Airsoft

AUSTRALIAN AIRSOFT COUNCIL

Information on the sport and proposals by the Australian Airsoft Council for the phased introduction of Airsoft.

Airsoft

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Introduction

The Australian Airsoft Council is asking for nothing more than a fair go. This document provides the reader with a context in which to place the Council's request regarding airsoft and also lays out a strategy to allow the partial legalization of airsoft devices under the strictest set of guidelines found anywhere in the world. Airsoft is a game but the Council understands that there are definite concerns regarding the equipment used to play the game. The Airsoft Council hopes that all stakeholders will read the following document with an open mind and pay particular attention to the "Australian Plan" set out on pages 37~44. The document is otherwise a general and fairly detailed explanation of Airsoft for the benefit of those unfamiliar with the sport.

While one may initially be taken aback by the military themes and images in this document one must also understand that this is a game. Military simulation has a huge following in the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States to name a few and estimates may put the global playing population at well over 200,000 active players. Our own neighbour New Zealand has a growing airsoft population, for a close up television news report and better understanding of the types of people involved in airsoft click this Youtube link Airsoft Close Up (NZTV)

The Australian Airsoft Council was established in June 2009 and is now the only active airsoft lobby group in Australia. The Council is an amalgamation of *the Milsim Association of Australia* and the membership of *Airsoft Australia.*

The AAC understands that at the moment there is no nationally consistent specific legislation regarding airsoft, and as the only stakeholder supporting airsoft, the AAC would like to be involved in any moves that would affect our member's chances of participating in either practical shooting matches or airsoft skirmish type games. Further information and documentation can be provided upon request.

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What Is Airsoft, the sport?

Airsoft is a combat sport, training technology and consumer item that had its beginnings in the U.S and Japan. And from there has spread throughout North America, Europe, the UK, the Philippines and Korea - and is growing rapidly into a global pastime for the perennial weekend warrior. The primary device used in these "war games" is the Automatic Electric Gun or 'AEG' for short.

These devices fire 6mm plastic 'BBs' at speeds ranging from 280 feet per second to over 500 feet per second. Internationally field limits usually range between 300-450fps for outdoor games and 300-350fps for CQB or close quarter battles. At 400fps you'll feel a nice sting if hit but at 300fps the feeling is negligible, if felt at all. While many operators (players) would prefer some consequence to being hit, many players prefer the relative safety that low velocities provide.

AEG's, replicate the size, weight and feel of real life firearms. This 'reality factor', so much a part of the game's appeal, also leads to one of airsoft's greatest challenges in countries such as Australia. The lack of legal recognition, born out of a fear of the misuse of the 'replica' firearm, hobnails many would be airsofters.

For those lucky enough to reside in countries that allow airsoft to be played legally most games take place in either a commercial or private forest setting or in commercial urban areas that provide an excellent opportunity for realistic simulated combat. The airsoft experience could be summed up with the probably unfamiliar word most associated with the sport - MilSim - or military simulation. Airsoft is essentially a sport dedicated to military and tactical simulations, but no definition can prepare you for the first time you walk onto a field and are confronted by the attention to detail a lot of guys and girls put into their uniform or 'loadout'. Or the extent to which players participate in realistic tactical maneuvers, make use of jargon for radio communications or use hand signals, smoke and camouflage to take out or capture an objective. Large teams may be divided into squads and fire teams with realistic objectives or missions that may or may not involve them in the main battle; like the real deal you may not fire a BB during the whole game, but you have completed a mission assigned to you as part of an overall mission strategy. The team work and the mission are just as, if not more important, than emulating Audie Murphy.

Airsoft operators unlike their paintballing counterparts realise that half the fun of simulated combat is getting fully into character. So if you do ever attend a game the first thing that will strike you is how completely over the top these guys are. To say airsofters put a lot of effort and money into their uniforms and gear is an understatement. They are realistic and sometimes even real in every detail from the boots to the helmet, the vest, the radio, the gloves and the unit patches stuck on their arms. Not to mention the devices which, apart from the AEGs, include hand guns, shot

guns, sniper rifles, mini guns, grenades and grenade launchers - all firing 6mm BB's.
MilSim most often falls into two different categories: re-enactment and simulation. Re-enactments focus on a particular event in history and aim to provide the most accurate representation of the time period, events and outcomes of the historical event. Simulation however may only focus on a particular time period and representation of which course a particular situation may have taken in an alternate history. In most cases a simulation event includes fictitious characters, groups and political situations. Airsoft milsim events that reach certain scales of realism, attendance and duration are commonly referred to as 'operations'. As the sport grows (overseas) these events are taking on epic proportions.

Airsoft History

Airsoft devices themselves have a relatively long history. Designed and marketed initially in the United States about 30 years ago by a major BB manufacturer, airsoft was conceptualized as a new approach. In place of the utilitarian airgun designed for hunting, the airsoft device was created with a pure recreational application in mind.
The designs of airsoft devices centre on a unique propulsion system utilizing a small amount of air to accurately shoot lightweight plastic BB balls. The design philosophy resulted in an air gun, which generates limited projectile velocity but is still accurate enough to be used in the competition sport Airsoft and in the training programs of many law enforcement and military forces worldwide.

As the airsoft product matured, manufacturers responded to demand from military/law enforcement training programs, consumers, players and collectors alike, and started to produce 1:1 scale replicas of real firearms. By modelling airsoft devices after world famous pistols and rifles, an entire line of Replica airsoft products were created. This created a huge splash not only in the United States, but it also brought the hobby to the rest of the world. Italy, Japan and many Asian countries caught on to the craze and took the development of airsoft devices to new heights. Over several design generations constant improvements were made. The highly matured plastic polymer technology industry in Japan created a new generation of airsoft devices with amazing durability and detail. Adding to its player/collector market, the improved airsoft devices created new opportunities for firearm safety training, movie productions and recreational sport. Airsoft devices offer a potential alternative for the collector and shooter. The combination of realism, safety, flexibility and low cost make airsoft more appealing to the interested consumer. Many of whom would like to exercise his or her steady eye/hand coordination without the inherent dangers or expensive of the real alternative.

SAFETY & URBAN MYTHS

The perception that many people have of airsoft is coloured by the equipment and apparel used by the players. This has lead to a number of misconceptions, myths and some concern about the sport, not the least of which are safety issues.

Safety is the primary concern of any responsible venue operator (with appropriate permit) and players of airsoft. It is also an inherent feature of the device design and equipment used during skirmishes. All players wear protective goggles or ballistic goggles designed to withstand impacts higher than those of the plastic airsoft BBs. Use of eye protection is mandatory on all sites in the world and is accepted practice amongst all airsoft players.

In addition to eyewear, many players choose to wear plastic or cushioned neoprene masks to protect their face and teeth. Military grade helmets are common, as are kneepads and the vast majority of players wear gloves to protect their fingers and hands. While there is no danger of injury, most players prefer to avoid the sharp stings of airsoft rounds impacting their hands.

Venues always have what is called a "safe zone". In this area every airsoft device must be switched to "safe" and the magazine removed before entry. This ensures that no accidents can take place in the presence of people who may not be wearing their eye protection.

Further to this, many venues adopt a "fire zone only" policy, which means that the airsoft devices outside of the actual play area must be inactive (safety on and magazine out) regardless of whether a player is in a designated "safe zone" or not.

Finally, all airsoft games and venues, like Paintball and Laser tag, have marshals operating within the play area. The purpose of this is to make sure that the safety rules are adhered to. Regardless of this, there are still a number of misconceptions that surround airsoft devices and the sport in general. We will attempt to dispel a number of these but please keep in mind that it is not feasible to cover every potential misconception and we make no claim to do so.

Examples of common misconceptions;

1. *Airsoft devices are dangerous, can cause injury, or even kill!*

Airsoft devices are specifically designed to be harmless beyond a sharp sting (except to exposed eyes and possibly teeth - hence the masks). The scientific threshold (according to UK laws) for any projectile round to cause a wound of any type is a "muzzle energy" greater than 1.35 joules[1]. Most airsoft devices used in skirmishes would under AAC proposals produce muzzle energy at or below 1.35 joules.

Many people claim that an impact with the human eye, even at such low velocities, could result in the loss of the eye or other significant permanent damage. This is also erroneous since the 1.35joule limit takes into account the resilience of the human eye.

It is currently recognised by the British Home Office and forensic science service that projectiles with muzzle energy of less that 1.35j are "incapable of penetrating even vulnerable parts of the body, such as the eye, although a direct hit from very close range would cause bruising"[2] Furthermore, it

[1] The kinetic energy possessed by a projectile as it leaves the barrel of the device.

[2] British House of Commons, Home Affairs Second Report, 6 April 2000, Appendix 1, section b.

has also been noted that "assessments by forensic scientists had indicated that the minimum muzzle energy required to inflict a penetrating wound lay between 2.2 and 3.0 ft/lb (foot pounds), or 3-4 joules."[3]

2. Airsoft devices are the same thing as Air rifles.

No, they are not. The council does however understand that there is some confusion in this regard.

Air Rifles are often rifled weapons which propel a lead or metal projectiles at high velocity (800~1500fps) and are typically used for target shooting and hunting very small game (rodents etc). *Air guns* use compressed gas and generate muzzle energy in the region of 17 joules. Such muzzle energy is far in excess of the physical capabilities of any airsoft device. An airsoft device is a precision sporting device designed to safely propel a plastic bead or ball (called a BB) at speeds in the region of 300~377 feet per second. Airsoft rounds and devices are incapable of producing the energy required to cause harm and as such are suitable for player-to-player "hitting" and target shooting only.

3. Airsoft devices could be loaded with metal shot making them lethal weapons.

There are rumors that these "toys" can be modified to fire bullets; airsoft enthusiasts know this is far from the truth. It is impossible to convert any airsoft device to fire a real bullet due to their internal design and the materials used in their fabrication. Most rumors are driven by the realistic look of the airsoft device, public fear and ignorance about what is actually beneath the gun's "skin". airsoft barrels are not rifled and definitely are not sturdy enough to fire a real bullet. If someone were to replace all of the parts necessary to use a real bullet, they could have simply built a real gun from scratch. Airsoft devices are precision devices that are designed to operate within specific parameters.

First, the weight of a metal round is far higher than that of an airsoft round[4], which means that an airsoft device is unable to generate sufficient energy to propel the metal round with any significant velocity.

Second, the internal gearboxes of airsoft devices, the part of the device which loads the pellet from the magazine into the barrel, are constructed to deal with a very light and very specifically dimensioned[5] projectile. Any attempt to force the gearbox to cope with vastly heavier objects (>1.5g), or objects not meeting the tolerances mentioned in footnote 6, will severely damage the device.

Third, the barrel of an airsoft device is specifically machined to very exact tolerances[6], any attempt to pass anything but an airsoft specific pellet through them will result in one of two things

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[3] Control of Firearms in Northern Ireland and the Draft Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, paragraph 32.

[4] Airsoft pellets are available in weights from 0.12g up to a maximum of 0.42g

[5] Airsoft pellets are machined to exactly 5.98mm with a maximum tolerance of 0.02mm either way

[6] Airsoft barrels are manufactured in steps of 0.01mm from 6.08mm down to 6.02mm

happening. Either the projectile will be too small to form an air seal and will simply roll out of the barrel, or it will be too large, and jam in it.
Finally, the spring and gears in the magazine of an airsoft device lack the power to raise a metal round into the firing position, making it nearly impossible to load alternative rounds in the first place. They are absolutely non-lethal. Airsoft devices are designed specifically for "hitting" people during an airsoft military simulation. Paradoxically, you can purchase a lethal air powered weapon but you may not possess a non lethal air powered airsoft device! Even so Australian Airsoft Council is pushing for a limit of approx 1.35joules for most airsoft devices, measured using .2g BBs. This corresponds to an absolute limit of 377fps which is well below the nearly universal numbers teams and fields are settling on and (self) regulating worldwide (400fps); and is widely held to be the safest limit for BB velocity; yet still far below the muzzle energy/ velocities produced by air rifles (800~1500fps).

4. *Airsoft will lead people to want to buy lethal firearms.*

There is no such thing as a "gateway sport". If an airsoft player wishes to take the time to learn to operate, store and maintain a firearm that is legal to purchase, licensed and registered that is his or her privilege. Further, the prohibited firearms that look like restricted airsoft devices are illegal and cannot be obtained by any legal means within any state of Australia. Airsoft, as a sport, has nothing to do with lethal firearms and the AAC makes it clear that any member who owns and operates a lethal firearm does so outside of the remit of the AAC.

5. *Airsoft devices are used in crimes.*

Possibly, but it is a fact that knives, syringes, hammers, baseball bats, hurly sticks and or real firearms are used in crimes now. While this statement may actually have some grounds in fact it is, by its very nature, paradoxical since frankly it is safer to be the victim of a crime involving an airsoft device than to be the victim of crimes involving the above mentioned items; readily purchased in a retail store today. Beyond this, one must also face the fact that with an appropriate license a lethal firearm can be purchased and just as easily used to commit a truly violent crime. To assume that an airsoft device owner is more likely to commit a violent crime than any other firearms owner (after going through the same licensing and registration procedures) is discriminatory - the argument itself is *ad hominem*.

6. *Airsoft and Paintball glorify violence, war and crime.*

This is a common point of view. It is also exactly the same one that many people have towards video games, rock/heavy metal/rap music, modern cinema, television shows and the news. It is a condition of our culture to question all influences without really understanding true motivations, it is pseudo science and requires a baseline deep in subjective opinion to accept or deny the "truths" offered by either side of this nurture/ nature debate. There has never been a conclusive study to show that partaking in and/or watching action/military orientated entertainments leads to a predilection toward violent crime. In fact

structured activities like martial arts classes, which specifically teach people how to injure one another, are known to reduce the likelihood of someone being involved in belligerent activities.

Airsoft Devices

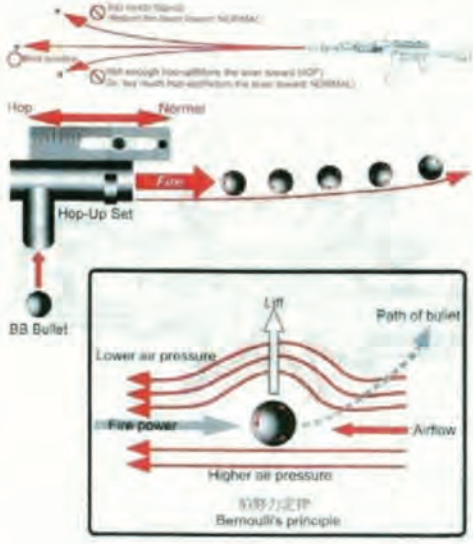
Airsoft devices are most commonly powered by one of three sources:

1. Bolt or pump action spring powered guns or "Springers"
2. Gas (Non-Blowback or Gas-Blowbacks)
3. Electric (Automatic Electric Guns or AEGs).

All airsoft devices fall under one of these three categories, the majority being the latter two, Gas or Electric. Most airsoft devices are replicas of real firearms, in keeping with the realistic style of Airsoft (also known as military simulation), but occasionally fictional "body kits" are available; such as the "M41A Pulse Rifle" from the movie "Aliens", or replicas of firearms that never went into service or production such as the XM8 prototypes. Airsoft devices also possess features that set them apart from other air guns, besides looking realistic. Before going into details about the different types of airsoft devices we'll take a look at one of the most unique and important features of all.

The Hop-Up Unit

The hop-up unit is probably the most unique identifier as to what actually constitutes and airsoft device. The hop up unit, invented specifically for airsoft devices, provides back spin to the 6mm plastic projectile dramatically increasing its range, while decreasing its muzzle velocity. The hop up unit does not affect the device's accuracy, only the flight path of the BB. The unit is completely unique to airsoft devices. A nub located on the inside of a synthetic sheath, covering the back end of the barrel, protrudes through an opening in the barrel and makes contact with the BB, at varying degrees of sensitivity. Controlled by increasing or decreasing pressure on the nub by way of a mechanism designed specifically for this operation, the hop up essentially allows the BB to defy gravity for a longer period of time. (see diagram right).



Spring Powered

Spring-powered Airsoft devices are single-shot devices that use potential energy stored in a spring to launch an Airsoft BB down the barrel of the replica. The user must cock a spring gun prior to each shot. This is typically achieved by pulling back the slide (pistols), bolt (rifles), or the grip on a shotgun, which in turn compresses the spring and makes the device ready to fire. Because of this, these devices are by definition incapable of automatic or semi-automatic fire. Low end spring powered toy guns are typically of this design and not as powerful as purpose built high end bolt action replica "sniper rifles".
While electric guns also use springs to propel an airsoft round, they are not considered to be in the same category as the single-shot spring-powered devices. Low-end spring guns tend to be much cheaper than their electric-powered equivalents due to their simplicity and lack of electrical and mechanical components (gearbox, electric motor and battery) and thus are widely available in overseas markets as toys for children. These toy guns are not suited for competition and do not provide enough accuracy or power for long-range use.

The exceptions however are high-end spring-powered airsoft devices. These guns are typically suited for "sniping" operations in airsoft matches and provide highly competitive muzzle velocities. Additionally, pump-action devices are sometimes used, especially in CQB (Close Quarter Battles). In cold or freezing weather, spring pistols are usually more reliable than gas-powered pistols (see below) or respectively AEPs (Automatic Electric Pistols), both of which can be adversely affected by extreme cold.

GAS POWERED

Gas-powered airsoft devices use pressurized gas to propel BB's. These guns are capable of automatic and semi-automatic operation. The most common gases used are "Green gas" (which consists of a mixture of propane gas and a polysiloxane lubricant) and HFC-134a, Green Gas being the more powerful of the two. Less commonly used gases include "red gas" (HCFC-22 gas), and CO2. Red gas is almost always avoided unless the replica has undergone high end modification, as its relatively high critical pressure can cause damage to the replica. CO2 replicas are less common because the gas needs to be stored at a higher pressure than Green Gas or HFC-134a, incurring rather higher costs. Other instances where gas is favoured are where adjustable velocities are required or where a blowback feature is desired. A blowback feature is a mechanism which cycles a slide or bolt to better simulate a real firearm's operation.

Gas power tends to be used in airsoft pistols. The gas is stored within a reservoir in the magazine of the device, along with the BB's. When the device is "fired", a small amount of gas is released to

propel the BB down the barrel and cycle the slide back, bringing the next BB into position to be fired with the next pull of the trigger.
However, that said, they are not just limited to pistols, sniper rifle replicas and military styled devices may also use gas mechanisms. While replicas typically feature a blowback mechanism similar to the pistol replicas, sniper rifle replicas usually omit the blowback mechanism in favour of reduced recoil and increased muzzle velocity using the single-shot bolt-action mechanism.
Recently some manufacturers have started to make automatic blowback rifles. These assault rifle replicas have an internal bolt which is cycled when shot, giving the feel of recoil with every shot, when firing in both semi-automatic and automatic modes.

Gas Grenade

Along with using gas to power airsoft devices, it is also applied for use in airsoft grenades. Grenades can be either projectiles, fired from a grenade launcher, or typical hand grenades. "Projectile" style grenades use shells and are based on real life "grenade launchers" such as the M203 launcher. It works on the system of an internal piston, filled with gas. The shell is inserted in the launcher and then fired at the designated area, with the gas expanding when the launcher is fired; launching the BB's stored within the shell at the designated area.

Hand grenades are work a bit differently, with the grenade shell being physically thrown at the designated area rather than being fired. These shells are based on real grenades such as the M67 fragmentation grenade. Inside the grenade there is a similar piston to the one used in the shells, but is on a literal "timer" that allows the user to throw the grenade at the designated area before the gas inside the grenade expands after a set time, usually between 3-5 seconds. BBs are again used in the grenade and are launched by the venting gas.

The M18A1 claymore mine has also been replicated, and works in a similar fashion to the M203 launcher. The Claymore is placed in a designated position on the ground, facing the destination in which one wishes for the BB's to travel. However, while the M203 has to be physically fired by the player when they are standing with it, the claymore can be set up to be fired by either trip wire or remote detonation.

Anti-tank weapons have also been replicated, such as the M72, but they are not common or popular due to their weight and greater expense. These are rarely used but can be (with special rules in place) when playing on an official Airsoft field (particularly in the United States).

Gas Shotgun

The projectile style of grenade has also been adapted to produce gas powered pump-action shotguns. These work in a similar way to the spring powered pump action shotguns, but do not gain energy from the pumping-action. Instead, they use shells like a real shotgun. Each shell contains

between 1 and 3 BB's and a small amount of gas. The shells are then loaded into the "shotgun" and the device is cocked via the pump action, loading the first shell into position. The device is then fired, releasing the gas in the shell which projects the BB down the barrel. To load the next shell, the pump action is cycled again, ejecting the spent shell out of the device via the ejection port, and cycling the next shell into position.

ELECTRIC POWERED

Automatic Electric Devices (commonly referred to as AEGs)

Electric-powered Airsoft devices use a rechargeable battery to drive an electric motor, which cycles an internal piston/spring assembly in order to launch BB's. Automatic and semi-automatic operation is possible which give these devices the popular name "automatic electric guns" or AEGs. These devices often attain muzzle velocities between 270 and 500 ft/s (80 to 150 m/s) and rates of fire of between 600 and 2000 rounds per minute. They are the most commonly used airsoft device.

What powers the BBs flight?

The Mechbox or gearbox of an airsoft device known as an AEG or Automatic Electric Gun is essentially an air pump. A battery powers an electric motor which in turn powers a piston via a gear set. The piston compresses a spring and when the gears have cycled far enough the piston is released and is pushed with force back down a cylindrical casing, the piston head compresses air as it moves. The air is propelled through a nozzle, in turn propelling the BB through the barrel.

Batteries

The Electric motor of an AEG or "automatic electric gun" (usually positioned in the handgrip, barrel guard or stock) can be powered by a variety of batteries including Nickel Cadium (NiCad), Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH) and the newer Lithium Polymer (Li-Pol). Average voltages range from 8.4v ~ 12v

External modifications, such as metal bodies and reinforced plastics that make AEGs look and feel even more realistic, have become very popular. AEG manufacturers such as Classic Army and Tokyo Marui produce airsoft devices that are visually very similar to their real counterparts. Tokyo Marui, however, sticks with a durable ABS plastic where as Classic Army features full metal bodied guns and stronger furnishings.

The two most common AEGs fielded by players are the AR-15 series (M16 rifle, M4 carbine, etc, sometimes referred to as the Armalite or Colt series) and in the past the MP5 series, because parts for repairs or modifications/customization are commonly available. Also popular are AK models, the Heckler & Koch G36c and more recently, the M14. However, that does not mean other firearms

have not been replicated. In fact, it has been estimated quite that 95% of all real life firearms have an airsoft device replica, or body kit, made based upon them.

What kinds of firearms do these devices replicate?

The Tokyo Marui company (Japan) essentially invented modern Airsoft. Their AEGs are known for their reliability, the ease with which spare parts can be located, and the range of airsoft device replicas they produce. Their range below is an example of just how many real guns have been replicated for uses as diverse as war games, collecting and law enforcement and military MOUT training. This list does not include their hand gun range.

M14 SOCOM
M14 (fiber-type stock)
M14 (wood-type stock)
M16 & M4 series
Colt M4A1 carbine New-type
M4 S-System
Colt M16A1
Colt M16A1 Vietnam version
Colt M16A2
Colt M733 Commando
Colt M4A1 R.I.S.
Knight's M4 SR-16
Colt M4A1
Colt XM177E2 (discontinued)
Colt CAR-15 (discontinued)
Colt M653 Barnes version (limited edition)

H&K G36C
MP5-J
MP5-K
H&K MP5SD5
H&K MP5SD6
H&K MP5KA4 PDW
H&K MP5A4 High Grade
H&K MP5A5 High Grade
H&K MP5 R.A.S. [5]
H&K MP5KA4
H&K MP5 Navy (Limited Edition)

P90
P90 Triple Rail
FAMAS & Steyr series
Steyr AUG Special Receiver
Steyr AUG Military-type (discontinued)
FA-MAS Special Version
FA-MAS 5.56-F1 (First AEG ever made)

Vz. 61 Scorpion
Heckler & Koch MP7A1
Uzi submachine gun
Thompson M1A1

AK series
AK-47
AK-47S
AK-47 Spetsnaz (limited edition)
AK-47 Beta Spetsnaz
AK-74MN (Electric Blow Back)
AKS-74U (Electric Blow Back)

G3 series
H&K G3A3 (discontinued)
H&K G3A4 (discontinued)
H&K MC51
H&K G3 SAS
H&K PSG-1
H&K G3/SG1
HK51 (limited edition)

Low powered electric guns

Low powered electric guns (LPEGs) are distinguished them from the more expensive and more powerful AEGs by their cheaper design and build quality, though their operation is similar. They are not to be confused with Mini Electrics (described below). They are of novelty value and are usually sold in large department stores as toys. They are regarded as inferior to spring operated devices due to their poor construction, including a plastic gear set, and their extremely low velocities even with .12g BBs.

Medium Powered electric guns

Some companies have improved their quality to such an extent that some models are now considered simply as mid ranged AEGs that are more affordable but still reasonably effective. Among Airsofters these are commonly referred to as middle powered electric guns (MPEGs).

Within the last 24 months the MPEG market has increased a hundredfold, based mostly in China, and is now producing many AEGs that are just as powerful as high end AEGs and with extremely good workmanship, at generally 1/3 of the price of their high end competitors. However, the companies which produce these devices often lack quality control standards, so airsofters run the risk of receiving a device that is faulty or of generally poor quality.

Electric Blow Backs

Electric Blow Backs, also known as EBB's, are cheap electric devices, mostly modelled after real world pistols, which typically run from four AA batteries or AAA batteries. EBB's generally have a very low muzzle velocity and "blow back" like a Gas Blow Back to simulate the action of a real pistol, however the low power of the batteries produce a very slow and delayed slide action.

Mini electrics

Recently, the company UHC, well known for its spring guns, began manufacturing a range of electric devices in miniature that fire only in automatic mode. They differ from LPEGs in that they are not replicas of real firearms, being only miniaturized version of real firearms, mostly made of black or clear plastic.

They have small magazine capacities, usually between 50 and 100 rounds, but may have good range and functional hop-up units. They have become very popular in recent years, and are now being manufactured by Tokyo Marui, as well as the Taiwanese company HFC. These "minis," as they are referred to, are not a viable option in games against AEGs since their magazine capacity and poor accuracy leave the user at a disadvantage.

AEPs

Automatic Electric Pistols, abbreviated AEPs, was first introduced by Tokyo Marui in 2005 with their Glock 18C (followed later by a Beretta 93R model). They were the first handguns to incorporate an electric powered system that is capable of automatic operation.

In cold weather, AEPs are often considered better sidearm's than gas powered pistols, because batteries are not as badly affected by frigid weather. Gases like CO2 and green gas are stored in liquid form and require heat in order to vaporize. A gas pistol at 10 °F will usually only get one to two usable shots from a full magazine.

Because an AEP's gearbox and battery are smaller, the velocity of the BB's is relatively slow for airsoft play although CYMA's Glock 18C is capable of firing full auto at around 270fps with reasonable accuracy.

An AEP differs from electric blow-backs because the AEP has a fixed slide (in which there is no external movement of the slide during operation), while an EBB attempts to simulate the "blow back" action in the slide experienced in a real pistol or Gas Blow Back (GBB). An AEP, however, has much more power and accuracy.

ACCESSORIES AND PARTS

BBs

Airsoft devices fire spherical plastic pellets ranging from 0.12 to 0.88 grams in weight, though the most popular weights for AEGs are between .20 and .28 grams, depending on the range that the device is typically used at. Heavier rounds between .32g and .43g are typically used for sniping or practical shooting, as they are more stable in flight and thus, more accurate at range. While BB's may be heavier, it is not necessary to have the gun upgraded to a very high FPS level. The best way to increase the accuracy of a device is to adjust the hop-up to the point of where the bb flies as straight and as far as possible without curving upwards or downwards at short distances. BB's are typically 6 mm in diameter, though 8 mm varieties exist for specialty weapons. Pellet quality is important, as malformed pellets could easily damage the barrel of the airsoft device and/or the hop up system.

Sights

Optical sights are fairly common on airsoft devices; mostly red dot sights for short-range use, and telescopic sights for longer-range use. These range from inexpensive sights designed for use on pellet guns and .22 rifles, to mid-range sights, usually inexpensive replicas of actual rifle sights (such as replicas of the famous M68 Aimpoint), to actual sights designed for use on rifles, including the EOTech Sights, and the Trijicon ACOG TA01NSN. Most of these sights are mounted on a MIL-STD-1913 Rail.

Magazines

An airsoft device's magazine quite simply could never hold a real bullet! There is no way to modify its mechanism for such a purpose. If you look at the image below it becomes obvious that modifying an airsoft device to discharge real ammunition would require the fabrication of that weapon from scratch. Magazines are usually realistic looking replicas of real firearm's magazines and as such are made of materials like stamped metal or high impact ABS plastic. They occasionally feature markings and/or engravings that match or mimic their real counterparts.
Gas blowback magazines are usually made out of thicker metal, since they contain compressed gas, to power the device, as well as the BB's. The magazines usually have a valve on the bottom that is used to fill its internal cylinder with gas. They are designed to be similar in weight to a fully loaded magazine from a real firearm. Airsoft magazines are divided into the following classes according to the number of BB's they hold:

Low capacity (Low-Cap)

Lo-Cap magazines are the ones that are usually supplied free with AEGs. These magazines typically hold between 50 and 100 shots in a vertical stacked, spring loaded magazine. There is no winding involved and these magazines tend to feed more reliably, but they hold less ammunition per mag than other types. They come standard with devices manufactured by companies such as Tokyo Marui.

Medium capacity (Mid-Cap)

Medium Capacity or Mid-Cap magazines usually work the same way as Lo-Cap magazines (vertical stacked BBs, no winding mechanism, but hold roughly double the ammunition of a Lo-Cap mag. The track that the BBs follow inside the mag is longer and contains a longer spring to push the BBs in to the AEG. Several of these mags hold enough ammunition for skirmishing, and the Mid-Caps are very reliable.

High capacity (Hi-Cap)

High Capacity magazines for most device types, holding 300+ BB's, incorporate a spring that must be wound in order to feed ammo from a reservoir to the airsoft device. This mechanism allows a magazine that normally holds 50 shots to hold several hundred. Hi-Cap mags do allow you to load hundreds of shots into an airsoft device, but they can be problematic if not properly taken care of. This term is used for all magazines with a winding mechanism. A toothed wheel is rotated to bring BB's from a reservoir, along a feeder and up into the device. Often this wheel is turned manually but a battery powered electrical motor or "autowinder" is available to perform the same function. These magazines are almost exclusively used in AEG type of devices and the obvious advantage is the greater number of rounds. However Hi-cap magazines are not allowed at most major airsoft events, and are more often than not frowned upon, surprisingly, as unrealistic!

Real capacity (Real-Cap)

Real-Caps are identical in operation to Lo-Cap magazines, but they carry the same amount of ammunition that the real version of the magazine can carry, which is often much less than the standard airsoft magazine. For example an M-16 Real-Cap will hold 30 rounds instead of the 68 of a standard magazine.

SAFETY

All airsoft devices come equipped with a safety. On semi auto only, or single shot weapons, this is usually a button or small lever which when in a certain position stops the gun from firing. On devices which have semi and full auto functions, the safety is in the form of a fire selector switch, which allows the user to select between "safe", "semi" and "auto" firing options.

While airsoft devices are considered rather safe, there are safety precautions that anyone who is handling or shooting an airsoft device must follow. At very close-range (1 meter) BBs impacting on bare skin at a velocity of 300 FPS may break the skin. If playing with a t-shirt or thin clothing it may possibly leave a small welt. BBs can also cause definite problems for unprotected eyes.
For these reasons safety guidelines have evolved with the sport to protect the eyes and face. The minimum level of gear required to participate in all games includes a pair of fully-sealing impact-rated goggles to protect the eyes of the participants. A common law among airsoft fields and teams may read as such,

Eye Protection is MANDATORY!

All goggles and safety glasses must have a hard lens and must meet ANSI Z87.1 standards. There must be a full seal around the eyes and must have a safety strap to prevent them from falling off. Goggles with soft lenses or shop glasses without a full face seal are not acceptable. If you can insert the eraser-end of a pencil between your face and your protection, it does not offer a "full seal" and is not acceptable.

Goggles and glasses with anti-fog lenses are highly recommended. Clearing fog during combat operations must be done w/o removing your eye protection. If you remove your eye protection during an operation, you will be asked to leave.

The best overall protection is currently offered by paintball style masks. These masks provide an additional level of protection by covering the face, teeth, and ears, reducing the risk of injury to these body parts to zero. The lens is a solid piece of impact resistant plastic. Some airsoft masks are made with mesh screens, though these screens may not offer protection from cheaper or bio-degradable BBs that sometimes (though rarely) fragment upon impact.

A player and any observer near live airsoft devices are required to keep their face mask, goggles, or shooting glasses on at all times. This is a standard safety requirement at all airsoft fields and is enforced by marshals to ensure that all players and observers remain safe and no accidents occur during game play. All players must immediately stop shooting when a person without eye protection is encountered in the playing area. One commonly adopted practice is for players to shout the words "Cease-fire, Blind Man!", "Non-combatant!", "Walker!", "Civilian" or other such phrases and halt an ongoing game if a player or bystander is seen in the designated game play area without proper eye protection. Any player hearing the words must, in turn, stop and also shout the words, resulting in a chain reaction which halts and alerts the whole game.

Airsoft devices themselves are completely safe once disconnected from their power source (battery, gas or spring mechanism). However when not actively playing, some fields require "barrel bags," also known as barrel plugs, be place over the muzzle. Many airsoft devices, especially AEGs, come with small red plastic barrel blockers that fit over the flash hider. The magazine must also usually be removed, and the devices actuated to clear the chamber and finally the "safety" must be engaged. Many fields not only require players to leave their devices set to the safety position when they are not skirmishing, but sometimes even during active game play. This is a practice taken from real firearms training, in which an operator never puts a finger on the trigger or takes the weapon off safe until ready to fire.

All conventional firearms, explosives, and bladed weapons are banned from airsoft fields for obvious reasons. Players are also expected to be discreet in transporting or carrying their gear and combat-style uniforms so as not to unduly alarm the general public or in some cases follow guidelines for transportation set out in local legislation and regulations. Airsoft devices are usually banned from public places.

WHY NOT JUST PLAY PAINTBALL?

Airsoft and paintball are sports with different markets. Paintball seems to entertain the people that tend to play fast paced, just for fun sports. Airsoft serves the more tactical crowd, who prefer teamwork and strategy over speed of action.
Most people do not realize that airsoft has been around much longer than paintball. Paintball first came on to the scene in the United States in the mid-1980s and Paintball has gained greater popularity and spread faster than airsoft in countries like the US and Australia. However, in Asia,

airsoft is much more popular and paintball is nearly non-existent. It should be noted that while airsofters and paintballers are serious about their sports, the debate between them is often not. Both sports offer upsides and downsides, Pros and Cons.
As the Sport of airsoft grows in popularity, questions raised include: Which sport is better? Which sport is more cost effective? What is the difference between airsoft and paintball?

Initial Cost

The initial distinction between the airsoft and paintball is a simple cost benefit analysis, comparing the sports. If you take a look at the costs for each sport you will find that both sports of course require an initial investment. For both sports, if you want to be completely decked out in every form of equipment available to you, you are looking to spend several hundred dollars (for imitation gear) and into the thousands for original products. But to be competitive on the playing field the initial set up costs for airsoft are far lower than paintball and the ongoing costs are dramatically lower when ammunition is factored into the calculations. A basic competitive set up for paintball and airsoft respectively may look like this (not including clothing and tactical gear)

Paintball

1. Tippmann A-5, semi-automatic paintball gun set ----------$500 (pictured here)
2. Field grade Paintballs (2000 Count)------$320.00
3. Empire Vents Cylus paintball mask--------$70.00

Total = $870

Airsoft

1. JG Steyr AUG (includes Battery, Charger, and Hi cap magazine)--------$300.00
2. 4000 rounds .20gram BB's----------$25.00
3. Shooting Glasses ----------$ 40.00

Total = $365

These calculations were based on Australian paintball prices (which are high) and Korean airsoft prices (which are probably the highest in the world).

That is the cost of base equipment needed to play and not be at any serious disadvantage. You can see clearly that airsoft is much cheaper. Could you go cheaper in Paintball? Yes, but are you going

to be "out gunned"; even with a stock JG G36C any new airsoft player can be right there with the top dogs in range and accuracy and he'll have a great gun.

2000 paintballs for $320.00, for base quality rounds!? The price difference is remarkable to say the least. Airsoft BB's come up far cheaper even when purchasing the highest quality rounds.
Airsoft rounds are also a lesser threat to players, they do not leave as much bruising as paintball rounds, and are less painful than paintball rounds. Paintball rounds contain more mass and therefore carry more kinetic energy than airsoft rounds. Airsoft rounds being smaller have less kinetic energy but greater range (also affected by the wind).
Paintballs, unlike BBs, need a little TLC. Paintballs need to be rotated on a regular basis so dimples don't form. Dimples alter a paintball's trajectory. Dimpled paintballs tend to "hook" or "dive", making for a frustrating waste of money.

Clothing and gear

As you may have gathered airsoft is a sport based on military simulation. And the replication of military gear extends well beyond simply owning a replica of a real military style gun. Participants go to extreme lengths to get their clothing and tactical gear as close to real life specs as possible. Paintball on the other hand is developing into something less than a military simulation and could be loosely described as a "brightly coloured combat game". The images below will give you an idea of how the sports differ fundamentally in philosophy.

Tactical gear

Players wear tactical clothing and accessories not only for the added realism, but to fulfil the practical needs similar to that of a real soldier. One such example is the ability to carry spare magazines, batteries, propellant gas canisters, water,

food, or other equipment in specified vests. The most common are holsters, load bearing vests, and modular rigs such as MOLLE, ALICE, and the British PLCE systems. Some players even wear hydration systems, such as those manufactured by Camelback.

When a player graduates to this level of involvement the cost differences between airsoft and paintball start to matter little. As with any sport the higher end you go the more the set up costs are going to be. The important thing to remember is that unlike paintballers, airsoft players don't want their expensive gear covered in paint!

Honour system

One definite advantage to being covered in paint is that you know definitively if someone is "hit". Airsoft game play relies heavily on the 'honour system'. Players rely on each other's honesty to admit to being hit, because unlike paintballs, BBs do not leave a mark (on clothing) and skin "hits" are indistinguishable because of the fractional size of the "welt".

Depending on the muzzle velocity of the gun, and distance from which a person is shooting, the person on the receiving end of the shot will usually feel or hear the impact, but a player at very long ranges, when distracted, or when running strenuously or returning fire may not recognize that they have been hit. To avoid unnecessary disputes that disrupt the game, players are discouraged from calling out hits on their opponent but are expected to signal a marshal to judge how effectively their hits have been. Simulated 'knife hits' can, at the venue's discretion, be performed when a player touches or taps an unaware opponent. This prevents the player being forced to shoot him or her at point-blank range. Similarly a 'surrender hit' occurs when a player refrains from shooting an opponent at close range while enforcing that opponent's surrender.

Players are usually prohibited from firing blindly (not being able to see their target), especially around corners. Players are expected to avoid shooting of an opponent who has already admitted being hit. Harsh language and forceful physical contact between players is strongly discouraged and even penalized. Players are expected to resolve disputes politely and with proper decorum. All airsoft players are required and expected to acknowledge being hit even if they are in doubt. Those who acknowledge being hit are generally expected to do the following: (1) Shout "I'm hit" loudly; (2) Raise their hand or gun high and/or display a 'hit indicator' while walking back to the safe zone. A hit indicator can be either a bright-coloured (usually red) cloth during the day or a blinker or mini-flashlight when in dim light or darkness.
Dishonest players who fail to follow the rules or acknowledge their hits run the risk of being labelled and ostracized by the local airsoft community. They will from then on be observed more carefully by the marshals or possibly be even banned from playing in the area.
Due to the nature of the honour system many feel airsoft relies, to its advantage, on "gentlemanly" ethics.

AIRSOFT IS MORE THAN A GAME.

There is more to airsoft than military simulations, team work and sporting ethics, it is much more than just a game. Airsoft devices have real world and competition applications, unlike their paintballing counterparts.

TACTICAL & SAFETY TRAINING

This excerpt is from an article by an instructor at P.O.S.A (Police Officer Saftey Association U.S.A).

"At the Police Officer Safety Association we teach a course called Close Quarter Handgun Core Skills. It is a course focused on just what the title suggests: fundamental skills and drills for close quarter lethal force encounters.
I always like to start this course by lining up the participants at seven yards, facing an IPSC or IDPA target. I ask them to perform two reasonably standard handgun drills.
Drill number one is to fire a magazine into the A zone as fast as they can make the shots.
Drill two is to put two into the A zone and one into the head, on command, repeating until the magazine is depleted.

Then I ask the class, "What relationship to real-life street encounters did either of these two drills have?" A surprising number of the attendees have the correct answer on the tips of their tongues: "Almost nothing."

That's right. They were all standing in a row, facing a designated direction. They fired on command. They were at least four times the distance that they were likely to have to fight at with a handgun for real. They were using

sighted fire. They didn't move. They were placing their shots carefully. The targets weren't moving. The targets were all facing them head-on. And most important: the targets weren't shooting back."

Making it real

What follows are descriptions of three of the basic drill sets we currently use in the Close Quarter Handgun Core Skills course. We are always adding, and sometimes dropping, drills as we continually develop the course.

Some of these drills employ airsoft technology. If you aren't training with airsoft, you need to be-if you are concerned with self-defense. Airsoft is far less expensive than other projectile-firing simulated firearms technologies, and more reliable, to boot. It is widely available and easy to obtain. Little protective gear needs to be worn, and as a non-marking technology, you can train in your actual tactical environment: in your house, in your car, in your business, and so on.

Modern Airsoft gas blowback devices (GBBs) have the look and feel of their conventional counterparts, complete with slides that cycle for each shot and magazines that contain both projectiles and propellant. In addition to being fun to shoot, GBBs are excellent training tools for teaching gun safety to novices, practicing shooting and gun handling skills and conducting force-on-force exercises.

Force-on-force training certainly is not new in that the military and specialized law enforcement units have been conducting scenario-based force-on-force training for years. What is relatively new is the application of this training on a wide scale, i.e., all police officers and economically.

One of the lowest cost, and cost-effective options involves airsoft devices. While airsoft products are not new, the technology has advanced to the point where it is a viable training option. Currently, the airsoft industry offers two types of products that meet law enforcement training needs: the "blowback" green gas pistols and the automatic electric guns (AEG's).

Airsoft devices provide a way for anyone to acquire the equipment to do highly realistic force-on-force training. Why is that important? Taking classes is an excellent way to learn new skills, but without practice those skills can fade quickly. If defensive pistol-craft is a martial art, then force-on-force is sparring. Live-fire training is essential to learning and mastering shooting and gun-handling skills, and there are many different target systems available to add realism to live-fire training. No inanimate target, however, can substitute for a live opponent who thinks, moves, communicates and fights back. If simple safety procedures are followed and appropriate equipment used airsoft devices can be ideal training tools for force-on-force practice.

A few common sense safety rules must be followed if airsoft devices are used in force-on-force training. Everyone in the training area must be checked for live weapons, head to toe. All real weapons (firearms, knives, and others) must be removed and stored away from the training area. All training gear must be checked and verified by all participants before any shots are fired. Anyone who leaves the area and returns must be checked again.

PRACTICAL SHOOTING & COMPETITION

Airsoft competition shooting while still an under developed aspect of the sport in general may provide those uninterested in "war games" an outlet to participate in matches utilizing airsoft technology. Several disciplines already familiar to sporting shooters match perfectly with an airsoft devices capabilities. And the cost benefit of airsoft technology may enable more people to enjoy the competition and fun involved in shooting sports.
Australian Airsoft Council Practical Shooting Federation (AACPSF) events may include,

IAPS sanctioned Practical shooting

Practical Shooting attempts to measure the ability to shoot rapidly and accurately with a handgun. Competitors move, negotiate obstacles, run, speed-reload, and drive their guns through each of several courses as fast as their skills will allow. The scoring system measures points scored per second, then weights the score to compensate for the number of shots fired. If they miss a target, or shoot inaccurately, points are deducted, lowering points-per-second score.

AAC sanctioned 10m Running Target

10 metre running target is an ISSF shooting event, shot with an airgun at a target that moves sideways. The target is pulled across a two meter wide aisle at the range of 10 metres from the firing point. The target is pulled at either of two speeds, slow or fast, where it is visible for 5 or 2.5 seconds, respectively.

AAC Action Air Competition

Action Air is a fast-paced pistol shooting discipline requiring the use of self-loading pistols or revolvers to shoot at various targets.

All events are designed to produce a competitive atmosphere while still focusing on the fun to be had when utilizing non-lethal airsoft technologies.

How would the anti-gun lobby react to airsoft sport shooting?

This article is taken directly from Gun Control Australia main website and is a front page article there. The author is anonymous.

John Crook, GCA founding Chairman

Where are all the Non-killing Guns? - Sunday 6th July 2008

"In his President message for October 2007, the SSAA National President, Bob Green, complained about Gun Control Australia saying that "Teaching a child to shoot is teaching a child to kill".

Guns are designed to fire or propel high-speed projectiles. These so-called bullets are, in the vast majority of cases, designed to kill something or to be used to practice for the killing process. Shooters may have noticed that you don't need to take a safety training course when you buy a tennis racquet, and the racquet does not have to be registered with the police. The reason is that, unlike guns, **tennis racquets are not designed to kill. Gun laws are based on this fundamental fact.**

Hunting is the most common reason that people give in order to qualify to own a gun. The law throughout Australia allows appropriate licence holders to hunt-to-kill various species at various times. Whilst this is often done for pleasure, hunters may be encouraged to do this with government bounties if excess numbers of a certain animal is considered to have occurred. Whether shooting is the best way to reduce feral animal numbers may be debated, but it is understandable that shooters would claim to be of service to the community when they reduce such numbers.

For the most part, handguns are fundamentally designed to threaten, injure or kill other humans, or to practice for that.

Why then should people query a statement such as: "Teaching a child to shoot is teaching a child to kill", because that is exactly what the great majority of guns are designed to do.

Where is the much sought-after magazine which only advertises non-killing guns (NKguns) and non-killing gun events?

Gun Control Australia would like to see a new type of gun, the NKgun. We are examining the possibility of awarding a $1000 prize for the best design of such a gun that is shown to us before the 31 December 2009.

The essence of NKguns is that (to those so oriented) they give the satisfaction of 'killing' some living thing without actually doing any damage to that thing. **The hope of the Gun Control Australia committee is that those shooters who at present have no choice but use Kguns for personal satisfaction will transfer their allegiance to NKguns**

The Australian Airsoft Council believes no better endorsement could be given to the sport of airsoft or to the airsoft "non killing gun", or airsoft device. Though we are sure Gun Control Australia would attempt to qualify these remarks it does at least show what possibilities airsoft provides to those disinterested in actually lethal or injurious firearms.

COLLECTING

What is firearm collecting?

The collecting of firearms is a great pastime and a rewarding hobby for a lot of people, and as just about any serious collector will tell you, it can also be very expensive. Going hand in hand with being expensive, firearms collecting can also be a financially rewarding hobby as some collections can easily be valued well into the tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars. Collecting firearms is not an overnight "fad" that people just wake up and decide to be a part of. It's something that is brought about by one's interest in and respect for firearms and their use. Some people gain this interest as one of their family members may have been in the military, some are just fascinated with antique muskets and cannons and some have just been around firearms all their life and can appreciate the beauty and workmanship that goes into the creation of some firearms. Firearms collections are as broad and varied in their style as their owners likes and dislikes and can range from antique muskets, cannons and primitive medieval firearms to modern military equipment. They can be based on a particular period of history, a specific conflict, country, military organization or simply a particular brand. Some people even collect firearms that are just used as movie props, but no matter what your particular choice is, the basis is the same.

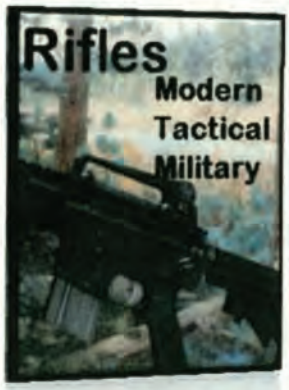
It's extremely rewarding, not only from a financial, but also from a historical point of view. Being able to collect and preserve certain time periods of firearms, as well as creating a well layered display of the firearms and equipment used in that period is creating a historical asset for future generations to enjoy. In Australia, the history of our Armed Forces, our State Police, the sometimes romanticized stories of our pioneers and bushrangers and even back as far as our colonization by English settlers can all be preserved by firearms collectors. As philatelists collect stamps which depict various periods in time, to give is a freeze-frame snap-shot of that time, firearm collectors do the exact same thing but with a different medium. We collect and preserve these pieces of history, so that others may take a step back in time to truly gain an appreciation and understanding of what has been accomplished by our forefathers, in the face of adversity, to build a nation as proud as Australia.

Collection Expenses & Airsoft as an alternative.

The collecting of real firearms is expensive, especially when trying to collect current use firearms. A modern military collection would generally include firearms such as the M4A1, M16A2, L1A1 SLR, F88 Austeyr, AK-47 and so on. As these firearms are still in active use throughout the world in

various military forces, the likelihood of being able to acquire a deactivated version is very slim. In some recent research via the Internet, online catalogues from companies in the UK which have M4A1's for sale as deactivated firearms were priced in the realm of 800 UK pounds (~ 1650 Australian dollars)[7] plus shipping. For collectors other than a sponsored museum, this is well beyond their abilities to purchase. Even newly manufactured replicas still fetch prices over 1000 Australian dollars. The other option is to purchase what are known as "Blue Guns" and then carefully hand paint them to accurately replicate the look of the real firearm. Blue Guns, are of rubber or plastic construction. They are moulded copies of firearms which incorporate a steel skeleton to add weight and give it a more realistic "feel". These are commonly used by military & law enforcement agencies to train personnel in the safe handling of firearms. Their cost is less than that of a replica or deactivated firearm, but still well over double that of airsoft guns, and then still require a lot of work on the part of the collector to improve their appearance. These types of "firearms" also have no real significant value as compared to others.

Airsoft on the other hand allows the serious collector to obtain these firearms for far less in terms of expense but without compromising on aesthetic accuracy or resale price. A quality airsoft firearm that replicates an M4A1 for example can be purchased in full working order for much more like a quarter of the price of a realistic replica or a deactivated firearm. And modern military firearms are far from the only ones available in the airsoft format. Even in terms of World War II firearms, Airsoft has a huge range of accurately reproduced version of many of the period firearms. Firearms such as the Mauser Kar 98K, MP-44, M1 Garand, M1 Carbine, Lee Enfield Mk4, Mosin Nagant, etc. are readily available in airsoft versions. There are even airsoft version of handguns, large munitions such as Rocket Launchers and portable munitions such as the Hand Grenade. Almost all airsoft firearms allow for the addition of any of the period accessories without difficulty. For those who are specifically movie fans and collect firearms to complete their movie collection, airsoft again can fill that void. There are a number of airsoft firearms which are designed to perfectly mimic firearms seen on many of the popular movies. Some airsoft firearms are also available with genuine manufacturer markings, making them a perfect replacement for the real firearm. As you can see, in terms of variety, reproduction accuracy and overall expense, airsoft has a huge advantage when it comes to a collector's interests.



To add to this growing list of advantages that airsoft has over its real firearm counterpart, its inherent safety is another major benefit. airsoft firearms are manufactured specifically **not** to fire explosive charged

[7] All prices and conversion rates are stated as of Wednesday, 16-July-2009.

projectiles. There are manufactured to fire 6mm or 8mm plastic BB's[8] at velocities well below that of any conventional firearm. As collector's firearms are generally deactivated, this low velocity is not of any great concern. However, the fact that the airsoft firearm itself can never be modified to chamber or fire live rounds of conventional ammunition is of great advantage to collectors. As the name suggests, airsoft firearms use compressed air or gas[9] to propel the BB down the barrel. The detachable magazines commonly found as part of the semi or full automatic airsoft firearms also adds to this safety, because although they are designed to "look" like the original firearm design, they are designed specifically to accept only the size BB for which the airsoft firearm was originally designed. The detachable magazine is spring loaded in most cases and feeds the BB into a circular hole on the base of the "Air Chamber"[10] or hop up unit, made only to fit the specifically sized BB for that airsoft firearm.

The methods & materials of manufacture also diminish the possibility of airsoft ever being able to be modified to fire conventional ammunition. The gears of the mechanism which drives the propellant system are made of mild steel, aluminium or plastic. The Air chamber is made of either plastic or die-cast metal alloys. The barrel is made as two pieces, an inner barrel which the projectile is propelled down and an outer barrel which is there to protect the thin inner barrel from damage as well as adding aesthetics to the firearm. The barrels generally manufactured of brass, aluminium or stainless steel, have a wall thickness of approximately 1.5-2mm and are unrifled. The detachable magazines are manufactured from either plastic or thin sheet metal and are fitted with an internal mechanism to assist in feeding the BB into the air chamber. This mechanism is generally of a spring type and is made only strong enough in lifting power to withstand the weight of the light 0.2g-0.4g BB's. The receivers are made of either plastic, die-cast metal alloy or mild steel and are in no way strong enough to withstand the forces applied by the explosion inside a conventional ammunition shell casing. All of these factors combined make for an aesthetically stunning replica firearm with huge safety factors built in which ensure that whether it is complete or in a deactivated state it can never be made to fire any type of conventional ammunition. A huge plus for collectors in anyone's eyes!

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[8] BB – A name given to the "ball bearing" projectile used in the first "Daisy" brand air guns. A named shared with Airsoft due to the spherical "ball bearing" shaped plastic projectile used in these firearms.

[9] Generally the use of a manual or motorized mechanism to compress air forms the baxis of an Airsoft propellant system. In recent years, development has gained momentum and the use of compressed gases such as CO2 or Propane have found use as a propellant system.

[10] Air Chamber – The section of an Airsoft firearm which holds the BB projectile in place until such time as it is filled with compressed gas used to propel the BB down the barrel.

WHO IN THE WORLD WOULD ALLOW PEOPLE TO USE AIRSOFT GUNS?

Airsoft in other countries

Austria

Airsoft guns and pistols with more than 0.08 joule can be purchased in specialized weapon shops only. All users have to be at least 18 years old.

Belgium

In Belgium, airsoft devices and pistols can only be bought at officially licensed dealers, carrying a government permit along with a certified weapon of defense (W.O.D.) to import and sell firearms. While it is forbidden to display or carry airsoft devices in public, owing and renting them out is unrestricted. Sale of airsoft devices to minors is forbidden, including sale over the internet (such as e-bay). Replicas should never exceed 7.5 Joule measured 2.5 meters from the barrel tip.
In general, all events must take place in private locations. Organizations may host airsoft events under the condition that they are not affiliated with ideological or religious agendas.

Bulgaria

Airsoft is a legal sport in Bulgaria and there are no restrictions placed on the guns apart from a parents' permission for people under 18. As airsoft devices are considered air guns by the Bulgarian law, no documents, licenses or anything else is needed to possess them. There are no restrictions about lasers, flashlights etc. Moreover, there is no need for the end of the barrel to be painted in orange (like in the United States). There are neither restrictions about the power of the air guns/airsoft devices nor about carrying them in public areas.
Shooting in "protected" (quote from the law) areas is forbidden. Protected areas are schools, administrative buildings and other public property as well as public areas.

Canada

According to the Canada Firearms Centre, airsoft devices that closely resemble real firearms are classified as replica firearms and can only be imported by companies possessing a Business Firearms License. It is unlawful to sell or transfer replica firearms without this license. Airsoft devices imported into the country by private citizens are at risk of being seized and destroyed at the border by customs agents. The few Canadian airsoft retailers that exist, take advantage of this fact and the prices are high in comparison to other countries.
No legal distinction is made between airsoft and true firearms when they are used for the purposes of crime.
Air guns with both a muzzle velocity greater than 152.4 metres per second (500 ft/s) and a muzzle energy greater than 5.7 joules (4.2 ft·lbf) are considered firearms for the purpose of the Canadian Firearms Act. For example, an airsoft BB leaving the barrel at 213 metres per second (700 ft/s) and weighing 0.20 grams (3.1 gr) has a muzzle energy of 4.43 joules (3.27 ft·lbf).
In Ontario, the minimum age to purchase airsoft is 18. Children under age must be supervised by someone over 18.

The People's Republic of China

It is legal in China's SARs (Special Administrative Regions, such as Macau and Hong Kong), but may not be fired with a muzzle energy above two joules of kinetic energy. In Hong Kong, you are only allowed to play airsoft in private areas and non-country park areas. You may not reveal the airsoft devices in public areas.

Denmark

Airsoft devices are mentioned in the Danish "Våbenlov" (arms control legislation). You have to be at least 18 years old to buy, hand over or possess airsoft devices. They may be used on police-approved sites, with a permission slip, at the age of 16. However, a firearms certificate is not required.

Finland

Visible transportation of replica firearms in public areas is forbidden. All replica firearms must be covered with something, for example, a weapon case. Land owner's permission is needed to play airsoft in any area.
Minors (under the age of 18) are able to purchase airsoft devices only with written permission from their legal guardians.

France

Visible transportation of replica firearms in public areas is forbidden. They must be covered with something, for example, a weapon case. Land owner's permission is needed to play airsoft in any area.
Minors can only buy or use airsoft devices which are under 0.08 joules in power. In general, airsoft device may only have a power under two joules, otherwise they are considered to be a weapon and must be registered.

Germany

Airsoft devices under 0.5 joule are considered toy guns and can be sold to all persons above three years of age. Distributors agreed to raise the limit to at least 14 years of age. This has been realized and the limit is thus 14 years. All airsoft devices between 0.5 joule and 7.5 joule must be bolt-action or semiautomatic only and can only be sold to people who are 18 years or older. These are considered "free" firearms. As a result, sales of guns of more than 0.5 joule are allowed only in weapon shops and guns must be marked with the trader's weapon abbreviation and a F-in-a-pentagon mark as well as the airsoft device caliber (such as 6 mm BB).
While the possession of airsoft devices is allowed, the actual use in a game is (at least) hotly debated. That is why most players using guns with more than 0.5 joule muzzle energy leave Germany to play in countries like France, Belgium, Denmark or the Czech Republic.

Greece

According to law, airsoft devices are not real firearms and they are free to be purchased from shops. However, the purchase and use of airsoft devices are not permitted for people under 18 years, although it is possible with parental supervision.
It is prohibited to have any replica gun in public sight. This is treated similarly to illegal possession of a real firearm.

Ireland

The status of airsoft in Ireland was changed after the 2006 Criminal Justice Act, which amended the previous Firearms Acts from 1925, 1963, 1972 and 1990. Where once authorization or a license was required for all devices which fired a projectile from a barrel, the law now defines a firearm as (amongst other things):

an air gun (including an air rifle and air pistol) with a muzzle energy greater than one joule of kinetic energy or any other weapon incorporating a barrel from which any projectile can be discharged with such a muzzle energy

The aim of this change was to establish a classification of firearms in order to eliminate the legal oddity where toy suction cup dart guns and the like were legally classified as firearms, thus bringing Ireland into line with the rest of the EU. In this case, one joule was used as the limit, as opposed to seven joules in Germany, twelve foot-pounds force (8.9 J) in the UK and so on. The one-joule limit most likely arose from UK case law where it was found that energies in excess of one joule were required to penetrate an eyeball (thus causing serious injury). As a result, airsoft devices under one joule of power have been declassified and have become perfectly legal to possess and use within Ireland. Those over one joule of power remain legal to possess and use within the Republic, so long as a firearms certificate is applied for and granted by the local Garda superintendent. However, at this point they are classed legally as actual firearms.

Airsoft devices with a muzzle energy in excess of one joule must be licensed and as such must have a serial number marked indelibly on them. With firearms this is achieved by stamping or engraving the number on the receiver or other critical component of the firearm. For airsoft devices which do not have such serial numbers, one must be indelibly marked on it. A discussion on the exact manner in which this is to be done should be had with the local Garda Superintendent, as different Superintendents may have different preferences for this. However, it should be noted that the airsoft device in question would then legally be a licenced firearm and shooting any person with it would constitute assault. Furthermore, no airsoft site in Ireland would allow any player to use an airsoft device in excess of one Joule, licensed or not.

Italy

Airsoft devices and pistols are allowed a muzzle velocity below 100 m/s (328 ft/s) i.e. equivalent to a muzzle energy equal or minor to one joule. Under the law, airsoft devices are not classified as firearms, but as toys. You can buy and sell them both from stores and from another private citizen, either domestically or from abroad. Internet purchasing and mail shipping is legal and unrestricted. No license or registration is required. There is no mandatory minimum age to purchase airsoft and/or use it during a regular match. The Italian Ministry of Interior only recommends that their sale be restricted to people over the age of 18 or 14 if accompanied by a parent or legal tutor or if the replica is not particularly realistic or powerful (i.e. low-grade airsoft products).

Red tips must be present on the barrel ends of the airsoft device when they are imported and sold by a store. Once you own the airsoft device, you may remove the red tip. However, the similarity between genuine firearms and airsoft device replicas is close enough to provoke interaction with law enforcement personnel if an airsoft device is mistaken for its real counterpart. Airsoft devices used to commit a crime are treated as real guns, assault weapons carry an extra mandatory sentence in addition to the regular punishment for the crime committed.

Usage and open carriage of air soft guns in public places is forbidden. You can play on a private property away from public sight or in a well-delimited private or state property after having asked the local authorities for a limited-time permit (usually from six to 48 hours) and having alerted the local police command to avoid alarmed citizens calling for emergency.
As the law limits the muzzle energy that an airsoft device can develop before being classified by law as an air gun, modifying an airsoft device to deliver more power or to shoot anything other than 6 mm BB plastic pellets is a felony.

Japan

In Japan, airsoft devices are legal, but may not shoot with a muzzle energy above 0.98 joules. Legal requirements are set on airsoft model manufacturers to prevent any possibility of a replica weapon being converted into an actual firearm. Standards include (but are not limited to) use of low-melting point metals and non-ballistic plastics in structural components and incompatibility of mechanical components with actual firearm components and mechanisms. The overall litmus test used by the Japanese National Police Authority is whether the replica weapon can be made to chamber and fire an actual round of ammunition. These standards have proven successful within Japan, as it has been found that criminal elements discovered that it is significantly easier to purchase an actual illegal weapon in comparison to modifying a comparatively fragile replica into a functional firearm. Due to this reality, most crimes involving a threat of physical violence are perpetrated with edged weapons, as firearms seen in public are (by default) believed to be toys by the public at large.

Lithuania

Registration of any sort is not required for airsoft devices. However, they are only available for purchase to people over 18 years. Airsoft players have established unofficial set of rules, which regulates the behavior of players belonging to the community.

New Zealand

Single-shot and semi-automatic (all automatic weapons require a special restricted endorsement) air-powered weapons are legal to possess and use in New Zealand, provided that the person is either over 18 years of age or 16 with a firearms license. A person under 18 may not possess an air gun, but may use one under the direct supervision of someone over 18 or a firearms license holder. It is illegal to use these weapons in any manner that may endanger or intimidate members of the public (pointing, brandishing etc.) except where there is reasonable cause such as an airsoft game.

Norway

The Arms control legislation (Våpenforskrift) requires that one has to be at least 18 years old to buy, hand over, possess and use airsoft devices. A firearms certificate is not required.

Philippines

As of 24 July 2006, the then Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief General Oscar Calderon has approved a petition for classification of airsoft devices as air guns under current PNP rules and regulations dated 29 January 1992, thus providing an opportunity for legal ownership and transport of airsoft devices under specific conditions. Despite the approval, validity is still the subject of debate. Under Philippine law, a memo from the Chief PNP amending the PNP rules and regulations cannot overrule, repeal or amend a Presidential directive. Only the legislative body, the Supreme

Court or the present President can do so. Since the PNP has the authority to classify what constitutes a gun replica and airsoft device were deemed different from replicas, there may be no need to repeal LOI 1264 in order to achieve full legalization of airsoft in the Philippines.
At present, the current PNP Chief Director, General Avelino Razon Jr, has signed a revised version of the 2006 memo and has given the airsoft community six months to comply with revised rules and regulations. Airsoft devices must now be registered and airsofters must also sequester a permit to legally transport their guns to authorized game sites. Unregistered airsoft devices may be confiscated.

Poland

Airsoft devices fall into the same category as paint ball guns and air-powered guns. Up to 17 joules they are not considered to be weapons (above 17 joules they become pneumatic weapons requiring registration) and are available to people over 18 years of age. Registration of any sort replica under the 17 joules-limit is not required. There is no need for the end of the barrel to be painted in orange or any other similar markings. The age restriction, however, is not strictly enforced and many cheap spring replicas can be found in toy shops due to common practice of labelling them as "toys." Generally, police considers airsoft devices toys rather than "non-lethal weapons."
It is not forbidden to display or carry airsoft devices in public, but as it may lead to unpleasant encounter with local police it is better to avoid it. The customs also recognize airsoft and allow their private import.

Portugal

Airsoft is legal in Portugal under the name of soft air. Soft air falls into a specific category designated as "Arma de softair" or in English "softair gun." According to the new Guns and Ammunitions Act (DR - Lei n. °5/2006 de 23 de Fevereiro - Regime Jurídico das armas e suas munições), any soft air gun must be totally or partially painted in fluorescent red or yellow color. The maximum energy level at muzzle exit must not exceed 1.3 Joules (or 374 ft/s). Purchase of soft air guns is subject to a couple of limitations, namely a minimum age of 18, a purchase only for sport practice and a registration in a soft air federation prior to the weapon's purchase.
Soft air players/gun owners don't need to possess Public Liability insurance. However, other special limitations may apply to soft air gunsmiths and players.

Romania

Law nr. 295 from 2004 (Regimul Armelor şi Muniţiilor) regulates all use of weapons and associated ammunition. The law is quite unclear (concerns airsoft devices) as to whether this kind of device should be classified as a "non-lethal weapon" or "toy." The law regulates the use of air-powered weapons (e.g. sport/competition use that use a metal projectile) under "non-lethal" category and solely requires that you are at least 18 years old and register your weapon at the police precinct nearest to your location.
Furthermore, the law specifies that, should you attempt to use a non-lethal or replica gun to perform (or attempt to perform) armed robbery, you shall be prosecuted as if a real gun had been used.

Slovakia

Airsoft devices have a status similar to the Czech Republic and Slovenia, where they are considered to be firearms. All firearms are governed by law 190/2003. Here, airsoft devices fit into weapon class D (§7b) and no permit is needed. The use of airsoft devices is allowed by players that are least 18 years old. They may not have a muzzle energy greater than 15 joules. The owner of an airsoft device is required by law to secure it when not in use.

Slovenia

One has to be at least 18 years to buy airsoft devices.
If the velocity of an airsoft device is below 100 m/s (328 ft/s) that is equivalent to one joule, it is considered to be a toy. If the velocity is higher than 100 m/s (328 ft/s), the airsoft device is classified as a section D weapon in the Firearms control legislation of Slovenia. Additionally Air Soft Clubs and National Shooters Association in Slovenia recommend that airsoft device velocities should not be above 100 m/s (one joule).

Sweden

One must be at least 18 years old to buy airsoft devices. Minors can only use an airsoft device under the close supervision of someone older than 20. However, this law is meant for target shooting at a range. Thus, there is no legal way for a minor to own devices or play airsoft. A parent that buys a one for their child commits a crime.
In order to possess a Co2, air or spring operated firearm without a license, the impact energy of a projectile fired at a distance of four meters (from the muzzle) must be less than ten joules. If semi or fully automatic, the impact energy must be less than three joules.

Switzerland

Airsoft devices are not considered subject to the weapon legislation and no permission is necessary.

United Kingdom

There are currently certain restrictions on the possession of airsoft devices, which came in with the introduction of the ASBA (Anti-Social Behavior Act 2003) Amendments, prohibiting the possession of any firearms replica in a public place without good cause (to be concealed in a hard gun case or sealed container only not to be left in view of public at any time). The prohibition of self-contained gas cartridge weapons similar to that made by Brocock can arguably apply to Moscarts and BB-Shower grenade systems. However, a formal case precedent has yet to be set.
There were initial concerns among the airsoft community that the Violent Crime Reduction Bill (passed as an Act in November 2006) would in future prevent airsoft skirmishers from buying realistic imitation firearms. However, on the 20th of September 2006, the Association of British Airsofters (ABA) received a letter from Tony McNulty (Minister of State for Security, Counter-Terrorism, Crime and Policing at the Home Office) saying that he has "decided to provide a defense for airsoft skirmishing in relation to the ban on the sale etc. of realistic firearms." There has been confirmation that airsoft will receive an exemption. This letter has been scanned and reproduced on the ABA website. Note that membership of the ABA may be required in order to view the letter.
The defense is based on whether or not a person is a skirmisher. One of the measures put in place by retailers to aid in identifying skirmishers is a database of skirmishers registered in a central database. A person must be a regular skirmisher (i.e. skirmish three or more times in no less than two months) in order to be registered and the airsoft site they register/skirmish at must hold public

Public Liability Insurance. Once a skirmisher is registered, they receive a membership card and must produce this before buying or trading airsoft devices from these retailers, though not a legal requirement. As long as you can prove that you are an airsoft skirmisher, you may purchase Realistic Imitation Firearms or RIFs (Airsoft devices deemed to be realistic). HM Customs & Excise will also have access to the database to verify the identity of importers.

According to the Violent Crime Reduction Act (VCRA) that came into effect on 1 October 2007, RIF (Realistic Imitation Firearms) can only be purchased by registered members of an airsoft skirmish site (accessories and ammunition are not covered by the VCRA). Only those people over the age of 18 can purchase Replica Imitation Firearms. IF (Imitation Firearms), however, are still legal and may be purchased by anyone 18 or over and used by any age, regardless of membership status. These usually take the form of "Two-Tone" guns (see picture) - normal airsoft devices that have around 50% of the gun painted or manufactured in bright colours in order to mark them out clearly as Imitation Firearms and not Realistic Imitation Firearms.

United States

Under Federal Law, airsoft devices are not classified as firearms and are legal for all ages. This is also the case for the laws in each state. However, in some major cities and population centres the definition of a firearm within their respected ordinances includes propulsion by spring or compressed air, thus making airsoft subject to applicable laws.

A 6 mm minimum orange tip must be present on the barrel end of the airsoft device (or clear/transparent body) to identify it as such for any commercial sales. Once sold, local laws may vary on whether or not the orange tip must be kept.

WHAT AN AUSTRALIAN EXAMPLE MAY LOOK LIKE?

THE UK EXAMPLE

In the United Kingdom, airsoft devices are classified as realistic imitation firearms or RIFs. The sale, manufacture or importing of RIFs are restricted to activities that are exempted or have been granted a defense by the Home Office under the Violent Criminal Reduction Act. Airsoft has been granted a defense and a skirmisher as defined under British law is allowed to purchase, manufacture or import airsoft replicas. Usually, the only accepted method of proving entitlement is to be a member of a site that holds public liability insurance. A scheme set up by UK retailers, called UKARA, recommends that an airsoft site only give membership to a player who has played at least three games over a period of no less than two months. The right to own a RIF is still reserved to over 18's. Many retailers will only sell airsoft devices to UKARA registered players. Also, the use or possession of any kind of replica gun loaded or otherwise in a public place is an offense under UK law and can carry heavy penalties.

The Violent Crime Reduction Act

A realistic imitation firearm is defined thus in the Act:

38 Meaning of a realistic imitation firearm

(1) In sections 36 and 37 a realistic imitation firearm means an imitation firearm which
   a) has an appearance that is so realistic as to make it indistinguishable, for all practical purposes, from a real firearm; and
   b) is neither a de-activated firearm nor itself an antique.
   c) For the purposes of this section, an imitation firearm is not...to be regarded as distinguishable from a real firearm for any practical purpose if it could be so distinguished only
      I. by an expert;
      II. on a close examination; or
      III. as a result of an attempt to load or to fire it.

(3) In determining for the purposes of this section whether an imitation firearm is distinguishable from a real firearm

   a) the matters that must be taken into account include any differences between the size, shape and principal colour of the imitation firearm and the size, shape and colour in which the real firearm is manufactured; and
   b) the imitation is to be regarded as distinguishable if its size, shape or principal colour is unrealistic for a real firearm.

For the purposes of section 38(3)(b) of the 2006 Act, a colour is to be regarded as unrealistic for a real firearm only if it is a colour specified in paragraph (2).

The colours specified in this paragraph are

a) bright red, bright orange, bright yellow, bright green, bright pink, and bright purple.

The Australian Plan

It is the Australian Airsoft Council's core assumption that airsoft has no chance unless it is an organized and regulated sport that can effectively and efficiently self governed under both current laws and any future legislation and regulations. It is the council's opinion that this is not only possible but ultimately beneficial to airsoft as a sport generally, not only in Australia but in all jurisdictions.
There are multiple challenges facing the Airsoft Council in its quest to de-regulate airsoft devices to a point that while restricted they are attainable for the prospective competitor. Some of these problems include the lack of official recognition that airsoft competition is a genuine reason to import airsoft devices; the cost of attaining a firearms license – a paradox when one assumes prospective competitors choose the sport in part because of the lower costs involved. And probably the greatest challenge lies in the ban on military styled replicas and the automatic operation of many airsoft devices.
It is the Airsoft Councils belief that all of these challenges can be met and addressed if there is a genuine dialogue where in all parties with a stake in the outcome shape and adhere to a pre defined path of partial deregulation, with check and balances built into the system.

The Australian Airsoft Council's mission, as the initial body responsible for Airsoft related sports, is to register fields, competitors and clubs and make sure the sport is self regulated to such a degree to assure the public and police of the sports inherent safety. To achieve these aims the council will as a legal entity,

1. Draw up statues or association rules to regulate its activities and incorporate.

a) Create statues to govern and regulate airsoft skirmishing in Australia
   I. And include the development of competitive events and rankings systems
   II. Sanction or sponsor events coordinated by clubs or the AAC itself including a national championship
   III. Affiliate with other responsible international (skirmishing) associations
   IV. Attempt to gather international or domestic sponsorship for these events
   V. Create and institute a field Marshall (safety officer) training program & certification

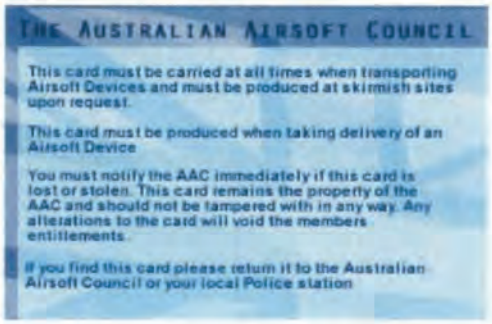
b) Affiliate with *International Airsoft Practical Shooting*- The AAC will affiliate with IAPS to standardize its practical shooting activities and engage in international competition with other IAPS regions including, the Netherlands, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Belgium, Croatia, France, Malta, Portugal, Peru, the United States and the United Kingdom. To affiliate AAC must
   I. Create statues to govern and regulate airsoft practical shooting in Australia
   II. Create and Institute a Range Officer training program & certification

c) The AAC will establish a Field and Member registry and identification system to ensure only legitimate airsoft skirmishers have access to airsoft devices.

I. **The Member Registry** - The AAC Registry will be a database of current members maintained for the purpose of identifying current airsoft competitors. Each member will be issued with a unique alpha-numeric Registry designation.

II. **Identification** – Each member will receive an Identification card containing their registry number, full name, present address, date of birth, membership approval date and will also indicate whether the competitor is a junior or common member.

III. **Status** – A member may only be considered current if they have participated in no less than 6 airsoft competitions in each calendar year from their initial registration.



IV. **Initial Registration**- The application process;

i. A skirmisher must have attended at least 3 airsoft related events (including instructional courses) over not less than a two month period at a registered field to qualify for registration.

ii. The applicant may then fill in an application form at that field to be considered for registration. The prospective applicant will have to show receipts from the fields as evidence of these activities. Appropriate (100 points) identifying documents will be requested at this time. Documents shall include at least one form of photographic identification and a valid firearms licence;

- ✓ Birth Certificate/Card - 70 points
- ✓ Passport - 70 points
- ✓ Citizenship Certificate - 70 points
- ✓ Drivers Licence - 40 points
- ✓ Firearms licence – 25 points
- ✓ Medicare Card - 25 points
- ✓ DVA Card - 25 points
- ✓ Centrelink Card - 25 points

- ✓ Credit Card or Account Card - 25 points
- ✓ Bank Statement - 25 points
- ✓ Motor vehicle registration or insurance document - 25 points
- ✓ Property rates notice - 25 points
- ✓ Property lease agreement - 25 points
- ✓ Home insurance papers - 25 points
- ✓ Utilities bills - 25 points

iii. Once the applicant's identity has been verified by the field and the application form has been forwarded to the AAC (containing photocopies of one form of photographic identification and a firearms license) an AAC regional officer will then contact the applicant directly via telephone or video phone for a short interview.

iv. Finally after a police check the applicant will be advised of his or her eligibility.

V. **Fees** – Membership dues must be paid upon registry and there after each calendar year from that date. Fees are set at AUD $35.00 per annum.

VI. **Field Registry** – Field may apply to join this registration system by completing the Field registration form. There are no fees required for field registry. In order to establish a field's bona fides the AAC will reserve the right to request additional information. The field will then be added to the field register and this will allow skirmishers at that site to be added to the member registry. The AAC will then issue a stamp to each registered field that they will use to stamp the players' application form before forwarding it to the AAC. Fields who have registered in this scheme will have their site name & contact details displayed on the AAC website

Genuine Reason- The AAC would hope that the above would enable skirmishing (sport or target shooting) to become a genuine reason to possess an airsoft device.

Purchasing airsoft devices.

Obviously at the moment there are no airsoft retailers within Australia. The Airsoft Council suggests the following as a practical method for ensuring airsoft devices, are only available to registered members.

a) The Australian Airsoft Council will develop a list of reputable airsoft retailers and Australian registered firearms dealers (agents) willing to facilitate airsoft purchases. The dealers would

I. Only sell airsoft devices to licensed skirmishers that are also registered with the AAC. This includes aftermarket parts.

II. Receive from the customer a Permit to Acquire for each firearm and the customer's AAC registry number. On receipt of the original copy of the permit and a photocopy of the customers AAC Registry card, and after electronically verifying with the AAC the identity of the customer, the dealer would then be able to forward the airsoft device by registered post.

III. Inform out of state customers that they will need to use a local firearms dealer as an agent to receive the device. Airsoft devices may only be sent interstate to another dealer. If the seller has never dealt with the receiving dealer the receiving dealer should fax his licence and details to the seller.

b) Permits – The AAC would like to see a permit system put in place where all legally importable airsoft devices (whether bolt action long arm or semi automatic military type airsoft devices) be made available for purchase by registered members that;

I. Hold a current firearms license for category A (conditions XXX), when applying for a Permit to Acquire.

The non lethal, non injurious nature of the sport, should in the AAC's opinion justify replicating the paintball system wherein a Category A license is sufficient to apply for a permit to own any such air or gas powered device.

Phase 1 - What Airsoft devices?

What would we like to see happen in Phase 1

1. Category A and Category D (military style self-loading centre fire rifle) "two tone" airsoft air guns, which substantially duplicate a gun of those types in design, may be imported into Australia for use by registered airsoft skirmishers at registered airsoft fields. This initial phase is a combination of restrictions on the appearance of the airsoft device, its manner of operation and overall length; all of which are of concern to the various state governments and police services. The Australian Airsoft Council believes these initial restrictions, a combination of proven restrictions in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, will provide the sport with adequate probationary restrictions and to some extent mitigate the current illegality of the devices since in function and

appearance the devices do and would bear striking differences from the real weapons in those categories. Initial airsoft devices,

a) Colours should by law include bright red, bright orange, bright yellow, bright green, bright pink and bright purple.
b) The device's automatic function should be rendered inoperable mechanically and by law
c) A device's minimum length should be 75cm
d) The device should be engraved with a unique serial number as per the licensing and registration requirements for all Australian firearms
e) In the case of semi-automatic, military styled airsoft devices - muzzle velocity should be restricted to 1.35joules or 377fps.

Purchasing process

The following example is based on Queensland law.

Licensing

1) Safety Training - It is a requirement by law that buyers do a Firearm Safety Course for before they can purchase their firearms licence.

2) Application for Firearms Licence.

   (a) Firearms Licence Application Form: The application itself will cost $XX.XX and the firearms licence will cost $XX.XX which is a 5 year licence.
   (b) The applicant will need a genuine reason for having a licence and therefore will follow the process outlined above to establish themself as a registered player.
   (c) Form Questions
      i. Question 1. - Class of Licence — Tick: Firearms (Long Arms)
      ii. Question 10. - Genuine Reason — Tick: Sports or Target Shooting

3) The licence types/conditions
   (a) In order to purchase an approved airsoft device a buyer would need a Fireams licence with XXX Conditions or interstate equivalent.
   (b) Minor licences (Regarding those under 18)- Minors may hold a Minors licence, as a condition on the licence, while not being allowed to purchase any airsoft device until 18 years of age.

4) Purchasing an approved airsoft device

   (a) Permit to Acquire Form (PTA)
      i. Buyers are required to send an approval form to Weapons Licencing. A Buyer would enter the following details onto the form –
         Type: A
         Action: Air
         Calibre: 6mm
         Mag Cap: 40+
         Make and Model:
      ii. The PTA form will cost $XX.XX and there is a minimum 28 day waiting period before receiving approval.
      iii. Once received the PTA is taken to the dealership to sign all relevant documents.

   (b) Purchasing interstate – The device should be sent to a firearms dealer (agent) in Queensland so that the PTA can be issued and serials tracked.

   (c) Purchasing overseas

      i. Importing airsoft devices is restricted under the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956.
      ii. Only dealers with B709A can ship devices from overseas.

5) Storage Facility - Legal requirements

   (a) A new amendment to the Weapons Act 1990 (only applies to new licence holders) requires you to have your own storage facility even if you have no weapons.
   (b) Your storage Facility must meet these guidelines –
      i. The Container must be a rigid structure made of solid steel or timber and if it weighs less than 150kg, be securely fixed to the frame or floor of a permanent building.
      ii. The container also must have a sturdy lock and be kept locked when the weapon is not in use.
   (c) Transporting by car
      i. When transporting, the device must be made inoperable by removing the battery and magazine.
      ii. The device must be carried in a locked metal container which should be affixed to the vehicle (e.g. chaining it) and kept covered from public view at all times until reaching the field.

Phase 2

What would we like to see happen in Phase 2

After an appropriate length of time wherein all stakeholders agree that the provisions put in place to regulate airsoft skirmishing and the ownership of airsoft devices are adequate and no instances of abuse by users of this privilege have been recorded, the Australian Airsoft Council would propose a second phase of regulation in which,

1. Category A and Category D (military style self-loading centre fire rifle) airsoft air guns affixed with blaze orange tips, which substantially duplicate a gun of those types in design, may be imported into Australia for use by registered airsoft skirmishers at registered airsoft fields.

    (a) Colour of the devices tip or flash hider should by law be permanently blaze orange
    (b) The device's automatic function should be rendered inoperable mechanically and by law
    (c) A device's minimum length should be 75cm
    (d) The device should be engraved with a unique serial number as per the licensing and registration requirements for all Australian firearms
    (e) In the case of semi-automatic airsoft devices - muzzle velocity should be restricted to 1.35joules or 377fps.

2. The initial "two tone" restrictions on the appearance of the airsoft device be maintained for new skirmishers for a period of X time (example 6 months) after registration,

    a) Colours should by law include bright red, bright orange, bright yellow, bright green, bright pink and bright purple.
    b) The device's automatic function should be rendered inoperable mechanically and by law
    c) A device's minimum length should be 75cm
    d) The device should be engraved with a unique serial number as per the licensing and registration requirements for all Australian firearms
    e) In the case of semi-automatic airsoft devices - muzzle velocity should be restricted to 1.35joules or 377fps.

The Australian Airsoft Council believes these initial restrictions, a combination of proven restrictions in the United States, United Kingdom and New Zealand, will provide the sport with adequate precautionary restrictions and to some extent mitigate the current illegality of the devices since in function and appearance the devices do and would bear a reasonable difference from the real weapons in those categories.

Phase 3

What would we like to see happen in Phase 3

After a further appropriate length of time wherein all stakeholders agree that the provisions put in place to regulate airsoft skirmishing and the ownership of airsoft devices are adequate and no instances of abuse by users of this privilege have been recorded, the Australian Airsoft Council would propose a third phase of regulation allowing the devices automatic operation, in which;

3. Category A and Category D (military style self-loading centre fire rifle) airsoft air guns affixed with blaze orange tips, which substantially duplicate a gun of those types in design, may be imported into Australia for use by registered airsoft skirmishers at registered airsoft fields.

    (a) Colour of the devices tip or flash hider should by law be permanently blaze orange
    (b) A device's minimum length should be 75cm
    (c) The device should be engraved with a unique serial number as per the licensing and registration requirements for all Australian firearms
    (d) In the case of semi-automatic and automatic airsoft devices - muzzle velocity should be restricted to 1.35joules or 377fps.

4. The initial "two tone" restrictions on the appearance of the airsoft device be maintained for new skirmishers for a period of X time (example 6 months) after registration,
    (a) Colours should by law include bright red, bright orange, bright yellow, bright green, bright pink and bright purple.
    (b) A device's minimum length should be 75cm
    (c) The device should be engraved with a unique serial number as per the licensing and registration requirements for all Australian firearms
    (d) In the case of semi-automatic and automatic airsoft devices - muzzle velocity should be restricted to 1.35joules or 377fps.

The Australian Airsoft Council believes these initial restrictions, a combination of proven restrictions and conditions in the United States, United Kingdom and New Zealand, will provide the sport with adequate precautionary restrictions and to some extent mitigate the current illegality of the devices since in function and appearance the devices do and would bear a reasonable difference from the real weapons in those categories.

It is the opinion of the AAC that these measures would provide Australian jurisdictions with the world most stringent provisions regarding airsoft devices (excluding the current outright ban), and yet would not unfairly obstruct prospective and current (expatriate) skirmishers from pursuing a hobby/sport that is a safe, mentally and physically rewarding team oriented activity.

EXAMPLE LEGISLATION

The following are examples of possible changes to current legislation

NEW SOUTH WALES

Firearms Act 1996 Firearms Regulation 2006

The Australian Airsoft Council proposes the following alterations to the above mentioned Act and Regulation (highlighted areas denote alteration)

The Firearms Regulation 2006
Part 1
3 Definitions

(1) In this Regulation:

air gun means a firearm (other than a rifle or handgun) designed to fire shot, bullets or other projectiles by means of compressed air or other compressed gas and not by means of burning propellant;

airsoft gun means a air gun (other than a bolt action air gun) designed to discharge 0.2g 6mm plastic projectiles known as BBs at a maximum muzzle energy of 1.35joules or a muzzle velocity not exceeding 377 feet per second(fps), in any manner of operation, approved as such a firearm by the Commissioner.

Firearms Act 1996
Division 2 Licensing scheme

8 Licence categories and authority conferred by licence (cf 1989 Act s 21, APMC 1, 3, 4)

(1) The categories of licences, the firearms to which they apply, and the authority they confer, are as follows:

Category A licence

Firearms to which the licence applies:

- air rifles
- air guns
- rimfire rifles (other than self-loading),
- shotguns (other than repeating action, eg pump action, or self-loading)
- shotgun/rimfire rifle combinations.

All prohibited firearms are excluded from this licence category.

Firearms Act 1996 Section:

12 Genuine reasons for having a licence (cf APMC 3, 1990 Reg cl 22A)

(1) The Commissioner must not issue a licence that authorises the possession and use of a firearm unless the Commissioner is satisfied that the applicant has a genuine reason for possessing or using the firearm.

(2) An applicant does not have a genuine reason for possessing or using a firearm if the applicant intends to possess or use the firearm for any of the following reasons:

a) personal protection or the protection of any other person,
b) the protection of property (other than in circumstances constituting a genuine reason as set out in the Table to this section).

Table

Reason: Airsoft shooting – military simulations or re-enactment games

The applicant must be an active member of an Airsoft Association or club or historical re-enactment society which conducts competitions or activities requiring the use of airsoft guns.

Firearms Regulation 2006 (whole section added)

Part 3 Licences—additional provisions

34A. Members of approved Airsoft associations, clubs or re-enactment societies

(1) If a licensee who is a member of an approved Airsoft association, club or re-enactment society as the genuine reason for being issued with the licence authorizes the member to use a firearm

(a) to participate in games, simulations or re-enactments conducted by the approved association or club or society, but only on land for which the association or club or society has been given the written permission of the owner or occupier to manage the game, simulation or re-enactment.

(b) to participate in games, simulations or re-enactments other than those approved by the approved airsoft or re-enactment association, club or society, but only on the land for which the licensee has been given the written permission of the owner/occupier to manage the game, simulation or re-enactment

(2) If an approved club has been given permission under subclause (1) (a) for its members to conduct activities on rural land, the member of the club who is for the time being responsible for the activities conducted by the club on that land must, on demand made at any time by a police officer or authorised officer for that land, produce the permission, as soon as practicable (but not more than 48 hours) after the demand is made, to the officer who made the demand or to another police officer or authorised officer nominated by the officer.

(3) If a licensee has been given permission under subclause (1) (b) to conduct activites on rural land, the licensee must, on demand made at any time by a police officer or authorised officer for that land:

(a) produce the permission for inspection by the police officer or authorised officer, or

(b) if it is not in the licensee's immediate possession—produce the permission, as soon as practicable (but not more than 48 hours) after the demand is made, to the officer who made the demand or to another police officer or authorised officer nominated by the officer.
(4) A person commits an offence under subclause (2) or (3) only if the police officer or authorised officer, when making the demand, explains to the person that failure to comply with the demand is an offence.

Firearms Regulation 2006 (whole section added)

57a Permit to conduct airsoft games

(1) The Commissioner may, on application by a person, issue a permit authorising the holder of the permit:
(a) to conduct organised activities involving the use of airsoft guns

(2) The Commissioner must not issue any such permit (referred to as an ***airsoft game permit***) unless the Commissioner is satisfied:
(a) that the conduct of those activities on the premises specified in the application has been approved by local consent authority, and
(b) those activities will be conducted with proper regard to the preservation of public safety.

(3) An airsoft game permit is subject to the following conditions:
(a) such conditions as may be imposed by the Commissioner concerning the safe keeping of airsoft guns,
(b) that the holder of the permit must permit the inspection at any time of the premises specified in the permit by a police officer (or such other person as may be approved).

(4) The holder of an airsoft game permit is authorised to conduct activities involving the use of airsoft guns, but only on the premises specified in the permit.

(5) A person (other than the holder of an airsoft game permit) who possesses or uses an airsoft gun on the premises specified in a permit under this clause is not required to hold a licence or permit authorising the possession or use of an airsoft gun.

(6) The exemption provided by subclause (5) only applies while the person is in possession of, or while the person is using, the airsoft gun on the premises specified in the airsoft game permit.
(7) An airsoft game permit is subject to the condition that the holder of the permit must not allow a person to use an airsoft gun (other than a those provided by the holder) on the premises specified in the permit unless the holder of the permit has seen the person's firearms licence (allowing for the use of airsoft guns.

Firearms Regulation 2006

Part 9 Approval of clubs

90 Definitions

(cf 1997 cl 77)

In this Part:

club means:

(a) in relation to the genuine reason of sport/target shooting—a shooting club, or

(b) in relation to the genuine reason of participating in airsoft shooting, simulations or re-enactments- an airsoft association,club or team

(c) in relation to the genuine reason of recreational hunting/vermin control—a hunting club, or

(d) in relation to the genuine reason of firearms collection—a collectors' society or collectors' club that has been established for at least 3 months.

Firearms Regulation 2006 Part 9 Approval of clubs

91 Approval of club

(d) the club is affiliated with one of the following associations, including any other approved peak firearms association that is based interstate, and the association concerned has recommended the granting of the approval:

Air Rifle Association of Australia (Incorporated)
Antique Arms Collectors Society of Australia Co-operative Limited
Arms and Militaria Collectors' Association of NSW
Arms Collectors Guild of NSW
Australian Airsoft Council
Australian Clay Target Association Inc
Australian Deer Association
Australian Hunters International Inc
Australian Sporting Clays
Federation of Hunting Clubs Incorporated

Firearms Regulation 2006

96 Participation requirements for club members (cf 1997 cl 81)

(1) A person's membership of an approved club is, if the person is the holder of a licence, subject to the following requirements:

(e) in the case of an approved an airsoft club---the person must, over any period of 12 months, participate in no less than 6 events (approved by any approved an airsoft club) involving airsoft games, simulations or re-enactments.

Firearms Act 1996

52 Use of mail for sending firearms (cf 1990 Reg cl 86B)

(1) In this section, ***firearm*** includes a firearm part (except for parts unique to airsoft guns)

(2) In this section ***firearm*** does not include approved airsoft guns delivered to an appropriately licenced person, to the buyers current residential address only from a licenced firearms dealer who has verified as the buyer as licenced.

NOTES:

We feel that this addition is necessary. Typically airsoft devices are shipped; we feel that given the near harmless nature of the devices, provisions for authorized courier delivery services should be made; at least until the sport has developed to the extent where commercial retail stores in multiple areas are viable.

Firearms Act 1996

54 Advertising sale of firearms (cf APMC 10 (a))

A person must not cause an advertisement for the sale of a firearm or firearm part to be published unless:

(a) the person is a licensed firearms dealer, or
(b) the proposed sale is to be arranged by or through a licensed firearms dealer.
(c) the sale of an approved airsoft gun is arranged by or through an approved association or club and both buyer and seller are licenced to possess those types of firearms

55 Means of delivering possession of firearms (cf 1990 Reg cl 86A)

(1) A person may deliver possession of a firearm or firearm part to another person:

(a) in person only, or
(b) only by means of another person who appears to the person to be able to ensure the security of the firearm or firearm part during the course of delivery.
(c) by an approved courier delivery service if the firearm is of the types noted in section 52 subclause (7)

Firearms Regulation 2006

129 Shortened firearms

(cf 1997 cl 104)

(1) For the purposes of section 62 (2) of the Act, a firearm is to be considered as having been shortened only if:

(a) in the case of a firearm that is a smooth bore shotgun or a combination smooth bore shotgun and rifle:

(i) the length of the barrel, or, if it has more than one barrel, of the longer or longest barrel is less than 45 cm, or

(ii) the length of the stock is less than 30 cm or it has no stock, and

(b) in the case of a firearm that is a rifle, not being a combination smooth bore shotgun and rifle or an air gun:

(i) the length of the barrel or, if it has more than one barrel, of the longer or longest barrel is less than 40 cm, or

(ii) the length of the stock is less than 30 cm or it has no stock, or

(iii) the overall length is less than 80 cm, and

(c) in the case of a firearm that is an air gun (except an airsoft gun):

(i) the length of the barrel is less than 30 cm, or

(ii) the length of the stock is less than 30 cm or it has no stock, or

(iii) the overall length is less than 70 cm.

(2) This clause does not apply to such kinds of firearms as the Commissioner determines.

Firearms Act 1996

Schedule 1 Prohibited firearms (cf APMC 1 , Sch 1 PW Act)

(Section 4 (1))

1. Any machine gun, sub-machine gun or other firearm capable of propelling projectiles in rapid succession during one pressure of the trigger, unless it is of a type approved by the commissioner.

2. Any firearm that substantially duplicates in appearance (regardless of calibre or manner of operation) a firearm referred to in item 1, 5 or 6, unless it is of a type approved by the commissioner.

3. A firearm, not being a pistol or an approved airsoft gun, fitted with a stock that is specially designed so as to be readily detachable, or to operate on a swivel, folding or telescopic basis.

NOTES

Regulations 2006 Schedule 1

1) We feel this alteration leaves the Act's principles intact and gives the Commissioner the authority, should it be required, to restrict airsoft guns of any type, or as we hope, to allow their use.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Firearms Act 1977 Firearms Regulations 2008

The Military Simulation Association of Australia propose the following alterations to the above mentioned Act and Regulation (highlighted areas denote alteration)

Firearms Act 1977

Part 1—Preliminary

5—Interpretation

(1) In this Act, unless the contrary intention appears— ***to acquire*** means to acquire through purchase, gift, loan or hire; ***active member*** of a club for a 12 month period means—

(c) in relation to an airsoft club or association and the holder of a firearms licence authorising possession of class A airsoft firearm —

(i) a member of the club who has participated in airsoft club organised competitive matches on at least six occasions during the 12 months; or

(ii) a member of the club who satisfies the Registrar that the member failed to meet the requirements of subparagraph (i), during the 12 months, due to the member's ill health or employment obligations or some other reason accepted by the Registrar;

air gun means a firearm (other than a rifle or handgun) designed to fire shot, bullets or other projectiles by means of compressed air or other compressed gas and not by means of burning propellant;

airsoft gun means a airgun (other than a bolt action airgun) designed to discharge 0.2g 6mm plastic projectiles known as BBs at a maximum muzzle energy of 1.35joules or a muzzle velocity not exceeding 377 feet per second(fps), in any manner of operation, approved as such a firearm by the Registrar.

class A firearms means—

(a) air rifles, air guns, airsoft guns and paint-ball firearms; and

recognised airsoft operator means a airsoft operator declared to be a recognised airsoft operator by the Minister pursuant to this Act;

(5) A person who purchases or sells more than 50 000 rounds of ammunition in any 12 month period will, for the purposes of this Act, be taken to be carrying on the business of dealing in ammunition in respect of the ammunition purchased or sold in excess of 50 000 rounds in that period unless he or she establishes on the balance of probabilities that he or she was not carrying on such a business.

(6) Subsection (5) does not apply—

(a) in relation to a recognised firearms club;
(b) to the purchase or sale by a recognised paint-ball operator of ammunition suitable for use in paint-ball firearms;
(c) to the purchase or sale by a recognised airsoft operator of ammunition suitable for use in airsoft guns;

(d) if all the ammunition purchased or sold in a 12 month period was the subject of one transaction or two or more transactions entered into on the same day at an auction.

Part 3—Possession of firearms and dealing in firearms and ammunition

Division 1—Possession and use of firearms

(4) No offence is committed under this section in relation to a class A, B or H firearm by virtue of the fact that—

(ba) a person has possession of, or uses, a paint-ball firearm on grounds of a recognised paint-ball operator while participating in an organised activity involving the use of paint-ball firearms (but no other firearms);

(bc) a person has possession of, or uses, an airsoft gun on grounds of a recognised airsoft operator while participating in an organised activity involving the use of airsoft guns (but no other firearms);

Division 5—Acquisition of ammunition

21B—Acquisition of ammunition

(6) This section does not apply in relation to the acquisition of ammunition—

(a) by a licensed dealer in ammunition in the ordinary course of business as a dealer in ammunition; or
(b) by a recognised firearms club for distribution to members of, or visitors to, the club; or
(c) by a member of a recognised firearms club from the club; or
(d) from a recognised firearms club by a visitor to the club for use on the grounds of the club in a manner authorised by the club; or

(da) by a recognised paint-ball operator for distribution to participants in an organised activity involving the use of paint-ball firearms (but no other firearms) on grounds of a recognised paint-ball operator; or

(db) by a recognised airsoft operator for distribution to participants in an organised activity involving the use of airsoft guns (but no other firearms) on grounds of a recognised airsoft operator; or
(e) by a person for use by that person in a firearm in circumstances in which that person is not required by this Act to hold a firearms licence

Division 6—Firearms clubs, paint-ball operators, airsoft operators and commercial range operators

21D—Recognised paint-ball operator and or airsoft operator

(1) If the Minister is satisfied that a paint-ball operator and or airsoft operator conducts its affairs and activities in a responsible manner, the Minister must, on application by the operator for recognition, declare the operator to be a recognised paint-ball operator and or airsoft operator by notice in the Gazette.
(2) If the Minister refuses an application for recognition, the Minister must provide the applicant with a written statement setting out the reasons for the refusal.
(3) If at any time the Minister is satisfied that a recognised paint-ball operator and or airsoft operator has failed to comply with this Act or no longer conducts its affairs or activities in a responsible manner, the Minister may, by notice in the Gazette, revoke a declaration under subsection (1).
(4) Before revoking a declaration, the Minister must—

(a) give the operator at least two months written notice of the proposed revocation setting out the Minister's reasons for the proposed revocation;
(b) and give the operator a reasonable opportunity to make written or oral submissions to the Minister in relation to the proposed revocation.

21F—Approval of grounds of recognised firearms clubs or airsoft operator or paint-ball operator

(1) If any activity involving the use of a firearm takes place on grounds of a recognised firearms club or recognised airsoft operator or paint-ball operator and those grounds are not approved under this section in relation to that activity, recognition of the club or operator under this Part is by force
(2) If the Registrar is satisfied that the grounds of a recognised firearms club or recognised paint-ball operator or airsoft operator are suitable for the purpose of the activities of the club or operator, the Registrar may, on the application of the club or operator, approve those grounds for use in connection with those activities.

(3) An approval under this section is subject to—

(a) any conditions prescribed by the regulations; and
(b) any conditions imposed by the Registrar (which may include a condition limiting the periods during which the grounds may be used by the club or operator).

(4) The Registrar may impose conditions pursuant to subsection (3) on the approval of the grounds or subsequently.
(5) If the Registrar refuses an application for approval, the Registrar must provide the applicant with a written statement setting out the reasons for the refusal.
(6) If at any time the Registrar is satisfied that grounds approved under this section would not be approved if application for approval were made at that time or that a condition of the approval has been contravened, the Registrar may, by notice to the club or operator, revoke the approval.
(7) The Registrar may, on his or her own initiative or on application by a recognised firearms club or recognised airsoft operator or paint-ball operator, vary or revoke conditions of an approval.
(8) Before revoking an approval or varying conditions of an approval on his or her own initiative, the Registrar must—

(a) give the club or operator at least two months written notice of the proposed revocation or variation setting out the Registrar's reasons for the proposed revocation or variation; and
(b) give the club or operator a reasonable opportunity to make written or oral submissions to the Registrar in relation to the proposed revocation or variation

(9) The Registrar, or a person authorised by the Registrar, may, for the purposes of determining an application for approval under this section, reviewing such an approval or determining whether conditions of approval are being or have been contravened, enter and inspect the grounds of a recognised firearms club or recognised airsoft operator or paint-ball operator at any reasonable time

Firearms Regulations 2008

Part 1—Preliminary

3—Interpretation

Airsoft shooting means shooting an airsoft gun when participating in an organised activity on the grounds of a recognised airsoft operator or club;

4----Prescribed Firearms

(1) For the purposes of the definition of ***prescribed firearm*** in section 5(1) of the Act, and at the discretion of the Registrar, the following firearms are prescribed:

(e) air rifles and air guns (but not airsoft guns) having 1 or more barrels of less than 250 millimetres in length;
(f) firearms having an overall length of less than 750 millimetres (but not airsoft guns, handguns or power heads);
(g) firearms (but not airsoft guns or handguns) designed to be reduced in overall length by folding, telescoping or any other means to a length of less than 750 millimetres and then to be capable of being fired; (**See notes)

Part 3—Licences

Division 1—Firearms licences

11—Purposes for which firearms may be used

(2) Subject to subregulation (3), 1 or more of the following purposes may be endorsed on a firearms licence:

(d) paint-ball shooting—4;
(da) airsoft shooting 4a

Division 4—Conditions of licences
21—Conditions of firearms licences

(12) If the purpose, or 1 of the purposes, endorsed on a firearms licence is paint-ball shooting or airsoft shooting, it is a condition of the licence that only a paint-ball firearm or airsoft gun will be used for the purposes of paint-ball shooting or airsoft shooting

Part 4—Acquisition and registration of firearms
33—Acquisition of class H firearms

(1) For the purposes of section 15A(4b) of the Act, the Registrar may grant to an applicant who is the holder of a shooting club member's licence or an airsoft shooting license a permit to acquire a class H firearm—

(c) in the case of an airsoft shooting license the hand gun must be an airsoft gun type only

Part 7----Recognised bodies

Division 2—Recognised airsoft operators or paint-ball operators and recognised commercial range operator

51—Application for recognition of airsoft operator or paint-ball operator

(1) An application for recognition of an airsoft operator or paint-ball operator and approval of the operator's grounds must be made to the Registrar in a form approved by the Registrar and must be accompanied by—

(e) evidence of compliance with the requirements of any other Act relating to use of land as grounds of an airsoft operator or paint-ball operator; and

54—Alteration of grounds or range

A recognised airsoft operator or paint-ball operator or a recognised commercial range operator must not alter the grounds or range used by the operator without first obtaining the approval of the Registrar.

55—Operator to inform Registrar of change

(1) A recognised airsoft operator or paint-ball operator or recognised commercial range operator

must, within 28 days after a variation in or addition to the activities of the operator has occurred, provide the Registrar with a description of the variation in or addition to the activities of the operator.

(2) A recognised airsoft operator or paint-ball operator or recognised commercial range operator that is a company must, within 28 days after—

(a) a variation to the constitution of the operator comes into force; or
(b) a change in the directors or shareholders of the operator has occurred, provide the Registrar with—
(c) the text of the variation to the constitution; or
(d) the names of the persons who have ceased to be directors or shareholders of the operator and the names and addresses of persons who have become directors or shareholders of the operator,
(as the case requires).

(3) A recognised airsoft operator or paint-ball operator or recognised commercial range operator must—

(a) from time to time, at the request of the Registrar, provide the Registrar with such information in relation to the affairs and activities of the operator as the Registrar requires; and
(b) permit the Registrar, or a person authorised by the Registrar, to inspect the operator's premises and grounds or range at any reasonable time.

NOTES

Regulations 2008 Part 1 Section 4 ----Prescribed firearms

1) We feel this alteration leaves the Act's principles intact and gives the Registrar the authority, should it be required, to restrict airsoft guns of any type, or as we hope, to allow their use.