

Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Qld.) Inc.

Branch Range Officer Guidelines

Version May 2016

S.S.A.A. (Qld.) Inc.

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Branch Range Officer Guidelines



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1. Document History

The current approved and released version of this document is Version 1.0 as approved by the Executive of Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Qld.) Inc. on 31st May 2016. All previous versions no longer apply and should be destroyed.

2. Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
Association	Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Qld.) Inc.
Executive	As defined in the Association's Constitution, either as a group or individually

3. Purpose

These guidelines are designed to cover the knowledge and skills required to serve as a Range Officer. It will make you aware of your obligations and duties a required by S.S.A.A. (Qld.) Inc., and your responsibilities under the Weapons Act 1990, amendments and Regulations.

4. Pre-Requisites

A minimum of twenty-four (24) hours of supervised Range Officer duty in various competitions and practice sessions across multiple disciplines to be documented and signed off by the supervising Range Officer, a copy of which is to be supplied with the Application Form. Should a person wish to apply for both Longarms and Handguns, a minimum of twelve (12) hours for each category is required.

Approval is required from the applicable Branch Executive, proof of which will be recorded in the Minutes of a Branch General Meeting and via acknowledgement of a signed Application Form.

5. Outcomes

- 1. Supervise a Range safely and competently in conjunction with the S.S.A.A. (Qld.) Inc. Range Rules.
- 2. Understand the law pertaining to the duties and responsibilities of Range Operators and Range Officers, as per the Weapons Act, as amended.
- 3. Identify the different types of firearms that are approved for use on the Range.
- 4. Know the target and target systems that are approved for the Range.
- 5. Be able to control the Range using the standard S.S.A.A. Range Commands.
- 6. Be able to manage conflict and resolve issues, which may arise.
- 7. Understand what is meant by Risk Management.
- 8. Understand Emergency procedures.



6. Responsibilities and Obligations

You are required to abide by, and support in their entirety, the Policies of S.S.A.A. (Qld.) Inc., including the current S.S.A.A. (Qld.) Inc. Range Rules.

As a Range Officer you may be under the direction of a Range Supervisor so your responsibilities may be limited to observation of several people on the firing line at any one time, or you may be responsible for the complete Range and what happens or occurs on it.

Being a Range Officer is a 'PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT'.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware and up to date on all current Weapons Acts, Regulations and applicable law.

7. Working with People

The role of a Range Officer naturally puts you in contact with people of all abilities and levels of experience, from first time shooters to those with many years of experience. This will require many people skills and a high level of concentration to ensure the Range functions safely and all operations run smoothly for the enjoyment of all shooters and spectators.

7.1 The Leadership Role

The Range Officer should, if possible:

- ✓ Establish and maintain consistent Range Management within the established and agreed Procedures and Policies
- ✓ Develop a discipline that ensures Range and Safety Rules are being followed without members and visitors feeling uncomfortable or over controlled
- ✓ Control the functions of the Range safely
- ✓ Develop the confidence of both shooters and visitors
- √ Identify potential problems
- ✓ Develop a network of people to call on for assistance

7.2 Common Courtesy

Through regular Range Officer duties at the Range facility you will begin to form working relationships with those who are regular attendees, learn their names and build a rapport with these people. They may become Range Officers in the future, so offer encouragement, and share responsibilities with them. This will make your job a lot easier and will also give them some confidence in their own abilities.

7.3 Communication

An essential part of all human interactions is communication. Many people have researched it, thought about it, analysed it and encouraged it, but few people practise it. There are two parts to effective communication.



The first component of good communication is listening. The old saying that says, "You have two ears and one mouth" is noteworthy. Listen to all parties, ask clear questions and listen carefully to their responses.

The other part to good communication is speaking clearly and precisely. This is the key to everybody understanding what is required of them at a given point in time.

7.4 Criticism

By not understanding the rules of criticism you are heading for a potential disaster. Criticism is one of the hardest things for a human being to take and cope with. More conflicts arise and situations worsen due to criticism, than almost anything else. There are some rules however which may avoid confrontations.

- ✓ Never criticise the person only draws attention to the action.
- ✓ Never criticise the person in front of their peers. They will lose face or feel belittled.
 Call them away from the group and speak quietly to them.
- ✓ Never criticise sub-ordinates in front of others. Ask them to step aside with you.
- ✓ In fact don't criticise at all. Just point out the pitfalls of their actions or comments and encourage them to do better next time.

7.5 Coaching

The Range Officer will often be called upon to assist a new shooter. They may be asked to demonstrate the operation of a firearm, or provide information about the sport in general.

Always remember that the primary duty of the Range Officer is to ensure the safe operation of the Range, and providing coaching advice may distract you. As such, it is strongly recommended that you delegate the coaching duties to another competent person on the range.

7.6 Management Procedures, Practices and Policies

For you to be effective in your role as Range Officer you need to have a thorough working knowledge of the Branch, and Range. The Branch should provide for you a manual and some guidance and education in all aspects of Branch management, including a copy of the Branch Range Standing Orders and By-laws, Risk Management Procedures, and Grievances and Appeals processes.

8. How to Act as a Range Officer

As a Range Officer you are an Ambassador for your Branch, and for the Shooting Sports. Your attitude and behaviour should show as an example for others to respect and imitate. Be polite at all times and treat everybody, as you would like to be treated.

You may be the first person a visitor meets when attending a Range. Be helpful, courteous and when they leave, let them leave with a good impression. While your decision regarding safety issues on a Range is final, with this authority comes a responsibility to ensure your decisions are considered by others to be accurate, fair and knowledgeable.



On matters of SAFETY, you have the authority to over-rule any referee or shoot captain.

Before you do, make sure that you are making the correct decision.

If you have to correct somebody on a safety issue, be firm but be polite and be sure of your facts.

If you do not know the correct answer to a question whether it is about legislation or just a general firearm related question, be truthful, and offer to find out the correct answer. Let them know you are unsure or don't know. Make it clear, and don't give half-correct or incorrect information. Give them only the correct information.

8.1 Traits of a good Range Officer

- ✓ A sense of purpose
- ✓ Committed to the duty
- ✓ Provides support for the members and visitors upon request
- ✓ Confidence in self and ability in the successful running of the Range
- ✓ Unselfishness and a readiness to assist the Branch
- ✓ A team player
- ✓ Aware of the responsibilities of the role
- ✓ Able to maintain a firm, but fair, consistent and agreed set of Policies and Procedures
- ✓ Lead by example
- ✓ Excellent communication skills
- ✓ Patience and politeness

8.2 Knowledge a good Range Officer should have

- ✓ Knowledge of the Law relating to the Storage, Carriage and Use of Firearms in Queensland
- ✓ Knowledge of the Law relating to Range Operators, and Range Officers
- ✓ Knowledge of the Law relating to Shooting Clubs, Shooting Ranges and Shooting Galleries and any Approvals
- ✓ Knowledge of particular Branch Operating Procedures and Policies
- ✓ Knowledge of basic Work Health and Safety
- √ Knowledge of Firearms in general
- ✓ Knowledge of Range Commands and Range control methods



9. Range Safety and Commands

A safe working environment is paramount for a safe range. A clean and tidy range not only looks an inviting place to be, it is also a safe place if there are no distractions or trip hazards. An inspection of your working environment to make sure it is free of rubbish, damaged equipment or other risks is the first duty when arriving at the range. All target frames should be in good repair, and red flags and/or lights available and functional. All documentation should be available and current. You should conduct an inspection of all of the Range and its environs before you open the Range for use.

9.1 Understanding Firearms

You will need a good understanding of firearms, and the way they work.

- ✓ You are not expected to be an expert on makes and models of every firearm made.
- ✓ You are expected to know and understand the different actions of firearms, the basic functions or states of readiness of firearms, and essentially how to clear them and declare them safe.
- ✓ You are expected to understand how to rectify malfunctions.
- ✓ You can increase your knowledge and understanding by observation, research, study, and by asking others more experienced than yourself. Try asking someone for help and you will be surprised at how willing they are to help you.

9.2 Range Commands

Range commands are a series of spoken words that control activity on your Firing Line, during Competitions and Practice sessions.

These commands are common to all S.S.A.A. Ranges throughout Queensland, are listed in specific Discipline Rule Books, and are designed to provide a safe shooting environment.

Below is a list of the generic commands given to enable shooters to hold, load, aim and fire their firearms on a Range during either a Competition or Practice session.

1. Shooters to the line.

Shooters move forward to their respective shooting positions)

2. Load and make ready.

Shooters may now handle their firearms, load magazines and cylinders and ready the firearm pointing down Range.

3. Shooters are you ready?

Shooter confirms yes or no or sometimes no only.

4. In your own time commence fire.

Shooters then commence to fire at their own target.



You may have some slightly differently worded commands to those above. If so, make sure that ALL Range Officers on the Range use the SAME commands to avoid confusion.

Some Disciplines have a series of specific commands for their competitions. The Discipline Chairman and/or Shoot Captain should make you familiar with their commands before the commencement of competition.

10. Stuck Live Round

The S.S.A.A. requirement is:

In the event of a malfunction which results in a stuck live round which cannot be simply removed from the breech end of the barrel, the firearm is to be made safe and removed from the range to a competent person for repairs. Under no circumstance is an attempt to be made to remove the round by insertion of a cleaning rod or similar object from the muzzle end of the firearm.

11. Risk Management

As the name implies it is the managing of risks, identifying the potential risk or risks and putting systems and procedures into place to prevent situations arising or occurring. Before these identified situations occur, either through circumstance or failure to observe certain practices, it is essential to have people trained in coping with them. The following items are some things you may have to be aware of.

11.1 Medical Emergencies

These may occur at any time and it is essential that there is an agreed policy and procedure to follow and that you are familiar with it. If you are a member of a new Branch and are about to put a policy in place you may like to consider the following when designing it:

- 1. Everybody must know the correct physical address for the Range so emergency services can find you quickly.
- 2. Have either a land line or mobile service available every time the Range property is in use.
- 3. Know where the first aid kit is. Ensure it is up to date and complete. Implement a system to allow this to be kept current.
- 4. Know and understand the meaning of FIRST AID. First aid is the provision of initial care for an illness or injury. Make sure you know what you are doing or make sure a trained first aid person administers first aid.
- 5. Never leave the patient alone.
- 6. If an Ambulance is needed then advise them of the nature or type of injury, e.g. heart attack, open wound, loss of blood, snake bite etc.
- 7. Do not hang up the phone until advised to do so by the operator.
- 8. Send someone to the entry point of the property to flag down the ambulance or emergency vehicle.
- 9. See the Range Supervisor / member of the Branch Committee and make out a report in the **Range Incident Book**.



11.2 Insurance

In case of an incident on the Range:

- 1. Comfort patient.
- 2. Never admit liability or responsibility on behalf of yourself or the Branch.
- 3. What you say or state, may affect your responsibility to the Branch, and may be answerable in a court of law.
- 4. Write up a brief and accurate account of the incident in the Range Incident Book.

11.3 Fire

Due to the nature of most outdoor Firing Ranges, those that are not maintained or are infrequently maintained may lend themselves to ignition, during the long hot months of summer.

Regular maintenance programmes will help to control the risk of fire. If in doubt as to the correct methods of preventing the possibility of fires and to know what actually constitutes a Fire Hazard, the Queensland Fire Service will be only too willing to provide advice and inspection of the facility. Remember - if in doubt ask.

12. Terminology

Approved Attendance Register

An Approved Attendance Register contains all of the information as required by the Authorised Officer, Weapons Licensing Branch.

Firing Line

The firing line is defined as the start of the firing Range, from where live firing takes place, and includes either the covered area or the firing mound or that area clearly delineated.

Range Complex

The Range Complex is the total area that encompasses the Range Facility including the car park and environs, the firing range and the safety template.

Range Officer

A Range Officer is a person who holds a current Firearms Licence under the Weapons Act 1990, and is endorsed by the Branch to act in that capacity on behalf of the Range Operator.

Range Safe

The Range is safe when the red flag at the firing line is raised or the red lights are displayed. No handling of firearms is permitted and persons may move forward of the firing line, as directed by the Range Officer.

Range Open

The Range is open for shooting when the red flag at the firing line is lowered or the red lights are turned off. Only then may firearms be handled as directed by the Range Officer.

Range Closed

The Range is closed when shooting and associated activities have ceased for the day.

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Safe Direction

A safe direction to point the muzzle will depend on where you are and the environs around you. On most Ranges, a safe direction is the muzzle pointing directly up in the air.

Safety Template

The Safety Template/Danger Area is defined as the area surrounding the firing Range and defines the extremities of the Range Complex.



13. Annexure A

13.1 Knowledge of the Law

Weapons Act Part 4 Section 52.

Physical possession and use of weapon sometimes allowed for the purpose of training a minor

- (1) A minor who is at least 11 years may have physical possession of and use a category A or B weapon or a category M crossbow in a place where it is lawful to physically possess and use a category A or B weapon or a category M crossbow if
 - (a) the minor is under the direct and immediate supervision of a parent, guardian or another person who is acting in the place of a parent or guardian; and
 - (b) the parent, guardian or other person is licensed to possess the weapon.
- (2) A minor who is at least 11 years may have physical possession of and use a Category A or B weapon or a Category M crossbow at an Approved Range for Category A or B weapons or Category M crossbows if the minor is supervised
 - (a) directly and immediately by a Range Officer; or
 - (b) as prescribed by Regulation.

Weapons Act Part 4 Section 53.

An unlicensed person may use a weapon at an approved range

- (1) This section applies to a person
 - (a) who is not a licensee; or
 - (b) who is a licensee but is not authorised to possess the weapon the person proposes to physically possess and use under this section.
- (2) The person may physically possess and use a weapon at an approved range for the category of weapon if, immediately before possessing and using the weapon, the person:-
 - (a) produces for the inspection of a range officer at the range photographic identification identifying the person; and

Examples of photographic identification:-

- · weapons licence
- driver's licence
- (b) completes and signs an approved form stating the following and gives the form to the range officer:-
 - (i) the person's name, residential address and date of birth;
 - (ii) that the person is a licensee or is not an excluded person;
 - (iii) the date and time the declaration is completed.



- (3) Before allowing the person to physically possess and use a weapon at the approved range, the range officer must sign the approved form declaring that the range officer:-
 - (a) inspected the person's photographic identification; and
 - (b) if the person states in the approved form that the person is a licensee, inspected the person's licence; and
 - (c) was satisfied:-
 - (i) the person signing the approved form appeared to be the person shown in the photographic identification; and
 - (ii) after inspecting the completed approved form:-
 - (a) that information in the completed approved form agreed with information shown on the photographic identification; and
 - (b) that the person is a licensee or, on the information contained in the approved form, is not an excluded person. Maximum penalty 20 penalty units.
 - (4) It is a condition of the approved shooting club's shooting club permit that the club must keep the approved form for 3 years after the approved form is signed.
 - (5) The range officer must ensure the person is supervised by the range officer or another range officer at all times when the person is in physical possession of the weapon. Maximum penalty 20 penalty units.
 - (6) For subsection (5), if the person is in physical possession of a category H weapon, the supervision of the person by a range officer must be direct, personal and exclusive supervision by the range officer at all times when that person is in physical possession of the weapon.
 - (7) In this section excluded person means a person
 - a. who has been convicted in Queensland or elsewhere of:
 - i. murder or manslaughter; or
 - ii. armed robbery; or
 - iii. unlawful wounding; or
 - iv. grievous bodily harm; or
 - v. an offence involving drugs, weapons or violence prescribed under a regulation that is punishable by at least 7 years imprisonment; or
 - b. who, in the 5 year period immediately before the day the person signs the approved form under this section, has been convicted of, or discharged from custody on sentence after the person has been convicted of, any of the following offences
 - i. an offence relating to the misuse of drugs;
 - ii. an offence involving the use or threatened use of violence;
 - iii. an offence involving the use, carriage, discharge or possession of a weapon; or
 - c. who, in the 5 year period immediately before the day the person signs the approved form under this section, has been subject to a domestic violence order, other than a temporary protection order; or
 - d. who is subject to a temporary protection order; or



- e. who is prevented by another order of a Queensland court or another court outside Queensland from holding a licence or possessing a weapon unless the order permits the person to possess or use a weapon under supervision; or
- f. who, in the 5 year period immediately before the day the person signs the approved form under this section, has been subject to an involuntary assessment order under the Mental Health Act 2000 or a similar order under the Mental Health Act 1974, or a similar order in another State; or
- g. who has been refused a licence, or whose licence has been revoked, in the 5 year period immediately before the day the person signs the approved form under this section because the person is not, or is no longer, a fit and proper person to hold a licence; or
- h. whose licence is suspended.

Weapons Regulations Part 12 Section 77. Supervision of experienced minor who is at least 11 years at an approved range

- (1) For Section 52(2)(b), a minor who is at least 11 years may be supervised directly by a Range Officer or a Range Officer's appointee if:-
 - (a) the minor has fired a weapon at an Approved Range on at least 3 separate occasions; and
 - (b) no more than 6 minors to whom paragraph (a) applies are supervised by the Range Officer at the same time.
- (2) In this section "Range Officers appointee" means an adult appointed by the Range Officer for the purpose who holds a licence authorising possession of the weapon being used by the minor.

Weapons Act Part 4 Section 85. Only an approved shooting club may conduct target shooting

A person must not conduct a shooting club for the sport of target shooting unless the shooting club is an approved shooting club.

Weapons Act Part 4 Section 97. Club must keep range use register books

- (1) It is a condition of an approved shooting club's shooting club permit that the club must keep a range use register and ensure the register is available at all times when the range is being conducted by the shooting club.
- (2) Before a person uses a range conducted by an approved shooting club to discharge a weapon, the person must-
 - (a) if the person is a licensee, produce the person's licence to a range officer at the range; and
 - (b) enter in the range use register the details provided for under subsection (3).



Note-

If the person proposing to use the range is not a licensee the person must produce the identification and complete the approved form required under section 53.

- (3) The register must include provision for the following details-
 - (a) the person's identity;
 - (b) the category of weapon the person will use on the range;
 - (c) other details prescribed under a regulation.
- (4) It is a condition of an approved shooting club's shooting club permit that the club ensure that a range officer of the club must inspect the entry made by the person in the register and endorse the entry as correct before allowing the person to use the range.
- (5) An endorsement under this section must clearly identify the person making the endorsement.
- (6) Subsections (2)(a) and (4) do not apply in relation to a range officer of the approved range using the range to discharge a weapon.

Weapons Act Part 4 Section 98A

Limitation on organised target shooting

Unless otherwise authorised by this Act, a person may conduct organised target shooting only on an approved range.

Weapons Act Part 4 Section 108.

Duties and responsibilities of Range Operators and Range Officers

- (1) In this section -
 - "range operator" means the person conducting an approved range for an approved shooting club under the approval given under this division and, if the approval is issued to an unincorporated body or association of persons, includes each member of the body's or associations governing body.
- (2) A range operator must ensure every person who physically possesses or uses a weapon at the approved range is properly supervised by an adult (a "Range Officer") who-
 - (a) Holds a firearms licence under this Act; or
 - (b) Is a range officer, however called, under law of another State that corresponds with this Act.
- (3) A range operator must ensure the name of each range officer supervising persons using the approved range is prominently displayed at the range at any time when a weapon is discharged.
- (4) A range operator must take all reasonable steps to ensure a person attending the approved range does not contravene this Act.

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Weapons Act Part 4 Section 109. Responsibilities of range officer

A range officer supervising an approved range must take all reasonable steps to ensure a person attending the range does not contravene this Act.

Weapons Act Part 4 Section 110. Responsibilities of a person attending an approved range

- (1) A person attending an approved range must not possess or use a weapon at the range unless the possession or use
 - a. is authorised under
 - i. a licence issued to the person; or
 - ii. section 52; or
 - iii. section 53; and
 - b. is permitted by the Range Officer; and
 - c. complies with the conditions on which the range was approved, including, for example, that it is a weapon of a category for which the range was approved.
- (2) A person attending an approved range must not use a weapon in a way that is likely to cause death or injury to a person or unlawful destruction of, or damage to, property.
- (3) A person attending an approved range must comply with a direction by a range officer for the range given for the purposes of this Act or safety reasons, unless the person has reasonable excuse.



14. Annexure B

14.1 S.S.A.A. (Qld.) Inc. Range Rules (2012 Edition)

The powers of the Range Officer concerning conduct on the Range are absolute and not subject to question or discussion, other than at a Branch General Meeting.

- 1. The first duty of every person, upon entering the Range Complex, is to sign the Approved Attendance Register.
- 2. Each and every person, whether a member or visitor, upon entering the Branch premises, places themselves under the control of the Range Officer or their assistants. Such persons must at all times comply with the Range Officers' instructions and directions about the Rules of conduct and safety.
- 3. It is strongly recommended that all shooters wear enclosed footwear (i.e. shoes or boots not thongs), protective eyewear, and hearing protection.
- 4. All firearms carried on or about the Range Complex must be held in a position of safety with the muzzle pointed in a safe direction and the action open and unloaded at all times. Carriage to, or removal from the firing line must be at the direction of the Range Officer or their assistant.
- 5. Firearms must be unloaded and their actions must be open at all times with no rounds in the chamber/magazine after they have been cleared. The firearm may be loaded on the firing line only when permission has been given by the Range Officer.
- 6. Should the Range Officer consider any firearm and/or ammunition to be unsafe or unsuitable, he/she may deny the user the right to use it on the Range.
- 7. Owners should ensure that the firearms are mechanically sound and in a safe condition i.e. that the firearm does not inadvertently fire when the action is being opened or closed.
- 8. Any person, who considers the firearm, ammunition, or practice of a shooter to be unsafe, should bring the matter to the attention of the Range Officer or their assistant, who, after investigation, will take the appropriate action.
- 9. To prevent injury to the shooter and damage to the firearm, the barrel, chamber, etc. should be free of any oil, grease, or any other obstruction. The ammunition must be of the correct type and ballistically sound.
- 10. The Range Officer or their assistant will issue a command or sound a device for the commencement of shooting. A command will be given, or a device will also be sounded for a cease-fire. When a cease-fire is called, all firing will stop immediately. When the Range Officer or their assistant orders "unload and show clear", firearms are to be made safe, for inspection by the Range Officer or their assistants. No person will move forward of the firing line into the target area until permission is given by the Range Officer or their assistant. Any person/s wishing to hang targets on 200-metre frames (or beyond), must notify the Range Officer or their assistant of their intention to do so and then report to the Range Officer or their assistant when back on the firing line.

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- 11. When a firing line is closed, a red flag will be flown, or a red light will be illuminated at the firing line to show that the Range is safe. The Range Officer or their assistant is to give the command "Range Safe" before persons are allowed forward to check targets. The raised flag and/or the illuminated lights must be clearly visible to all persons on or approaching the firing line. When the Range is open, the red flag will be lowered, or the red light will be switched off. The Range Officer or their assistant is to give the command "Range Open" before persons are allowed to handle firearms.
- 12. When people are forward of the firing line, unauthorised personnel will keep clear of the firing line and under no circumstances, handle firearms. Non-shooters must stay back from the firing line in the defined areas.
- 13. Danger flags (Red 6ft x 4ft) will be flown from poles 5 to 6 metres high, one at the entrance to the Range Complex, and one from the furthest backstop. These flags will be hoisted before any shooting takes place, and lowered after shooting ceases, and all firearms are cleared, declared 'safe' and securely stored.
- 14. Warning Signs are to be permanently displayed at the Range entrance, and all other paths, tracks or entry points into the Range and any Safety Template/Danger Area.
- 15. The responsibility for observing all Range Safety Rules rests with each individual.

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15. Annexure C

15.1 S.S.A.A. (Qld.) Inc. Branch Range Officer Application Form

Form available from the State Office electronically or in hardcopy.

S.S.A.A. (QLD.) INC. APPLICATION FORM S.S.A.A. BRANCH RANGE OFFICER To be completed by applicant and forwarded to Branch Committee for processing							
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Branch Range Officer Guidelines



16. Annexure D

16.1 S.S.A.A. (Qld.) Inc. Trainee Range Officer Time Card

Form available from the State Office electronically or in hardcopy.

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