

Safety Guidelines

Policy Number – 1018

Last Edited: 2025/09/11

<https://archery.org.au/>
(02) 9772 2995

Prepared by:
Insert Name Here





Purpose

The aim of this document is to provide a set minimum safety standards that allows the sport of Archery to be practised in a safe and professional manner by Recognised Governing Bodies (RGBs), Clubs and individual members of Archery Australia.

Archery safety is a matter of exercising common sense, good judgement and courtesy.

All members are responsible for their own safety and the safety of others. All members should read, understand and abide by this Safety Policy and/or the Safety Policies set by their RGB and or Club.

Contents

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Section 1 | Terms and Definitions |
| Section 2 | General Safety |
| Section 3 | Equipment Safety |
| Section 4 | Individual Practice |
| Section 5 | Field of Play Layout |
| Section 6 | Tournaments: Target, Field and Clout |
| Section 7 | Tournament Cancellation and Postponement |
| Section 8 | Club or Social Shoots |
| Section 9 | Working Bees, Mowing and General Club Maintenance |

Section 1

Terms and Definitions

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Field of Play | The area designated as the venue where archery is practiced it may also be referred to as the range. |
| Field Course | A series of targets located throughout a bushland setting that is numbered sequentially starting from Target 1. |
| Member | Any financial member (affiliate) of Archery Australia, Full Member, Temporary Member, Associate Member, or Life Member. |
| Visitor | Any member of the public who visits an Archery Club. Visitors intending to undertake any shooting must be recorded as a Temporary Member. |
| Bow | Generic term which refers to any type of archery bow used; Recurve, Compound, Longbow, Barebow or Crossbow. |
| Arrow | Refers to a shaft (constructed primarily of wood, fibreglass, carbon, or aluminium), consisting of a nock on one end to attach the shaft to the string and a metal point on the other end. This covers both bare shafts and fletched shafts. |
| Bolt | Name given to any projectile shot from a crossbow. Bolts will be referred to as arrows in this policy. |
| Release Aid | Any device used (other than the fingers on the hand of the archer) to hold the string and draw the bow and, which can then release the string after some type of triggering system is activated. |
| Target | Name of the piece of equipment comprising of a butt, stand and target face/s |
| Target Butt | The part of a target designed to stop and hold the arrows. |
| Target Faces | The coloured paper attached to the front of a butt. |
| Clout | Style of shooting where arrows are shot over long distances at a triangular marker on the ground that is known as the Clout. Depending upon equipment, age and gender distances shot are from 100 meters to 180 meters. |
| World Archery | The governing body for international archery events. |
| AA | Archery Australia, the governing body of archery in Australia. |
| RGB | The state or recognised governing body. Clubs are registered to Archery Australia through an RGB. |

Section 2

General Safety

- Clubs are strongly encouraged to undertake a regular Risk Analysis of their facilities and activities to identify any potential risks and hazards. The risk analysis should be conducted in line with the Archery Australia Risk Management Policy and follow the Archery Australia Risk Management Procedure.
- If there is an identified risk the club should develop an action plan to manage the identified risk.
- If there is the possibility of uninvited public access onto the venue, warning signs and flags must be erected to warn and protect members of the public.
- Shooting must cease immediately if a member of the public or an animal (such as a dog) crosses the shooting range or moves behind the target butts. Shooting may not recommence until all members of the public or animals have reached a safe area. Be courteous to members of the public at all times.
- Clubs and RGBs should develop their own Safety Policy (in line with this policy) or utilise the Archery Australia Safety Policy. The safety policy should be distributed to all members and be prominently and publicly displayed.
- Clubs are encouraged to develop an evacuation procedure to be followed in the case of an emergency. The policy should be displayed and distributed to all members.
- In accordance with the Archery Australia Constitution and Shooting Rules and the Archery Australia Public Liability Insurance Policy, only members (affiliates) of a club registered to Archery Australia through their RGB are permitted to shoot or undertake archery activities on any club ground or identified facility used by the club. A visitor or non-member to the club who undertakes any shooting activity must be a Temporary Member of Archery Australia.
- It is strongly recommended that clubs have an Attendance Book, which must be signed by all members, temporary members, and visitors attending the Club in order to validate attendance for the Archery Australia Insurance Policy.
- Members who invite guests to the Club must ensure their guests comply with all safety rules. If the visitor intends to shoot, they must become a Temporary Member.
- Shooting in residential areas, including your own residential property is discouraged and not recommended. Such shooting is not covered by the Archery Australia Public Liability Insurance policy.
- Covered footwear must be worn at all times while engaging in the practice of archery. Sandals or open toed shoes are not permitted while shooting or on the Field of Play.

- Alcohol and drugs must not be consumed by anyone prior to or while shooting. No person may shoot when under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Headphones or ear coverings must not be worn while shooting or on the Field of Play, this may prevent an archer hearing any warning signals.
- Armguards, chest protectors and tight-fitting clothes are recommended for personal safety.
- Bows must never be drawn back with an arrow fitted unless the bow is pointed toward the targets and the field of play is clear of archers and officials.
- The practice of drawing a bow or adopting a shooting technique that allows the bow to be drawn back and raised higher than the top of a target butt is considered to be unsafe and must not be used.
- Never aim a bow, loaded or otherwise, at another person.
- Never run on the Field of Play – walking pace only, particularly while carrying arrows.
- When crossing the Field of Play always walk behind all archers on the shooting line. Do not ask a fellow archer to cease shooting so you may cross in front.
- Be careful not to disturb neighbouring archers when shooting or leaving the shooting line. Avoid poking other archers with bow limbs or stabilisers.
- Archers must regularly check and maintain their equipment. Archers should inspect equipment for cracked limbs and risers, damaged arrows, frayed strings and damaged nocks. It is the archer's responsibility to ensure their equipment is safe to be used.
- Always use matched arrows.
- Never dry fire a bow (firing a bow without an arrow attached to the string).
- All shooting should be under the control of a Director of Shooting, Field Captain or suitably qualified and experienced club official.
- All organised shooting should be controlled by sound signals (whistle or hooter blasts)
 - **Two Blasts:** Come to the Shooting Line
 - **One Blast:** Commence shooting
 - **Three Blasts:** Stop shooting, retrieve and score arrows
 - **Multiple Blasts:** (5 blasts or more) Danger, stop shooting immediately
- Never move forward to collect your arrows before directed to by the Director of Shooting, Field Captain or suitably qualified and experienced club official.
- When approaching a target, look for arrows that may be lodged in the ground.
- Approach the target from the sides to avoid arrows lodged in the ground or target.



- When pulling arrows from the target, ensure there is no one standing in front of the arrows and always pull arrows while standing to the side of the butt.
- A maximum of two archers are to remove the arrows at a time, one from each side (one person removes from the left side, one from the right). Always use the method of withdrawing arrows from the target prescribed Archery Australia method.
- Never pull an arrow from the target butt toward your face.
- Always use two hands when drawing arrows from the target and always use the method prescribed in the Archery Australia method.
- If shooting Barebow it is strongly recommended that an arrow must not be drawn above the cheekbone, this is a potential eye hazard particularly with a mis-shot arrow.
- When shooting on a field course and you are looking for a missed arrows, archers must prop their bow up against the front of the target. This will warn following archers that the field target is still in use. This applies in both practice and competition.
- At no time shall a person cause any interference to an archer or their equipment whilst they are shooting.
- All clubs are strongly encouraged to have a well-stocked and maintained First Aid Kit available.
- Club Check List
 - First Aid Kit
 - Attendance Book
 - Sun Screen
 - Water or Drink Supply
 - Emergency Contact List
 - Safety Policy

Section 3

Personal Equipment Safety

Arrows

- Arrows should be inspected for damage regularly, preferably after each end, particularly carbon arrows.
- Arrows should be matched being the same type, size and length, fitted with the same points, nocks and fletched (vanes).
- Only arrows designed for target or field shooting must be used. Hunting arrows must never be used at an Archery Australia Club.

Recurve Bow

- The bow must be inspected each time you shoot for damage; such as cracks or faults.
- The bow should be strung only in an approved and safe manner.
- The bowstring should be checked for damage, wear, or faults prior to shooting.
- Arrows rests should be checked for damage or wear prior to shooting.

Compound Bow

- The bow must be inspected daily for damage, crack or faults.
- The bowstring and cables should be checked for damage, wear or faults prior to shooting.
- Arrows rests and accessories should be checked for damage, wear or faults prior to shooting.
- An experienced and trained person should only carry out maintenance on a compound bow using appropriate equipment.

Crossbow

- Only crossbows, which confirm with Archery Australia and WCSA Rules, can be used within Archery Australia clubs.
- Any person shooting a crossbow must be able to provide any permits required by law appropriate within that State.
- Any unattended crossbow must be left in a secure state.
- A loaded crossbow must never be placed on the floor or ground.

Release Devices

- Release devices must be of sound design, inspected regularly and in good working order.
- If the release aid uses a rope to hold the string or a loop attached to the string the rope or loop must be inspected by the archer prior to commencing and on a regular basis and changed when any signs of excessive wear are found.

Section 4

Individual Practice

Target and Indoor Practice

- Ideally all target ranges should be setup with a permanent shooting line and staggered targets with archers shooting and moving forward to score together.
- Where this is not possible and permanent target butts are used with a staggered shooting line a safety zone must be established (refer Section 5).

Field Practice

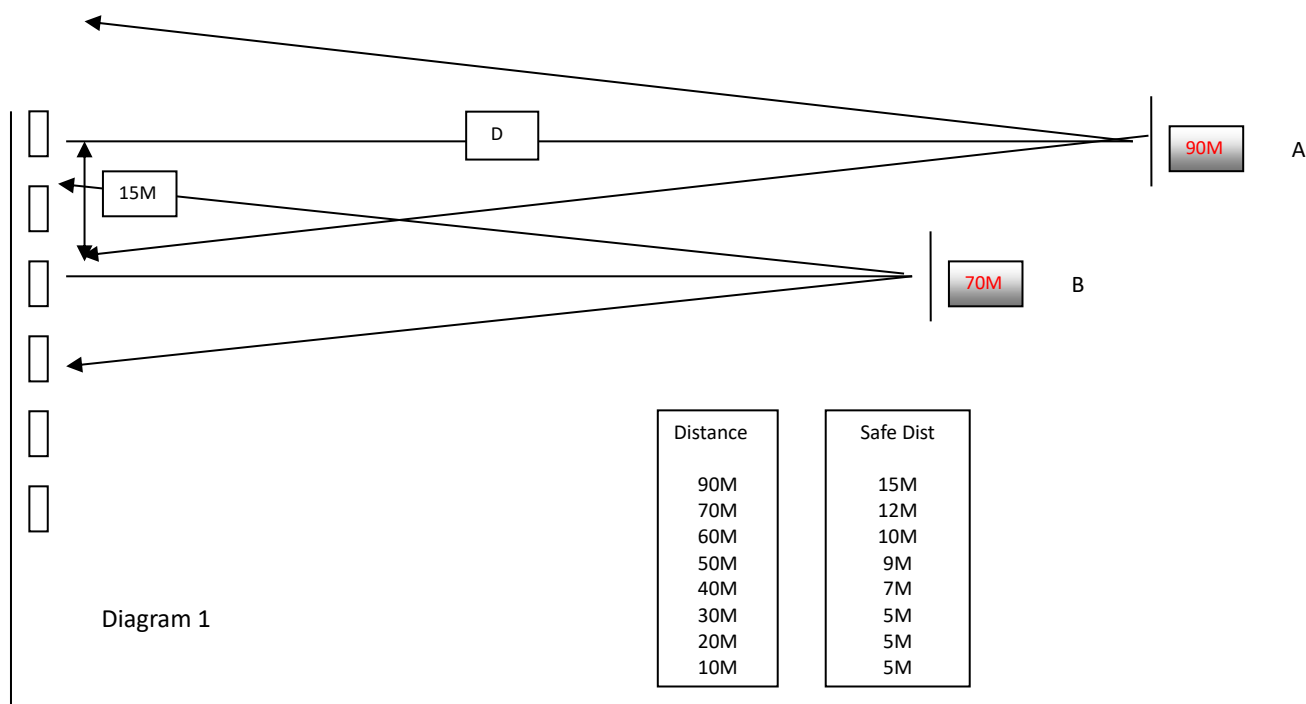
- A field course is to be travelled in only one direction (with target butts ascending in numerical order).
- Archers may only enter and exit the field course via an approved entry / exit point and must keep to the marked tracks.
- It is recommended that a notice board or book be used where archers entering the field course for practice write their name and time of entry and erase it at the completion of their shooting.

Section 5

Field of Play Layout

Target Field of Play

- Ideally the field of play should have a backstop such as a mound or fence or both behind the target to stop arrows that may miss the target.
- If a fence is to be used it should be constructed of such material to stop an arrow but also prevent undue damage to the arrow.
- If a backstop and / or fence are not available there must be cleared area of no less than 50 meters behind the longest target. This area should be fenced or sign posted or both to prevent vehicle or pedestrian access.
- There should be a clear zone of no less than 20 meters either side of the Field of Play. This area should be suitably fenced and / or sign posted.
- Ideally to prevent archers having the sun in their eyes causing a hazard all shooting in Australia should be toward the south.
- If the field of play is set-up using permanent target butts with a movable shooting line the club must develop shooting rules to ensure safety zones are enforced between targets.
- This safety zone must be established with a minimum of an overshoot zone funnel (refer Diagram 1).



Example:-

To calculate "safe" distances between targets

Distance between centre of targets = (D) Distance divided by 6

Therefore in this example archer A @ 90 metres must ensure that minimum distance left for safety is: 90 metres divided by 6 = 15 metres. Therefore 15 from the centre of target A must be left as the safety margin. Archer B @ 70 metres must ensure that 12 metres is available.

Archers on staggered shooting lines must move down together to collect arrows.

Archers from joining targets must not shoot or enter the overshoot zone of another target.

Dividing the Field of Play into Ranges

After you have determined safe shooting zones, you can use this information to divide a Field of Play into various ranges to allow for the safe shooting of various distances simultaneously.

A safe shooting zone is defined by the distance divided by six.

The range distance is then divided by 9 to establish a safe buffer area. The next safe shooting zone may be selected, depending upon shooting distance.

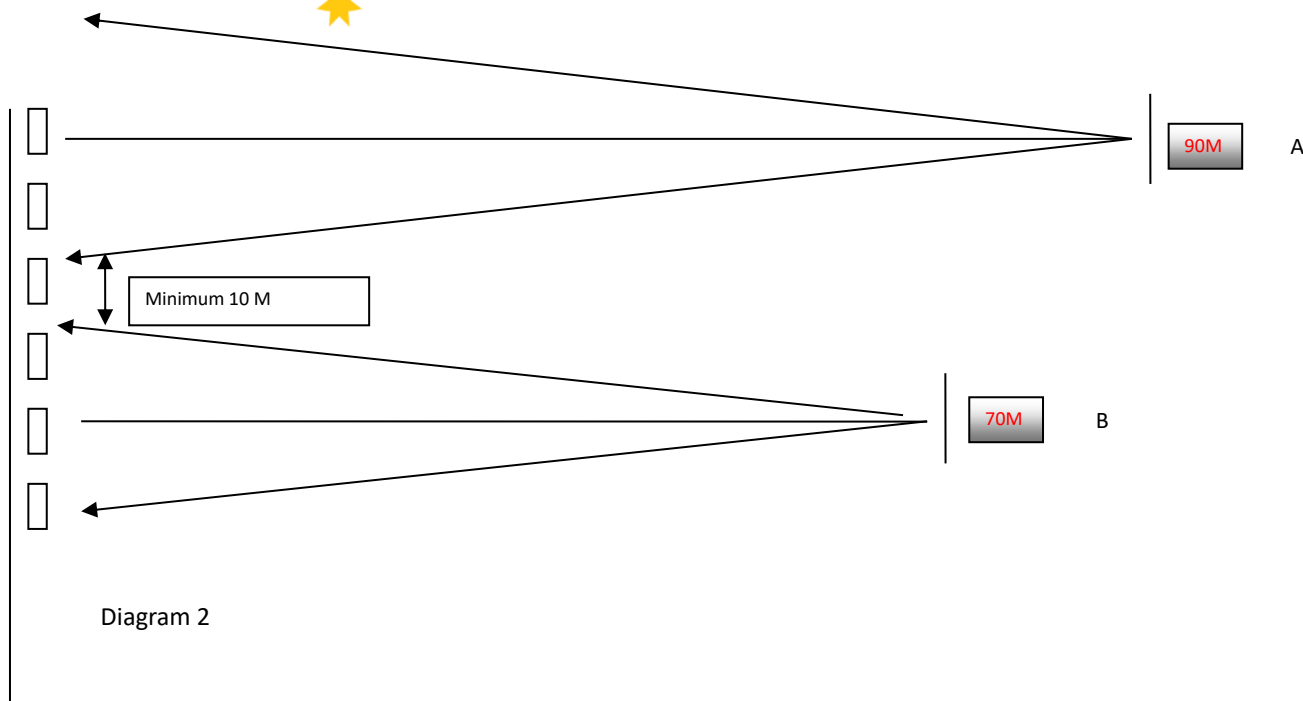
Please note – Safe shooting zones may overlap. But an archer must never shoot or enter an unsafe area.

Safe Division of Field of Play

The longest distance being shot next to the division is divided by 9.

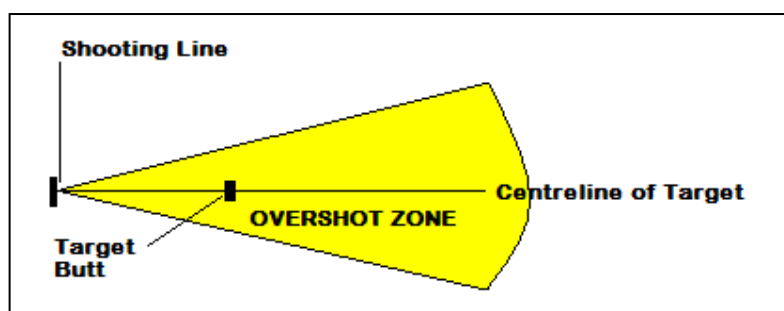
| Shooting distance | Separation from closest safety area |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 90M | 10M |
| 70M | 8M |
| 60M | 7M |
| 50M | 6M |
| 40M | 5M |
| 30M | 4M |
| 20M | 2.5M |

The safety area is measured from the point where the unsafe area ends to the same point for the next archer.



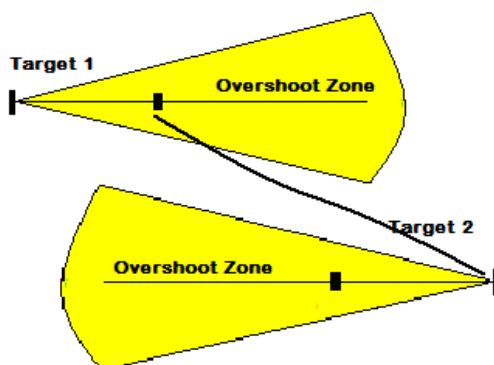
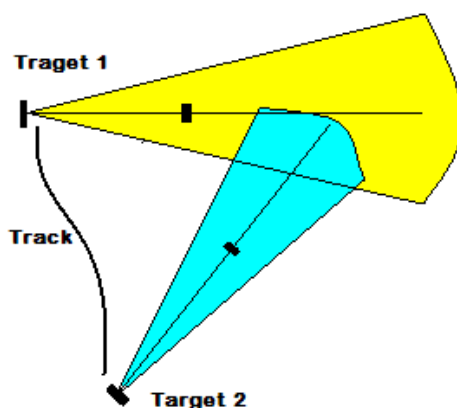
Field Course Field of Play

- For safety the field course should be laid out to ensure there is no possibility of arrows overshooting into another target shooting/overshoot zone.
- The course should be set out so competitors can easily follow paths and tracks without straying into another target lane or overshoot zone.
- To prevent overshoot hazards each target should be set up using an overshoot zone funnel.



- This overshoot zone should be the same as target archery (50 meters) unless mounds or backstops are used.
- Extra distance must be added to the overshoot zone when shooting up hill, the steeper the angle the longer the overshoot zone.
- Extra care must be taken if rocks and landscape are within the overshoot zone that may cause a missed arrow to skip or ricochet. This is particularly important with down hill shots.

- The use of backstops and blinds should be considered for steep uphill shots or down hill shots where rocks and landscape may cause skips and ricochets.
- A field course should be set up to ensure there is no possibility of a competitor straying from one target into an overshoot zone of another target.
- A field course should also be designed to avoid placing targets in the overshoot zone of another target.



- If a club is unable to comply with safety zones they should undertake a risk analysis, establishing an action plan to overcome any deficiency.

Section 6

Tournaments

Target, Indoor and Clout Tournaments

- Target tournaments must be held under the direction and supervision of the Director of Shooting (DOS).
- All tournaments must be controlled using a sound signal, control lights and digital timing is an additional option.
- Archers must only remove an arrow from their quiver and load the arrow on the bow when on the shooting line.
- If an arrow falls forward on the shooting line, the archer must wait until all shooting has finished to retrieve an arrow.
- When archers have completed shooting their end, they must step back from the shooting line (behind the waiting line if provided) so that the Director of Shooting has an unobstructed view.
- If a Waiting Line is not provided archers should step back a minimum of 5 meters behind the Shooting Line when completed shooting.
- When shooting Clout, care should be taken when approaching the Clout. Look for arrows that have fallen short. Non-scoring arrows should be stood up and stuck in the ground by the first person encountering them.
- If a staggered shooting line is being used in Clout, ensure a safe distance is allowed between the multiple clout shooting lines.

Field Tournaments

- The field course is to be travelled in only one direction (with target butts ascending in numerical order).
- Archers may only enter and exit the field course via an approved entry / exit point and must keep to the marked tracks.
- There should be no skipping of targets. If archers are held up they should ask permission to shoot through. There must be no doubling-back.
- Archers must never walk back along tracks.
- No archer is to move forward of the shooting position until all archers have shot all their arrows.

Tournament Cancellation and Postponement

Clubs, Recognised Governing Body's and Tournament Organising Committees are encouraged to introduce Tournament Cancellation and Postponement Policy for all events. This policy should be publicly available and displayed at all times.

This policy should clearly identify the course of action that must be taken in the case of excessive, inclement or dangerous weather conditions or an emergency.

These weather conditions could include – heat, rain, wind, hail, and lightening.

As archery is largely an outdoor sport care must be taken and appropriate action undertaken to ensure the safety of competitors, officials and spectators in extreme weather conditions.

Heat

In extreme heat conditions it is strongly recommended that WBGT Heat Stress level is checked about every 15 minutes.

Ideally tournament organisers should be using a Heat Stress Testing device and should cancel or postpone the event when the WBGT reaches the prescribed danger level, refer Archer Australia Heat Stress Guidelines.

Archery being an “outdoor” sport, the risk of heat exposure is ever present. Archers are responsible for their own safety and should take appropriate precautions such as wearing appropriate clothing, hats and long sleeve shirts, use sunscreen and drink water on a regular basis.

Tournament organisers should be provided with shade behind the “Waiting Line” at tournaments and provided access to water. For club activities, clubs should consider setting up a shelter along the Shooting Line.

During tournaments archery spend the majority of the time on the field of play moving too and from the targets and scoring, extra care should be considered such as the use of umbrellas.

Organisers of tournaments should; also consider the tournament program and an earlier starting time of events to avoid the “heat of the day” or program the tournament outside of times of the year subject to extreme weather conditions.

Rain

Archers are well known for their ability to “soldier on” in rain and wet conditions. Generally it is commonly accepted that rain should not cause a cancellation or postponement but the Organising Committee should consider the general safety of competitors, officials and spectators.

Consideration should be given to slip and trip hazards, damage to personal and tournament equipment. In cold and wet conditions consideration should also be given to hypothermia.

As power is required for many tournaments consideration should be given to the hazard of water and electricity and appropriate action taken.

Wind

As archery is generally an outdoor sport, wind is ever present and generally an unavoidable part of archery.

Strong gusty winds create hazards in archery, such as blowing arrows from arrow rests, blowing over telescopes, umbrellas, tents, target butts and causing objects to become air borne.

Air borne objects create a major hazard with people being struck. As a general rule when wind gusts reach the maximum recommended threshold (refer to your local Work Cover Authority) shooting should stop and archers, officials and spectators should leave the Field of Play.

Hail

Although not common hailstorms do present a potential risk for serious injury. In many cases hailstorms arrive without warning, although accompanied by dark storm clouds.

Archers, officials and spectators should be immediately evacuated to a sheltered area until the storm has passed.

Lightening

Lightening poses a major risk, at the first sight of lightening even in the distance all shooting should immediately cease and the Field of Play should be evacuated until the threat has passed.

Emergency Procedure

Clubs, Recognised Governing Bodies and Tournament Organising Committee's should consider developing an evacuation procedure for each venue. This should be clearly displayed and should be followed in the case of an emergency.

A First Aid Kit should always be available and for major events a trained and certified First Aid provider should be in attendance.

A list of emergency numbers and a telephone should be readily available.

Section 8

Club and Social Shoots

- All organised shooting at a club must be carried out at the direction of a Field Captain or suitably trained and experienced Club Official.
- Archers must pay attention to and cooperate with Officials at all times.
- If a staggered shooting line is to be used then adequate separation and safety zones between targets must be provided.

Section 9

Working Bees and Club Maintenance

- All shooting should be stopped during working bees and club maintenance. A “Range Closed” sign should be displayed prominently.
- When general maintenance is being undertaken, shooting will take place at the discretion of the Field Captain or suitably trained and experienced Club Official.
- When using lawn mowers and other similar equipment only experienced and authorised persons should operate this equipment.
- While using electrical or other power equipment during working bees and general maintenance, those using the equipment are responsible for their personal safety and the safety of those in proximity to the work being undertaken.
- When undertaking works more than 1.8 meters off the ground, or work, which involves overhead powerlines, extra care must be taken and the use of safety harnesses should be considered. Always carry out work with the assistance of other members and with the approval of the Club Executive.
- Power tools and electrical equipment must be checked regularly to ensure they are in safe working order.