



SAGA SNIPPETS

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Private Members Bill Update

By Ludwig Churr

November 2018

On 6 November 2018 the Private Members Bill (PMB), as submitted by Dr Pieter Groenewald for changes to the Firearms Control Act (FCA), was presented to the Police Portfolio Committee for discussion. (See Snippets, September 2018 for an article on the PMB.)

The bill set out to:

- address the current situation of approximately 400,000 firearms with expired licenses
- propose changes to the FCA to further strengthen and allow for late licence renewals and the payment of an administrative fine

The PMB was made available to the public for comment before it was presented to the Police Portfolio Committee for consideration.

At the Police Portfolio Committee (PPC) meeting there was only time for one round of questions as the meeting was cut short due to other Parliamentary commitments. A follow-up meeting for further deliberations was held by the Police Portfolio Committee on 20 November 2018.

The merits of the proposal were discussed before a vote was taken whether to adopt the PMB.

The PPC was advised that it was able to adopt a PMB. Once approved by the PPC, it still had to go to the National Council of Provinces, and therefore there was the possibility of a second round of comments and delibera-

tions. It was further advised that it might still take a long while before the Minister's amendment bill is presented to parliament.

It was confirmed that the PPC can announce an amnesty and/or moratorium and that they can decide and determine the wording, and the terms and conditions of any such amnesty/moratorium. The PPC is keenly aware of all the risks associated with an amnesty and the chairperson, Mr. Francois Beukman, referred to the fact that some SAPS stations are to be excluded in the event of an amnesty being announced. No decision, however, was taken in this regard.

Prior to the vote the committee was briefed by the Civilian Secretariat of Police – they were not in favour of the PMB, primarily because of the pending bill that intends making far reaching changes to the Act. In addition, they had the audacity to state that the PMB would place an additional burden on the CFR. The PPC ought to have emphasized the fact that, despite the additional burden, it was the CFR's duty to remedy the situation, and by starting sooner rather than later, they could address the late renewal problem before the main amendment bill is introduced.

All PPC members agreed with the urgent need for changes to the Firearms Control Act and that there are currently problems that need to be corrected. Four parties supported the PMB. The DA, EFF, IFP and FF+. However,

the ANC voted against the PMB and because of the casting vote of the chairman, the bill was not adopted. One can only but speculate that, despite sound reasoning for adopting the bill, the ANC voted on policy considerations rather than expediency.

The PPC members expressed concern that after the 2019 election, the new PPC members would be less knowledgeable about the firearm situation and may not be able to make well informed recommendations for any changes to the FCA when it is presented to them for comment.

For other releases on this matter please see:

<https://www.politicsweb.co.za/politics/anc-does-firearm-owners-a-disservice->

<https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/the-mercury/20181121/281779925168274>



Gun Safety Rules Don't Need to Change with Times

by Patrick Sweeney
Saturday, November 10, 2018

What is one of the biggest changes in shooting in the last generation? Bonded bullets? High capacity? Polymer pistols? Nope, the rules. As in: The four rules. (See below for the full set.)

Codified by the late Jeff Cooper, at Gunsite, the four rules of safe gunhandling have been passed on by every shooter through Gunsite, and beyond, to the point that there are people who don't know where they originated. A lot of shooters just know them, kind of like the background microwave radiation: it has always been there.

Well, they weren't.

When I started shooting, back in the neolithic era, you had to be safe, but the "rules" were a catch-all of each shooter's experiences. Some knew some, some obeyed others. My learning is an example. My late father was almost shot by a fellow soldier, in a farmhouse in Belgium while getting ready to go out on patrol, due to the fact that the other G.I. was not paying attention to the muzzle. As a result, two decades later, one of the sharpest rules dad instructed us on was keeping the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.

But someone else, whose father hadn't had that experience, might not care about muzzles. And yes, life on ranges, and hunting, back then, could be scary.

The four rules are not just a quick recitation of the basics, but an interlocking set of rules that are both safety and custom, manners and security, respect and obligation.

Rule One is simple: you treat all firearms as if they were loaded. Again, my father was an exemplar here, but his instruction came in a broader scale: "All guns are load-



ed, all dogs bite, all snakes are poisonous." If you treat all guns as loaded, then you won't have a problem when one of them really is. Ditto dogs and snakes.

Rule Two buttresses Rule One, and adds a layer of protection. Since you treat them as if they were loaded, you obviously don't point them places they ought not to be pointed.

Rule Three works in support of Rules One and Two, since it is highly unlikely that a firearm will discharge if you keep your finger off the trigger.

And Four? One of our club members lost his cell phone (back in the early flip-phone era) when he dropped it on the range, and plinked at what was obviously just another tin can downrange. If he had remembered that he hadn't tossed that many cans out, and walked back downrange to investigate "That shiny thing" before shooting it, he would not have had to replace his phone. Breaking Rule Four can be worse than just anew phone.

Now, you will see posters, T-shirts, handouts and range rules that list more than the four, you can see five, eight, 10 or 20 rules when you include range rules, which can be sort of like Home Field Rules used to be in baseball "The big oak tree in right field is foul-ball territory."

If your gun club insists that you not shoot targets lying on the ground, that's a home field rule. It is time-and-place specific, and not part of The Four. They should be listed separately, not all lumped onto a poster with The Four.

The beauty of The Four is that you can shoot anywhere, use the four rules and be safe. And, the reinforcing aspect keeps you safer. If you break a rule, you can be ejected from a match, range or club, but it is unlikely someone will be hurt. It might just be an embarrassing episode, like my club member. (No, it wasn't me, I didn't have a cell phone back then.) Break two of them, and the risk of injury goes up.

The rules work, so stop trying to "improve" them. Don't re-write them, don't go adding paragraphs of extras to each, and keep the home field rules separate.

The Four Rules are now so deeply ingrained in good shooters that we gun writers regularly get letters, emails and comments complaining when it looks like we've broken one of them. Odds are, we haven't, but it is good to be reminded. They are that important.

The late colonel got them right, he put them in the right order, and he knew how to use the English language. Learn them, and leave them alone.

Rule One: Treat all guns like they are always loaded.

Rule Two: Never let the muzzle cover anything which you are not willing to destroy

Rule Three: Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target

Rule Four: Always be sure of your target and what's behind it.

<https://www.americas1stfreedom.org/articles/2018/11/10/gun-safety-rules-don-t-need-to-change-with-times/>

How to Introduce Senior Citizens to Shooting

<https://www.nrafamily.org/articles/2018/11/2/how-to-introduce-senior-citizens-to-shooting/>

by Dave Campbell
Friday, November 2, 2018

Ginny is a lovely, hardworking senior citizen who of late has found herself having to leave work, late at night, and return to her home in a part of town that has seen a big uptick in crime recently. She knows as well as the rest of us that, as a senior citizen, she's part of a growing population that's also facing a growing threat. Older folks are among the most vulnerable demographics for unlawful attacks and assault, unfortunately. So when Ginny took a realistic look at her situation, she decided to ask a friend from church if he could help her learn how to shoot. That person, as I'm sure you can guess, was me.

Let me say up front that I make no claims as a professional trainer in firearms. The very best way to learn is to seek out professional training. That said, I have introduced more than two dozen people to shooting during the last 40-plus years, including such diverse backgrounds as my mother—who once was vehemently anti-gun—to youngsters and fellas in my own age group. Once that interest is stimulated, the motivated student would be wise to seek professional training.

Ginny knew that I was a "gun guy" from having read some of my articles, but she also worried that maybe I wouldn't want to help her. She knew that I've made no secret that I prefer large, heavy bullets—specifically the .44 Special and .45 ACP—as the preferred rounds for self-defense. "All I have is a .22," she said. "'I'm not sure you would want to teach me.'"



I was pleased to let her know that wasn't the case at all. For starters, a .22 is a great place to begin for someone interested in learning self-defense shooting and gun handling. What's more, the fact of the matter is simple: The best gun to have when a gunfight or violent confrontation breaks out is the one you have on you at the time of the incident. A pair of .22 LR bullets delivered to the proper place at the right time beats a slew of other rounds sprayed in the general vicinity of the bad guy.

When I first started working with Ginny, I did so with two base assumptions. First, that shooting should be fun, or at least enjoyable. Second, that I didn't want to turn a shooting lesson or session into an endurance event. Let the student determine his or her limitations. A lesson that is fun and enjoyable whets the student's appetite to learn more and makes it easier to teach them. And while I remain steadfast in my own preference for large, heavy bullets to defend one's self, if such rounds are painful for the student to employ, they are far more likely to give it up. Just because a person cannot physically handle a major caliber doesn't mean they have no right to be able to defend themselves to the best of their ability.

My senior student started slow, and that was by my design. Her first shots from her SIG Mosquito

were at 3 yards at a regular bullseye. The purpose here is to gain familiarity with the gun and get grounded in the basics of sight alignment and trigger control. Not surprisingly, her groups were very good from the get-go. Getting good groups early on instills confidence and makes the student eager to go to the next level. That session lasted about an hour.

A couple of weeks later we had another lesson. I started her again at 3 yards—this time on a "Bad Guy" target from Birchwood Casey—to make sure she hadn't forgot anything. She hadn't. I moved the target back to 5 yards and started working on presentation from the low ready position. Too, I started her to shoot the target's eyes as a point of aim. She progressed splendidly, and then I made a mistake.

An eager student and not afraid to try anything new, I started showing her and then letting her shoot some close-up drills—arm's length, one-handed shots at the eyes and speed rocks to the groin. The session ran a bit more than an hour and a half. The next day she messaged me that her hands were cramping up and she was a bit sore. My bad. As we get older—and I know this first hand—we don't have the endurance we had when we were younger. I was so eager to show her some of the stuff we would spend more time

Continued....How to Introduce Senior Citizens to Shooting

learning that I over-extended the session. Each shooting session should be long enough to get one or two points across and no more.

By her third lesson my student started learning drawing and presentation from the holster. A good friend of mine, Rob Leahy of Simply Rugged Holsters out of Prescott, Arizona, provided her with one of his Cattleman holsters and a magazine pouch. Like anyone new to shooting, my student started slow and developed speed as her familiarity with the pistol and holster became greater.

Eventually her comfort with the pistol and shooting increased to the point where she began to look at other, more powerful alternatives to her .22 LR Mosquito. She asked me about all the hoopla over a 1911 pistol—what was it; why do some like and others not, etc. I let her try my Kimber Custom Shop Rimfire—a 1911-style pistol chambered in .22 LR—and her reaction after the first shot was, “Oh, this is very nice!” She also tried out an S&W Model 60 I have with target wadcutters and found it pleasant to shoot as well. I believe that in the not-to-distant future there will be a centerfire in her holster. Too, I pity anyone stupid enough to attack this quiet grandmotherly lady. She may not be a candidate for a law enforcement SWAT team, but anyone who messes with her is likely to find himself in a world of hurt.

The secret to successfully starting anyone to shooting is to make it an enjoyable experience. Start them slowly, and only progress to a new skill level once the previous

one is mastered. Keep in mind that seniors—like most very young shooters—may have strength issues that prevent them from operating some handguns. It may be too much for some of them to rack a centerfire pistol’s slide, or to pull through a double-action revolver’s trigger. Let them determine the level they can comfortably achieve success. Like I said, a pair of .22 LR hollowpoints with proper shot placement beats a magazine full of 9mm or .45-caliber bullets around the periphery.

10 Rules for Teaching New Senior Shooters

Do not start with a powerful centerfire.

Keep the shooting sessions short, no more than an hour.

Keep the ranges short so that it is easier to shoot good groups.

Be aware of and accommodate physical limitations.

Take frequent breaks; sit down off the range and discuss tactics and scenarios.

Make shooting fun.

Do not get too wrapped up in tactical dogma.

Give the shooter an opportunity to find the best way to solve a problem.

Celebrate successes; do not come down hard on corrections.

Let the shooter progress at their own rate; don’t try to force them too quickly.

Watch this space ...for more interesting firearm snippets