

A man wearing a cap and glasses, seen from the back, holding a stopwatch. He is wearing a dark polo shirt with "RANGE OFFICER" and a logo on the back. In the background, there are four shooting targets labeled C1, C4, C7, and C9.

**RANGE
OFFICER**



RANGE OFFICER GUIDE

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Fédération • • •
Québécoise de Tir

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RANGE OFFICER GUIDE

PREREQUISITES

1. Be a member in good standing of the Fédération Québécoise de Tir (FQT).
2. Be at least 21 years of age.
3. Be a member in good standing of an FQT-recognized shooting club for more than one year.
4. Have regularly practised shooting with restricted firearms during the year preceding the application.
5. Pass the examination and the Knowledge Validation Questionnaire administered by the FQT.
6. Successfully complete any other training deemed equivalent by the Minister of Public Security.

FUNCTION DESCRIPTION

The range officer is responsible for the safety of people practising shooting with restricted and prohibited firearms, as well as visitors and observers at the shooting range or shooting club.

Provincial safety regulations require the presence of an FQT-recognized range officer in order to use restricted and prohibited firearms at a shooting range or shooting club.

The range officer on duty must be thoroughly familiar with the specific safety regulations and appendices of the club where they perform their duties; it is the club's responsibility to ensure this.

Being qualified as a range officer does not authorize a qualified person to act in that capacity without the approval of the shooting club for which they wish to serve. This decision rests with the club's board of directors.

To maintain recognition of their qualification by the Fédération québécoise de tir (FQT), a person must perform range officer duties at least once per year and successfully complete the Knowledge Validation Questionnaire every year.

The FQT reserves the right to withdraw the qualification of any range officer who fails to comply with the code of ethics they agreed to upon certification, who does not meet the quality standards established by the FQT, or who has not performed range officer duties.

The club may decide that it no longer requires the services of its range officer.

WHAT IS THE KNOWLEDGE VALIDATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RANGE OFFICERS?

Description and Purpose

The annual Knowledge Validation Questionnaire is intended to ensure the maintenance of competencies and the validity of range officer qualifications.

From now on, every range officer who has completed the initial training must pass this test each year in order to maintain recognized range officer status with the Fédération québécoise de tir (FQT).

This test is designed to validate that range officers continue to possess the knowledge required to rigorously apply safety rules and supervise shooting activities safely at a shooting range.

This requirement helps maintain high safety standards for both shooting clubs and the shooters who use their facilities.

It is therefore essential to ensure that all range officers keep their knowledge current and master the behaviours, responsibilities and procedures applicable at a shooting range.

The Knowledge Validation Questionnaire therefore serves as a reminder of best practices and as an essential tool for ensuring safe, professional supervision within Québec shooting clubs.

WHO OVERSEES SAFETY IN OUR SPORT?

The Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports is responsible for ensuring the safety and integrity of persons involved in sports.

In carrying out these duties, the Minister has the authority to:

- a) Approve, with or without amendment, the safety regulations of a federation of sports bodies or a non-affiliated sports body in order to ensure the safety of participants and spectators during the practice of a sport;
- b) Adopt regulations to ensure the safety of participants and spectators during the practice of a sport;
- c) Enter into an agreement, in accordance with the law, with another government, with one of its departments or agencies, or with a person for the implementation of this Act or its regulations;
- d) Authorize, in writing, a person to verify compliance with this Act and its regulations.

WHAT DOES THE FÉDÉRATION QUÉBÉCOISE DE TIR DO?

A federation of sports bodies or a non-affiliated sports body must adopt safety regulations covering the matters prescribed by government regulation and ensure that its members comply with them.

In Québec, the Fédération Québécoise de Tir is the only organization mandated to develop safety regulations for the sport of target shooting, submit them for approval by the Minister, and train range officers.

A federation of sports bodies or a non-affiliated sports body must have its safety regulations approved by the Minister.

The Minister may order a member of a federation of sports bodies or of a non-affiliated sports body to comply with that federation's or body's safety regulations when the federation or body fails to enforce them.

REMINDER OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF BILL 9

1. No person may attend a shooting range to use a restricted firearm or a prohibited firearm unless they are a member of a shooting club or are invited under the immediate supervision of a member.
2. The shooting club must keep an attendance register for members and users. This register must indicate the date, time of arrival and time of departure for each person, as well as any other information prescribed by government regulation.
3. All members must present and wear their VALID shooting club membership card on the firing line.
4. The shooting club must revoke or refuse to renew the membership of any member who has not practised target shooting for more than one year at their shooting club—or elsewhere, without being able to provide proof—unless that member presents a new certificate of successful completion of the aptitude test required under Bill 9. If the person forgot to renew their membership card before its expiry date, even by a single day, they must retake the Bill 9 course.
5. Reporting a person: Every member of a shooting club or user of a shooting range must immediately report to the person responsible for the club or range any behaviour that could compromise their safety or the safety of others when using a firearm.

TYPES OF SHOOTING RANGES

Every range officer must know the different types of shooting ranges.

1) STANDARD SHOOTING RANGE

A rifle or pistol range equipped with a bullet backstop and an appropriate safety zone, but without a protective trench downrange for targets and/or target markers.

2) TRENCH SHOOTING RANGE

A rifle range built to conventional range specifications, but equipped with a protective trench downrange for targets and/or target markers.

3) BAFFLED SHOOTING RANGE

A rifle or handgun range equipped with baffles (whether suspended and/or ground-mounted) or similar features designed to contain all shots fired and ricochets within the active range area.

This type of shooting range may include a protective trench downrange for targets and/or target markers.

4) SHOOTING RANGE WITHOUT A SAFETY ZONE

A rifle or handgun range where shooting is directed toward natural or artificial features that prevent overshots and ricochets from leaving the immediate active range area.

5) CLAY TARGET SHOOTING RANGE (SKEET AND TRAP)

A smoothbore shotgun range designed for shooting frangible targets launched along fixed trajectories or within prescribed arcs.

6) SPORTING CLAYS RANGE

A smoothbore shotgun range designed for shooting frangible targets launched along fixed trajectories or within prescribed arcs.

However, this range is laid out to simulate hunting or field situations.

7) FIELD-EXPEDIENT SHOOTING RANGE

A rifle or handgun range that has no bullet backstop or whose bullet backstop is unsuitable.

The range must nevertheless have an adequate safety zone.

SAFETY ZONE

Depending on the design of the shooting range, a safety zone in the direction of fire may or may not be required.

The decision as to whether a safety zone is required, and the dimensions of that zone, must be based on an assessment of the range's intended use and construction.

If the range design and its use are such that:

- fired projectiles or subsequent ricochets may leave the active range area under normal operating conditions, a safety zone in the direction of fire is required;
- or fired projectiles or subsequent ricochets will be contained within the active range area under normal operating conditions, a safety zone in the direction of fire is not required.

A shooting range safety zone is the area in the direction of fire, in front of the firing line, that contains projectiles fired over the bullet backstop under specific conditions.

Such projectiles may result from an excessively high angle of elevation of the firearm, causing shots to pass over the bullet backstop, or from projectiles ricocheting off targets, the bullet backstop, or other range surfaces.

SAFETY ZONE EXEMPTION FOR A BAFFLED SHOOTING RANGE

A properly designed, built and operated baffled shooting range does not require an extensively developed safety zone in the direction of fire.

A safety zone is intended to provide a buffer between the parts of the shooting range where shooting activities take place and areas where other human activities occur.

SAFETY FEATURES OF A SHOOTING RANGE

Safety Zone Sign — AS APPLICABLE TO THE CLUB

The sign must display at least the following information:

- a) the name of the shooting range;
- b) the contact information for the range operator (e.g., telephone number).

Range Status Sign – AS APPLICABLE TO THE CLUB

A large, clearly visible sign must indicate the current status of the shooting range (e.g., RANGE ACTIVE – LIVE FIRE or RANGE CLOSED).

Perimeter Warning Signs (General Public)

The perimeter of every shooting range must be clearly marked with appropriate warning signs.

Range Safety Rules Signs

Signs must be permanently mounted on a building, post, frame, or other permanent structure.

They must be located behind the firing line in a highly visible location for all users approaching the shooting range and must include at least the following information:

- a) the maximum firearm calibre permitted on the range;
- b) prohibited projectiles (e.g., tracer or armour-piercing ammunition);
- c) authorized targets (e.g., paper targets);
- d) prohibited targets (e.g., glass targets);
- e) authorized shooting activities (e.g., shooting positions, distances, etc.);
- f) a brief explanation of the warning flags or warning markers;
- g) emergency telephone numbers (e.g., 911, police, ambulance, hospital, etc.).

These signs are intended to provide users with a quick reminder of the range's operating and safety rules.

However, they do not replace the requirement for the range operator to maintain a more detailed set of range operating procedures.

Warning Flags and Warning Markers

Every shooting range that is separate from a shooting facility must have its own system of warning flags or warning markers.

This system informs range users and anyone present on the property whether the range is OPEN or CLOSED, thereby helping to ensure everyone's safety. The primary flag and marker colours are RED and GREEN.

Warning Flags

The colours of the warning flags have the following meanings:

- a) Red = Danger — Range in operation, LIVE FIRE IN PROGRESS;
- b) Green = Safe — Range closed, NO LIVE FIRE IN PROGRESS — handling of firearms on the shooting range is prohibited.

Bullet Fragments

A bullet fragment is a piece of a bullet, target, or ground debris projected back toward the shooter as a result of a bullet or projectile impact.

Firing Point and Target Numbers

All firing points and target locations must be clearly numbered.

Firing Point Locations

Firing points must be spaced sufficiently apart to ensure that shooters do not interfere with one another while firing and to allow Range Officers to safely and effectively carry out their duties.

ROLE OF THE RANGE OFFICER

Duties to be performed by the Range Officer before the shooting range opens:

- a) Raise the **RED** flag or activate the **RED** warning light.
- b) Position the club's two signs: one at the parking lot entrance and the other at the entrance to the shooting facility, for outdoor shooting ranges.
- c) Open the gate providing access to the shooting range, where applicable, for outdoor shooting ranges.
- d) Prepare the firearm logbooks for rifles and restricted firearms, in accordance with the club's procedures.
- e) Ensure that the staplers are stocked with staples for mounting targets, in accordance with the club's procedures.
- f) Ensure that there is an adequate supply of targets for long guns and restricted/prohibited firearms, as applicable.
- g) Inspect the target frames and verify that they are in good condition.
- h) Verify that the **BUZZER** is functioning properly, in accordance with the club's procedures.
- i) Ensure that the shooting benches and firing line are clean.
- j) Ensure that each shooting bench is equipped with a garbage container and a firearm rest.
- k) Ensure that the **Safety Table** is clearly identified.*

Please note: No one is permitted to handle a firearm placed on the Safety Table except the firearm's owner.

During operating hours, the Range Officer is responsible for welcoming both club members and day shooters.

Before a member may use the shooting facilities, they must have in their possession:

- 1. A valid club membership card;
- 2. A valid Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL);
- 3. The registration certificates for the firearms being used, where applicable.

The Range Officer must first verify that the member's club membership is valid. The Range Officer must then ensure that the shooter completes the appropriate logbook accurately:

1. Date
2. Time of arrival
3. Firearm registration certificate number
4. Firearm serial number
5. Calibre (if required)
6. Shooting room or firing line used (according to the club's procedures)
7. Time of departure

Closing Procedures

At the end of the day's operations, the Range Officer on duty must ensure that the shooting club is left clean, orderly, and ready to welcome members and visitors.

INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS

Shooting Incidents

While performing their duties, a Range Officer may encounter a shooting incident and, in rare cases, a shooting accident.

A shooting incident may involve property damage, such as an unintentional discharge into the bullet backstop, the ceiling of the shooting facility, the roof soffit, or other range structures.

When such an incident occurs, the Range Officer on duty must speak with the shooter involved to assess both their physical and emotional condition (for example, whether they have been injured or are in shock). The Range Officer must also determine what occurred and assess the damage to the range facilities.

The Range Officer must complete a formal Incident Report and submit it to the Board of Directors as soon as possible.

The club's Safety Committee will review the incident and submit its findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors.

A shooting incident may also involve a personal injury. For example, a shooter may have improperly adjusted the eye relief on their scope and been struck in the face by the optic during recoil.

As with the previous example, the Range Officer on duty must complete an Incident Report and submit it to the Board of Directors as soon as possible.

Shooting Accidents

In the event of a shooting accident—such as a firearm exploding due to improperly reloaded ammunition, an obstructed barrel, or an accidental discharge that injures another shooter or a guest—the Range Officer must immediately call **911** to request emergency medical and police assistance.

The Range Officer must provide assistance to the injured person and administer first aid if qualified to do so. Otherwise, they must immediately determine whether a certified first aider, physician, or nurse is present and able to assist. In such situations, the Range Officer must first declare and signal an **emergency cease fire**, secure all firearms, and ensure that the firing line is safe.

Whenever possible, members, day shooters, and guests should be asked to leave the shooting facility in order to provide emergency responders with unrestricted access and sufficient space to perform their duties.

An accident of this nature requires the completion of a formal **Accident Report**, which must be submitted to a member of the Board of Directors as soon as possible.

Any requests for interviews from the media or inquiries from investigators must be referred to the Board of Directors.

It is essential that the Range Officer remain calm while managing such an incident. Panic among those present must be avoided.

The Range Officer on duty must also contact a member of the Board of Directors to advise them of the situation. The Board member may arrange for additional supervisory personnel to provide support if required.

Never hesitate to contact a member of the Board of Directors if you are uncertain about the appropriate course of action.

SCENARIO-BASED GUIDANCE

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH A SHOOTER WHO FAILS TO COMPLY WITH THE CLUB'S RULES AND SAFETY PRACTICES

All members, without exception, are required to comply with the shooting club's safety rules and established safe handling practices.

As a general rule, the Range Officer will rarely encounter difficulty in ensuring that these safety rules are respected.

However, situations may occasionally arise in which a member fails to comply with a safety requirement, whether through oversight, negligence, or, in very rare cases, by challenging a lawful instruction issued by the Range Officer.

Above all, the Range Officer must treat the shooter with respect and professionalism, explaining the situation calmly and courteously. Under no circumstances should the Range Officer negotiate or compromise a safety rule.

If the shooter accepts the explanation and the situation is resolved, the Range Officer should report the incident to the Board of Directors for documentation purposes, particularly if the shooter may become a recurring safety concern.

If the shooter refuses to accept the Range Officer's explanation and insists on disregarding the safety rules, the Range Officer must instruct the shooter to leave the shooting facilities and advise them to discuss the matter with the club's management.

Should the shooter refuse to comply with the instruction to leave the premises, the Range Officer must contact 911. Upon the arrival of law enforcement, the Range Officer should advise the responding officer that the individual is refusing to comply with a lawful safety directive intended to protect everyone on the firing line and is refusing to leave the property.

Simply put, shooting activities cannot continue while such an individual remains on the firing line. In this situation, an Incident Report must be completed and submitted to the Board of Directors or the club manager, as applicable.

Throughout the entire process, the Range Officer must avoid raising their voice or arguing with the non-compliant shooter. Instead, the Range Officer should approach the individual calmly and attempt to establish direct, respectful communication.

It is essential to avoid creating unnecessary distractions or discomfort for other shooters and guests. The Range Officer must demonstrate that the situation is under control and that all actions are being taken in the interest of everyone's safety.

To assist the Range Officer in carrying out these responsibilities, the club's Safety Regulations, as filed with the Ministry of Public Security, are posted on the bulletin board inside the shooting facility for the information of all members and users of the shooting club.

A fundamental principle applies at every shooting club: **SAFETY IS NOT NEGOTIABLE.**

This means that under no circumstances may safety standards be compromised through negotiation or exception. At no time may a Range Officer permit shooting activities to continue under conditions that provide a lower level of safety than those established by the club.

A Range Officer may encounter situations other than those described in this guide, requiring sound judgment and professionalism in determining the appropriate course of action. Regardless of the

circumstances, the Range Officer should always be guided by one overriding principle: **SAFETY MUST ALWAYS TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER EVERYTHING ELSE.**

The Range Officer must be firm, empathetic, understanding, and maintain self-control at all times. They must serve as a positive role model for all members and range users.

A safe, well-supervised shooting environment where established rules are consistently followed helps provide a positive, reassuring experience for members, day shooters, guests, and visitors alike.

The members of the Board of Directors will always support the Range Officers in the performance of their duties. Range Officers should recognize that they are the club's frontline representatives and, as such, serve as its first ambassadors to members and the public. They are therefore expected to demonstrate professionalism and exemplary conduct at all times.

CEASE FIRE

The command "**CEASE FIRE**" is normally given by the Range Officer on duty.

However, any person present on the shooting range may—and must—call a CEASE FIRE whenever a dangerous situation or emergency is observed.

In an emergency, any individual may issue the **CEASE FIRE** command, and all members and day shooters must immediately comply.

In such circumstances, the Range Officer must proceed to the shooting bench from which the command was given and determine the reason for the emergency cease fire.

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