



Directions to Vary Muzzle Angles at UKPSA Matches

Introduction

In accordance with IPSC Rule 2.1.2.1 the UKPSA hereby directs that the procedures below must to be followed in order to gain approval to vary muzzle angles at UKPSA approved matches.

The UKPSA's document on muzzle angles serves a number of purposes.

The IPSC rulebook provides for the default IPSC safety angle to be varied and then hands over the responsibility to the Region. Any variance is subject to the "direction and approval of the Regional Director". In the case of the UKPSA the Regional Director is an officer of the UKPSA and the UKPSA Council determines the criteria that is to be applied (the direction) for matches to get approval.

Neither match organisers nor Range Masters want to discover problems the day before, or perhaps even on the morning a match starts. By specifying acceptable criteria for reduced muzzle angles it should be easy for a match organiser to build a match in the sound knowledge that the Range Master should not then find a problem on inspection.

The stated criteria should be welcomed by organisers and Range Masters alike because it should avoid untimely problems just as a match is about to start. Please make no mistake that it can never be good for a Range Master (or the organiser) to be faced with having to make changes to avoidable problems.

The UKPSA also has a responsibility to the members. When members travel to a match they should have a reasonable expectation of what to expect. Indeed this is one of the prime considerations of IPSC and IPSC is fairly unique in providing an international rulebook that strives for consistency across the world.

Members do not want to meet DQ traps or be faced with unexpected restrictions that may impede any reasonable technique they have developed. The UKPSA has stipulated reasonable minimum standards. This has nothing to do with over-regulation, this protects members by setting minimum standards. It provides consistency.

Finally, the UKPSA has made it clear that it does not want to approve restricted angles that reduce safety margins. The UKPSA is happy to support reduced safety angles that provide an additional margin of safety.

Consistency is a good thing and should benefit all.

This document gives direction and establishes the grounds for approval in accordance with IPSC Rule 2.1.2.1. IPSC has devolved that responsibility to the Regions. It is not excessive bureaucracy, it simply states easy to follow criteria.

The RM has the final word with regards to safety matters during matches.

Directions

- 1 The following directions apply to matches within the UKPSA Region and provide for legal or other safety restrictions that may be in force from range to range and from club to club. They also provide for increased safety angles that may be acceptable from time to time.
- 2 The provisions of all IPSC rules remain in force and these directions solely address the subject of reduced or increased safety angles.
- 3 With the exception of the provisions of Point 4 the following conditions apply:
 - 3.1 Any variations to the IPSC default muzzle angle must be notified to the UKPSA Secretary and Regional Director in writing prior to the commencement of the match.
 - 3.2 Any variations must be clearly stated on the course of fire submitted to the appropriate course reviewer(s).
 - 3.3 For each relevant C of F the maximum distance from where each target could be shot should be stated in the C of F document submitted to the UKPSA's course reviewer. Wherever possible the height of any backstops and/or berms should also be provided.
 - 3.4 Any variations must be clearly stated in all pre-match literature including announcements on the UKPSA website or forum.
 - 3.5 Any variations must be included in the written stage briefing and must be read to all competitors prior to the competitor's attempt at the C of F.
 - 3.6 Failure to comply with the provisions of these directions and failure to gain approval for any variations, may, as a minimum, result in approval for any affected stages being withdrawn and the stages removed from the match results. If the overall integrity of the match is significantly compromised as a result the entire match may lose its approval.
- 4 The Range Master is the final authority with regards to match safety. Any variations to muzzle angles that have not been submitted to the UKPSA Secretary, Course Reviewer and Regional Director in advance must not be otherwise altered at or during a match unless with the express approval of the Range Master and then only for circumstances of unforeseen problems. All relevant rules in the IPSC rulebook Section 2.3 will then apply.
- 5 Reduced safety angles are not a complete substitute for other safety considerations and the general provisions of IPSC Rules 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 continue to apply. Reduced safety angles may be employed to comply with range restrictions but only after full consideration has been given to the possible consequences of an accidental shot fired outside of the restricted angle. The UKPSA requires that it must remain extremely unlikely that such a shot would cause harm.
 - 5.1 Reduced safety angles may be employed as an additional safety margin to the IPSC default safety angle.
 - 5.2 In the absence of backstops, berms, side-walls or natural terrain to either side of the vertical, and capable of fully stopping any round from nearby stages impacting on them, all persons must remain uprange; i.e. no persons are allowed forward of the IPSC default safety angle while shooting on adjacent stages is taking place, if in range. However, reduced safety angles may be employed to provide an additional safety margin.
 - 5.3 For shotgun ammunition, for guidance purposes, minimum fall-out distances may be considered as follows: birdshot 300 metres, buckshot 720 metres, slug 2000 metres.
- 6 Safety angles are to be measured from a line (hereinafter referred to as "the intercept") taken from the front of the competitor facing directly downrange towards the backstop or in the case of no backstop from the logical downrange direction. The intercept is to be taken as at a nominal height of 1.6 metres.
 - 6.1 The minimum angle that can be stipulated is 11 degrees.
 - 6.2 For ease and convenience the 11 degree angle can be interpreted as a ratio of 5:1 with 5 units of distance from the competitor to the target against 1 unit of safety margin; e.g. at 10 metres distance to a target there must be at least 2 metres of distance to the left and right and/or above the intercept; at 15 metres there must be 3 metres to the left, right or above; etc.

- 7 Competitors must not be expected to make judgmental decisions during a C of F with regard to remaining within reduced safety angles and a clearly identifiable visual reference is a necessity.
- 8 Courses of fire must be designed so as to never allow any opportunity for a competitor to shoot at a target from any location that would cause an inadvertent breach of the 11 degree (5:1) stipulated minimum.
- 9 For Angles Above the Horizontal:
 - 9.1 The physical presence of backstops, berms, side-walls or natural terrain (e.g. a hillside) may be used to delimit the extent of modified safety angles above the intercept provided they conform to the minimum stipulated in this document, provided they are “in range” and provided they are capable of fully stopping any round impacting on them.
 - 9.2 In the absence of backstops, berms, side-walls or natural terrain as described in 9.1 above the IPSC default angle of 90 degrees to the intercept will apply.
- 10 For Angles to the Left or Right of the Vertical:
 - 10.1 In cases where muzzle angles are modified to the left or right in accordance with IPSC Rule 2.1.2.1 (and where IPSC Rule 10.5.2 will therefore apply) the UKPSA requires clear markers be placed to indicate the limits.
- 11 Note that a match disqualification will apply for breaking the limit of any safety angle varied in accordance with these directions (see IPSC Rule 10.5.2) with the exception of the provisions of Point 12 where IPSC Rule 10.4.1 applies (see below).
- 12 IPSC Rule 10.4.1 prescribes a disqualification in cases where a competitor causes an Accidental Discharge in a direction specified as unsafe in the written stage briefing.
- 13 Increased safety angles may be applied for all ammunition types where it is safe to do so but is still subject to the approval of the Range Master during the pre-match inspection. The provisions of Points 3.2, 3.4 and 4 will apply.
- 14 Please note that the Range Master has the authority to modify any stage where he/she considers that a restricted safety angle has been applied inappropriately or onerously and in particular where a competitor “disqualification trap” is created. If the Range Master considers that the stage is unsuitable or unworkable and cannot be sensibly modified then that stage must be deleted from the match.
- 15 Addition Course Design Guidance:
 - 15.1 For stages where the default IPSC default safety angle of ninety degrees is in force course design should not create situations where competitors have no option other than to shoot at angles with less than 11 degrees of safety tolerance; for example, a competitor could, by choice, shoot a target at an angle of 89 degrees without penalty provided there was an opportunity elsewhere to shoot the same target at an angle of 79 degrees or less.

The UKPSA Council will review these directions from time to time.

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