

Training for your Handgun License



Sporting Shooters Pistol Club

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Introduction

The Sporting Shooters Pistol Club (SSPC) is one of Victoria's largest handgun target shooting clubs. Our club is entirely run by a team of hard working volunteers. We operate at the Springvale SSAA range and run a number of different handgun shooting competitions.

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with a structured training plan to take you from your introduction course, through your Probationary License and ultimately to your Full Handgun License through the use of competency based training.

This guide will cover the specific competencies that you need to demonstrate (and be able to explain) in order to be safe, and is intended to provide you with a structured set of competencies to get the most out of your shooting experience.

These competencies are designed to build on each other to allow you to gain the required set of skills and consist of three levels:

1. Prior to attending your Handgun Safety course – Level 1.
2. To progress from your Probationary License and demonstrate the required skills for the club to sign off on your Full Handgun License – Level 2
3. To demonstrate the required competencies for the club to sign off on your 'Permit to Acquire a Handgun', if you wish to purchase your own firearm in the future – Level 3.

NOTE: This course DOES NOT REPLACE the mandatory Victoria Police Handgun Safety Course which you will be required to pass before the club will sign off on you gaining a handgun licence.

Licensing and Handgun Ownership

Once you have:

- Completed the Introduction to Handguns Course;
- Been signed off to Level 1 competency;
- Successfully completed your Handgun Safety Course;
- Joined our club;

You will be able to apply for a provisional handgun licence. This licence will allow you to shoot without filling out a NORI (Notice of Receiving Instruction) form. You can then take part in any of our competitions. You will need to take part in at least five competitions while you hold your provisional licence before applying for your full handgun licence.

Once you hold a provisional licence you can purchase and store ammunition, but you cannot own a handgun.

The provisional licence lasts for a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 months, after which you can apply for a full handgun licence, however this requires club signoff, which will only be provided upon attainment of Level 2 competency.

Once you have a full handgun licence you can make an application to purchase a handgun. Again, this requires club signoff and will only be provided upon attainment of the relevant Level 3 competencies.

Remember that our club has plenty of different handguns available for you to use. There is no charge for this and many of our club members do not own handguns and instead use the club guns for all competitions.
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Handgun Laws

Handgun laws are a separate subject, and you will learn more about this during the Safety Course. For now, there are a few things you need to be aware of:

NORI Forms

Until you have a provisional handgun licence, each time you shoot you will need to complete a NORI (Notice of Receiving Instruction) form. The form is then signed by your instructor and forwarded to the Victoria Police. You will receive a confirmation letter from the police each time you participate in shooting with a NORI form.

You can only use a maximum of 10 NORI participations before you must either stop shooting or apply for a full licence. (For Juniors it is a maximum of three).

Even if you have joined as a member of our club, you must continue to complete NORI forms for each shoot until your provisional licence arrives.

Ammunition

You are not allowed to possess any handgun ammunition unless you have a handgun licence (or provisional handgun licence).

Make sure that you do not take any ammunition home with you!

Prohibited Persons

You are not allowed to take part in any shooting activity if you are a prohibited person. This may include people who are subject to an intervention order or have been in prison. Please discuss this with your instructor if you think it affects you.

The SSPC Code of Conduct

SSPC as a club and all our members subscribe to and are bound by a Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct aims to set out the minimum standards for members of SSPC. It applies when competing, practicing, training, spectating or taking part in club-sanctioned activities.

- Act within the rules and spirit of the Shooting Sports.
- Promote fair play over winning at any cost.
- Encourage and support opportunities for people to learn appropriate behaviour's and skills.
- Support opportunities for participation in all aspects of the Shooting Sports.
- Treat each person as an individual.
- Show respect and courtesy to all involved with the sport.
- Respect the rights and worth of every person, regardless of their age, race, gender, ability, cultural background, sexuality or religion.
- Respect and abide by the decisions of Range Officer's, Club Trainers and Committee Members.
- Wherever practical, avoid unaccompanied and unobserved one-on-one activity (when in a supervisory capacity or where a power imbalance exists) with people under the age of 18.
- Display appropriate and responsible behaviour in all interactions.
- Display responsible behaviour in relation to alcohol and other drugs.
- Act with integrity and objectivity, and accept responsibility for your decisions and actions.
- Ensure your decisions and actions contribute to a safe environment.
- Ensure your decisions and actions contribute to a harassment-free environment.

- Do not tolerate abusive, bullying or threatening behaviour.

Members

- Give your best at all times.
- Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit.
- Compete by the rules and show respect for other members, range officers and committee members.

Aggressive Behaviour

Aggressive behaviour actual or implied has NO PLACE in the shooting sports and particularly at SSPC. If you demonstrate aggressive behaviour you will face disciplinary action immediately with a very high probability of being expelled from the club and reported to LRD.

Recalcitrant Behaviour

Recalcitrant behaviour also has NO PLACE in the shooting sports and particularly at SSPC. If you demonstrate ongoing recalcitrant behaviour you will face disciplinary action immediately with a very high probability of being suspended from the club for a period of time. If suspended, the Firearms Act dictates we must report the suspension to LRD.

Disciplinary Action

Failure to follow the SSPC Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action by the Club. If you are brought up on Disciplinary action, you will be brought before the Committee to explain yourself.

Disciplinary Action can result in:

- Suspension
- Expulsion
- A Fine
- And/or the loss of your license if the Committee believes you are no longer a 'Fit and Proper Person'.

Safety Equipment

Some basic safety equipment is required whenever you are on a handgun shooting range:

Ear Protection

Handguns are loud, louder than a jet engine, and they can cause permanent hearing damage. You must wear ear protection while shooting. Some people prefer ear plugs while others use earmuffs. Some people use both. **We recommend electronic earmuffs with a noise reduction of 26dB or greater.**

Electronic Earmuffs employ built-in directional microphones that amplify range commands and other ambient sounds to a safe 82 dB, providing more natural listening and enhance communication. For protection, Electronic Earmuffs actively listen and automatically shut off amplification when ambient sound reaches 82 dB, effectively blocking out hazardous noise.



Eye Protection

Handguns shoot bullets. Bullets travel very fast and sometimes when the bullet strikes a hard target, a bullet fragment can come back towards you. These pieces of shrapnel do not usually travel fast enough to do any serious damage, unless they hit you in the eye.

Safety glasses are mandatory whenever there is shooting on the range, even if you are just watching others shoot. If you need to take your safety glasses off for any reason, then leave the range first!

We recommend that you purchase Safety Glasses that meet Australian Safety Standard AS/NZS 1337.1 or American National Standards ANSI Z-87.1



Now that you have decided to continue to take part in shooting then you should buy your own eye and ear protection as soon as possible.

Buy the best you can afford.

You only get one set of Eyes and Ears!!

Standard earmuffs and safety glasses are available from the shop at the range or from any hardware store. Remember to look for earmuffs with a noise reduction of 26dB or greater.

Competitions

SSPC holds a number of different competition shoots in which you can participate as a club member.

However, given that you are beginning your training, we will first look at ISSF 25 Metre as this is where you will spend your time during your training.

ISSF 25 Metre

This match consists of two separate stages with 30 shots of fire in each stage. The two stages are "Precision" and "Rapid Fire". The Precision stage is shot at 25m on a precision target with five minutes allowed for each five shot series. The Rapid Fire stage is also shot at 25m, but the target turns toward the shooter for three seconds and away for seven seconds.

The match can be shot two ways: With a Centrefire pistol (in which case it is referred to as a 25 Metre Centrefire competition), or with a .22 Rimfire pistol (referred to as a 25 Metre sport pistol competition). This competition is always shot one handed, however we do allow competitors to shoot this competition two handed upon request.

Service Match

The service match is shot at ranges from 50 metres down to 7 metres and consists of 90 shots. Throughout competition shooters are required to shoot prone, sitting, kneeling and standing from a barricade position. The competition is shot with both the right and left hands. **You will need to have successfully completed this training program, hold a full license and get a holster qualification to shoot this competition.**

IPSC

The IPSC competition consists of a number of action stages with the shooter running between targets in order to get the highest score in the shortest possible time. Each stage has variety of target types (paper and steel, stationary and moving, scoring targets and penalty targets). There is no set way these targets are arranged, nor even how many targets are used in a single match. **You will need to have successfully completed this training program, hold a license, get a holster qualification and complete the IPSC qualification course to shoot this competition.**

During your training plan, we encourage you to come and watch some service match and IPSC competitions being held.

How to use this Training Plan

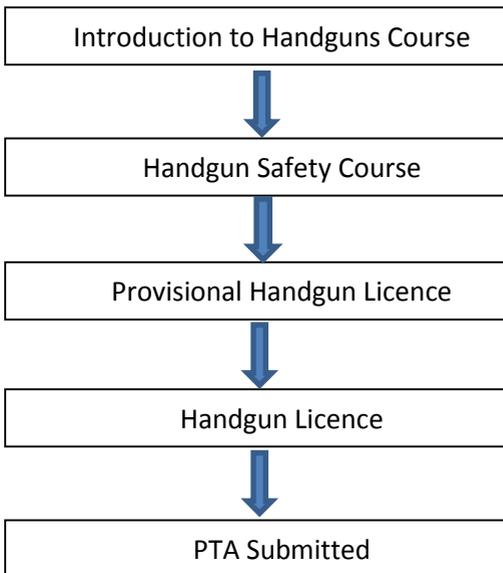
This Training Plan is designed to build on the core principles of:

- Handgun Safety;
- The Shooting Range;
- Ammunition & Calibres;
- Handgun operation; and
- Shooting Fundamentals

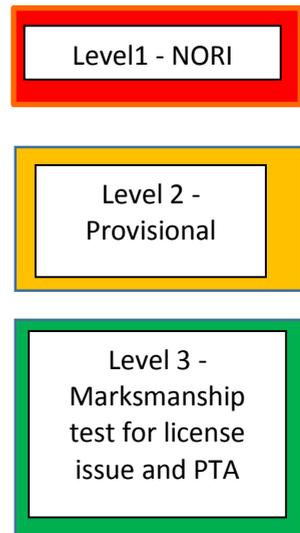
that were covered in your 'Introduction to Handguns' booklet and course. You will need to refer to that booklet in addition to this booklet to pass your competency tests.

This training plan consists of practical competencies that must be demonstrated to show you are a safe, competent shooter and member of the club.

Handgun Licence Pathway



Training Plan



Training Plan Pathway

Your Training plan is colour coded to a Traffic light system.

Level 1- Red Light	Subject	No of Competencies
	Range Etiquette	9
	Safety	20
	Revolver Basics	6
	Semi-Auto Basics	10

You must be deemed competent at this Level and have your Level 1 competency certificate signed off by a club trainer before attending your Safety Course.

Level 2 - Yellow Light	Subject	No of Competencies
	Revolver Advanced	7
	Semi-Auto Advanced	11
	Marksmanship Basics	6

You must be deemed competent at this Level and have your Level 2 competency certificate signed off by a club trainer before the club will sign off on your Full Handgun License.

Level 3 - Green Light	Subject	No of Competencies
	Marksmanship Advanced	3

You must be deemed competent at this level and signed off by a club trainer for the Handgun class you wish to purchase and they build upon each other.

Eg. If you wish to purchase a Rimfire revolver or Semi-Auto, then you need to pass Marksmanship test 1.

If you wish to purchase a Centrefire Revolver, you need to pass Marksmanship test 1 & 2.

If you wish to purchase a Centrefire Semi-Auto then you need to pass Marksmanship tests 1 to 3.

Who can sign off on competencies?

Range Officer

The Club Range Officers will be your Day-to-Day training resource.

They are the club members who will sign off on your competencies as you go.

However, do not expect the Range Officer to take the initiative in assessing you. Have a discussion with them and ask them to teach you the SSPC way for your competencies and then ask them to observe you when you feel you have a competency down. The way we have put the training plan together is many simple competencies that build. As such, you do not need to ask a Range Officer to observe everything at once. Ask them to observe one or two competencies and then move on.

Be prepared that they may say no. This would happen if they were working by themselves or have numerous new members on the line. Their primary role is the safety of all members and to observe and monitor the safety of the range as a whole.

Club Trainer

SSPC has a number of club trainers who are your go to people for:

1. Any extra help you need with a competency. (however, the Range Offices are your primary point for this)
2. Once you have all competencies signed off by the Range Officers, you need to make a time for an assessment by a club trainer.

Club Trainer Assessments

The SSPC Trainers are the people who assess you for a training level and are the only people authorised to sign off on a training level so you can progress to your next level. At this assessment, you will be expected to demonstrate all the competencies you have been signed off on.

If you are not competent, then they WILL NOT sign you off.

Turning up to a Safety Course without your Level 1 certificate

The Safety Course is a limited resource as the trainers for this need to be accredited with Victoria Police. As such, there is high demand for a spot on this course.

It is mandatory for an SSPC member to have a Level 1 competency certificate signed and stamped by an authorised club trainer to sit this course.

If you book a spot on this course without this certificate, that is fine.

However, if you turn up to the course without a signed Level 1 Competency Certificate you will not be able to sit the course, and will not receive a refund.

You will also be excluded from the next two Safety Courses.

Squib loads

At SSPC, commercial reloaders reload a large proportion of our ammunition. The nature of reloaded ammunition gives rise to the possibility of Squib Loads.

What is a Squid load?

A **squib load**, also known as a squib round, pop and no kick, or just a **squib**, is a firearms malfunction in which a fired projectile does not have enough force behind it to exit the barrel, and thus becomes stuck.

This type of malfunction can be extremely dangerous, as failing to notice that the projectile has become stuck in the barrel may result in another round being fired directly into the obstructed barrel, resulting in a catastrophic failure of the weapon's structural integrity.

Squibs are most often caused by a lack of powder in the cartridge, or a failure of the primer to ignite the powder at all. In the first case, when the firing pin hits the primer, it produces just enough force to push the bullet into the barrel but no further.

Subsequent rounds will pile up in a very strong weapon or destroy a weaker one.



Signs of a squib include:

- Much quieter and unusual discharge noise. Smaller or empty powder loads, combined with the primer discharge echoing in the casing or barrel, produce an unusual noise. This noise is often called a "ping" or "pop", rather than the expected "Bang" of a standard shot.
- Lighter or non-existent felt recoil force. Lower force on the projectile, insufficient to clear the barrel, translates to a lower recoil force, which may be completely absorbed by the firearm's recoil mechanisms.
- Discharge from the ejection port or cylinder gap, instead of the barrel. The primer and any burned powder produce smoke, less than a standard load, which cannot be vented through the barrel as normal.
- Failure of the action to cycle (in semi-automatic firearms). Both blowback and blow forward semi-automatic designs rely on the recoil force to eject the spent casing and cycle the next round. Lighter recoil force may not be sufficient to cycle the action.

Squib loads are also referred to as "pop and no kick", in recognition of the above symptoms.

What should you do if you suspect you have a squib load?

STOP, STOP, STOP!!!!

Under no circumstances are you to continue shooting. The consequences can be catastrophic!



Immediately put your hand up and ask the Range Officer for help. They will investigate your Handgun to diagnose if you have a squib. If you do have a squib, they will attempt to clear it for you.

Malfunctions – Semi Auto

Malfunctions can and do occur from time to time while shooting. Make sure that you take the necessary time to properly prepare your ammo and firearm, and it will greatly reduce your chances of experiencing malfunctions.

If you experience a malfunction during a course of fire, you may safely attempt to correct the problem and continue the course of fire. During such corrective action, you must keep the muzzle of the firearm pointing safely downrange at all times. You must not use rods or other tools to verify or correct the malfunction.

There are three common malfunctions that occur to a Semi-Auto and they are:

1. Failure to feed.
2. Stove-pipe jam
3. Double feed.

Knowing how to clear them quickly & safely is a key part of your training and allows you to continue shooting the course of fire.

<p>Remember: Keep your trigger finger outside of the trigger guard when you are clearing any malfunction!</p>

Failure to Feed

Failure to feed is commonly caused by not inserting a magazine properly into the firearm. The competitor attempts to fire a second shot, the only thing that occurs when the trigger is pressed is that the hammer falls and makes a click. With the magazine not seated properly, the slide has failed to pick up the next round out of the magazine.



The following method is used to resolve this problem:

1. Move your trigger finger **outside** of the trigger guard.
2. Release your weak hand from the firearm



3. Push the magazine back into the firearm with your weak hand.



4. Pull the slide back.



5. Your weak hand reacquires its grip on the firearm.



6. You begin to reacquire the target.
 - Your trigger finger moves to the trigger.



Stove-Pipe

The competitor will see an empty case sticking in the way of the sight picture.



The following method is used to resolve this problem:

- Remove your trigger finger from within the trigger guard.
- Release your weak hand grip from the firearm.



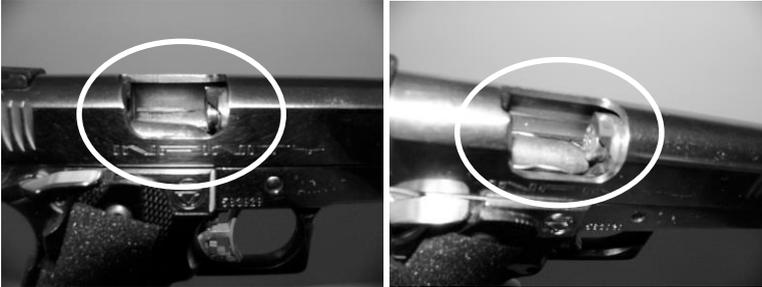
To clear the stovepipe, the weak hand sweeps over the top of the slide.



Note: This almost always feeds the next round from the magazine. If the next round has not been picked up from the magazine, you may be required to rack the slide.

Double Feed

A double feed can be observed when two cartridges competing for equal space in the breech.



To clear a double feed, the following method is used:

- Lock the slide back.
- Drop the magazine.
- Work the slide to get rid of the cartridge or cartridges causing the malfunction.
- Insert a fully loaded magazine.
- Work the slide to strip a cartridge off of the magazine.

Malfunctions – Revolver

Revolvers are generally very reliable. However, like any machine, revolvers can and do fail.

The most common issue with a revolver is a failure to eject/extract. The more a revolver is shot, the dirtier the chambers become; over time, this can foul extraction and lead to a gun that you can't reload.

The second common reason for failure to eject/extract is a failure of the ejector star, which pushes the cases free and then snaps back to its original position for reloading – unless you get a flake of unburnt powder under the star!

Then you won't be able to close the cylinder and get the handgun back into action without first brushing out the area under the star.



Level 1 Competencies

Range Etiquette/Fundamentals

Competencies to be demonstrated	Can the Trainee articulate and demonstrate?	Range RO (C for competent)	RO Name	RO Signature
1 Who is in charge on the range?				
2 Who is there to help?				
3 Obtaining Ammunition				
4 Obtaining a Club Firearm				
5 Understands what to do during a cease fire				
6 Demonstrates Non-Aggressive Behaviour				
7 Demonstrates a safe attitude				
8 Follows RO Direction				
9 Interactions with other Club Members				

Safety

Competencies to be demonstrated		Can the Trainee articulate and demonstrate?	Range RO (C for competent)	RO Name	RO Signature
1	What are the 3 laws of Gun Safety?				
2	Remove Handgun from Box/Bag				
3	Correct Handgun position on Bench				
4	Handgun clear position				
5	What is the Red line and rules for it?				
6	What is the Yellow line and the rules for it?				
7	Safe Handgun direction while handling				
8	Ability to move around the gun in the bay				
9	What is the procedure for leaving a bay?				
10	Handling of a loaded Handgun				

11	Consistently demonstrate finger off the trigger				
12	Use and knowledge of safety equipment				
13	Follows Range Commands				
14	Articulate what the range commands are				
15	Clear Handgun correctly at Ceasefire				
16	How do you ask for help?				
17	What is the procedure for coming onto the Range?				
18	Boxes/Bags Handgun correctly at end of Comp.				
19	Follows correct procedure for returning club firearms.				
20	What are the emergency range commands?				

Revolver Basics

Competencies to be demonstrated		Can the Trainee articulate and demonstrate?	Range RO (C for competent)	RO Name	RO Signature
1	Explain the operation of a revolver				
2	Complete the Revolver schematic test				
3	Correct Revolver Grip				
4	Correct procedure to load a revolver				
5	Correct procedure to unload a revolver				
6	Correct procedure to reload a revolver				

Revolver Schematic Test – Part 1

Draw a line from the list on the right to the correct part of a revolver



- Front Sight
- Cylinder
- Rear Sight
- Hammer
- Cylinder Release
- Grip
- Trigger
- Trigger Guard
- Frame
- Barrel

Revolver Schematic Test – Part 2

Draw a line from the list on the right to the correct part of a revolver



- Front Sight
- Chamber
- Rear Sight
- Hammer
- Cylinder Release
- Grip
- Trigger Guard
- Ejector
- Ejector Rod

Semi-Auto Basics

Competencies to be demonstrated		Can the Trainee articulate and demonstrate?	Range RO (C for competent)	RO Name	RO Signature
1	Explain the operation of a Semi-Auto				
2	Complete the Semi-Auto Schematic Test				
3	Correct Semi-Auto Grip				
4	Correct procedure to load a Semi-Auto magazine				
5	Correct procedure to load a Semi-Auto				
6	Correct procedure to unload a Semi-Auto				
7	Correct procedure to lock open the slide				
8	Release slide using slidestop				
9	Release slide via racking				
10	Operate the safety				

Semi-Auto Schematic Test – Part 1

Draw a line from the list on the right to the correct part of a Semi-Auto



- Front Sight
- Slide
- Slide Lock/Release
- Rear Sight
- Safety
- Grip
- Magazine Release
- Trigger
- Trigger Guard
- Frame

Semi-Auto Schematic Test – Part 2

Draw a line from the list on the right to the correct part of a Semi-Auto



- Barrel (in ejection port)
- Ejection Port
- Hammer
- Beavertail
- Magazine
- Slide (Open Position)
- Barrel (Slide open)

Level 2 Competencies

Revolver Advanced

Competencies to be demonstrated		Can the Trainee articulate and demonstrate?	Range RO (C for competent)	RO Name	RO Signature
1	Explain what a squib load is				
2	Explain what a squib load sounds like				
3	Explain the procedure for dealing with a suspected squib load				
4	Explain what a failure to fire is				
5	Explain the procedure for dealing with a failure to fire				
6	Explain what a failure to eject is				
7	Explain the procedure for dealing with a failure to eject				

Semi-Auto Advanced

Competencies to be demonstrated		Can the Trainee articulate and demonstrate?	Range RO (C for competent)	RO Name	RO Signature
1	Explain what a squib load is				
2	Explain what a squib load sounds like				
3	Explain the procedure for dealing with a suspected squib load				
4	Explain what a failure to fire is				
5	Explain the procedure for dealing with a failure to fire				
6	Explain what a failure to eject (Stovepipe) is				
7	Explain the procedure for dealing with a failure to eject (Stovepipe)				
8	Explain the procedure for dealing with a double feed				

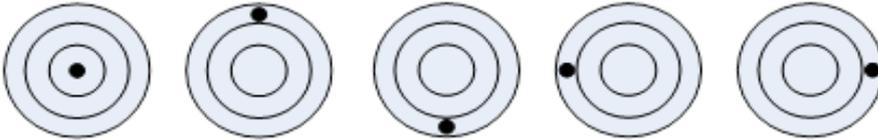
9	Explain what a failure to extract is				
10	Explain the procedure for dealing with a failure to extract				

Marksmanship Basics

Competencies to be demonstrated		Can the Trainee articulate and demonstrate?	Range RO (C for competent)	RO Name	RO Signature
1	Correct Sight Picture				
2	Complete the Shot placement theory test				
3	Correct finger placement on Trigger				
4	Correct trigger pull				
5	Correct two handed stance				
6	Correct one handed stance				

Shot Placement Theory Test

Draw a line to the correct sight picture for each shot placement



Too High



Too Right



Perfect



Too Low



Too Left

Level 3 Competencies

Marksmanship Advanced

Competencies to be demonstrated		Can the Trainee put 10 rounds on target at 25 metres?	Range RO (C for competent)	RO Name	RO Signature
1	Marksmanship Test Level 1 - Rimfire (Revolver or Semi)				
2	Marksmanship Test Level 2 – Centrefire Revolver				
3	Marksmanship Test Level 3 – Centrefire Semi-Auto				

Level 1 Competency Certificate

This certificate will be signed off once you have successfully completed all your Level 1 competencies by Range Officers and have passed your Level 1 competency assessment with an approved club trainer.

Once you have passed this assessment, you can complete your Safety Course.

<p><i>Level 1 Competency Assessment Certificate</i></p> <p>Date ____/____/____</p> <p>I hereby certify that _____</p> <p>has completed the SSPC Level 1 Assessment</p> <p>and has demonstrated the competencies required in order to attend their Safety Course.</p> <p>Name of Instructor _____</p> <p>Signature of Instructor _____</p> <p>SSPC Training Stamp _____</p>

You will need to bring this book with a signed off and stamped copy of this certificate to your Safety Course

Level 2 Competency Certificate

This certificate will be signed off once you have successfully completed all your Level 2 competencies by Range Officers and have passed your Level 2 competency assessment with an approved club trainer.

Once you have passed this assessment, you can apply to the club to sign off on your full handgun license.

<p><i>Level 2 Competency Assessment Certificate</i></p> <p>Date ____/____/____</p> <p>I hereby certify that _____</p> <p>has completed the SSPC Level 2 Assessment</p> <p>and has demonstrated the competencies required in order to</p> <p>apply for their full handgun license.</p> <p>Name of Instructor _____</p> <p>Signature of Instructor _____</p> <p>SSPC Training Stamp _____</p>
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You will need to provide a signed off and stamped copy of this certificate with your full Licence application.

Level 3 Competency Certificate

This certificate will be signed off once you have successfully completed your Level 3 competencies (or competency for the class you wish to purchase) by Range Officers and have passed your Level 3 competency assessment with an approved club trainer.

Once you have passed this assessment, you can apply to the club to purchase a handgun the class you have achieved.

Level 3 Competency Assessment Certificate

Date ____/____/____

I hereby certify that _____

has completed the SSPC Level 3 Assessment

and has demonstrated the competencies required in order to

put in a PTA for:

(Instructor to sign appropriate Level/s)

Rimfire: _____

Centrefire Revolver: _____

Centrefire Semi-Auto: _____

Name of Instructor _____

SSPC Stamp: _____

You will need to provide a signed off and stamped copy of this certificate with your PTA.