

FINAL

Totara Lodge  
Upper Hutt, Wellington, New Zealand  
8 February 2019

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ICFRA TARGET RIFLE COMMITTEE  
HELD AT TRENTHAM ON 25 JANUARY 2019

Present:

Iain Robertson	GB	Chairman
Bernard de Beer	RSA	
Catherine Berry	AUS	
Dan Chisholm	CAN	
Malcolm Dodson	NZ	
Ray Gross	USA	
Lindsay Peden	SCO	
George Wittorff	AUS	

In Attendance:

Phil Harrison	Secretary General
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Apologies:

Dennis Flaharty, Michelle Chombart

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting. The Minutes of the Meeting of 1 August 2015, previously approved electronically, were confirmed.
2. Matters arising.

There was an outstanding item for consideration of permitting the use of bullets with construction other than jacketed lead core. The issue arose mainly in the context of environmental limitations on use of lead. The political pressures across several States and in countries outside the USA appeared to have reduced.

**Closed**

3. Proposals by or through the IRRG
  - a. **“Machine Gunning”**. In competitions shooting strings on electronic targets, F-class competitors had demonstrated successful performance by very rapid fire to complete the course within a limited wind bracket. Noting that
    - Target shooting required a subtle balance of skills, within which the ability to shoot quickly and the ability to judge wind accurately were complementary

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- Rapid fire on an electronic target shifted the balance between those
- F-class disapproved the practice, but had not applied a technical rule; instead the next World Championships would be shot in pairs, with a specified minimum time between shots if a competitor had to shoot singly
- The matter had been considered across Australia where most clubs now shoot on electronic targets; States and Territories had chosen not to rule

IRRG requested the Committee's opinion. The Committee discussed the matter widely, considering inputs including:

- The current position, by default, was that the practice was permitted under the rules
- ICFRA rules were widely used either directly or as a basis of national rules; ICFRA should give a lead on the matter even though the issue could not be live in an ICFRA competition until 2025 at the earliest.
- F-class competitors had used rifles with two loading ports, which technical modification had enabled even faster loading and firing. Such a modification would be pointless if the target's response was delayed; thus a rule requiring a delay would have the effect of preventing a spate of modifications to equipment.
- Recently, the US nationals had been shot in strings on electronic targets with a built-in 7 second delay in displaying shot position and score. After the event, competitors' reactions had been generally positive.
- If a delay were to be mandated, it would be better to start with a longer delay and reduce it if acceptable rather than start with a shorter delay subsequently found to be inadequate.  
IRRG had considered a 7 second delay, but concluded that 10 seconds would be more representative of equivalence to the best achievable with a manual target.
- There were good organisational reasons for using the same delay in all events TR and F-class, individual and team.
- An impromptu trial in Australia had demonstrated a minimum time, to fire 2+10 scoring 50 in a TR coached shoot on electronic targets with no inbuilt delay, of 127 seconds.

### **Decided:**

- It was appropriate for ICFRA to rule on the matter (AUS & GB (in regard to TR) dissenting)
- The issue arose solely in the context of electronic targets, thus a response based on delaying the near-instantaneous response of the target was the appropriate one.
- A standard delay of 10 seconds, as recommended by IRRG, was appropriate (AUS dissenting).
- FCC should be further consulted by IRRG.

- b. Formation of a group to consider regulation of electronic targets.** A proposal had been made that ICFRA should regulate on standards to be applied to electronic targets for international competition and should regulate on processes for their use, and that a sub-committee should be formed for that

purpose. It was explained that extant ICFRA rules on the matter operated by proxy, through a requirement that before electronic targets could be used in an ICFRA event they must have been used in an entire National Meeting to the satisfaction of competitors. Regulating directly would require significant complexity, and there was the possibility of over-regulation acting to inhibit the advantages offered by electronic targets. There was a duty on national organisers to provide systems and facilities that were fit for purpose. Specifying limited elements such as calibration checks would be appropriate.

**Decided:**

A sub-committee to regulate on electronic targets would not be formed (CAN dissenting).

IRRG should develop a requirement for a calibration check of electronic targets before use in international events.

- c. **Penalties for firing during the sighting period.** Given that, during the sighting period, targets may only be exposed if it would otherwise be safe to fire, a majority of the IRRG consider that an automatic penalty of disqualification for firing during that period, based on the concept that to do so is dangerous, is disproportionate. **IRRG propose (one member dissenting) a lesser sanction involving disregarding the shot and deduction of penalty points, with an option for more stringent penalties. IRRG invite the Committee to opine on the matter in advance of it being presented to General Assembly.**

The committee engaged in an extended and complex discussion. The issue arose from an occurrence in the F-class World Championship team match, where some but not all targets has been displayed and the firer obeyed an instruction from the coach to shoot, in circumstances where clearance to do so had not been given. The Match Committee had decided not to apply a penalty. On a strict reading of the rules the alternatives were to disqualify or not.

- Severe penalties for firing during the preparation period are intended to reinforce attention to a safety related rule.
- It is not clear that the rule is safety related, since the CRO may only order targets to be raised if it would in all respects be safe to fire.
- There was no disagreement that firing during the preparation period should ordinarily result in a sanction.
- One view was that disqualification should result unless the perpetrator could demonstrate that they should not be held liable, in which case no penalty could apply.
- An alternative view was that a range of penalties should be available corresponding to degrees of mitigation.
- It was noted that if a firer is prevented from shooting by immediate disqualification then there is no viable subsequent amelioration of penalty.
- Disqualification of a team member would also result in a penalty on the entire team, which might be considered inappropriate.

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- Abolition of preparation periods – rifles not to be dry-fired until the order to commence is given - would eliminate nearly all of the possible sources of inadvertent firing, but would have consequences as regards timekeeping.

### **Decided:**

- There is an issue to be dealt with – current rules are inadequate.
- Discretion as to penalties would be appropriate (SA dissenting).
- Active consideration should be given to alternative measures, such as removing the sighting period in team matches and adjusting time allowances accordingly.

- d. **Challenges for a lower score.** A change to the effect that a register keeper may, notwithstanding that a score is not unmistakably in error (Message 3), challenge any shot as being of lower value than that signalled. This was introduced as a non-controversial amendment, but concern is expressed by GB and Guernsey. **IRRG invite the Committee to opine on the matter in advance of it being presented to General Assembly.**

The committee engaged in extended discussion. Conflicting views resolved to:

- The desire that, to the greatest extent possible, the score recorded be the correct score.
- The desire to minimise opportunities for gamesmanship through highly speculative challenges interrupting the flow of shooting, particularly in a team match, and thus retaining rules that give benefit of any doubt to the firer.

### **Decided:**

That Message 5 should be amended so as to permit the firer (or appropriate team officials in a team match) **or the register keeper** to challenge the value of a shot as being **incorrectly** signalled (GB dissenting).

- e. IRRG had submitted a number of **proposed changes**, details of which had been previously circulated (copy attached). These had been considered **non-controversial**; only the proposal regarding challenge for a lower score had attracted comment. **The other proposals thus carry.**
4. **Proposal by USA.** That **rule T 2.19.2.2 controlling .223” Remington calibre ammunition in individual and team competition in Target Rifle events under ICFRA rules be amended to increase the limitation on bullet weight to max 91 grains.** This is being proposed as a technical element in a wider proposal to permit .223” calibre rifles in specific events, which proposal rests with the World Championship Committee.

The Committee was advised that 90gr bullets are now routinely used in .223” ammunition, and that lighter bullets may place users of .223” rifles at a significant disadvantage against .308” at longer range or in stronger winds. The Committee was assured that there was no intent to permit a competitor to use more than one calibre in the course of an event.

**Decided:**

That the proposal be accepted.

5. Proposals by GB.

- a. That the committee consider certain amendments to rule 2.4 (dealing with chamber dimensions).

It was pointed out that ICFRA controls by specifying cartridge dimensions, and that those are specified in terms of .308 Win dimensions.

**Decision:**

Item withdrawn

- b. That the Committee take note of the ongoing research by the NRA of GB, including in-use trials, to determine an optimum set of target sizes for national competition and invite the NRA of GB to report outcomes.

The Committee was reminded that ICFRAs only request to national organisations regarding targets was that they adopt standardised aiming marks.

The committee noted the work in progress and awaited advice as to outcomes, scheduled for 2021.

6. That **the Committee elect a Chairman** to serve from the conclusion of the Championships in accordance with Standing Order 20.

The NRA of GB has confirmed that Iain Robertson will continue as the GB representative to the Committee. Iain Robertson is willing to continue in the post of Chairman if the Committee so decides. There were no other nominations.

**Decision:** Iain Robertson would continue as Chairman.

Meeting closed at 1230 hrs

*Iain Robertson*

I W ROBERTSON

GB representative

Chairman ICFRA TR Committee

Actions:

Chairman 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d

GB Representative 4b

IRRG 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3e (to incorporate) 4 (to incorporate)