

DEDICATED SPORT PERSON STATUS

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Firearms Control Act and Regulations [FCA&R] has seriously restricted the private ownership of firearms in South Africa. The FCA&R restricts private ownership of firearms according to their use, in our case the shooting sports. To ease the restrictions somewhat, a category called dedicated sports person has been included in the FCA to allow the ownership of more and different firearms for the shooting sports.

The FCA&R determines that to be classed as a dedicated sports person you have to belong to an accredited sports-shooting organisation and complete a relevant training course. The sports-shooting organisation has to keep particulars of the members so qualified and their participation in shooting sport. To remain a dedicated sports person the individual has to be a **person in good standing and actively participate**. The sports-shooting organisation also has to evaluate its dedicated sports persons and keep records of its members' participation.

REQUIREMENTS

The practical requirements for becoming and remaining a dedicated sports person are explained below.

1. SAPSA is an accredited sports organisation as provided for in the FCA&R and may therefore have dedicated sports persons as its members. Membership is easy to determine by way of membership fees, cards and lists.
2. The relevant training course is stated in Regulation 4:
(b)(ii) in the case of a sports-shooting organisation, the sports-shooting organisation only register a person as a dedicated member and dedicated sports person with the sports-shooting organisation if such person has successfully completed a relevant training course that complies with the provisions of the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (Act No. 58 of 1998) read with the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998); [Regs]

As at July 2006, this training course does not yet exist and will probably only be available by the end of 2007. In the mean time the CFR recognises all SAPSA members as dedicated sports persons. This, however, is subject to change without notice.

3. The sports-shooting organisation has to have a dedicated procedure for its dedicated members. This dedicated procedure for SAPSA is that clubs keep record of all IPSC matches and tournaments that the members participate in. The sub sections of Regulation 4 reads as follows:
*c) it has a dedicated procedure in place to regularly evaluate its dedicated members for their -

(i) bona fides to be or remain a dedicated hunter or sports person, as the case may be;
and*

(ii) dedicated participation in their applicable hunting or sports-shooting activities, as the case may be;

(d) it keeps on record the particulars of the participation by a dedicated member in his or her hunting or sports-shooting activities as a dedicated hunter or dedicated sport person, as the case may be;

4. The dedicated member must also be a person in good standing as determined further in Regulation 4:

(e) it will in respect of a registered member only allow dedicated membership to the association or organisation as long as -

(i) the dedicated member is a person in good standing as a dedicated member with the association or organisation, as the case may be; and

The Regulations define such a person as:

1. (xiv) **“person in good standing”** means a person who -

(a) is or remains acceptable to an accredited hunting association, sports-shooting organisation or collectors’ association as a dedicated member or collector, as the case may be;

(b) actually fulfils the intent of the Act in respect of his or her status as a dedicated hunter or dedicated sports person, or collector as the case may be; and

c) is not unfit to possess a firearm in terms of the provisions of the Act;

5. The FCA defines a dedicated sports person as follows:

dedicated sports person means a person who actively participates in sports-shooting and who is a member of an accredited sports-shooting organisation.

The important elements are ‘**actively participates**’ and ‘**a member of an accredited sports-shooting organisation**’. SAPSA is already an accredited sports-shooting organisation, thus only the meaning of actively participates must be determined. It must also be closely linked to person in good standing who ‘**actively fulfils the intent of the Act**’. We must accept that if you don’t shoot you cannot be in good standing irrespective of how much work as an official or administrator you do.

SAPSA defines actively participates as participating in a number of IPSC competitions in each calendar year with a minimum of six points. These points work according to IPSC levels:

level I is a club level IPSC competition and participation in one club level competition equals one point each time;

level II is a provincial level IPSC league and participation in an IPSC league match equals two points each time;

level III is national level IPSC competition and participation in a national equals three points each time.

We as sports shooters have to ensure that we comply with the FCA&R to remain dedicated sports persons and to retain SAPSA's status as an accredited sports-shooting organisation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Club. Each club must keep record of their member's participation as must the member. Accurate record of participation in club shoots and provincial leagues is exceptionally important, to enable enquiries by the Police to be answered. The FCA&R requires that SAPSA submit a name list of dedicated sports persons annually. To do this the club must send their name list with the accumulated points to the province by the end of November each year. The name list must state which members are still dedicated members having six or more points for the year, which members are occasional sports persons having less than six points for the year, and which members have terminated their membership with the reason for the termination.

Province. The province must consolidate the points list per name per club, verify the names and points, and submit the list to the SAPSA office by the first week of December each year.

SAPSA. The SAPSA office (Admin Officer) will consolidate the lists and compare the names with the SAPSA membership list. After verifying the names, the list will be submitted to the Police by the middle of December stating which members are dedicated sports persons, occasional sports persons, and which have terminated their membership with the reasons. The SAPSA office needs to have the detail of points per member by the first week of December annually to be able to update and submit the list to the Police before the end of December.

OCCASIONAL SPORTS PERSON STATUS

What happens to a member who does not accumulate six points or joins as a new member? We and they have to accept that they are occasional sports persons.

Definition: occasional sports person means any person who, from time to time, participates in sports-shooting but who is not a member of an accredited sports-shooting organisation.

There is no Police requirement to do a course to be an occasional sports person as for dedicated sports person. There are no requirements of any kind for becoming or remaining an occasional sports person, except the restrictions placed by the FCA&R.

As the Police have no requirements for records of any kind for occasional sports person, SAPSA does not prescribe any. However, it would be wise for clubs to keep the same meticulous records of participation as for dedicated sports persons to be able answer Police queries. After all, the particulars of these members already appear on our name list and is available to the Police.