

Peter John Clarke

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**Subject: Fallow Deer Inquiry Tas Gov.**

Qualifications. Deer Hunter for some fifty odd years, in Tasmania Victoria Queensland Northern Territory Fiordland NZ Benchback PG Currently a member of Australian Deer Association Central Branch Vic. and Sporting Shooters Association of Australia Past State President ADA Past Southern President ADA Past Vice President Derwent Valley Field and Game Past ADA Rep Deer Advisory Council Past Committee Member Bagdad Field and Game

**Enviromental Impact Public Land**

Follow Deer are mainly grazers competing with native animals for food and which can also in their grazing include endangered plants in alpine areas such as W.H.A. and other Conservation areas and cause damage if left alone and not managed properly. This is why I have enclosed a document entitled Conservation and Pest Management Competencies drafted by the SSAA Vic Inc and accepted by the Natural Resources Vic for using hunting as a conservation tool to protect these areas. In Vic where I hunt, I have hunted Fox and Deer in the above areas mentioned. I have also hunted deer in National Parks in Vic which allow such activities to take place. There is also balloted hunting allowed for Hog Deer at Boolpool near Bairnsdale Vic in a Conservation Area to manage wild deer populations. signage is displayed as to inform public of hunting period, public still use area at same time

Aldo

Leopold often considered as "The Father" in modern day Conservation, who was also a hunter. "quotes", Conservation is harmony between man and his environment.

A study completed by the Game Management Unit into possible disease or parasites that may be carried by wild Fallow Deer, came up negative to any concerns. The deer have built up numbers, as not yet out of control, in these conservation and W.H.O. areas because (a) Climate Change, warmer hence more food. (b) reduction of livestock. (c) lack of management ie hunting access. Hunting of Deer under guidelines or similar to those supplied could be allowed to manage deer populations in these areas. There is not enough evidence at this point of time and also not big enough deer populations to cause any damage to the areas mentioned

Subject: fallow deer

When I first started deer hunting at the age of seventeen years of age, it was a two month season with five deer, Stags only could be taken. Since then it went to two deer, one stag, one doe, season reduced to one month. Since then it has been "f" about and nothing has worked since then so far as hunter access for many or real management for crop protection and environmental protection for our high country, so please this time around get it right so as our kids and the environment can move into the 21st century. A lot of hunters, like myself with no place to hunt deer, go to Victoria or other States to hunt thus Tasmania is missing out on moneys spent in other States on food clothes etc

**Incidental Matters**

At present with game management and most properties, the opportunity for access by new or old hunters with no where to hunt is very much impossible. Some conservation land is available but limited access and limited numbers of hunters allowed to engage in deer hunting is a restricting factor. Those with access do not want to share the "crop". How can one person, for example, be given 20 deer tags for crop protection, and others with no where to hunt miss out on taking some prime venison home to eat, not a fair system. What would one person do with, not only taking 1 stag 1 doe during the normal deer season but 20 deer on crop protection making a total of 23 deer. I would suggest either thrown away, fed to the dogs or more to the point, sold on black market to Hotels and restaurants, thus undercutting any commercial trade by legal business.

If the present system or something similar becomes the "status quo" I suggest a better deal for hunters with no access to properties for deer hunting. I suggest that financial members of hunting clubs, when required by the landowner, be given a share of the crop protection tags. As a member of such clubs members would have insurance cover of up to 2 million dollars. The tags would be issued for the taking of Does, Stags Spikers as is process presently in place

Note. These views expressed by me are my views and in no way express the views of the Associations that I have been involved with.

Signed Peter J Clarke



**Subject: deer management tas**

**Environmental Impact Private Land**

The main damage to private land by Fallow Deer in Tasmania is (a) crop grazing (b) damaged fencing (c) private forests (a) Crop damage. Most crops are grown when deer are in most need of food ie late summer winter. Summer to gain weight for the breeding season in April, and in winter to gain weight lost during breeding season, One solution would be to electric fencing or just plain fencing not only good enough to keep out wild deer but keep out grass eating native animals also. More access to properties for hunting by hunters would lessen the problem now faced by landowners. Unfortunately most farmers don't see the advantages just moan to governments. (b) Fencing When wild frequent pastures, crops they will in time damage fencing surrounding these. Solution Better fencing so as to protect pastures and crops can claim back on tax as most would anyway. Private Forests. Damage is done in two ways. One being as deer travel through newly planted trees, will pull out same just to find out if new food source is worth eating which in turn is dropped to the ground and left to die. Secondly male deer, when antler growth is complete, they will rub on the saplings removing velvet, which encases the newly grown antler, causing damage to young trees, some times destroying them, Again when the breeding season approaches male deer will again rub trees to (a) practice for fighting off other males to gain breeding does, or (b) marking their territory for the breeding season. As stated before more allowance for hunters would help manage this problem

**Commercial Opportunities**

Some thirty years ago farmers were allowed to trap wild fallow deer. As usual they were not very wise, they did not set up a proper industry. They took the lazy way, in the back door out the front door quick as quick, to make the fast buck. There was no research into farming Fallow deer which would be the worst deer to farm because of (a) their flighty nature (b) velvet yield low (c) body weight to monies made no or little profit (d) nothing set up for by products ie skins or antler sales. Some two years ago a study was completed into the commercial sale of wild shot Fallow deer in Tasmania by pro shooters, the findings showed that the recovery of prime venison for human consumption was unprofitable

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Subject: fallow deer

#### Protection Status

This is a "pet" subject of mine. As being a hunter on a property at Cressy for some thirty seven years, I and some thirty other members were told our services were no longer required thirty odd years of good service to the landowner not taken into consideration. And yet he and a lot of other farmers are screaming out to government that they are being over run by deer and they the same farmers are either, reducing hunters on their properties or not allowing hunters to enter their property to help reduce deer numbers. When I was representing A.D.A. on the T.D.A.C. I was one of the main forces behind G.M. and helped instigate bringing Brian Murphy to Tas. and start up the G.M.U. I now beleive it has failed, all it has achieved large antlers and lack of hunting access for those with no place to hunt or those who want to take up deer hunting. Every one is saying that there are more deer in the state than ever before, I believe this not to be true. Reason why, deer numbers on all the larger properties ie Windfalls, Charlton. Weasle Plains, Connorville, Hunterston, Quornhall, just to name a few when I started hunting numbers were in their thousands on each one, now they are counted in their hundreds. I realise deer numbers have been noticed in new areas and what is referred to as fringe but I believe this is due mainly to escapes from holdings or illegal releases in those areas. Other reasons for believing deer numbers are out of controll (a) ten years of drought has left little food in the bush so deer frequent crops and pasture, which makes them more visible. (b) Other reason is I believe, some hunters on game managed properties, when given crop protection tags tell lies to what they actually take, it is less. eg hunters given twelve tags each, tells farmer filled all tags, truth filled one sixth, farmer views crop still full of deer

#### Solution

(a) Make deer season like most other States twelve months long, but still requiring Game Licence. Harvest any age any sex any number. I believe this would help farmers to control deer and help protect crops and pastures. This can only be achieved by allowing more hunter access to private and public land also more conservation land for the purpose of controlling wild deer only by means of hunting

## Conservation and Pest Management Competencies

### SSAA (Vic) Inc.

Persons endorsed by the Victorian Executive of SSAA to participate in Conservation and Pest Management (CPM) activities will have been assessed as competent in the following fields:

1. **Ecology** – persons accredited under CPM will have demonstrated that they understand that-

*In order to manage species it is necessary to manage their complete habitat.*

*To protect a natural community it is necessary to protect all the components from soil microbes to top-order predators.*

*Under natural conditions animal populations are regulated by a combination of resources (food, water, shelter) predation and diseases/parasites. Scarcity of food, water or shelter increases vulnerability to predation, diseases and parasites.*

*The "carrying capacity" of any given habitat is the maximum number organisms that it can support (i.e. provide food, water, shelter) under the normal range of climatic conditions (e.g. If a habitat has no rain for six months of the year then carrying capacity is limited by accessible water sources.)*

*Ultimately, living populations are limited by the essential element that is present in the least amount (the 'Law of the Minimum').*

*If the normal limitations on an organism are removed (e.g. it is transplanted to a new habitat) then it is likely to cause economic or environmental damage or act as a disease vector, thereby becoming a pest.*

*Introduced animals are more likely to become pests because the diseases and parasites affecting native species will have little effect on them and native predators will not be adapted to them. Removing these controls allows introduced animals to reach population levels that cause economic or environmental damage (e.g. possums in NZ). However altering the controls on a native species can also permit it to become a pest (e.g. improved food sources, a reliable water supply and removal of predators have allowed the major kangaroo species to become pests in many areas.)*

*Animal numbers in a given population can change dramatically in response to shifts in climate or resource availability. This phenomenon is more pronounced in unstable ecosystems affected by climatic extremes, which describes most of Australia.*

*Unstable ecosystems are more prone to damage from sudden changes in animal populations and may take a long time to recover from such damage. This includes damage from human, as well as pest animal, activity. As an example wheel tracks may persist for a century once they have cut through the vegetative soil cover in semi-desert or alpine regions.*

*Modern pest management practice focuses on harm minimization rather than eradication in most situations.*

(Learning Outcomes: On completion of this unit of competency participants will understand that:

- i) Management of a species involves the management of all aspects of their habitat.
- ii) Under natural conditions animal populations are regulated by the availability of resources, particularly those present in the least amount, disease and predation.
- iii) Animal populations are likely to assume pest proportions when natural regulating factors are removed.
- iv) Introduced animals are more likely to become pests because natural regulating factors are removed when they enter the new environment.
- v) Unstable ecosystems are easily damaged and may take a long time to recover.)

2. **Animal Behavior and Physiology** – persons accredited under CPM will be required to demonstrate their understanding of –

*Animal behavior - which is the suite of habits by which individuals and species survive. These habits provide the lowest risk, lowest energy cost route to obtaining food and shelter, reproducing and avoiding predators.*

*Instinctive behavior is the suite of inherited habits that are usually, primarily designed to contribute to species survival. These behaviours evolved under selective pressure from the animal's environment. (e.g. breeding behaviour, response to predators, seasonal migrations, game birds learning that it is safer to run than fly).*

*Learned behaviour is an individual adaptation to local circumstances. (e.g. rural foxes 'learning' that the hens are not locked away until sunset and urban foxes 'learning' that the prime foraging territory is the car park at the local "MacDonalds".)*

*Response to danger usually takes the form of some combination of "fight/flight/freeze" and an understanding of the characteristic behaviour of a given species will indicate the best combination of hunting techniques to achieve control of it (e.g. ambush, herding, baiting, calling). Because some animals will try very hard to escape it is necessary to follow-up on all shots fired unless there is convincing evidence of a complete miss.*

(Learning Outcomes: On completion of this unit of competency participants will understand that:

- i) Animal behaviour is a mix of instinctive and learned habits.
- ii) Behavioural habits are selected to provide the easiest means of obtaining the necessities of life.
- iii) The characteristic behaviour of a species will influence the techniques used to locate and control it.)

*Animal physiology – which as far as hunters are concerned relates to the size and location of the most vital organ systems and the physical characteristics and structures that different species have evolved to maintain and protect these vital systems. These physical characteristics include hair or fur, hide, cartilage, bones and muscles. In addition to these physical structures many animals gain additional protection from dust and burrs matted into the coat or dried mud plastered onto the hide adding a type of composite 'armor'.*

*The higher animals depend on complex central nervous systems that allow them to respond to widely and rapidly varying conditions. Sustaining the central nervous system requires an effective circulatory (heart) and respiratory (lungs) system to provide a continuous supply of oxygen and energy.*

*The ethical objective of hunting is to produce the complete shutdown of the central nervous system in the quickest and most humane manner possible. Animal Welfare texts all dictate that the way to do this is to destroy the brain or spinal cord close to the brain – by striking or shooting the animal in the head or neck. On close examination, however, almost all the above texts assume that the animal is at close range and virtually stationary. (It is quite easy to shoot an animal "in the centre of the forehead, just above the line joining the eyes" when it is standing 2 metres away, when the animal is 200 metres away and moving the situation becomes a little more complex.)*

*Among land animals only the hominids (humans, apes and politicians) and the higher carnivores have a brain that occupies a significant percentage of the volume of the head. Among the larger herbivores, the brain may occupy as little as 10% of the volume of the head and is often protected by masses of horn and/or bone. This means that a "head" shot can easily fail to reach the brain while inflicting injuries that will not prevent the animal's escape but will doom it to a slow and painful death. This is particularly likely to occur when ballistically marginal firearms are used.*

*Where the brain cannot be reliably targeted the most effective alternative is to shut down the respiratory and circulatory systems that support it. The mammalian brain cannot consciously function for more than a few seconds when deprived of oxygen so stopping the heart or collapsing the lungs is quite a quick, humane kill. In addition the heart-lung area in all mammals is much larger than the central nervous system and much less subject to sudden changes of position.*

*The exact size and position of the heart and lungs varies with different species as does the amount of structural protection noted above. It is important to be aware of these differences and their effect on requirements for firearm proficiency and selection.*

(Learning Outcomes: On completion of this unit of competency participants will understand that:

- i) The higher animals depend on complex central nervous systems, which are in turn dependent on respiratory and circulatory systems.
- ii) The size and exact location of the central nervous system and the heart and lungs varies between species.
- iii) Ethical hunting (and Animal Welfare legislation) requires that an animal be killed as quickly and humanely as possible, which is best achieved by shutting down the central nervous system.
- iv) The central nervous system in some species is relatively small and cannot always be reliably targeted. Ethical hunters will be aware of this and will often choose to target the heart and lungs.
- v) The degree of structural and environmental protection for the vital systems varies between individuals of a species and there is a need to select a firearm with the ballistic capabilities to cope with this.)

3. **Shooting proficiency and ballistic selection** – persons accredited under CPM will be required to demonstrate an understanding of relevant ballistic capabilities, and to demonstrate proficiency with a firearm as outlined at the end of this document.



There are legally-mandated minimum calibers for taking certain species proficiencies must be demonstrated using firearms that are equivalent to, or exceed, these calibers (e.g. .222 Rem kangaroo industry minimum, .243 Win Victorian small deer minimum, .270 Win Victorian large deer minimum).

*Ballistic selection - pest control almost always requires taking the shot as presented so it is necessary to consider the ballistic capabilities that are required to cope with:*

*The biggest, toughest, animal that could possibly be encountered.*

*The worst target presentation likely to be encountered.*

*The animal's coat is likely to be thickly matted or coated with dried mud.*

*The likelihood that animal will be moving.*

*'Ballistic capability' relates to the ability to deliver sufficient energy, to produce a humane kill, into the vital systems of an animal under the worst possible combination of the factors listed above.*

*Projectile energy alone is not a sufficient criterion to assess ballistic capability. A very light projectile at high velocity may have more than sufficient energy but lack the penetration to reliably deliver that energy past hair, hide and bone into the vital organs. Projectile weight and projectile construction are more reliable indicators of ballistic capability than velocity particularly with smaller calibers and high impact velocities.*

*Because of these problems care must be taken to select appropriate projectiles, even when using legal minimum calibers. For species that have no legally-mandated, minimum caliber the ballistic capability of a firearm should be assessed according to bullet weight, bullet construction and delivered energy especially for firearms of less than 7.62 mm caliber. Care must also be taken to ensure that the selected projectiles will expand reliably and not over penetrate and deliver insufficient energy to shut down vital systems, which means that full-jacketed and 'match' projectiles are normally inappropriate.*

(Learning Outcomes: On completion of this unit of competency participants will understand that:

- i) Pest control using firearms often requires taking shots under less than ideal conditions.
- ii) Projectiles may have to penetrate a significant thickness of hair, hide and bone to reach vital organs.
- iii) Projectile energy alone is not a sufficient measure of the suitability of a particular cartridge for use against a given pest species.
- iv) Projectile construction and weight are equally as important as projectile energy in determining cartridge suitability.
- v) Its construction can significantly influence the ability of a projectile to reliably expand and penetrate into the vital organs of an animal.)

In addition to the above firearm proficiencies, applicants will be assessed for knowledge of:

*firearms safety in field situations,  
awareness of environment including other persons  
firearm pointed in safest direction at all times  
complete projectile path clear with no ricochet risks  
target always clearly identified  
negotiating obstacles safely  
ammunition selection  
ammunition that can be confused*



*risks of muzzle brakes and the use of hearing protection*  
 familiarity with the full range of action types,  
*strengths, weaknesses and applications*  
*special risk factors*  
*tube magazines, non-detachable magazines*  
*reloaded ammunition*  
 features of optical sights,  
*advantages*  
*special risk factors*  
*power versus field of view and low-light vision*  
 basic firearms maintenance,  
*keep excess lubricant out of barrel and action*  
*check barrel for copper fouling esp. with high-velocity loads*  
*corrosive properties of ex-military ammunition*  
*maintain firing mechanism for safety and reliability and*  
 the legal requirements for transport of firearms  
*firearms and ammunition must be separately secured*  
*definitions vary across jurisdictions – worst case ACT.*

Applicants' ability to make safety judgements in field situations will be assessed using targets positioned to simulate field conditions where there may be safety considerations that would preclude a shot. If suitable target ranges are not available visual simulations will be used.

4. **Navigation** – persons accredited under CPM will be required to demonstrate their proficiency in –

*Determining scale, reliability, terrain and magnetic declination from map sheets.*

*Compensating for magnetic declination in aligning map sheets and laying-off bearings.*

*Locating features on map sheets from grid references.*

*Plotting a safe course using grid references or compass bearings and the terrain information on a map sheet.*

*Using 'dead reckoning' navigation to follow a set of directions or to reach a predetermined point under conditions of reduced visibility.*

*Using the sun and stars as navigational aids.*

*Understanding how human error affects navigation e.g. why do people who are lost tend to walk in circles.*

(Learning Outcomes: On completion of this unit of competency participants will be able to demonstrate that they can:

- i) Interpret and use the information provided on map sheets.
- ii) Use grid references to locate positions and features on maps.
- iii) Use the information on a map sheet to plot the safest course between grid reference points.
- iv) Use the sun and stars to supplement artificial navigation aids.

v) Navigate to a point or locate current position by using records of direction and distance.)

5. **Environmental awareness** — persons accredited under CPM will be required to demonstrate their awareness of -

*Ecosystems in areas having highly variable climates or nutrient deficient soils are hardy but very slow to recover from any activity that damages them. (E.g. Rangeland ecosystems are dependent on a ground cover of vegetation and leaf litter to prevent soil erosion. Once that ground cover is damaged and erosion commences it is very difficult for vegetation to re-establish.)*

*All human activities have the potential to cause damage to ecosystems, even those activities that most of us do not even think about:*

*Camp-fires leave scars and uncontrolled fires cause changes to vegetation.*

*Traffic whether on foot, horseback or in vehicles can damage ground cover and lead to soil erosion. High use sites such as fords and campsites are particularly vulnerable to damage.*

*The movement of people, vehicles and animals can transport pest plants, insect pests and diseases into un-infested areas.*

*Dumping rubbish or human waste can introduce pests and diseases, damage ground cover, alter soil chemistry and pollute water supplies.*

*The level of damage relates to the intensity of the activity and the level of climatic stress on the biological community. Desert or alpine ground cover plants can be damaged if two or three people simply step on them in quick succession. (This makes the "leave nothing but footprints" creed of the 'ecotourist' sound pretty hollow.)*

*Because of the vulnerability of many ecosystems it is important to ensure that Conservation and Pest Management programs are managed to minimise the impact on the areas where they take place.*

*As a rule all cooking will be done on fuel stoves. Fires will only be lit in existing fireplaces with the permission of the managing agency. Where open fires are used the firewood will be carried into the area to avoid damage to ground cover and animal habitat. All necessary precautions will be exercised to prevent fire damage and fires will have to comply with safety rules (eg. clear all flammable material within 3 metres of the fire).*

*Vehicle movements will be restricted to formed tracks unless officers of the managing agency provide other instructions. Avoid moving in large groups and especially walking in single file, which results in everybody stepping on more or less the same spots. If a track is boggy or eroded it may be necessary to not use it and instead find another access. To avoid causing or adding to damage, parties should only be as large as necessary and camp-sites should be selected in consultation with the managing agency, to minimize the impact on the ground cover. Vehicle, and even walking, tracks*

*may have to be closed for management or environmental reasons, such closures have to be respected.*

*Vehicles should be cleaned of soil and plant material before entering sensitive areas. Walking boots should also be cleaned to prevent transfer of seeds and diseases.*

*As far as possible all rubbish, including food scraps, should be carried out and provision should be made for this. Where a party is going to occupy a camp for more than a few days arrangements should be made to secure refuse from insects and animals or to dispose of it to an appropriate site at regular intervals.*

*Arrangements for disposal of human waste should be made in consultation with the managing agency. Where possible camps should be sited in the vicinity of existing facilities. Where these are not available human waste should be buried deeply, well away from any water sources. If soil conditions are unsuitable then some form of portable toilet should be used.*

NOTE: Where possible all of these competencies will be assessed by practical demonstration (firearms proficiency can only be assessed by demonstration on an approved range), detailed simulations or verbal or written exercises. In addition, records of participation in control programs and statements from State environment agency officers or SSAA assessors can be used to support assessment of competency.

## INTRODUCTION

Each year new and experienced hunters take to the ranges to enjoy the sights and pleasures of trees, sky and water. They thrill to the excitement of hunting wild game with the same anticipation that their fathers did years ago.

To do it safely is the responsibility of the individual. To make a rewarding and safe sport even safer is the responsibility of all.

Records prove most firearm accidents result from a lack of safety knowledge, or the failure to apply it. To reduce hunting and other firearm related accidents in Australia S.S.A.A. has undertaken a program of safety instruction for hunters.

In America a law was passed that required all hunters to successfully complete a course in firearm safety instruction before they could buy their first hunting licence. New York was the first state to adopt this requirement in 1949, California being the second in 1954. We acknowledge that the Californian program formed the basis of this work.

If the concepts contained herein are learnt and consistently applied they will make many outdoor experiences not only safer, but a great deal more fulfilling for all.

Statistics have shown that where these programs are in place, either mandatory or voluntary, substantial reductions of accidents have been achieved.

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### 3 RESPONSIBILITIES AND SAFETY

#### 3.1 HUNTER RESPONSIBILITIES

Development of a mature attitude in regard to firearms and hunting. Hunting is a pleasant pastime - it also requires responsibility. That means more than just firing a firearm safely.

1. A hunter course can save lives.
2. Game laws protect animals and aid hunters.
3. Landowner-hunter relations mean more areas available for hunting.
4. Wildlife management programs aid animal populations.
5. Hunters make a positive contribution to conservation.
6. Hunter clothing - visibility means safety.

The purpose of the Hunter Safety Program is to teach existing and new hunters safe hunting habits, game management and ethics. Basic firearm handling in the field and hunting responsibilities to himself, others in the field, to the game and the land are the back bone of today's Hunter Safety Course. How to cross a fence, to pass up a shot, where to find game, laws which must be observed, are all part of Hunter Safety.

Expert Marksmanship is not the intention of this course. This subject requires separate attention and an effective level of competence must be achieved to attain the fulfilment of the ethics.

Accidents with firearms do not just happen. They are caused by ignorance or disregard of safety rules.

#### 3.2 The Ten Commandments of Safety.

1. Treat every gun with the respect due to a loaded gun.
2. Carry only empty guns taken down or with the action open, into your car, camp and home.
3. Always be sure that the barrel and action are clear of obstructions.
4. Always carry your gun so that you can control the direction of the muzzle.
5. Be sure of your target before you pull the trigger.
6. Never point a gun at anything you do not want to shoot.
7. Never leave your gun unattended unless you unload it first.
8. Never climb a tree or fence with a loaded gun.
9. Never shoot at a hard flat surface or the surface of water.
10. Do not mix gunpowder and alcohol.

## 4. HUNTER ETHICS AND LAWS

### 4.1 HUNTER ETHICS.

As the hunter learns the basics of handling firearms safely, he or she must also develop certain responsibilities to the sport.

An understanding of wildlife management, game laws and sporting codes are as important to the hunter as firearms safety.

All hunters must develop a code which will make him a good hunter. The code is called a Hunters Ethic.

This ethic is just as important whether you hunt with a mate or alone in the remote outback. Here are some rules which are part of a Hunters Ethic and should be followed just as closely as the 10 Commandments of gun safety.

1. I will consider myself an invited guest of the landowner, seeking his permission and so conducting myself that I may be welcome in the future.
2. I will obey the rules of safe gun handling and will courteously but firmly insist that others who hunt with me do the same.
3. I will obey all game laws and regulations and will insist that my companions do likewise.
4. I will do my best to acquire those marksmanship and hunting skills which assure clean, sportsman like kills.
5. I will support conservation efforts which will assure good hunting for future generations.  
I will pass along to younger hunters the attitudes and skills essential to a true outdoor sportsman.

### 4.2 HUNTING LAWS.

To be safe and ethical hunters you must obey all game laws. This is essential for three basic reasons.

1. To ensure safety and welfare of people.
2. To ensure everyone has an opportunity to hunt.
3. To protect and conserve wildlife.

Each state's hunting laws may differ but almost all are designed to achieve the above objectives.



Those who break these laws are criminals. Many laws are for the protection of game, ie. closed seasons afford protection during the periods of reproduction and seasonal stress. Bag limits afford the maximum amount of hunters an equitable share of the harvest.

To the sportsman the need for closed seasons and bag limits is well understood and the law strictly observed.

## 5. PUBLIC SAFETY AND LAWS

### 5.1 PUBLIC SAFETY

Examples of laws to ensure public safety.

1. Prohibits hunters while under the influence of alcohol and or drugs.
2. Prohibits shooting from, upon or across any public highways.
3. Prohibits hunting on private lands without permission of the landholder.
4. Prohibits littering.

### 5.2 LAWS TO GIVE ALL HUNTERS A FAIR GO

1. Hunting permit.
2. Setting of bag limits.
3. Limit number of permits to hunt particular areas.
4. Establish methods by which wildlife may be taken.
5. Limiting use of motorised vehicles while hunting.

### 5.3 UNWRITTEN LAWS

True sportsmen obey the unwritten or moral laws as well as the written ones. That is while legally being able to take the daily bag limit the ethical hunter will only take what he knows he can use even if it is less than the legal limit.

Modern means of travel and technology of high power firearms and optical sights has given man a much greater advantage over his quarry than he has ever had. Since hunting for food is seen as no longer a necessity many people feel that hunters have lost respect for wildlife.

The ethical hunter has not lost this respect, in fact the concern for wildlife and its place in the supporting eco systems will have the ethical hunter instil in others the same principals he uses himself. This includes letting others know when he thinks their behaviour is out of line.

Shooting at road signs, chasing game in vehicles, road hunting and careless handling of firearms are a few traits he won't let by without his displeasure being vocalised. The ethical hunter would report poachers and be willing to testify in court if necessary because he knows the importance to obey laws to preserve wildlife and the environment.

Slob Hunters (Rambo types) have no place in ethical hunting. It is up to all hunters to abide by the highest expectations of ethics at all times to restore the hunters image in public esteem.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

### 6.1 RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE LANDOWNER.

On private land the hunter **MUST ALWAYS** obtain permission from the owner to hunt. **FAILURE** to ask is one of the main complaints landowners have against hunters.

As a guest, the hunter should respect the property, taking care not to break down fences, trample crops, disturb or injure livestock and leave all gates as they were found. Inconsiderate shooters and other outdoor enthusiasts are usually responsible for vast tracts of land being behind "No Trespassing" signs.

Take the time to note and report anything which is out of character to its surrounds, ie, leaking water trough, livestock on roadways, gates closed denying access to water, trespassers and poachers etc.

Even on public (Crown Land) just because you own a small share of it does not give you the right to abuse it.

Never destroy or litter a property, public or private and leave your camp-site in better conditions than you found it.

### 6.2 RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOURSELF.

#### 1. High visibility clothing.

Avoid wearing clothing which in colour, size or texture could lead to your being mistaken for an animal found in the area.

Be conspicuous to other shooters.

Don't become a target for someone else. When carrying out trophy heads, goat or deer, tie blaze orange ribbon around antlers etc to prevent yourself from being mistaken for a trophy animal.

## 2. Know your firearm.

Always adopt safe handling procedures and insist others do the same. Keep your firearm clear and inspect it from time to time for wear and trouble free operation - get it fixed immediately if a problem becomes apparent. Be sure to clear the bore of oil or grease before going hunting.

## 3. Fitness.

Be kind to yourself. Get yourself into shape before a hunting trip and always stay within your physical limits. Fatigue and being over eager are prime causes of hunting accidents. Don't put yourself or your hunting companions in peril.

## 4. The Resource

Be sure your firearms are sighted in before you leave.

Improve your marksmanship skills by practicing.

Learn to judge distances.

Be sure the calibre is adequate to the task.

Aim for humane one shot kills, know where the vital organs are on your quarry.

Follow up and finish off any injured or wounded game.

Take care of game meat by keeping it clean, dry and cool, fully utilise all that you shoot.

## 7. FIREARM SAFETY

### 7.1 FIREARM SAFETY

#### Basic Fundamentals

Never have in your possession a firearm that is loaded, unless you are holding it and ready to shoot.

Use only safely constructed firearms in sound condition and the correct ammunition.

Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.

#### Gun Handling

If a new chum thinks he's got all the answers – sit on him.

Plinking – great fun, burn some ammo and relax – don't allow it to become horseplay.

At the end of the day, reflexes are slow and carelessness can creep in. A gentle reminder to your shooting mate to watch the direction of the muzzle could avoid disaster.

Buck fever – take extra caution when you first spot game, be sure to identify the game and check the background.

Misfires – keep muzzle on the target for a minimum of thirty seconds before investigating cause.

Mixed ammo 12g – 20g etc. Never carry other than the ammo for the firearm you are using

## 7.2 CARRYING A FIREARM

- a) Double handed in the ready position.
- b) Cradle carry,
- c) Elbow carry,
- d) Shoulder carry.
- e) Sling carry.
- f) Trail carry.

Always close the bolt over an empty chamber. Get your mate to check each time.

- g) Ensure safe muzzle direction and keep your finger outside the trigger guard.
- h) Only chamber cartridge on final approach to game.

## 7.3 SAFETY WHILE IN THE FIELD

- a) Walking in file.  
Front hunter points his gun ahead, middle hunter points his gun to the side, the last hunter points his gun to the side or rearward.
- b) Walking abreast,  
The left side hunters shoot only to the front and to the left, The middle hunter shoots only to the front while the hunter on the right shoots to the front and right only.
- c) Several independent hunters.  
Constantly monitor the other hunters positions. This can best be done by radio. Do not shoot if in doubt of the other hunters position.
- d) Target identification.  
If a full target is not always seen, be sure you can see enough of it to make a positive identification before shooting.

e) Transportation.

Never carry a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle or boat. Firearms should be unloaded and stored in a rack or case. When out in the field and you stop for any purpose, lunch, tea, smoke or just a rest, always unload.

Always unload when you are within range of camp or a dwelling. Always unload before you attempt to negotiate any obstacle, be it a fence, gate, fallen log or a creek.

Clean firearms and store away, also store ammunition in separate container.

Never leave a loaded firearm lying around the camp.

## 8. PRINCIPALS OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION.

Nearly everyone enjoys wildlife. There are few joys greater than watching a Wedgetail eagle soaring the thermals, the effortless bounding of old man red, or the waddling gait of an echidna. A love of wildlife is good, but only of value when it is used to ensure that wildlife is correctly managed. After all who wants the mallee fowl or the brushtail bettong to join the ever growing list of extinct species.

Wildlife includes all the wild animals. Game animals are those wildlife that may be hunted according to regulated seasons and bag limits. Non game animals are not usually hunted, or, if they are, hunting seasons and bag limits are not regulated.

Wildlife is important as a source of beauty, scientific (biological) knowledge, recreation and income. Wildlife is sensitive to change and is valuable because it indicates the quality of its environment. Healthy wildlife indicates a good environment; few or no wildlife usually means that something is wrong.

The study of wildlife leads to a deeper understanding and appreciation. The only way to ensure that you, and others will be able to enjoy and benefit from wildlife is to learn about its management.

Wildlife management is the science of conserving wildlife and its habitat, for the benefit of all.

Several important concepts basic to the wise management of wildlife are:-

1. Sound biological knowledge.
2. The management of man because man's activities affect wildlife.
3. Management must be designed to benefit all, not just wildlife.
4. Management means conservation (wise use) not preservation (non use).

### 8.2 PRINCIPLE ELEMENTS OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

a) Habitat.

Habitat is an environment that supplies everything wildlife needs for life; food, cover, water and space. When these habitat features are in good supply they contribute to the well being of wildlife. If any of the habitat factors are in short supply it limits the number and distribution of wildlife and is called a limiting factor.

**b) Food**

Each wildlife species eats specific foods regardless of other foods that may be available. Some plants have higher nutritional value than others and this may vary seasonally. Both quality and quantity of food are important.

**c) Cover**

Wildlife needs cover to protect it while feeding, sleeping, breeding, roosting, nesting and travelling. Cover takes many forms, such as vegetation, burrows, rocks and other natural features.

**d) Water**

All wildlife needs water. Sources of water are; surface water, dew, snow and succulent vegetation. Some animals can also use metabolic water (water held in or chemically processed within the body).

**e) Space**

Wildlife needs space to survive. Overcrowding leads to severe competition for all habitat factors essential for life. For this reason only a specific number of animals can live in an area.

**Arrangement**

The arrangement of food, cover and water in an area determines wildlife species numbers and their distribution.

Wildlife is often described as an edge species because it commonly lives along the edges, not in the middle of different types of vegetation in an area. If there is a good arrangement of food, cover and water it creates more edge area for wildlife to live in.

**f) Carrying Capacity**

Carrying capacity is the number of each wildlife species the habitat can support throughout the year without damage to either the animal or the habitat.

When wildlife numbers exceeds the carrying capacity of the habitat the excess animals die from starvation or other causes.

**g) Succession**

Each species of wildlife lives in the biotic community that best meets its needs.

Some species may live in several community types, others may live their entire life in one community. Each community is subject to gradual change due to the effects of weather, plant growth and other factors. This change is called succession. During each stage of succession, the plants and animals change, gradually replaced by other species of plants and animals that are better able to survive in the type of habitat that has developed. In other words succession is the orderly replacement of one biotic community by another.

Succession can be set back to earlier stages by disturbances such as, controlled burning and timber or brush removal. Such things as controlled burning improves the habitat for most species.

### 8.3 POPULATION DYNAMICS OF WILDLIFE

It is important to understand the factors that affect population growth and decline. Two major factors affect population dynamics.

#### 1. Birth rate

Most wildlife have high birthrates, small species usually have higher rates than larger species. Factors affecting birthrates are: -

- a) Number of young per birth
- b) Number of births per year
- c) Age at which breeding begins.

#### 2. Death Rate

Most wildlife species have a high death rate, smaller species having higher mortality than larger species. The most important factors effecting the death rate are:-

- a) Starvation; directly relates to habitat often severely influenced by introduced species.
- b) Hunting; removes some of the animals that would normally be lost to starvation and other causes,
- c) Climate; severe weather conditions reduce wildlife numbers.
- d) Predatation; (not important unless cover is limited). disease and parasites (not important unless animals become unhealthy and starvation occurs.)
- e) Many native animals are easy prey for introduced predators.

### 8.4 WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Management must be flexible since population and habitat factors may change from year to year.

#### a) Laws.

Laws are needed, but are worthless unless they are flexible, based on biological fact and are used in conjunction with other management tools. Total protection has proved to be a poor approach.

#### b) Predator Control.

In good habitat, native predators rarely depress wildlife populations, hence native predator control is seldom necessary. Prey animals greatly outnumber and out produce their predators. Lack of adequate cover is the biggest cause of excessive preditation.

Introduced predators have substantially altered specific native wildlife populations.



c) Refuges

The supply of suitable habitat to increase wild life numbers. There are four main types:-

Big Game, Small Game, Waterfowl, NON-Game.

Of these, waterfowl has proven to be the most successful.

d) Stocking

Release of captive bred animals (endangered species breeding programs).

Release of captured wildlife and transplanting into low population densities.

( Careful study of an area's capacity to support extra stock is mandatory before a capture and release program is initiated.)

Stocking is usually unnecessary in good wildlife habitat.

e) Introduction of Exotics.

Most introduced exotics find their habitats unsuitable and disappear soon after release.

However there are some prime examples of where established exotics are now recognised pests. ie. rabbits, foxes, goats, cats, dogs, buffalo, horses, pigs, camels and donkeys.

f) Habitat Management

Habitat is the key to wildlife survival. Most habitat is lost to urbanisation, clearing or draining for farming, forestry and mining.

The key to managing good habitat is to prevent any further loss or destruction of it and to revitalize that which has been abused or desecrated.

g) Hunting

Hunting is a valuable management tool for maintaining healthy wildlife populations at or below the carrying capacity of the habitat. Hunting can remove population excesses each year and can also be a revenue earner.

To not remove the excess will only see the mortality of the breed increase and their state of health decrease as will the quality of its habitat.

## 9. BUSHCRAFT AND FIRST AID

### 9.1 When geographically embarrassed - suppress the urge to PANIC.

Being lost can be dangerous; how dangerous depends on how an individual will react and how well they are prepared.

### Seven Rules for staying out of trouble.

1. Tell someone where you are going and when you will be back, if you change areas let someone know.
2. Never go hunting alone.
3. Take enough food for several days longer than you anticipate.
4. Take a compass and/or a GPS and map and be well versed in their use.
5. Wear proper clothing and have the right equipment.
6. Plan to return to camp before dark.
7. Know how to build a safe fire.

### 9.2 IF YOU GET LOST

1. ADMIT it to yourself.
2. STOP.
3. Take time to think and figure where you are.
4. Scout the area, look for landmarks, mark your trail, if unsuccessful return to the start after 1/2 to 1 hour. Rethink; try another direction.
5. Allow 3 hours before dark, stop, set up camp, construct shelter, acquire food or water if necessary, build fire, find comfort and or warmth.

### 9.3 DAY PACK

Always carry a small day pack with a few essential items in case you get caught out.

1. First aid kit.
2. Matches or cigarette lighter.
3. Signal Mirror.
4. Water.
5. Space Blanket.

6. Compass and Map.
7. Knife.
8. Pad and pencil.
9. Emergency food.
10. Rope or twine.

**FIRST AID. – NOTE: This will be presented by an external specialist**  
Remember, DRABC  
**DANGER**, Remove the casualty from danger.  
**RESPONSE**, Check to see if casualty is conscious, if not.  
**AIRWAY**, turn casualty on side, clear airway.  
**BREATHING**, if not, turn casualty on back and commence EAR.  
**CIRCULATION**, if no pulse, commence CPR

Can you recognise the following conditions:-

Hypothermia	Heat Stroke
Dehydration	Snake Bite
Heart Attack	Diabetic Coma

We suggest you attend an accredited first aid course.

## 10. PLANNING THAT TRIP

Questions to ask:- where, how long, how many, what for, is water available, nearest available supplies.

### 10.1 WATER AVAILABILITY

- a) No water available - carry 5 - 10 litres per person per day plus 2 days reserve. Use canned food etc with high moisture content.
- b) Plenty of water - carry one day's water, use dehydrated food to conserve weight.

### 10.2 MATE SYSTEM

There is no need to take four sets of cooking utensils or multiples of many other items ie., axes, shovels, gas lights etc.

Plan your trip - talk to your shooting mates and decide what you want to take and who has got what. Once you know what you want, then decide what is really necessary, especially if you're back packing into a remote area.

## 11. NAVIGATION AND BUSHCRAFT

### 11.1 INTRODUCTION

BUSHCRAFT is in large part NAVIGATION

If you can navigate, you can prepare yourself properly.

Careful preparation is the key to safety and success.

This lecture is only an introduction to navigation.

It's purpose is to show you what can be achieved by combining navigation with the ability to live in the field.

This is an introduction only and it is up to you to learn to navigate.

Remember, a map and a compass can be very dangerous - it can cause you to get over-confident. So never go anywhere unless you know where you are.

### 11.2 BUSHCRAFT / MAPS

#### TYPES

- a. Topographical.  
Shows features on the ground and shape of the land.
- b. Geological.  
Shows what is in the ground (no good for navigation)
- c. Cadastral.  
Government and property boundaries.

#### SCALES

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 1: 25,000  | Very fine detail - search and rescue       |
| 1: 50,000  | What we want - good for hiking and hunting |
| 1: 100,000 | Broader view for planning                  |
| 1: 250,000 | Road map - vehicular                       |

#### Margin Information

Going around a 1 : 50,000 topographical map from the top left hand corner.

1. Sheet number (every corner)
2. Scale and type ie. 1 - 50,000 Topographical

3. Title (name of map)
4. Edition ie. second edition
5. Adjoining maps diagram  
Tells name and number of each map that adjoins the one at which you are looking at.
6. Scale. ie. 1: 50,000 is 20mm on the map represents 1 km on the ground. Used for calculation of distances when planning.
7. Contour intervals, 10 meters.  
ie. each contour line represents an elevation increase above sea level of 10 meters (approx 34ft)
8. Legend.  
Representative symbols to indicate features on a map two types:-
  - a. Man made. ie. roads, fences, bridges, gates, windmills etc.
  - b. Natural features. ie. cliffs, lakes, rivers and creeks, types of vegetation (pines, thin, medium and thick scrub, Sandhill's, ridges etc.)
9. Magnetic variation diagram.  
Shows relationship of grid north, true north and magnetic north for centre of map at date published, also amount of variation increases or decreases each year.
10. Grid reference.  
Describes how to make a map reference.
11. Reliability reference.  
Tells when aerial survey was made, when and who did map production (lithography), what edition and when and who printed map.
12. Folding diagram  
Correct folding method to allow access to full map without having to open it right out.

#### LATITUDE & LONGITUDE

Latitude & Longitude lines are grid lines used to dissect the globe into reference grids (squares).

- a. Latitude lines are lines drawn parallel to the equator 0 degrees L. The north and south poles being 90 degrees L.
- b. Longitude lines are lines drawn intersecting at the two poles. There are 360 degrees of Longitude. Greenwich being 0 degrees .

#### GRIDLINES

Grid lines are straight and are 1000M (1 km) apart (across & up) on a 1:50,000 scale map, they are used to give a reference to a position.

## METHODS OF SHOWING RELIEF

1. Contour lines show elevation above sea level. ie. If you imagine a hill cut into a number of horizontal slices, the line of the edge of each cut is a contour.

Spot heights shown by a dot and a number ie, ( 284 Hill shading gives better understanding of hills and valleys.

## 11.3 COMPASS & DIRECTION

Compass shows the cardinal points. ie. North, South, East & West. There are 360 degrees around the compass, north is 0 or 360 degrees.

Pointer indicates magnetic north or bearings in degrees clockwise from magnetic north.

When taking bearings be sure to keep compass away from the influence of metal objects. ie. rifle barrels, knives, motor vehicles.

### ORIENTATING THE MAP

Rotate the map so that it shows features in the same sense as those which you are viewing. if no land marks, rotate map to compass to show north. ie. top of map is north.

### KEEPING DIRECTION

Most people have a tendency to walk in an arc to the left or right instead of a straight line. ie. A bias to the balance system of the brain.

Daytime Pick a feature on your bearing and head towards it. If terrain is featureless keep compass in hand and refer to it frequently.

Night time. If you can't pick a point, go compass in hand, alternatively pick a star and check constantly. (Remember stars move about the celestial pole)

### USE OF PROTRACTORS

Fix a suitable length of cotton to centre point of protractor. Grid north is 0 degrees.

To make a grid bearing to go from your present position to another known feature.

Lay protractor on map with centre point over your present position and 0 degrees aligned parallel to vertical grid lines. With piece of cotton pulled taut through desired destination read off bearing in degrees from the protractor.

### MAGNETIC VARIATION

This is the variation between grid and magnetic north. A magnetic variation diagram and explanation is found near the bottom left hand corner of a 1: 50,000 topographical map.

A magnetic bearing must be converted to a grid bearing before it can be plotted on the map. A grid bearing must be converted to a magnetic bearing before it can be marched on using a compass.

Disregard true north. Grid north is the vertical grid lines on the map and does not change. Magnetic north is the degrees given either east or west of grid north as indicated on the diagram. This angle increases or decreases annually, either easterly or westerly at the rate indicated in the accompanying explanation. If this outcome means the magnetic variation is easterly then grid north is a larger angle than magnetic north. If the magnetic variation is westerly then grid north is a lesser angle than magnetic north.

#### 11.4 BACK BEARINGS & BOUNDARIES

##### BACK BEARINGS

Back bearings are used to accurately fix a position by resection.

A back bearing of a feature is the same as if you are at the feature taking a bearing to your present position.

A back bearing is obtained by adding 180 degrees to a bearing less than 180 degrees or subtracting 180 degrees from a bearing greater than 180 degrees.

##### RESECTION

The ability to determine your positions by the use of back bearings from three identified features (two will do in an emergency).

- a. Orientate the map.
- b. Locate your position by a comparison of detail on the map with features on the ground. If you cannot fix your position a resection is required.
- c. Locate three features on the ground that you can identify on the map.
- d. Take bearings to these points with a compass.
- e. Convert these to grid bearings.

**MOST IMPORTANT.** Do this first because bearings near 180 degrees can give errors.

- f. Convert grid bearings to back bearings.
- g. Using a protractor plot the back bearings from the identified points on the map.
- h. These lines will either cross or form a small triangle.
- i. Your position is where they cross in or close to the triangle.

##### BOUNDS

To remain in the limits of what you know.

To move from a place of known boundaries to another that you are able to recognise and confirm.

Keep boundaries close so that you know where you are all the time.

##### BY-PASSING.

The ability to deviate from a prescribed course and return to it around an obstacle ie. to navigate around a bog or swamp and return to your original course on the other side of the impasse.

##### BOUNDARIES

Before leaving a known point ie, camp, establish known boundaries to stay within. They may be a tree line, creek, lake, ridge line, road or fence line. If



you become bushed or unable to positively locate your position by walking on a pre-determined bearing you will be able to find the feature and then follow it to a known location. NEVER go outside of pre-determined boundaries without first re-defining new boundaries.

## 12. CHECK LIST

### 12.1 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE THE TRIP

1. Where are we going
2. What are the climatic conditions
3. Mode of transport
4. Is weight a major consideration
5. Is water available
  - a) for drinking
  - b) for drinking and bathing
  - c) for bathing only
6. Duration of trip

### 12.2

#### WEARING

Underwear  
Shirt  
Shorts  
Trousers  
Warm top  
Warm pants  
Water proofs  
Hat  
Balaclava  
Mittens / gloves  
Socks  
Footwear  
Alternative  
Gaiters  
Hankies, belt  
Dark glasses

#### WALKING / HUNTING

Rucksack / day pack  
Map (s)  
Map case  
Compass  
Torch  
Notebook / pencil  
Water bottle(s)  
Snacks  
Knife - (stone & steel)  
Rope / Meat bags  
Rifle  
Ammo (reloading)  
Cleaning gear  
Camera & film  
Bino's

## CAMPING

Tent  
Tent poles, pegs  
Ground sheet  
Sleeping Bag  
Inner sheet  
Sleeping mat / stretcher  
Torch & batteries (globe)  
Nylon cord

## EATING

Food - plan menu (separate list)  
Water container - puratabs - filter  
Stove / fuel / lighter  
Billy  
Bowl + or plate  
Mug  
Knife, fork, spoon

Take several days extra food and water as required.

Make sure someone knows EXACTLY where you are going and when you expect to return.

If you check in to Police National Parks & Wildlife Service etc where you are going be sure to advise when you get to where you're going and when you return.

## PERSONAL

Medication  
First aid kit  
Repair materials (sewing kit)  
Trowel (spade)  
Toilet paper  
Soap & towel  
Toothbrush & paste  
Sunscreen & repellent

Table  
Folding chair  
Sun shade  
Wash bowl  
Scourer, sponge, detergent  
Tea towel  
Rubbish bags (2)

# FIREARM SAFETY

No matter what situation you are in, safety is of utmost importance and the only way to ensure safety is to follow the rules. Shooting is one of the safest sports to participate in if these rules are followed. Studies have shown that it is safer than football, basketball, netball and even ping-pong! Always remember to observe and follow the firearm safety rules below. You should always insist that other shooters do the same and politely correct any deviation from these rules immediately.

## ALWAYS REMEMBER THESE IMPORTANT RULES

1. Treat every firearm with respect. Ensure the muzzle is always pointed in a safe direction.
2. Treat every firearm as if it is **LOADED** until you have personally proven otherwise.
3. Clear your firearm before handing it to someone else.
4. Clear the firearm after receiving it from someone else.
5. When a firearm is unattended, it must be left in a safe and stable position.
6. Never throw a firearm to someone else. Do not attempt to catch a firearm thrown to you.
7. Never shoot at hard flat surfaces, or at the surface of water, as there is the possibility of ricochet.
8. Always carry the firearm with a definite purpose having complete control over the firearm.
9. Never **POINT ANY** firearm, **LOADED** or **UNLOADED**, at or near another person.
10. Do not cock the firearm or place your finger inside the trigger until you are ready to fire.
11. Always ensure your firing zone and target is clear, and identify your target beyond all doubt. If you are unsure **DO NOT SHOOT**.
12. Never fire whilst running. Always stop and take aim before firing.
13. Every time a firearm is handled for any purpose other than firing, unload and visually check to ensure the firearm is safe.
14. Check your ammunition. Old ammunition is not reliable.
15. Store your firearm securely in a dry place when it is not in use. Never store firearms and ammunition together.
16. Be familiar with the legal requirements for safe storage, firearm ownership, possession, transport and use in your State or Territory or those that you are visiting.
17. Understand the operation of your firearm; always keep it in top condition.
18. Never mix shooting with alcohol or drugs.
19. Do not climb fences or obstacles with loaded firearms.
20. Never allow unauthorised access to your firearm or ammunition.
21. Encourage safe and responsible handling of firearms in the field, on the range and within the community and insist all shooters you come into contact do the same.

## Are juniors allowed to use firearms?

Yes. A junior must be 12 years of age or over to use firearms or apply for a firearm license. A junior can only use or carry firearms under the immediate supervision of an adult licensed person. Range officers are not able to supervise juniors. Juniors without a licence must also be accompanied by their parent/guardian.