

Safety and Technical Article for Bullshooter December 2000– This is the website version

I have recently become aware of a couple of items that need to be clarified. First however, some congratulations. While this is strictly not the place for it, I haven't seen it elsewhere. Reading my last copy of an American magazine, I noted that Karl Piper won the Barricade event at the Bianchi Cup this year with a perfect score. So, congratulations to Karl. And in general let do a bit of trumpet blowing when it applies. I have noted many times in the past that people succeed overseas – an no-one hears about it. Don't be modest – tell the Bullshooter.

Clarifications (this is a slightly expanded version of the article in Bullshooter

1) How to get on the NRO List.

I occasionally get asked by clubs why one of their local guys (or gals) isn't on the NRO list that is circulated to clubs from time to time. Since the last time I explained this is two and a half years ago, maybe it is worth revisiting.

In 1997 I decided that a list of National Range Officers would be a useful document for clubs looking for people to help them run shoots or do training, or just provide experienced advice. While quite a few clubs do have such people, quite a few smaller clubs don't.

However, such a list obviously needs to be up-to-date.

I obtained from the NZPA records a list of all people who we had listed as having obtained an NRO qualification at some time in the past. This included ISSF Judges, NZPA National Range Officers in ISSF, ML, HMS, and Service Pistol, and internationally qualified ROs in IPSC and NRA (of whom at that time there were few). I was advised that we should not publish their names without their permission, and in any case some of the qualifications went back many years. So, I sent out a letter explaining this, with a questionnaire which included telling me if the person was still active, and was willing to have their name sent to clubs.

I had a response from about 80 from 200 people. These people constituted the first list that was published. Since then I have added newly qualified people (on the basis that they wouldn't bother to qualify if they didn't want to work), people who either wrote to me themselves, or were referred by their clubs as "why isn't ----- on the list?), and some people known to me as doing training or RO work who weren't officially qualified. We also picked up some errors and people who were not on the records as NROs. In these last cases I have only added people to the list when they have specifically given permission.

Now, I know this is still not correct, and I am always pleased to add WORKERS to the list – provided that the person you think should be on the list wants to be on it! Within reason, lack of formal qualification is not a barrier.

So, if you think you should be on this list, or know someone who you think should be, I am very happy to add them to it – BUT, I need their written permission, and preferably the questionnaire.

2) The difference between the Club Safety Range Officer exam and the new "B test".

I was recently surprised to find there is *still* some confusion over this, so a brief history is in order.

In 1983 the NZPA Council (of which I was at the time President) directed the S & T Committee (then called Judge's Council) to prepare Club Range Officer exams. This was so that we could point to having qualified people in charge of ranges as was required by the agreement with the police (and common sense). Prior to this a Range Officer was anyone who was experienced and had been running ranges. An exam was written (by Rowan Whyte) and a training course (called the Range Manual) to cover the exam and a number of other things was written by me.

This was used primarily to train people as Club Level Range officers. These CROs could supervise themselves or other shooting. It was also used to give new shooters information that they needed to know about gun storage, protective equipment, and gun handling. At least 1000 people (and probably more) have been through this course and many hundreds of Club ROs trained and qualified. It has been through several revisions, the latest being 1997, and it

is now called the Club Safety Range Officer qualification. Currently you must do a general and safety section and one or more disciplines from ISSF, ML, and HMS. **THIS IS THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATION WHICH ALLOWS YOU TO SUPERVISE A PISTOL RANGE OR TO DO SHOOTING PRACTICE ON YOUR OWN.**

In 1998, it was recognised, perhaps belatedly that it would be better to separate the two functions of training ROs and training new shooters, and to have two separate training schemes and training materials.

From this, the "Introduction to Pistol Shooting" and what has recently been called the "B test" evolved. The training manual (Introduction to Pistol Shooting) contains all the shooter related material from the CSRO course and some other non-RO material. This came first, and the test papers followed. Initially this was conceived as a way of providing consistent, comprehensive and accurate training so that shooters from all clubs, large or small receive identical training. There was also the aim of removing from RO training, stuff which they already knew, and which only new shooters could usefully learn.

It was subsequently realised that here was a system which could relieve clubs of the responsibility for the declaration that new shooters were safe, trained and competent, which was required when applying for a B endorsement.

As it was, and had been since 1984, all shooters applying for a B needed a statement, signed off by the club committee saying that they were safe, had a knowledge of the rules and procedures, and had achieved a 70% (whatever that meant) competence level. Realistically, very few new shooters were actually assessed properly for all of these things (and I have sat on club committees passing B endorsement applications, where occasionally only one person present had ever met the B applicant). This actually exposed the club committee in the event that the new shooter proved to be dangerous or incompetent.

Having sat and passed the simple tests is now accepted by the police as evidence of such suitability for a B. Thus the onus passes from the club committee.

The NZPA AGM in 1999 voted that this should become mandatory for all new shooters seeking B endorsements. The material was circulated in February 2000, and at the 2000 AGM, the Council decided that B applications would no longer be accepted without a passed test paper attached.

ALL THIS TEST DOES IS TO TELL THE POLICE (and anyone else) THAT THE PERSON WHO HAS PASSED IT HAS BEEN TRAINED IN SAFETY AND BASIC GUN HANDLING. IT IS NOT AN RO QUALIFICATION, NOR DOES IT ALLOW PEOPLE WHO HAVE PASSED IT TO SUPERVISE THEIR OWN OR ANY ONE ELSE'S SHOOTING.

With the advent of this basic shooter training, the CSRO course contains material not relevant purely to training ROs. A new version is being produced trimming out the irrelevant stuff and adding some more advanced RO material. It is hoped to have this available early in 2001.

Nevertheless, the existing CSRO course and exam is perfectly satisfactory and remains the only bottom end qualification for people to supervise pistol ranges. This is why we have not rushed to produce the new exam.

THE "B TEST" AND THE CSRO EXAM SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED.

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