



Application of club safety rules..... Home Exercise

Our club has a duty of care to all its members and visitors.

All members have a duty of care to each other. There are no exceptions to this.

We are all on duty, all of the time.

Try not to be embarrassed by your lack of experience, or intimidated by the experience of others. If you see something you think is potentially harmful, act quickly. If danger is not imminent, express your concerns directly to the individual/s concerned or speak to a 'senior' club member as soon as possible.



Extract your copy of '**Pinhoe Target Shooting Club Safety Rules**' from your Welcome Pack and refer to it when you go through this exercise. Find yourself a quite place where you can consider each of the scenarios below. Jot down your observations. Better still, you could do this with another probationary member with whom you could share ideas. You don't need to do this in one hit. Take your time. After you have completed each scenario, compare your written observations with the analysis at the end of this exercise. To get the most out of this exercise **you will need to jot your down** observations in the boxes provided.



Scenario 1:

You follow a coach into an armoury to collect your firearm. You tell her the number and she takes it out of the rack and hands it to you. You take the firearm from her and carry it to your range. Is this all OK?

Observations:

Scenario 2:

Having checked your firearm is safe, you carry it to your range.



On your way another member who you do not know says rather bluntly to you "Do you mind not pointing that thing at me!" How should you react?

Observations:



Scenario 3:

You are set up for shooting but notice another member has laid his firearm down pointing to a side wall of the range. How should you react?



Observations:

Scenario 4:

You arrive on your range and notice that there is no flag in the breach of your firearm. What next?

Observations:



Scenario 5:

There are a number of other shooters in your detail. Your firearm is loaded. You squeeze the trigger. Nothing happens. What should do you do?

Observations:



Scenario 6:

You are shooting in an LSR detail. You experience a misfire part way through your magazine. You keep the rifle pointing downrange and activate your rifle's safety catch before placing the rifle pointing downrange. You attract the attention of the Range Officer. Is this the right course of action?

Observations:



Scenario 7:

This is a true story that happened to me long after I had been issued with my Firearms Certificate.



A friend of mine is a milliner (she makes hats). She was after a handful of 0.22 empty cartridge cases to decorate some hats. She asked me if I could provide her with some from my club. As you know, a club like ours has thousands of empty cartridge cases in buckets in our ranges which are recycled as brass. How would you have responded to such a request?

Observations:

Scenario 8:

You accompany a full member into an armoury to pick up some pellets for your air rifle. When you get there you notice that a friend of yours is loading a number of 10 shot air rifle magazines. She told you she usually does this so that she does not have to fuss doing it on the range firing point. What if anything, would you say to her?

Observations:

Scenario 9:

You are shooting in a competition. So far, so good. Just one shot to claim the crown. You're sighted up and your trigger finger is beginning to squeeze the trigger for victory. Then you hear the "Stop firing" command from the Range Officer. What should you do?



Observations:



Scenario 10:

You have reached the end of your detail. You have collected all your kit and are about to exit the range. You are the last to leave the range. You notice that a firearm has been left on the firing point. What should you do?

Observations:

Well done for getting this far!



Scenario 1 analysis:

You should have observed the coach before she handed you the firearm. Did you see her look into the breach to see if a flag or round had been left in it? If you did not observe her looking into the breach, what should you have done? You should have asked her to check if firearm was safe before she offered it to you to do your own checks. She may have 35 years more experience of shooting than you, but safety comes before all else.

Scenario 2 analysis:

The first thing you should do is to point the firearm upwards and then apologise. No excuses; just apologise. The second thing you should do is to learn not to do that again. Nothing worries members more than having a firearm pointing in their direction! It's careless and potentially dangerous. They do not know if the rifle is safe. You may, they do not. Incidentally, don't carry a rifle by its barrel. Use the stock. Amino acids in your sweat leave finger prints on the barrel which over time will corrode the metal. I bet you didn't know that!

Scenario 3 analysis:

The answer is quickly! Don't hang about wondering what to do. Act. A bullet or pellet accidentally released at a wall could ricochet anywhere. Approach the individual and gently ask them to point their firearm down the range. Why gently? Well it is not a good idea to make a bad situation worse by 'having a go' at them which could make them nervous.

Scenario 4 analysis:

Safety first! You keep your fingers away from the trigger (why?) and place the firearm so that it is pointing down the range. Don't touch it further. Make sure there is nobody in front of your firearm. Stay with it but get the attention of another shooter, preferably the person acting as range officer on your detail. Ask them if they could find you another flag or if they could mind your firearm while you go to find another flag. Flags can fall out of breaches – this is not uncommon. Never leave a firearm unattended.

Scenario 5 analysis:



The likelihood is that you have experienced a misfire. A misfire occurs when a round or pellet does not leave your firearm when it should. This is a more serious issue for live firing rifles than it is for air guns, because a live round could decide to fire seconds after you have squeezed the trigger (a slow burn). In both cases keep your firearm pointing down the range at all times. After about 30 seconds, disconnect yourself from the firearm but keep it pointing downrange. Raise your arm to attract the attention of a Range Officer or person on the far left of the detail. Do not call out! Wait until you get attention. Explain what has happened and let this member take over. Later on in your shooting career, you may wish to carry out some checks yourself, but do not be tempted to do so during your probationary period.

Scenario 6 analysis:

This is mostly the correct course of action, except the bit about the safety catch. Indoor shooting does not require the use of a safety catch in spite of the fact that manufacturers still build them in. A lot of shooters have no idea which way to operate their safety catch! Is it forwards or backwards? Any confusion about this could have disastrous consequences! It is for this reason that we do not use safety catches in club shooting. It is far safer for you to follow all the safety rules and not touch the safety catch..... ever.

Scenario 7 analysis:

Well diving into a bucket for a fistful just won't do! A live round may have been included by mistake. Or a misfired round could have found its way there. Also, there could still be (unlikely, but possible) some primer left in an empty case. This is one of those situations where your relative inexperience demands that you take advice from a Range Officer. In any case, what would other members think if they saw you stuffing your pockets with empty cases! If in doubt ALWAYS ask! What did I do? Well you will need to ask me to find out. But be aware, it is illegal to remove from a club, live rounds that you do not hold on your FAC.

Scenario 8 analysis:

All firearms should be loaded at the firing point. No exceptions. Can you imagine what might happen if a 10 shot magazine was loaded into an LSR semi-automatic live-firing rifle and then carried to the firing point? There can be no compromise on this. No loading of any firearm except at the firing point. I'll leave it up to you as to what you might say to the member in question. But say something you should! Remember, all members are safety officers.



Scenario 9 analysis:

Well, you might mutter something under your breath, but STOP you must! Keeping it pointed down the range, disconnect from your firearm. Put it down and move back. No range officer would stop a detail unless he / she had a serious concern. In this instance we differ from other sports: there is no doubting that this is a command not a request.

Scenario 10 analysis:

Seek another pair of hands if you can. If not available, your priority must be to make the firearm safe. Check it has a flag in it and the breach is otherwise empty. Never leave a firearm unattended. Move it into an armoury for safe keeping until the owner can be found. Don't leave your firearm on the range whilst sorting out the problem. It's always best to seek help when in awkward situations, but safety and security have to be your priorities.