

STANDING ORDER (STORES) 48

OFFICIAL FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION

1. Background

The purpose of this Order is to regulate control of official firearms and ammunition.

2. Definitions

In this Order, unless the context indicates otherwise —

- (a) “*the Act*” means the Firearms Control Act, 2000 (Act No. 60 of 2000);
- (b) “*the Regulations*” means the Firearms Control Regulations, 2004; and
- (c) “*the Firearms Standardization Board*” means a board consisting of members designated by the National Commissioner to advise the National Commissioner on the standardization of firearms used by the Police.

3. Categories of official firearms

- (1) The Firearms Standardization Board must categorize official firearms into standard and non-standard firearms and classify standard firearms as firearms intended for use in the performance of normal policing functions and firearms intended for use only by specialized units.
- (2) Only standard firearms classified as firearms intended for use in the performance of normal policing functions, may be used in the performance of such functions: Provided that members to whom non-standard official firearms have been issued in the past, may continue to utilize those firearms until the firearms are replaced with standard official firearms.
- (3) Standard firearms classified for use by specialised units, may only be issued to members of such units.
- (4) Non-standard firearms must not, without the approval of the Firearms Standardization Board, be —
 - (a) issued to members;
 - (b) kept in the Firearm Provisioning Store; or
 - (c) repaired.
- (5) Armourers may not stock spares for non-standard firearms that are still in use. If a non-standard firearm needs repairs or becomes unserviceable it must immediately be disposed of in terms of paragraph 16.

4. Marking of official firearms

An official firearm must be marked by SCM armourers with a unique identification mark allocated by the Central Firearms Registry in terms of regulation 83 of *the Regulations*.

5. Training

- (1) Before an official firearm may be issued to a member the member must successfully complete training by the Division: Training as prescribed in regulations 79 and 80 of *the Regulations*.
- (2) If a member has successfully completed the training referred to in subparagraph (1), the Division: Training must provide the member with written confirmation of the successful completion of the training in the handling of a specific firearm.
- (3) Every member who is required to handle an official firearm as part of his or her official duties, must take part in annual practice shooting sessions arranged by the Division: Training as prescribed in regulation 79 of *the Regulations*.
- (4) If a member has successfully completed the practice shooting sessions as required in sub-paragraph (3), the Division: Training must provide the member with written confirmation that the member is competent to handle an official firearm.

6. Issuing of an official firearm

- (1) A member is not entitled to be issued with an official firearm on his or her personal inventory for use in his or her private capacity when off duty.
- (2) Chief users must ensure that enough firearms are available at police stations and units to issue firearms to members for the performance of their functions and duties.
- (3) The following process must be followed if a member needs a firearm on his or her personal inventory for the performance of his or her official duties:

Stage	Description
1	<p>The member must submit a written application to his or her immediate commander for the issuing of a firearm. The application must contain the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a statement by the member as set out in annexure A; (b) the reason why the member needs the firearm on his or her personal inventory for the execution of his or her duties; (c) the type and calibre of the firearm for which the member is applying; and (d) the need for an official safe or description of the storage facility where the firearm will be stored when not in use in compliance with paragraph 11.
2	<p>Upon receipt of the member's application the immediate commander must ascertain whether the member —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) is fit to possess a firearm; (b) is competent to handle the specific firearm the member is applying for; (c) needs a firearm on his or her personal inventory for the performance of his or her official duties; and (d) has a safe or applied for a safe that meets with the requirements set out in paragraph 11.
3	<p>If the immediate commander is satisfied that the member meets the requirements in stage 2 and recommends the member's application, the following must be attached to the member's application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a certificate by the immediate commander that — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the member is in possession of a prescribed safe; or (ii) if the member is not in possession of a prescribed safe, that an official safe has been applied for and subject to the approval of the member's application for the issuing of a firearm and upon issue of the prescribed safe, that a certificate to that effect will be issued; (b) the statement by the member as set out in annexure A; and (c) a certified copy of the written confirmation from Division: Training that the member received the prescribed training in the handling of the specific type of firearm.
4	<p>The immediate commander must forward the member's recommended application with the supporting documents to the station commander, unit commander or component head for approval.</p>

5	<p>If the application is approved by the station commander, unit commander or component head, the immediate commander must —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) file the original application on the member's personal file; (b) forward a copy of the approved application to the accounting functionary; (c) forward a copy of the approved application to the chief user for the issuing of a firearm.
6	<p>Upon receipt of the approved application the chief user must obtain the firearm, magazines and rounds from the station inventory. If the items are not available from the station inventory, the chief user must requisition it from the Firearm Provisioning Store, SCM through the accounting unit against the PERSAL number of the member.</p>
7	<p>If the firearm, magazines and rounds have been obtained, the chief user, or a designated employee, must enter the following information on the member's personal inventory —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the type, caliber, make, model, unique identification mark and serial number of the firearm; (b) two magazines per firearm; and (c) the number of rounds that is issued, based on the capacity of the magazines and packing unit.
8	<p>The firearm, magazines and rounds are handed over to the member against an acknowledgement of receipt.</p>

- (4) If a member is applying for a second firearm on his or her personal inventory, the member's immediate commander must obtain approval according to the relevant SCM delegation.
- (5) The following process must be followed if a member needs a firearm for a specific period for the performance of his or her official duties:

Stage	Description
1	The process in stages 1 to 5 of subparagraph (2) must be followed.
2	Upon receipt of the approved application the chief user must obtain the firearm, magazines and rounds from the station inventory. If the items are not available from the station inventory the chief user must requisition it from the Firearm Provisioning Store, SCM through the accounting unit against the relevant chief user code.

3	<p>If the firearm, magazines and rounds have been obtained, the chief user, or a designated employee, must enter the following information in the Firearm Register (SAPS 457) —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) number and rank of the member; (b) the type, caliber, make, model, unique identification mark and serial number of the firearm that is issued; (c) two magazines per firearm; (d) the quantity of rounds issued, based on the capacity of the magazines and packing unit; (e) period approved and for which a permit is issued; and (f) all other information required by the register against the signature of the member.
4	The firearm, magazines and rounds are handed over to the member for the specific period against an acknowledgement of receipt.

- (6) The following process must be followed if a member is issued with a firearm for the performance of his or her official duties when the member is on duty:

Stage	Description
1	<p>Before issuing a member with a firearm when he or she is on duty, the member's shift commander or immediate commander must —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) obtain a statement from the member as set out in annexure A; (b) ascertain whether the member is fit to possess a firearm; and (c) ascertain whether the member is competent to handle the specific firearm to be issued to him or her.
2	The shift commander or immediate commander must obtain a firearm, two magazines and rounds from the station inventory.
3	The shift commander or immediate commander must issue a firearm to the member when his or her shift starts and the member must return the firearm and ammunition at the end of that specific shift by way of an entry in the Firearms Register (SAPS 457).

- (7) The following process must be followed if a member is issued with a firearm for the performance of special duties:

Stage	Description
1	The officer who issues the order for special duties must designate a member, in writing, to oversee the safekeeping and control of the firearms and ammunition used during the specific special duties.
2	The designated member must keep a Firearms Register (SAPS 457) for all the firearms and ammunition that are issued and returned during the specific special duties.
3	If a Firearms Register is already in place it must be used for the special duties. If not, a separate register must be instituted for use by members on special duties.
4	Firearms and ammunition must only be issued to members who are assigned to the special duties.
5	Before issuing a member with a firearm the officer who issues the order for special duties must — (a) obtain a statement from the member as set out in annexure A; (b) ascertain whether the member is fit to possess a firearm; and (c) ascertain whether the member is competent to handle the specific firearm to be issued to him or her.
6	A member performing special duties must be issued with the appropriate official firearm for the performance of the specific special duties only and the firearm must be handed back to the designated member after completion of the special duties.
7	Upon completion of the special duties, the designated member, together with the officer who issued the order for special duties, must reconcile the firearm register with the firearms on hand. The firearms must physically be handed over to the chief user or accounting functionary concerned against acknowledgement of receipt in the register.
8	Upon completion of the special duties, the officer who issued the instruction for special duties must issue — (a) a certificate to certify that all firearms and ammunition issued for the special duties have been returned; or (b) a qualified certificate with a statement that a loss or damage was reported in terms of paragraph 13(1) or 14(1).
9	The completed certificate must be submitted to the chief user or accounting functionary for filing for inspection purposes.

7. Declaring a member unfit to possess a firearm

- (1) If a member is declared unfit to possess a firearm in terms of Section 102 or 103 of *the Act*, he or she may not possess, have control over or use an official firearm.
- (2) A member who becomes or is declared unfit to possess a firearm, must within 24 hours, hand in his or her firearm and ammunition to the relevant chief user or accounting functionary.
- (3) If the immediate commander of a member becomes aware that a member has become or been declared unfit to possess a firearm, he or she must ensure that the member hands in his or her firearm to the relevant chief user or accounting functionary within 24 hours.
- (4) If the accounting functionary or chief user becomes aware that a member has been declared unfit to possess a firearm he or she must take in the official firearm of the member as soon as reasonably possible.
- (5) The accounting functionary or chief user must obtain a copy of the certificate issued to the member in terms of section 105 of *the Act*, with regard to the declaration of unfitness to possess a firearm.

8. The withdrawal of official firearms

- (1) A station commander, unit commander or section head must withdraw an official firearm from the personal inventory of a member if the member —
 - (a) no longer requires a firearm for the execution of his or her official duties;
 - (b) is not competent to handle a firearm in terms of regulation 79 and 80 of *the Regulations*;
 - (c) is suspended in terms of the Discipline Regulations;
 - (d) dies;
 - (e) is absent from duty without leave; or
 - (f) resigns from the Police.
- (2) A station commander, unit commander or section head must not approve the issuing of a firearm to a member on his or her personal inventory in the circumstances set out in subparagraph (1)(a) - (c).
- (3) The immediate commander of a member must physically remove the firearm from the possession of the member if paragraph 8(1) is applicable.
- (4) If the firearm and ammunition are accounted for on the personal inventory of a member, the station commander, unit commander or section head concerned must inform the relevant accounting functionary, in writing, through the chief user to have the items removed from the member's personal inventory.

9. The use of official firearms and ammunition

- (1) A member who has reported on duty, may not use his or her private firearm in the performance of his or her functions or duties.
- (2) Only official ammunition may be fired with an official firearm.
- (3) If a firearm or ammunition issued to member becomes unserviceable, the firearm or ammunition may be replaced with another firearm or ammunition: Provided that the exchange must be done with the necessary accounting transactions in the register, PAS and Firearm Provisioning Store.
- (4) A member who is in possession of an official firearm must have his or her appointment certificate and permit to possess the official firearm with him or her at all times.

10. The maintenance, modification and repairs of official firearms

- (1) Maintenance or modification of an official firearm must be done by official armourers at SCM.
- (2) A member may under no circumstances modify or repair any part of an official firearm.
- (3) An official firearm must, at least once a month, be cleaned and lightly oiled by the member who has immediate control over the firearm. Only official gun cleaning oil may be used when cleaning the firearm.

11. The safe keeping of official firearms and ammunition

- (1) An official firearm and ammunition that are not under the direct and physical control of a member, must be stored in a safe or strongroom that conforms to the prescripts of SABS Standard 953-1 and 953-2 as prescribed by *the Regulations*.
- (2) Only a member of the Police may be made responsible for the storage of firearms and ammunition.
- (3) Firearms and ammunition must be transported and safeguarded in accordance with the directives from time to time issued in this regard by the National Commissioner.

12. The inspection of registers and firearms

- (1) The chief user must inspect —
 - (a) the firearm register (SAPS 457) once a week and physically compare it with the firearms in the safes or strongrooms on the

- station inventory. The inspection must be recorded in the firearm register; and
- (b) all firearms and ammunition on a room inventory of a safe or strongroom, or issued to a member on his or her personal inventory twice a year. The certification function on PAS must be used to capture information regarding the inspection.
- (2) The member must present a copy of the written confirmation by the Division: Training that the member is competent when his or her firearm is inspected.
 - (3) The inspection in terms of sub-paragraph (1) must be done according to the instructions on inspection of personal inventories, stock taking and parade inspections.
 - (4) The chief user must forward the outcome of the inspection in terms of subparagraph (1)(b) to the accounting functionary who must file it for audit purposes.
 - (5) The designated SCM armourers must annually inspect all firearms on the room inventory of a safe or strongroom, or issued to a member on his or her personal inventory.
 - (6) The store master of the Firearm Provisioning Store must inspect all firearms in stock once a year. The certification function on PAS must be used to capture the information regarding the inspection. The inspection and certification may coincide with the annual stock taking in accordance with the instructions on stock taking.

13. Reporting of lost or surplus firearms and ammunition

- (1) Any loss of an official firearm and ammunition must upon discovery, as soon as reasonably possible, be reported to —
 - (a) the nearest police station and a case docket must be opened;
 - (b) the relevant Loss Management office, in writing, for registration of the loss and to commence with the loss recovery process; and
 - (c) the accounting functionary or store master, in writing, for verification in terms of firearm identification and investigation of liability.
- (2) Any surplus official firearms and ammunition must be reported to the accounting functionary or store master in writing for verification in terms of firearm identification and to account for the surplus.

14. Damaged or unserviceable official firearms

- (1) All damaged firearms must be reported in writing to the accounting functionary or store master and the relevant Loss Management office for registration of the damage and liability investigation.

- (2) If an accounting functionary or chief user is convinced that an official firearm is in need of specialized repairs or must be refurbished owing to normal wear and tear, the firearm and magazines must be handed in at the local SCM armourers.
- (3) The SCM armourers must register the firearm on the Workshop Accounting System (WAS) against acknowledgement of receipt for repairs.
- (4) The SCM armourers must not interchange firearm parts marked with the serial number of the firearm when firearms are repaired.
- (5) The local SCM Armourers must issue a certificate for all unserviceable official firearms indicating that the firearm is unserviceable. The certificate must be submitted to the chief user or accounting functionary who must attach the certificate to the PAS documentation for disposal purposes.
- (6) All unserviceable official firearms must be reported to the accounting functionary.
- (7) The accounting functionary must dispose of unserviceable firearms in terms of the procedure mentioned in paragraph 16.

15. Redundant Firearms and safety stock

- (1) All redundant firearms on provincial or divisional level must be dispatched to the Firearms Provisioning Store, taking into account the safety stock levels of stations or units.
- (2) The Firearms Provisioning Store must maintain minimum stock levels on standardized firearms as from time to time determined by the Divisional Commissioner: SCM.
- (3) The accounting functionary must ensure that a reserve of standard firearms is maintained at a minimum stock level of five percent of the human resources allocated to the structure.

16. Disposal of Firearms and Ammunition

- (1) Redundant, obsolete and unserviceable firearms and ammunition must be dispatched by the accounting functionary to the Firearms Provisioning Store and Ammunition Provisioning Store respectively.
- (2) Only the relevant Provisioning Stores at the Division: SCM may dispose of official firearms and ammunition. The Division: SCM must dispose of the firearms and ammunition in accordance with *the Act* and relevant government policy.

- (3) A transaction to sell, donate, exchange or transfer an official firearm or ammunition to another state department or government institution must be —
 - (a) authorized by the Divisional Commissioner: SCM or the relevant functionary to whom this power has been delegated by the National Commissioner; and
 - (b) approved in writing by the National Conventional Arms Control Council (NCACC).

17. The removal of ammunition on station inventory

- (1) The accounting functionary must remove from the station inventory all ammunition used during a shooting practise or in the execution of normal policing functions as soon as possible, but not later than one month after the incident.
- (2) The accounting functionary must remove the ammunition from the account without delay with the Extraordinary Issue procedure and a factual report, explaining the circumstances under which the ammunition was used, must be attached to the SAPS 39.

18. Disposal of empty cartridges

The accounting functionary or a designated employee must collect the empty ammunition cartridges after a shooting practise and when sufficient quantities are reached, the cartridges must be disposed of by way of a disposal board.

Annexure A

STATEMENT

I, no.:, rank:, name:,
stationed at, after having had the relevant
provisions explained to me by no.:, rank:,
name:, state the following:

1.

I have taken note of the provisions of section 120(8)(a) and (b) of the Firearms Control Act, 2000 (Act No 60 of 2000). I know and understand that it constitutes an offence if I —

- (a) fail to lock away a firearm in my possession in a prescribed safe or strong-room when such firearm is not carried on my person or is not under my direct control; or
- (b) lose such firearm, or am otherwise dispossessed of such firearm owing to my failure to —
 - (i) lock the firearm away in a prescribed safe or strong-room;
 - (ii) failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the loss or theft of the firearm while the firearm is in my possession or under my direct control; or
 - (iii) keep the keys to such safe or strong-room in safe custody.

2.

I have taken note of the content of Standing Order (Stores) 48 regarding the use of official firearms and ammunition.

3.

I have also taken note that —

- (a) I may be criminally prosecuted and charged with misconduct for the loss of a firearm; and
- (b) I may be held liable for the loss of the firearm and the amount of the loss may be recovered from me in terms of the Treasury Regulations.

4.

I declare that, according to my knowledge, there is no reason why I may not possess an official firearm and why I may be regarded as unfit to possess a firearm in terms of section 102 and 103 of the Firearms Control Act, 2000 (Act No. 60 of 2000).

*I know and understand the content of the this declaration;
I have no objection to taking the prescribed oath; and
I consider the prescribed oath to be binding on my conscience.

or

*I know and understand the content of the this declaration; and
I solemnly affirm that the contents of this declaration are true.

Signed at on 20

.....
SIGNATURE OF DEPONENT

*I certify that the deponent has acknowledged that her or she knows and understands the content of this statement. The deponent has no objection in taking the prescribed oath. This statement was sworn to me and the deponent's signature was placed thereon in my presence at(place), on (date) at(time).

or

*I certify that the deponent acknowledges that he or she knows and understands the content of the statement. This statement was affirmed before me and the deponent's signature was placed thereon in my presence at (place), on (date) at(time).

.....
COMMISSIONER OF OATHS

.....
FULL NAME

.....
DESIGNATION(RANK) AND AREA FOR WHICH APPOINTED

.....
BUSINESS ADDRESS

.....

.....

.....
PLACE

.....
DATE

.....
TIME

* Delete if not applicable