

Ethical Codes and Disciplinary Guidelines

When considering an application for accreditation of a hunting or sport shooting association, the Police must, in the first place, evaluate the ability of the association to further the purposes of the Firearms Control Act. These include the safe and responsible use and storage of legally owned firearms and to prevent crime involving the use of firearms.

Arising from this, the Registrar of Firearms requires, *inter alia*, proof of a training programme (page 6). The Registrar also requires copies of the ethical codes of the accrediting association, the disciplinary procedures in place and details of all cases of disciplinary hearings and outcomes. Accordingly, SA Wingshooters has reviewed, extended and formalised our ethical codes as published in the *Wingshooting* handbook. In consultation with our legal adviser, Mr Martin Hood, we have drawn up clear disciplinary guidelines. Let's hope we never need to apply them. Please read these codes carefully and file them:

WINGSHOOTERS' GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Safety Above All

No dead bird can ever compensate for a shooting friend injured, maimed or killed. Experienced shooters are aware at all times where other shooters are. We never shoot at an obscured object or at something we cannot make out clearly. We do not consume *any* alcohol before or during a shoot. It is our duty to *immediately* correct any transgression of safety rules or unsafe behaviour by anyone.

2. Broken Guns

Away from the firing line, guns are always unloaded, carried in gunslips or with actions broken, and are never pointed at anyone. Shots are never fired from vehicles, stationary or not.

3. Conservation Ethic

Because Hunting and the 'Great Outdoors' cannot be separated, all good true hunters are also good true conservationists. We support sustained utilisation as the cornerstone of effective conservation. We support the conservation of gamebirds as indicator species of the quality of the natural habitat. We actively support the development of rural communities, based on the sustainable use of renewable natural resources in general, and gamebirds in particular.

4. No littering

Because of our respect for the environment, we do not litter. We clean up behind ourselves and even other people.

5. Knowledge of the Quarry and the Law

Wingshooters always strive to learn more about their quarry, the game birds and the waterfowl. We always try to identify the gamebird before shooting, obey the law and comply with hunting regulations at all times.

6. Respect for Life

Wingshooters have respect for life, we practise self-restraint and condemn killing sprees and any wastage of bagged birds. We condemn the awarding of prizes for birds shot and any form of competition in live bird shooting.

We never shoot at birds on the ground and support the principle of bag limits as part of the shooting ethic. We make every effort to retrieve shot or wounded game. We avoid public displays of dead birds.



7. Avoiding Cruelty to Animals

We try to avoid wounding birds. We strive to improve our shooting skills on the clay target range and do not shoot at game which is out of range. We avoid shooting 'double birds' (i.e. a left and a right) under certain field conditions.

8. Respect for the Landowners' rights

Wingshooters look after the land and their host's property. We make sure what may and what may not be shot. We close gates and do not start veld fires. We believe in the farmer's right to a share of the bag.

9. Responsible use of Gun Dogs

Wingshooters encourage the use of gun dogs and the observance of a code of ethics for gun dogs. In particular, this code stipulates that one never allows one's gundog to make a nuisance of itself or show any aggression, and that the dog should be kept under control at all times. The gun closest to a pointing dog has the prerogative to shoot. We take particular care never to lose our temper with our dogs or to abuse them.

10. Putting something back

Wingshooters always put something back into the sport and go out of our way to help young shots. We act responsibly and within the law and support the collective effort of our fraternity to promote gamebird conservation. We foster the spirit of goodwill and share the special magic of our sport with wingshooters all over the world. **△**