

**NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION**  
**THE GENERAL COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a Meeting**  
**Held at the Pavilion, Bisley**  
**On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 2.00pm**

**Present:**

**Chairman:** Mr BWD Richards  
**Vice Chairman:** Prof AR Horrocks  
**Treasurer:** Mr MJC Haszlkiewicz

**Members:** Mr G Alexander  
Mr HRM Bailie  
Mr GV Barnard  
Mrs ID Bennett  
Mr MJ Black  
Mr JPS Bloomfield  
Wg Cdr DP Calvert  
Dr AM Cargill Thompson  
Mr ARK Clayton  
Maj SB Fraser  
Mr J Gardener  
Mr C Higginbottom  
Mr JM Kynoch  
Mr CD Law  
Mr CC Mallett  
Mr C Murton  
Mr K Nash  
Mrs KD Robertson  
Mr IW Robertson  
Mr AJD Saunders  
Mr IR Shirra-Gibb  
Mr JD Warburton  
Mr JA Watson  
Mr DD Watt  
Mr RHF Wills  
Mr D Young

**In attendance:**

Mr JEM Hartwell	-	Vice Chairman of the Council
Mr GWJ Alger	-	Secretary
Mr JE Staples	-	MD NSC
Maj MG Farnan	-	Director of Shooting
Mr B Thomas	-	Assistant Director of Shooting
Mrs HL Webb	-	Membership Secretary
Mr B Pollard	-	Finance Manager

**Apologies for absence:** Miss MZJ Boston, Mr CM Brooks, Wg Cdr DP Calvert, Mr JH Carmichael, Mr P Coley, Wg Cdr CJ Hockley, Lt Col L Holley, Mr M Maksimovic, Dr P Monaghan, Col WJ O’Leary, Mr JC Ragg, Brig JR Smales, Mr MP Watkins, Miss A Welford

### **CHAIRMAN’S OPENING REMARKS**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Ken Nash from the National Small-bore Rifle Association to the meeting at his first meeting as Ex Officio representing the NSRA.

### **G137 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY 2008**

The Minutes of the General Council Meeting of the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2008 were received.

#### **G132 a) YOUNG SHOOTERS’ FUND**

Mr Bloomfield asked for the following amendment to the Minutes to be made:

**“Mr Brooks advised that he had been reviewing the document and would refer back to the Membership Committee within the next 3-4 weeks. In fact it had taken 3 months”**

**Mr. Bloomfield asked that the reference to Iain Robertson be removed from the original minute.**

**The amendments were agreed.**

#### **G 135 3 c) AMMUNITION SUBSIDIES**

Mr Alex Cargill Thompson asked that the minute be amended to say that “the ammunition subsidy should be extended to the small number of U25 shooters that were shooting in the Hopton.” **Agreed**

#### **G136 c) – SPEED HUMPS**

Mr Alex Cargill Thompson asked a that the minute be amended to reflect the fact that he had asked whether the speed humps were sufficient to ensure that cars drove slowly enough to enable the CCTV to function properly. **Agreed**

It was reported that the upgraded system could read number plates whatever the speed of the approaching vehicle.

**The amended Minutes of the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2008 were agreed.**

### **MATTERS ARISING**

A question was asked regarding extending the TR ammo subsidy to MR. It was pointed out that MR Shooters provide their own ammo, so although the U25 are subsidised on their entry fee they still have to provide their own ammo. It was asked that consideration be given to dropping the MR entry fee.

A discussion took place relating to discounts already given.

It was agreed that this matter should be considered in the post-Bisley Meeting Review.

### **G138 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (G132)**

The Membership Minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> January 2008 were presented to the meeting.

There were no questions

#### **The Minutes were received.**

The meeting was informed that the next Membership Meeting was arranged for July to discuss membership subscription rates and marketing of membership.

A question was asked regarding the current level of Membership.

It was reported that the current membership numbers were levels 5664 with 435 applications having been received so far in 2008 which is an improvement on this time last year. It was further reported that all but approximately 250 members had renewed on receiving the initial renewal letter, which indicates that the potential level of lapsed members is likely to be lower in 2008 than previous years.

### **G139 MUZZLE ENERGY POLICY**

The Chairman of the Membership Committee and the Muzzle Energy Working Party made the following statement:

“As you know, the position we faced at the beginning of the year was that the muzzle energy of firearm / ammunition use on MoD ranges was going to be restricted to 3800J which would have excluded most civilian shooting. The NRA has successfully raised this limit to 4500J which means the vast majority of shooting can continue. This raise in the limit was subject to us formalising practices that are generally in place already. This formal process is the certification of shooters as being safe and competent by their club chairman. The club chairmen are not taking on anything more than they were already responsible for (although they may not have realised it) and the NRA has improved the insurance package available to affiliated clubs to include insurance for club officers. This requirement comes into effect on 1st Jan 2009. The training requirements for new shooters have also been formalised, and the MoD has approved the probationary course that the NRA had already started developing before the ME issue arose. This requirement as part of the NRA Safe Shooting System comes into effect from 1st July 2008. For those shooters using firearms with ammunition that produces an ME in excess of 4500J (but below the top limit of 7000J) there is an additional requirement to zero their firearm at 200m before moving back to further distances. This must be done each day they visit the range unless they are taking part in a competition running on consecutive days. At Bisley we have negotiated to allow shooters to use the zero range. We have already put this into effect and will monitor it to ensure improvements are made where necessary. Match Rifle and F Class shooters will receive detailed information in their packs when they pick up their squadding cards. The NRA has already written to every member to explain how these new requirements will affect them and we have already had in excess of 500 requests from our individual members for certification. At the same time, we wrote to all the affiliated clubs providing them with a comprehensive pack containing as much information as we could and providing advice on how to implement these requirements. Responses from clubs have also started coming in and it appears that club membership

numbers have also risen. We have hired a new member of staff to cope with the increased workload and Council have set a budget for the Secretary General to pay for this together with the database and infrastructure required. Whilst we believe we have covered most expected questions, there have been and will continue to be questions raised that may need us to tweak the advice and indeed our own processes. These processes will be subject to an ongoing review and the FAQs document will be regularly updated on the website and in the NRA Journals. Although I realise that those here will appreciate the important role the NRA has played in this matter, it has been incredibly difficult to communicate this message to our members without criticism for "allowing it to happen in the first place". I hope General Council will help to put out the message about the positive work the NRA has done to save civilian shooting on MoD ranges for not only our individual members, but also the members of the clubs that affiliate to us. The Secretary General will be holding a meeting on Sunday afternoon following the Inter Counties prize giving to allow clubs and individuals to ask questions they may have."

- a) An observation was made that Annex A the draft attached to the Written Resolution T652 – should be amended to allow probationary/assessment shooters to fire without a certificate – **It was agreed that this point would be addressed with the MoD.**
- b) It was asked that members be notified that if they wish to chronograph their ammunition they can hire the equipment from the Range Office – **It was agreed to advertise the fact on the website and in the Range Office.**
- c) A question was asked why the Zero Range was not covered by an RCO at the weekends. The new procedure which is managed by the Range Office was explained. This does not require an RCO to be present. The meeting was informed that the procedure is posted in the Range Office and printed on the reverse of the zeroing cards.
- d) A question was asked about the process and supply of targets for zeroing on a normal range. The meeting was informed that a person wishing to shoot HME ammunition must inform the range warden in advance so the appropriate target is supplied. The HME target will be supplied by the HME RCO.

### **G140 SHOOTING COMMITTEE (G133)**

The General Council received the Minutes of the Shooting Committee meeting of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008.

There were no questions.

The Vice Chairman of the Shooting Committee gave a verbal report on the Minutes of the Shooting Committee of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008.

The following issues in the minutes were identified for comment .

#### a) **S493 HANDLOADING COURSES**

The Vice-Chairman reported that two courses had been run, each over a full weekend. They had been very labour intensive. He said that there had been a great deal of support. The Committee recorded its thanks to both Dr Cargill Thompson and Dr Monaghan for their tremendous work. It was agreed that Hand loading Courses should be a permanent feature in future training years.

**A question was asked as to whether it would be possible to hold these courses in the regions. It was agreed that this would be considered.**

b) S494 ELECTRONIC TARGETS

The Vice-Chairman reported that the targets are much more reliable now, and that usage had increased due to the better reliability. Häring had moved the radio mast and this had produced a vast improvement. It was noted that many of the problems were not caused by the targets but by user 'target misses'.

A question was asked as to whether we should analyse the reliability and performance of the targets to make informed decisions going forward. Iain Robertson undertook to carryout this survey if required.

c) S495 MOD AMMUNITION AGREEMENT

The Vice-Chairman reported that, despite our best efforts, this agreement is not yet finalised, but it was believed that an agreement would be concluded before the start of the Imperial Meeting.

It was reported that the process of trying to reach agreement had been going on for 2 years prior to the agreement ending on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. Unfortunately due to organizational problems between Defence Training Estates and Land Command agreement had not been finalized to date.

The meeting was informed in the short-term the MoD had agreed to pay for range use up to the end of CENTSAM 2008, prior to the meeting commencing. They would then be working to finalise a contract for the MoD use of Bisley going forward for the next 3-5 years.

d) S497 c) FUTURE GB TOURS PROGRAMME

It was suggested that it might be more appropriate to treat all teams equally, making smaller grants but sending more teams. It was suggested that teams might visit Canada and South Africa biennially in alternate years. It was noted that this was a Shooting Committee decision, but it was agreed that another meeting of the Working Group would be arranged by Robert Stafford as soon as possible. It was explained that currently the NRA is unable to fund elite teams but will be seeking clarification from the Charity Commissioners in the near future.

**It was agreed that a calendar of proposed GB team tours should be sent out to the Home Countries, noting 'vacancies'**

e) S502 ICFRA - TARGET RIFLE WEIGHT/TR TRIGGER WEIGHT/SIGHTING SYSTEM (483b)

The Vice Chairman of the General Council gave an explanation of the recent significant changes to (Rifle Weight, Trigger Weight and Sighting System) the ICFRA rules relating to Target Rifle.

A lengthy discussion took place outlining the potential effect on GB and International shooting.

It was emphasised that the ICFRA position appeared to be an attempt to "provide a technical solution to every age-related problem". It was proposed that a survey should be undertaken of the rifles used by the best shots during the Imperial Meeting to see if these could be categorised. The results of this survey may then be forwarded to

National Associations in 'TR-shooting' countries which are members of ICFRA, pointing out the disadvantages of making the sport ever more technical, and therefore expensive.

**It was agreed that such a survey would be prepared by Mr. Bloomfield for all competitors in this year's Imperial and that it would also be put on the NRA website.**

To encourage completion of the survey a free prize draw for a voucher, redeemable against Imperial Meeting entry fee 2009, might be offered.

**It was agreed that the Secretary General should send a letter to all other NRAs & CSF/CG competing countries explaining the GB position on the ICFRA decisions.**

**It was agreed that Professor Horrocks' paper 'The Concept of a "Standard" Target Rifle: A Discussion Paper' should be attached to the minutes (Annex A) to fully explain the issues.**

f) S504 PROGRESS REPORT ON PHOENIX MEETING

The number of entries was down slightly at 530, but the number of entries for matches was 2652, the highest average number of entries ever. The Booklet this year had been produced in house and raised some £2000.

- g) Concern was expressed at the timing of the Schools' meeting due to the fact that students' holiday dates appeared to be changing. In particular, public schools' summer holidays were starting earlier, making it more difficult for schools to attend the competition.

**It was agreed that the timing of the Schools' Meeting should be part of the 2008 Bisley Meeting Review.**

- h) **Open Day** – It was commented that the Open Day was successful. There was a further request that the MD of NSC consider purchasing some extra rifles (6 to 8 scoped rifles for F Class and MR to save members having to supply their own firearms. A request was made for seating for visitors in the queues. It was stated this would be considered.

- i) A question was asked regarding how the NRA tested ammunition for the Bisley Meeting.

**It was agreed that the Director of Shooting would write an article for the Journal explaining the procedure.**

**G 141 NATIONAL SHOOTING CENTRE LIMITED (G134)**

The General Council received the Minutes of the meeting of the Board of 26<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

**Any Other Business** - A question was asked by the TR representative relating to a number of people's concerns at the use of Stickledown for GR events to the possible exclusion of LR shooting.

The point was made that if GR was becoming more popular that NSC ought to develop additional range space for this use freeing up Stickledown for Long Range shooting.

**It was agreed that GC should set up a working party with NSC to look at solutions to allow all disciplines the use of the ranges. (Iain Robertson, John Bloomfield, Charles Murton, Martin Farnan, Jeremy Staples, Rae Wills) to report by 12 September meeting.**

### G142 THE COUNCIL (G135)

Julian Hartwell reported on the meetings of 14<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February and 24<sup>th</sup> April 2008 and Written Resolutions T651, T652.

#### Minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008 were presented to the General Council.

T635 – Management Accounts - The meeting was informed that a new computerised accounting system upgrade and EPOS had been installed and were working effectively.

T638 – Muzzle Energy – The General Council was informed that at one stage there had been consideration of charging clubs/individuals for the Certification service. It had been decided not to charge for this service so the costings were no longer appropriate

T640 – The Barn – It was reported that the lease for the Barn had been finalised with Mr & Mrs Kent. The tenants had paid £170,000.

T640 (1) – Century Shelf – It was reported that the shelf had been sewn with a special grass to bind the surface.

No questions

#### Minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2008

The Minutes of the special Council meeting held to discuss Muzzle Energy were presented to the General Council.

No questions

#### Written Resolution T651 11<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Written Resolution T651 was received by the General Council covering the appointment of new Marketing Director by NSC.

A question was asked why in the document the Marketing Manager was also referred to as the Marketing Director. In reply it was explained that the person concerned was presently on probation. If successful she would become a Director of the NSC .

### Written Resolution T652 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Written Resolution T652 was received by the General Council dealing with the Council approving the arrangements for the military muzzle energy requirements.

No questions

### Minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2008

The Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2008 were presented to the General Council.

T655 – Event Cancellation Insurance – It was explained that following two incidents, the damage to the butts in 2007 and the flooding on the first Friday of the Bisley Meeting, the Council were considering taking out event cancellation insurance. It was reported that a working party were looking at this issue with the intention of reporting to the Council on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 with a further report to the General Council in September 2008.

Comments requested

A lengthy discussion took place on this issue, following which the General Council expressed the view that they thought it prudent to look at providing Event Cancellation Insurance.

T668 – Council Working Parties - It was explained to the General Council that the Council was considering the use of working parties to support the NRA Executive. and spread the load among the volunteers. Discussion had taken place , however, about the extent to which the Executive was large enough and had the necessary capacity fully to discharge all its obligations. As a result the NRA had held an ‘Organisational Structure Meeting’ to look at service delivery, staffing, infrastructure and accommodation needs for the future. A needs analysis report had been produced, which would be developed into a costed business plan. The business plan will be produced for consideration at the August Council Meeting and the September General Council Meeting.

### **Questions**

T699 – Public Benefit – A question was asked whether the paper could be shared with clubs and associations affiliated to the NRA. The view was expressed that the document as it stood was too technical for general release. ANNEX B

**It was agreed that the Vice Chairman of the Council should produce an abridged version of the Public Benefit document for general circulation and publication in the Journal.**

### **G143 (BISLEY DEVELOPMENT)**

The paper on the Bisley Development was presented by the MD of NSC .

An observation was made that there was no detailed financial analysis or financial plan in the paper although from Council and NSC Minutes it was possible to deduce that the Association is committed to some £110,000 for planning consultants. A figure of some £250,000 was mentioned as possible income without any calculations justifying it.



The MD of NSC explained that Guildford Borough Council had been quite supportive of development at Bisley but that this was conditional on being able to satisfy the needs of Natural England, hence the commitment to an ecological survey which would take most of the spring to autumn. Unless the result of that survey is acceptable to Natural England the prospect of getting planning permission is remote. At this stage only preliminary work has been undertaken on the overall costs which could be incurred and this is all dependant on what form any development takes..

The meeting was informed that the Association had committed very little expenditure to date until it knew the result of the survey. In the meantime a plan for Phase 1 of any development is currently being reviewed by a third party to ensure that it has been externally validated before further expenditure on it is committed..

The meeting was informed that the Real Estate Policy is currently under review to ensure that members concerns are addressed.

The MD of NSC informed those present that a sample lodge would be on site during the Bisley Meeting. Members would have the opportunity to express their views about the facilities they would like to see and register their interest in any lodge development. At present the Association has already received 25-30 expressions of interest. The value of the exercise during the Bisley Meeting will be to assess interest and determine if development is feasible.

The meeting was informed that if the Development was viable the cabins would be built by the NRA to a standard and design for use by shooters. It was intended to let the cabins on a variety of pre-prepared leases to meet different requirements from members

The meeting was informed that the Development could require an infrastructure upgrade of some £500,000 of which £250,000 will be to improve the electrical supply.

Those present were informed that the Development would be under the control of NSC on behalf of the NRA. The NSC will supervise any building work and leasing agreements with tenants.

#### **G144 NATSS (G118 d)**

The NATSS Press Release was received by the General Council

#### Questions

- a) A question was asked about how the new body would be funded. It was explained that a financial model was being developed for discussion at the next NATSS meeting. Any financial model would be taken back to public consultation in November 2008.
- b) Concern was expressed about the current name NATSS. It was explained that this was a working title which was likely to change with any merger.

#### **G145 GB PALMA TEAM CAPTAINCY AUSTRALIA 2011**

General Council accepted the result of the second vote which is to be considered by the Council on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

The Chairman of the TR Sub-Committee reminded the meeting the in terms of process there should be a vote of all the TR Members in relation to a GB captain. The results should then be considered by the Sub-Committee before being referred to the General Council.

Concern was expressed that the recent necessity to have a second vote was carried out with out reference to the TR Sub-Committee.

**It was agreed that the TR Sub-Committee would produce a written procedure for future elections and oversee the process.**

### **G146 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY (G101)**

The Vice Chairman of the General Council informed the meeting that although he had had support for the concept of 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration few members had offered to assist with the planning and arrangements.

Despite the promise that the President would attend an event in 2009-2010 the only additional offer of help had been from the Muzzle-Loaders who seemed quite keen to do something special.

To date no commitment of monies had been made and the intention was to upgrade major shooting events within the shooting calendar to badge them for them the 150<sup>th</sup>. The CCRS commented that 2010 was also their anniversary and they were trying to get the Princes to attend the Prize Giving.

**It was agreed to try and involve the NSC Marketing Manager and to hold a forum during the Bisley Meeting to discuss the issues and try to gain active support for supporting the 150th anniversary.**

### **OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **G147 DISCIPLINARY APPEAL COMMITTEE**

The meeting was informed that there were 2 vacancies on the Appeal Committee of the Discipline Body.

**It was agreed that nominations for co-option would be considered at the next General Council.**

#### **G148 VICE PRESIDENTS**

The meeting was asked to consider the nomination of a Vice President representing South Africa to maintain our long-term relationship with that country.

**It was agreed that the Council would look for a suitable candidate to be nominated as a Vice President for South Africa.**

#### **G149 INTERCOUNTIES**

The meeting was asked to consider providing subsidies for teams travelling long distances to the Inter Counties Meeting.

The meeting was informed that the Inter Counties event was already in receipt of subsidies.

The meeting closed at 5.20pm

**Chairman**

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.**

Date	Time	Venue
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2008	2.00pm	

**ANNEX A: 'The Concept of a "Standard" Target Rifle: A Discussion Paper'**

**ANNEX B: Public Benefit Paper by Julian Hartwell**