These units of competence are considered to be the minimum standards for persons seeking Weapon licences in Queensland. Potential licence applicants choose the units of competence related to the specific categories of firearms for which Weapons Act 1990 Qld licences will be sought.

Approved Course Training Requirements

For the issue of licence for a particular category of weapon the Commissioner has approved, as a minimum requirement the completion of the following units of competence:

NAT11029001 Demonstrate knowledge of firearms legislation, firearms and community safety
NAT11029002 Demonstrate use of Category A and B firearms safely
NAT11029003 Demonstrate use of Category C firearms safely
NAT11029004 Demonstrate use of Category D firearms safely
NAT11029005 Demonstrate use of Category H firearms safely
NAT11029006 Use Crossbows lawfully, responsibly and safely
NAT11029007 Lawful and responsible use of miscellaneous weapons.

Training courses are conducted fortnightly on Saturday Afternoons and Thursday evening

CATEGORIES OF FIREARMS

Category A weapons

Each of the following is a category A weapon if it has not been rendered permanently inoperable—

- a) Miniature cannon under 120cm in barrel length that is a black powder and muzzle loading cannon, depicting a scale model of an historical artillery piece or naval gun;
- b) An air rifle;
- c) A blank-fire firearm at least 75cm in length;
- d) A rim fire rifle (other than a self-loading rim fire rifle);
- e) A single or double barrel shotgun;
- f) A power head (for spear guns);
- h) A conversion unit is also a category A weapon.
- i) A paint ball gun

In this section—**conversion unit** means a unit or device or barrel that is capable of being used for converting a category (A) weapon that is a firearm from one calibre to another calibre.

Category B weapons

Each of the following is a category B weapon if it has not been rendered permanently inoperable—

- a) A centre fire rifle whether it is a bolt, lever or pump action;
- b) A double barrel centre fire rifle;
- c) A break action shotgun and rifle combination.

A conversion unit is also a category B weapon.

In this section—**conversion unit** means a unit or device or barrel that is capable of being used for converting a category B weapon that is a firearm from one calibre to another calibre.

Category C weapons

Each of the following is a category C weapon if it has not been rendered permanently inoperable—

- a) A semiautomatic rim fire rifle with a magazine capacity no greater than 10 rounds;
- b) A semiautomatic shotgun with a magazine capacity no greater than 5 rounds;
- c) A pump action shotgun with a magazine capacity no greater than 5 rounds.

Category D weapons

Each of the following is a category D weapon

- a) a self-loading centre fire rifle designed or adapted for military purposes or a firearm that substantially duplicates a rifle of that type in design, function or appearance;
- b) A non-military style self-loading centre fire rifle with either an integral or detachable magazine;
- c) A self-loading shotgun with either an integral or detachable magazine with a capacity of more than 5 rounds and a pump action shotgun with a capacity of more than 5 rounds.
- d) A self-loading rimfire rifle with a magazine capacity greater than 10 rounds.

Category E weapons

A bulletproof vest or protective body vest or body armour designed to prevent the penetration of small arms projectiles is a category E weapon.

Category H *Weapons Act 1990 Qld [s130-137]*

Each of the following is a Category H firearm

A firearm, including an air pistol and a blank-fire firearm, under 75cm in length, other than a power head, is a category H weapon, regardless of whether it has been rendered permanently inoperable.

A conversion unit is also a category H weapon.

Conversion unit means a unit or device or barrel that is capable of being used for converting a category H weapon that is a firearm from one calibre to another calibre.

- a) An air pistol;
- b) A centre-fire pistol with a calibre of not more than .38 inch or a black-powder pistol;
- c) A centre-fire pistol with a calibre of more than .38 inch but not more than .45 inch;
- d) A rim-fire pistol.

A weapon that is semi-automatic and has a barrel length of less than 120mm unless it has an overall length of at least 250mm measured parallel to the barrel is illegal;

A weapon that is not semi-automatic and has a barrel length of less than 100mm unless it has an overall length of at least 250mm measured parallel to the barrel is illegal;

A category H firearm must have a magazine capacity of no more than 10 rounds.

Category R – RESTRICTED

A machine gun or submachine gun that is fully automatic in its operation and actuated by energy developed when it is being fired or has multiple revolving barrels, and any replica or facsimile of a machine gun or submachine gun that is not a toy.

Any firearm capable of firing 50 calibre BMG ammunition.

Any clothing, apparel, accessory or article designed to disguise any weapon or other cutting or piercing instrument capable of causing bodily harm;

Anti-personnel gases and antipersonnel substances of a corrosive, noxious or irritant nature or that are capable of causing bodily harm, and any weapon capable of discharging the gases or substances by any means;

Acoustical antipersonnel devices of an intensity that is capable of causing bodily harm;

Hand grenades and antipersonnel mines;

Rocket launchers, recoilless rifles, antitank rifles, and bazooka or rocket propelled grenade type launchers;

Any knife so designed or constructed so as to be used as a weapon that while the knife is held in 1 hand, the blade may be released by that hand;

Any clothing, apparel, adornment or accessory designed for used as a weapon or a cutting or piercing instrument capable of causing bodily harm;

Mortars, all artillery and any incendiary or inflammable device containing any substance capable of causing bodily harm or damage to property;

A crossbow designed to be discharged by the use of 1 hand (that is not a toy pistol crossbow) that when discharged is capable of causing damage or injury to property or capable of causing bodily harm;

A Chinese throwing iron that is a hard non-flexible plate having 3 or more radiating points with 1 or more sharp edges in the shape of a polygon, trefoil, cross, star, diamond or geometric shape and constructed or designed to be thrown as a weapon;

Flails or similar devices constructed and designed as weapons consisting of in part, a striking head and which, if used offensively, are capable of causing bodily harm;

A device known as a “manrikiguisari” or kusari”, consisting of a length of rope, wire or chain fastened at each end to a geometrically shaped weight or handgrip and constructed or designed for use as a weapon;

A device known as a knuckleduster or any device made or adapted for use as a knuckleduster and which, if used offensively against a person, is capable of causing bodily harm.

A weighted glove designed or constructed to be used as a weapon.
A mace or any similar article (other than a ceremonial mace made for and used solely as a Symbol of authority on ceremonial occasions),

RECOMMENDED SEQUENCE TO OBTAIN A LICENCED FIREARM IN QUEENSLAND

Category A and B

1. Must be a fit and proper person, with no criminal conviction. (Sect 10 Weapons Act)
2. Must be a resident of Queensland
3. Must complete an approved Safety course approved by the Queensland Police Service/ Weapons Licensing Branch
4. Be in receipt of a Statement of Attainment for the completed course dated NOT MORE than 12 months from the date that your application for your Shooters Licence is processed.
5. Must be a member of a sporting club (or join an approved sporting Range, i.e. S.S.A.A. Australia wide), or other similar clubs
6. Or must have written permission from a property owner to use the property for hunting purposes. (Form 1 – Annexure for rural purposes/primary producer/recreational shooting/recreational fishing.) Property must be in excess of 40 acres, anywhere in Australia.
7. Lodge your application online for your shooters licence in the categories for which you wish to have firearms. This is done at www.police.qld.gov.au. You will be asked to upload the relevant documents.
8. Pay the prescribed fee when making application. Obtain your receipt, also keep a copy of all attachments lodged with your application should queries result from your application.
9. You will receive a “no reply” email acknowledging your application, and a Case Reference Number. You will also receive an email with a bar code that you need to take your Australia Post office that processes passport applications. You will need 100 points ID, and they will take your photo. This and confirmation of your ID will be forwarded to Weapons Licensing Branch.
10. When you receive your licence in the mail, check all details are correct.

Permit to Acquire (PTA)

1. Once you have lodged the application you can apply for a permit to acquire on line using the case reference number on the receipt. Payment is made on line.
2. If you have not already done so, select the firearm/s, all details of which need to be documented accurately. Category, Calibre, Type Number of shots, Brand Name, Model Number, Serial Number, the name and address of the person from whom you are obtaining the firearm/s including their Weapons licence number or Dealer number. The permit to acquire is done on line and you can elect to have the permit faxed to the dealer from whom you are purchasing the firearms. If you are purchasing from a dealer you only need to show the dealer number, the calibre, action and magazine capacity and the barrel length if it is a pistol. You must lodge a separate permit for each firearm Application
- 3 The dealer can enter these details when you take possession of the firearm. If incorrect information is submitted, these will be the details entered on the permit to acquire when it is issued. These details cannot be altered or corrected other than by Weapons Branch.
4. A genuine reason for acquiring a firearm other than a “Category A” firearm MUST be declared on the application.
- 5 Evidence of safe storage facilities for both firearms and ammunition, as required by the Weapons Act and Explosives Act, will need to be given. Keep a copy of all details submitted. Your PTA will be mailed to you if you have not nominated it to be sent to your dealer. This will take a minimum of 28 days A requirement of the Weapons Act

- 6 Remember, a Permit to Acquire is issued with an expiry date. If not used within this time, it becomes invalid and must be returned to Weapons Licensing Branch. The permit is valid for 6 months and cannot be extended.
7. On receipt of your Permit to Acquire, take it to the person disposing of the firearm to which it is issued, have a Dealer broker the transaction and then you will be able to take possession of your new firearm. You keep the top portion of the Permit to Acquire as proof of the transaction. The Dealer forwards the bottom portion to Weapons Licensing Branch. If the Dealer did not sell you the firearm, he/she is entitled to a separate brokerage fee for each firearm, under the Act, for the transaction/s. Fees may differ from State to State and Dealer to Dealer.
- 8 Weapons Licensing Branch will only give you a list of your firearms when you are renewing your licence so make sure you keep the copy of all the permits so you can check the list when it arrives. Make sure that the details are correct. If not, advise Weapons Licensing Branch as soon as possible.

Limitations on issue of license *Weapons Act 1990 Qld [s 10]*

1. A license may be issued only to—
 - a. An individual under subsection (2); or
 - b. A body under subsection (3).
2. A license may be issued to an individual only if the person—
 - a. Is-
 - i. for a license other than a minor's license—an adult; or
 - ii. For a minor's license—at least 11 years and otherwise within the age group prescribed under a Regulation for the license; and
 - b. has, under section 10A, an adequate knowledge of safety practices for the use, storage and maintenance of the weapon or category of weapon the possession of which is to be authorised by the licence; and
 - c. has access to secure storage facilities for the weapon or category of weapon possession of which is to be authorised by the licence; and
 - d. is not prevented under this or another Act or by an order of a Magistrates Court or another court from holding the licence; and
 - e. is a fit and proper person to hold a licence; and
 - f. has a reason mentioned in section 11 to possess the weapon or category of weapon; and
 - g. resides only in Queensland.

Category C

To obtain a category C licence, you must have a genuine reason why you are not able to use a category A or B firearm. One example would be that you are incapacitated in some form and can't break the action on a break action shotgun, and you cannot participate in your chosen sport for this reason unless you were able to obtain a semi- automatic shotgun that you were able to operate. You may need to produce a doctor's certificate to prove this, but in all probability, Weapons Licensing Branch would issue not you with a category C licence.

Category D

This is a restricted licence and would be by appointment only.

Category H

To obtain a category H licence you must be a member of an approved pistol club. To do this you must obtain a statement of eligibility (form QP515) from Weapons Licensing Branch and two character references prior to joining your new club. If you have a current AB licence you are not required to produce a statement of eligibility but you will need to produce 2 character references.

Once your membership has been processed, you need to compete in 3 competitions in the 6 months preceding your application for a pistol licence.

Once you have waited the 6 months and done the required shoots, you are able to apply for your category H licence. This is done as per the application sequence for a rifle licence listed above plus your participation book showing the three competition shoots and the Weapons Licensing Form 518B signed by your club representative stating that your 6 months has elapsed and you have done the required competitions.

Once your licence has been received, you are able to purchase your first pistol. Unlike the rifle licence where you can make multiple purchases, with your pistol licence you are only able to purchase two firearms in the first 12 months. These are either a rim fire or a centre fire plus an air pistol.

Once you have received your pistol/s, you then must compete in 6 competition shoots per year for the first pistol or if you have two different categories of pistols, e.g. a rim fire and an air pistol, you must compete in four competitions for each category. These records must be kept in your participation book, a copy of which must be given to your club secretary after the 30th June each year to show that you have complied with the Weapons Act. They must be on different days.

A category H firearm licensed for club use may only be used on a range and **CANNOT** be used on a property for recreational purposes.

A category H firearm must be stored in a **steel** safe that is **bolted** to the floor or frame of a building. It may have a key or a combination lock.

Category “H” for Rural Purpose s

Holster proficiency tests are not required to utilize holsters for primary production purposes.

Category “H” licences are normally issued for humanly dispatching injured or wounded livestock. It is normally understood that control of feral pests, wild dogs cannot be done Effectively with a category “H” firearm. These licences are issued on a case by case basis

A genuine need for a Category “H” firearm is where a property has terrain that is not accessible by conventional 4WD vehicles.

Category “H” firearms must not be carried loaded or exposed when crossing public roads between paddocks or properties.

Category “H” calibres can range from .22 to .45 for rural uses, and should be stored in a locked steel container when not in use.

STORAGE OF FIREARMS

1. **Category A or B firearms** (Refer to Firearm Categories within this Manual. The container must be made of solid steel or solid timber. If the container weighs less than 150kg, it must be securely fixed to the frame or floor of a permanent building.
2. **Category C, D, H or R firearms** (refer to the categories contained within this manual. The container must be made of solid steel and bolted to the frame or floor of the building.
3. **Containers** used to store firearms must have a sturdy combination lock, keyed lock or keyed padlock and be kept locked at all times other than to insert or remove a firearm. If using a keyed lock, ensure that you maintain control of the keys to prevent unauthorized access to your firearms. **Remember** - that ammunition must be stored separately from the firearm in its original packaging.
4. **Before storing your firearm**, it should be cleaned and given a light coating of oil. Regular maintenance and oiling will prevent corrosion.
5. Only the person/s licensed to have firearms is/are to have access to the safe.

A person who possesses a firearm must, when the firearm is not in the persons' physical possession, store it unloaded in a locked container with the bolt removed or the action broken. Remember that the bolt is a major component part of a firearm and must be stored under the same conditions as your firearm.

There is no requirement that they be stored in separate containers.

TRANSPORT OF FIREARMS

All firearms must be transported in a securely closed carry case or carry bag that does not advertise that it contains a firearm. While being transported, all firearms must be unloaded.

Public Places

In public places, it is a requirement of law that firearms must not be exposed to the view of the public without reasonable excuse. They must be in a condition not capable of being discharged. Depending on the firearm you own, this may involve an obstruction placed in the action to prevent it from closing. For example a trigger lock or a lock that prevents the firearm from being loaded.

Vehicles

If possible, firearm carry cases/boxes should be kept out of sight in the vehicle. When transporting a firearm by vehicle, the person in control of the firearm must ensure that if the vehicle has a lockable boot, the firearm is locked in the boot. For vehicles which do not have a boot such as a tray back utility, the firearm must be locked in a metal container. The metal container is to be fixed to the vehicle and must not suggest that there a firearm inside. Remember, ammunition must be stored separately from the firearm and transported in its box and secured.

An unlicensed person should not be left in charge of a vehicle carrying firearms. This means that if you have to stop and get petrol, and your passenger does not have a licence, you both must exit the vehicle.

Aircraft

If travelling by air, you must contact the airline with whom you are travelling well before the departure date. You are required to declare carriage of firearms and ammunition and they will advise you of their requirements as to how your firearms are to be transported.

Generally when travelling by air:

- Firearms must be in a locked container

- Passenger must have the key to the container

- Firearms will be checked by airline staff at check-in (ask for a private room) to ensure that they are unloaded. Extra time of at least 60 minutes should be allowed for this to be done.

- No loose ammunition will be transported. All ammunition must be packed in manufacturer's packaging and in accordance with carriage of dangerous goods.

- All air cylinders for air pistols and air rifles must be empty

- Some airlines have a policy that the Pilot is to be notified that a person has firearms on board and has adhered to the requirements of the Airline's Policies and Legal procedures.

Under no circumstances will ammunition or firearms be permitted to be carried in the passenger compartment of any aircraft.

Travelling

When travelling with firearms you should take precautions to minimise the likelihood of unauthorised access or theft.

Depending on the circumstances, it may be more secure to lock your firearms up within your temporary accommodation (motel room, guestroom) rather than leaving them locked in your car.

Give careful thought to how you will secure your firearm before leaving on your trip and take appropriate trigger locks, chains or padlocks with you.

If travelling interstate it is important to remember that each State and Territory has its own Firearms Legislation. It may be that the regulations in the State or Territory differ from the one it which you reside. It is best to check that jurisdiction's regulations before commencing your journey.

BASIC FIREARM SAFETY RULES

1 Treat every firearm as if it were loaded

Check every firearm yourself.

Every firearm should be treated as loaded until it is cleared and seen to be empty of ammunition. Ensure that the firearm is unloaded and that the action is open when carrying, accepting from or passing to another person or when removing it from storage.

2 Always point firearms in a safe direction.

Whether loaded or unloaded, make sure the muzzle is pointed in a SAFE direction; Be aware of where the bullet would go if the firearm discharged.

3 Never have loaded firearms in the car, home or your camp.

All firearms must be unloaded other than when they are being used to shoot; Ensure that when entering your car, house or your camp, all ammunition has been removed from all firearms; a firearm is unloaded when it has no ammunition in its breech, chamber, magazine or muzzle.

4 Identify your target and what is behind it.

Make certain of your target and what is behind it, before you fire; Be aware of the path of the bullet and where it will stop should you miss or the bullet continue on after passing through your target.

5 Store ammunition and firearms separately

When not in use, your firearm must be stored in a locked container with ammunition stored separately;

6 Never fire at a hard surfaces or water

This can cause a ricochet

7 No alcohol or drugs when handling firearms

Alcohol, drugs and medicines may impair judgment and co-ordination, which are essentially for the safe use of firearms;

It is an offence to be in physical possession of, or use a firearm, whilst under the Influence of alcohol or a drug.

8 Do not climb fences or obstacles with loaded firearms.

Make sure before attempting to climb through a fence or negotiating any obstacle that your firearm is unloaded.

FIREARMS means:-

A gun or other thing ordinarily described as a firearm: or

A thing ordinarily described as a weapon that, if used in the way for which it was designed or adapted, is capable of being aimed at a target and causing death or injury by discharging a projectile, or noxious, corrosive or irritant liquid, powder, gas, chemical or other substance or A major component part of a firearm but does not include:-

An antique firearm, explosive tool, spear gun, longbow or a replica of a spear gun, or longbow.

There are many different types of firearms in Australia today.

Irrespective of the type or calibre you intend to purchase, it is important that you have some knowledge of the different types of actions.

Let's look at an explanation of the words used to describe the six basic functions of a firearm.

These functions can be applied, more or less, to every type of firearm.

LOCKS	-	locks the bolt tight to the breech ready to fire
COCKS	-	cocks the firearm ready for firing
FIRES	-	discharges or shoots one round
UNLOCKS	-	unlocks the bolt from the breech face
EXTRACTS	-	removes the case (fired or unfired) from the chamber)
EJECTS	-	throws the case clear of the firearm.

SIGHTS

Open sights

Open sights are used with your eye, looking down the top of the barrel. Lining up the rear shaped U to a dot at the front of the barrel. See picture below.

Telescopic sights

Scopes are used to see object's that are small or require accurate bullet placement, or to see long distances. See picture below. (Looking through 1 of many optics

Maximum range

Maximum range is how far a bullet can travel.

Effective range

Effective range is bullet placement, how accurate you can place your shot.

OBSERVE THIS CODE

REMEMBER

SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY

Firearms Safety Rules Explained

Now that you have some basic knowledge on how your firearm operates, let's go over the Safety rules again and explain them a little more.

1 TREAT EVERY FIREARM AS BEING LOADED

Check every firearm yourself, do not take the word of another person that a firearm is unloaded.

Pass or accept only open and unloaded firearms.

Never ever accept or pass a firearm to another person unless the breech is open and all ammunition has been removed from the firearm.

Get to know your firearm; learn thoroughly the way it works, what action to take in case of a jam or malfunction, how to tell if it is loaded or unloaded, how to remove the magazine where possible and how to care for your firearm correctly.

Always keep your finger off the trigger and keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction:
be muzzle conscious.

If you do not know how to open a firearm leave it alone.

When handling a firearm to another person remember the following points:

Point the muzzle in a safe direction

Open the bolt or action

Check that the breech is empty

Check that the magazine is empty or has been removed.

Remember: this cannot be repeated enough times - never leave firearms loaded

Each year several people (often children) are injured or killed because a careless firearm user left a firearm loaded. Remember, when you are not using your firearm, unload it, and remove all rounds or cartridges from the breech or the magazine.

TIME FOR SPECIAL CARE:

Never allow your finger to go inside the trigger guard unless you are about to shoot. Be particularly careful at the moment of closing, cocking, releasing the safety catch, uncocking or opening a loaded firearm.

These are danger times when a firearm may be accidentally discharged through poor handling procedures or mechanical failure.

Special care is required when using the action to unload live ammunition from a firearm, e.g. a lever action. Fully chambering ammunition should be avoided where possible when using the action to unload.

2 **YOUR FIREARM IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**

If you own/use a firearm you must comply with the requirements of the firearms legislation in your State or Territory. You are both legally and morally responsible for your firearm.

Responsible ownership and use of a firearm can:

- Prevent you being responsible for an accident with your firearm.
- Prevent the prospect of being subject to civil and/or criminal charges.
- Prevent the possible loss of life through the misuse of your firearm.
- Prevent the illegal use of your firearm.

Remember, you are responsible for your firearm under all circumstances.

You should not confine yourself to doing the right thing and obeying the law because of the risk of prosecution if you do not.

You should comply with and promote the National Firearms Safety Code because it is the right thing to do.

3 **ALWAYS ENSURE YOUR FIRING ZONE IS CLEAR AND IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET BEYOND ALL DOUBT.**

What is a safe direction?

Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction.

A safe direction will depend on where you are and what you are doing.

Be aware of where the bullet would go if the firearm discharged.

Remember bullets go through walls, ceilings and car doors with relative ease.

Do not at any time point any firearm at yourself or another person.

Do not allow careless habits to form.

Concentrate on what you are doing and don't become distracted or daydream whilst you are handling firearms

Never lean your firearms against a vehicle you are tempting gravity and risking both an accident and damage to the firearm if it falls to the ground.

Remember; do not let the muzzle point at anyone else or yourself.

Be muzzle conscious.

IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AND WHAT IS BEHIND IT.

Make sure of your target before firing. It is not good enough to just think that what you see is your target.

REMEMBER:

Do not fire at movement only

Do not fire at colour only

Do not fire at sound only

Do not fire at shape only

Your target must be positively identified before firing: if in doubt, **do not shoot**.

In the early morning or late evening, it is not easy to see clearly

Be sure the object you are aiming at is clearly identified and that it is in full view before you shoot.

WHAT IS BEHIND YOUR TARGET?

What will happen if you miss the target or the bullet passes through the target?

What **might** you hit between you and your target?

The firing zone is not only the area between you and your target, but also the area beyond the target, which is still within the extreme range of your firearm.

The maximum danger range for projectiles may generally be:

.22 rim fire rifle	1500 metres (1.5 kilometres)
.303	3600 metres (3.6 kilometres)
.308	4050 metres (4.0 kilometres)
Air rifle	150 metres
Shotgun	300-700 metres (depending on shot size)
BB shot	450 metres

Check your firing zone with special care when shooting at birds in flight.

Shotguns need extra care because of the greater spread of pellets.

Also remember when shooting at moving targets the danger area will increase because your target is moving.

Be particularly aware of the position of other shooters who may be nearby.

It is essential that you ensure that your sights are correctly aligned, especially when using the chance of hitting something that you did not intend to hit.

ALWAYS REMEMBER – WHEN IN DOUBT – DON'T

4 NEVER FIRE AT HARD SURFACES OR WATER

Consider the area in which you are shooting.

Could a ricochet occur? A ricochet will almost certainly result from shooting at water, smooth flat surfaces and rocks.

Remember that when a ricochet occurs, you have lost control of where the projectile will finish up, resulting in possible injury, or even death, to another person or damage to property.

Be especially careful when shooting with an air rifle.

Because of the slow velocity of pellets fired from air rifles, they are very prone to ricochet and should be treated with the utmost of caution.

Rim fire and centre fire rifle bullets are prone to ricochet as they lose velocity at the end of their travel, which can be some considerable distance.

When shooting with a shotgun, your chances of a ricochet are multiplied by the number of pellets in the cartridge that you are using.

It takes only one pellet to cause serious injury or death.

Be particularly aware of this if you are shooting over water or over hard flat surfaces.

5 NEVER POINT A FIREARM AT OR NEAR ANOTHER PERSON.

Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction.

NEVER LOAD A FIREARM UNTIL YOU ARE READY TO SHOOT. NEVER TAKE LOADED FIREARMS INTO THE CAR, THE HOME OR THE CAMP.

Many people have been injured or killed having broken this rule.

Before entering a car, home or camp unload your firearm.

Ensure that the action is open and there is no ammunition in the breech or the magazine.

Pay particular attention to tubular or rotary magazines to ensure that all rounds are removed.

IN THE FIELD

This is a very important area for novice shooters.

It is essential that you understand the basic principles that apply to using firearms in the field.

In the field firearms should be carried unloaded with the action open, until you are in your shooting area and you are expecting game to be flushed.

Always point your firearm in a safe direction, be aware of your surroundings, and if hunting with companions be especially careful of where you are pointing your muzzle, be aware of where your companions are, especially in thick scrub where you may lose sight of them.

If hunting in a party where shooters are walking line abreast be extremely conscious of the person either side of you.

Take a shot only if the target is in front of you or if you are the shooter on the end of the line and can turn away from your companions to take a shot only if the target is in front of you or if you are the shooter on the end of the line and can turn away from your companions to take a shot in safety.

If stalking game with companions and you are walking one behind the other, then the only person who should have his firearm loaded is the person in the lead.

If shooting from a boat or punt, keep both hands on your firearm and control the direction of the muzzle at all times. Do not carry **loaded** firearms in a boat or punt unless you are ready to shoot.

Barrel obstructions are very common in the field due to objects such as mud, twigs, etc. becoming lodged in the barrel.

It pays to check your barrel frequently to ensure that you do not have an obstruction.

If you drop your firearm you should immediately check the barrel for obstructions.

If a cartridge produces an unusual or soft sound when fired, you should check the barrel for an obstruction before firing again.

Always unload the firearm before checking for obstructions.

When shooting in the field do not use set triggers or hair triggers.

These are designed for target shooting and really have no place in the field.

A simple knock is all it may take to cause an unintentional discharge.

When leaving or returning to a vehicle or camp, make sure that your firearm is unloaded.

Where possible, the magazine and bolt should be removed. A person who handles firearms safely should refuse to hunt with a person who insists on violating the principles of safe firearms handling.

Remember, in the field as elsewhere, firearms and alcohol do not mix.
When in the field, ensure that your dress is suitable for the conditions that you may encounter, and if going into mountainous areas, be prepared for sudden changes in the weather.

Wear appropriate footwear when hunting, to protect your feet from injury and prevent you from slipping.

Thongs and sandals are not safe at any time whilst using firearms.

7 KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER UNTIL YOU ARE READY TO SHOOT.

It is not a safe practice to have your finger on the trigger or inside the trigger guard until the moment before you are ready to fire at your target.

Firearms in good order have trigger pressures set at safe levels.

Normally the manufacture sets this before they leave the factory.

This does not mean that it is safe to leave your finger on the trigger while carrying your firearm, as other factors or distractions may cause the trigger to be set off accidentally.

Trigger adjustments should only be carried out by a competent person, preferably a qualified gunsmith.

a) ON OR SAFE

In this position the firearm is restricted from firing in the event of the trigger being accidentally pulled or snagged on a branch when moving through dense vegetation.

b) OFF OR FIRE

When in this position the firearm can be discharged by pulling the trigger. Most firearms have markings stamped into the metal work or coloured dots to indicate the current status of the safety catch.

8 WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED SHOOTING REMOVE THE MAGAZINE (IF FITTED) UNLOAD AND THEN CHECK THAT THE CHAMBER IS EMPTY.

On completion of shooting or handling a firearm, you should open the action and remove any live rounds from the chamber.

You should make it a habit to check that the chamber is empty.

At this stage you should also remove (if possible) or empty the magazine.

Not all firearm magazines are removable or easily checked.

Magazines may be removable, or fixed. (Bolt/hinged floor plate, tubular or some box magazines).

Remember:

Your firearm is considered loaded if the action is closed and if it has a live round in the chamber or, if the magazine still contains a live round, even if the magazine is not attached to the firearm.

9 MAKE SURE THAT ALL FIREARMS ARE TRANSPORTED SECURELY TO PREVENT MISUSE OR THEFT.

10 NEVER ALLOW UNAUTHORISED ACCESS TO YOUR FIREARM(S) OR AMMUNITION.

The storage of firearms and ammunition is your responsibility.
You must never allow unauthorised persons access to your firearm(s) or ammunition.
Your firearm(s) should only be accessed when you are present to ensure safe handling.
You must ensure that your firearms(s) cannot be easily stolen.
When not in use, you must secure your firearms and ammunition separately, not only for safety reasons.
Safes or other storage containment facilities must be constructed and secured in accordance with Queensland Police/Licensing Regulations.
Brown built lockers, old refrigerators or containers are not recommended storage systems.
As a firearm owner/user, you are responsible for making absolutely sure that all safety requirements within the home are carried out.
Over the years, a considerable number of children have been killed or injured because firearms were left in an unsafe condition in the home.
So **THINK**, when putting your firearm away;

DO NOT PUT YOUR FAMILY AT RISK.

Before storing your firearms:-
Make sure your firearm is unloaded (magazines and chamber empty)
Clean the firearm and lightly oil it before putting it away.
If possible, remove the bolt and magazine and lock it away separately from the firearm
Leave the action open on firearms where the bolt cannot be easily removed such as lever action or self-loading rifles.
Break action firearms must be stored with the action broken or disassembled
Store firearms and ammunition separately.

REMEMBER: YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR FAMILY AND TO OTHERS.
Make sure that all members of your family, especially the children, are aware of what a firearm is, what it is designed for (its capacity to kill or injure) and why it must not be touched.
ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE CONTROL OF KEYS TO PREVENT ACCESS TO YOUR FIREARMS.

11 DO NOT CLIMB FENCES OR OBSTACLES WITH LOADED FIREARMS.

Every year shooters are shot (usually with their own firearm) as they attempt to negotiate fences and/or obstacles with loaded firearms.

If attempting to cross a fence alone:

Unload your firearm
Place it through the fence and lay it on the ground with the muzzle pointing in a **SAFE DIRECTION**. Then cross the fence away from your firearm

If crossing a fence with a friend:

Ensure all firearms are unloaded

Use the same method as for crossing alone, or hand your unloaded firearm to your companion and then cross the fence. Then have your companion hand you your unloaded firearm and his unloaded firearm.

These two methods of crossing, if carried out correctly, will prevent injury or possible death by a firearm, as could be the case if neither method were used.

12 ENCOURAGE SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE SHOOTING PRACTICES IN THE FIELD, ON THE RANGE, AND WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

Those involved with firearms should be ambassadors in the community for current and prospective firearms owners/users.

By exercising and encouraging training in the safe use of firearms by members of the community, clubs and collectors, it is possible to provide a safe environment for all. Shooting and hunting ethics should be encouraged.

The use of both body and mind is necessary if one is to become proficient in the use of a firearm.

It is, therefore, critical that those involved in the handling and use of firearms gain proficiency in as many aspects relating to them as possible.

Firearms have the potential to fire projectiles for distances far beyond the target.

You should be aware of the capabilities and potential danger of your firearms.

Ensure you are aware of what is around and beyond your target and do not shoot if it is not safe to do so.

Refuse to shoot with a person who does not have safe firearm practices.

THE BASIC CODE OF PRACTICE:

Primary objective when shooting animals is to achieve instantaneous loss of consciousness and rapid death without regaining consciousness. This can be regarded as "Sudden and painless death".

Shooters should not fire at an animal unless they are confident of destroying it efficiently and humanely.

Shooting, if done properly, is a most effective, and in some cases, the only method of humanely destroying animals.

To provide maximum impact and minimum misdirection, the operational range should be as close as circumstances allow.

Shots should be aimed to destroy the brain, heart and lung or connecting blood vessels of the heart.

Shooting at other parts of the body is not appropriate and likely to wound the animal.

Where an animal is wounded there is an ethical and humane obligation to ensure the death of that animal is complete before engaging another target or another activity.

13 NEVER MIX SHOOTING WITH ALCOHOL OR DRUGS. GOOD JUDGEMENT IS THE KEY TO SAFE FIREARM USE. AVOID ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND/OR DRUGS AND/OR MEDICINES WHEN USING FIREARMS.

Alcohol and many day-to-day drugs & medicines (including illegal drugs and drugs prescribed as medication) dull and slow your mental and physical reactions. At the same time you may be unaware of this reaction and even feel you are in better control than usual.

When using firearms this is an extremely dangerous conditions as the ability to recognise and react to dangerous situations swiftly and accurately is essential.

Do not shoot if you are on medication that is identified as affecting your ability to drive or operate machinery.

If in doubt, ask your Doctor

Alcohol and drugs must never be taken before you go shooting, whilst you are shooting, or until your firearm has been put safely away.

It is an Offence in Queensland to use or be in physical possession of a weapon whilst under the influence of liquor or drugs.

Refuse to shoot with others who are or have been drinking alcohol or taking drugs/medicines.

ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND FIREARMS DO NOT MIX.

14 UNDERSTAND THE OPERATION OF YOUR FIREARM, KEEP IT IN GOOD REPAIR AND ALWAYS USE THE CORRECT AMMUNITION.

IS YOUR FIREARM SAFE?

It is dangerous to use any firearm that is not in a safe working order.

Do not attempt to repair firearms yourself.

Take suspect firearms to a gunsmith for inspection and have repairs carried out by a reputable gunsmith.

A gunsmith has the experience and equipment to do the job.

It is worth the extra cost to prevent an accident.

The following are firearm parts that may require attention from time to time:

Head space	The distance between the base of the chambered cartridge & the face of the bolt.
Firing pin protrusion & shape	Affecting safe, reliable firing
Tightness of Action & Shock	Affecting accuracy
Condition of Barrel & Chamber	Important for safety and accuracy
General condition of firearms including safety catch	Particularly important for self-loading shotguns & rifles
Trigger pull	Vital for both safety & accuracy. The recommended minimum trigger pull weights are:
22 rim fire rifle	1.5 kg
Centrefire sporting rifle	1.5 kg
Single trigger shotguns	1.5 kg
Double trigger shotguns	1.5kg 1 st trigger – 1.8kg 2 nd trigger
Target rifles	As regulated by competition rules
Set triggers	Follow manufacturer recommendations

NOTE **Self-loading firearms often have a heavier pull than conventional firearms. Manufacturer recommendations should be strictly adhered to.**

WARNING **do not exchange bolts, bolt heads or other action parts.**
These should be fitted by a registered gunsmith

15 NEVER STORE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION TOGETHER. ENSURE THEY ARE SAFELY LOCKED AWAY WHEN NOT IN USE.

It is a legal requirement to store firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers. It is also safe practice. Many firearm incidents occur in the home because ammunition and firearms are stored together. Children frequently suffer injuries because of their natural curiosity. If a child finds a firearm with the ammunition the result may be fatal. It is important that you lock up your firearms and ammunition separately. When removing a firearm from the boot of a car or a similar place, remember (**BUTT FIRST**) Never remove a firearm (**MUZZLE FIRST**).

16 DISPOSE OF UNWANTED FIREARMS LAWFULLY.

Surrender them to the police or sell them to or through a licensed dealer.

Firearms or receivers no longer required by a licensed owner must be disposed of in the following manner:

Surrender to a police station (YOU WILL RECEIVE A RECEIPT AS PROOF OF DISPOSAL)

Dispose to a licensed firearms dealer (you will receive a receipt as proof of disposal)

FIREARMS INCIDENTS

One of the main objectives of firearms safety is to reduce the incident of firearms accidents. In reality, there are few incidents that can be identified as a firearm **accident**. In almost every case at least one principal of the **National Firearms Safety Code** will have been breached.

It is essential that you as a firearms owner / user are aware of **your** responsibilities to yourself, your family, fellow shooters and to the community.

It is virtually impossible to anticipate incidents and have rules to prevent every unsafe situation where accidents involving firearms may occur.

Knowledge of the basic rules is essential to prevent accidents, but to do this; the rules must be thoroughly understood and correctly applied at all times.

Two things make up an accident:

- (a) **An unsafe condition of the firearm**
(Such as a loaded firearm cocked with the safety catch off when not intending to fire the firearm and
- (b) **An unsafe act by the person in control of the firearm**
(Such as placing the finger on the trigger when not actually intending to fire the firearm)

Persons in control of a firearm should know the condition of the firearm at all times.

- Is the firearm loaded?
- Is there a round in the chamber?
- Is it cocked?
- Is the safety catch applied?
- Where is it pointed?

The degree of firearm readiness should be appropriate to the situation and the legal requirements which may apply. The firearm should not be loaded or in a condition able to be discharged unless you are actually engaged in firing the firearm.

Remember, never rely solely on the safety catch, as this is a mechanical device and it could fail

The condition of a firearm should be checked.

- When you first take control of the firearm either from storage or when handed a firearm by another person
- Prior to handing the firearm to another person
- Prior to cleaning the firearm
- Prior to placing the firearm back in storage
- Whenever you are unsure of the condition of the firearm.

NOTES

