

**QLHF GUIDELINES FOR USE OF BLANK-FIRE WEAPONS AND
PYROTECHNICS IN COMBAT AND OTHER DISPLAYS
(26th September 2002 - Net V1.1)**

Amendments

Date	Amendment
26th Sept 2002	How to indicate an Emergency

Specific Guidelines for the use of black powder in small arms and cannon will also be prepared.

Each participating organisation is expected to have its own Safety Regulations. These guidelines provide the best-practice framework in which those Regulations should fit.

GENERAL SAFETY

1. Possession of illegal substances; illegal, unregistered, or improperly registered weapons; or live ammunition, is forbidden at any event. Violations of these provisions will result in immediate expulsion from the site.
2. Possession or use of alcohol during a display is not permitted.
3. Individuals who are discovered to be intoxicated before a display will be prohibited from participation. Any individual discovered to be intoxicated during a display will be immediately removed from display area.
4. A casualty evacuation plan should be prepared prior to the event and relevant medical facilities advised of the event.
5. Clean water is to be held in bulk for the emergency treatment of burns (can be held in fire buckets)
6. Fire buckets and fire fighting equipment is to be on hand in the camp area.
7. Campfire sites should be cleared of vegetation to a safe distance
8. Care is to be taken with the use of candles and smoking in tents

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of every participant to adhere to these guidelines and obviate all safety violations on and off the field. Individual Unit Commanders however, are ultimately responsible for ALL actions of their men in the field as they pertain to these Guidelines.

a. Unit Commanders are responsible for :

nominating a Safety Officer from within their Unit.

organising and supervising a safety briefing and inspection for all unit members before the event.

Ensuring the safety and legality of all weapons or other devices used by their unit, and the training of those personnel, before they are allowed to take part in an event.

Arranging the inspection by the Pyrotechnic Marshal of all pyrotechnic devices to be used by the unit.

Ensuring that only individuals who are approved members of their unit, and who have been briefed on all safety requirements, carry arms at the event site.

b. QLHF will assist and provide support to Unit Commanders in fulfilling their obligations under these guidelines by :

Co-ordinate the efforts of unit appointed safety officers, and work with them to ensure full understanding of these Guidelines.

Organise a standard safety briefing and inspection for all participants before any battle scenario is begun.

Serve as final arbiter for safety-related decisions or disputes.

Ensure the availability of the required first aid personnel prior to the start of any combat scenario.

Serve as the proponent for these Guidelines, and propose suggested revisions as needed to ensure effectiveness, accuracy, and currency.

b. All Event participants will :

Be familiar with, and comply with the contents of these Guidelines.

Comply with the direction of Unit Commanders and QLHF Marshals in matters pertaining to event safety.

Ensure attendance at both unit and event safety briefings and inspections, prior to taking part in any scenario play.

Be prepared to serve as adjunct safety officers during combat scenarios.

PROCEDURES

a. Unit Procedures

Unit Commanders will ensure their members understand these Guidelines. Specifically, before any participant is allowed to take part in the event, the Unit Commander (or designated Safety Officer) will:

1. Inspect individuals for safety hazards and correct defects found.
2. Ensure each unit member receives a comprehensive safety briefing
3. Ensure an inspection is made by the Pyrotechnic Marshal of any pyrotechnic devices which the unit intends to use. All devices should in the first instance comply with the provisions of **Annexure A** to these Guidelines. Un-inspected or unapproved devices are to be immediately removed from the field.
4. Inspect weapons and ammunition. This includes:
 - a) Individual weapons
 - b) Automatic weapons, whether set up in fixed locations or carried, to ensure compliance with the provisions of **Annexure B**.
 - c) Inspect mortars and other devices for compliance with the provisions of **Annexure B** to this regulation.

5. Observe scenario play within their unit and, in the event of a safety infraction or safety related incident, intervene to resolve that incident.

b. QLHF has a duty of care to ensure the safe conduct of the event Specifically QLHF will ensure that:

1. Suitable qualified or experienced individuals are appointed as Marshals
2. The Marshals shall organise and conduct a safety check or demonstration of any pyrotechnics intended to be used at any time during the event. This will be accomplished as outlined in **Annexure A**.
3. Deliver a comprehensive safety briefing before any scenario play is begun.
4. Organise and execute a spot-check of all participants before the scenario has begun.
5. Observe the scenario and, in the event of a safety infraction or safety related incident, intervene to resolve that incident.

SAFETY PRACTICES

A. Firearms

Firearms of any type will be handled according to the following *Basic Safety Rules*:

***TREAT EVERY WEAPON AS LOADED UNTIL CHECKED!**

***KEEP MUZZLE POINTED IN A SAFE DIRECTION AT ALL TIMES!**

***KEEP FINGER OFF OF TRIGGER UNTIL SAFE TO FIRE!**

***POSSESSION OF LIVE AMMUNITION IS ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN!**

1. The use of wax wads for blank small arm ammunition is ***NOT ALLOWED***. Wadding should be of tissue paper, nitrated if desired, or of some other readily flammable material.
2. Ammunition must be stored in a secure receptacle and out of public sight and reach.
3. No smoking or fires shall on any account be allowed in the vicinity of carriages or wagons or any other vehicles or vessels in which ammunition is carried.
4. No smoking or fires shall on any account be allowed near magazines or gun emplacements.
5. Weapons will at all times be under strict physical levels of individual and unit security. Participants are responsible for the security of their own weapons. No firearms will be left unattended or unsecured on any occasion.
6. No weapons are to be loaded without the direct order of the Unit Commander or Nominated Safety Officer.
7. After any display all weapons are to be examined by the Unit Commander or Nominated Safety Officer to ensure they are free of ammunition. All used and unused ammunition is to be returned to storage after any display.
8. Ammunition is not to be handled by any member of the public.
9. Full control of any weapon must never be given to a member of the public. If a weapon is to be shown to a member of the public, personnel must retain one hand on the weapon. Unlike re-enactors the public are not licensed to possess, hold or carry a weapon.
10. Firing of any weapon may occur only in designated areas.

B. Hand to Hand Weapons (bayonets, clubs, trench knives, etc.).

1. Compliance with QLHF Guidelines for inter-group edged weapons combat must be reached before any combat of this type may take place.
2. Trench clubs are to be constructed of soft materials which will not produce injury in use.
3. Bayonets will NOT be affixed to rifles except for approved and controlled scenarios. Bayonets may only be fixed on the battlefield when so directed by the two field commanders. Under no circumstances will combatants come to close quarters with fixed bayonets.
4. Participants will not come to close quarters with any pointed or edged weapons without prior approval of the Edged Weapon Marshal
5. Other authentic trench fighting implements, i.e. entrenching tools, may be used in simulated hand-to-hand combat, provided arrangements and rehearsals have been organised between both combatant units. Their use will be governed by common sense and prudent judgment so as not to endanger other re-enactors.

C. Pyrotechnics.

The term "pyrotechnics" or "projectile" as used in this section serve as a general term to cover ANY of the following: pyrotechnic devices; smoke devices of ALL types; mortar and mortar smoke bombs; rifle launched and hand thrown grenades; light producing devices; and ANY explosive device intended to increase the atmosphere at the event, whether it be thrown or launched in any manner.

- Pyrotechnics will not be thrown or launched directly at individuals. Projectiles must be launched or thrown so as to FALL at no less than a 45 degree angle.
- Pyrotechnics will not be thrown or launched into bunkers, MG, or mortar positions.
- All personnel MUST wear steel helmets when within an area where launched pyrotechnic devices are used.
- Pyrotechnics are not to be handled on the Display Field by any personnel unless so authorised by the Pyrotechnic Marshal.
- Any Field area where pyrotechnics are laid prior to an event must be tightly policed to prevent interference.

FIELD MANOEUVRES

1. Before troops leave to partake in exercises and/or field manoeuvres, the designated Safety Officer or Unit Commander will certify that the magazines and pouches of his members were examined on parade, and that no ball ammunition OR projectile component was located in any of them.
2. Bayonets are not to be fixed by dismounted troops, nor will swords be drawn by mounted troops when they are opposing forces with which contact will be made at distances of less than 25 metres.
3. Participants are not to fire at an opposing body of any arm at a distance of less than 25 metres.
4. No firearms are to be pointed directly at any other individual.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES DURING A BATTLE DISPLAY

- a. A First Aid service will be provided for major public events.
- b. The word "STAND FAST- EMERGENCY" will be used to indicate a genuine emergency; any other terms is considered period in context and can be ignored.
- c. At the word "STAND FAST- EMERGENCY" all activity will cease and silence will be maintained on the battlefield in order to direct medical aid to the spot required. Individuals not involved with the emergency incident will hold in position until the two field commanders officially reinstate combat if and when appropriate.
- d. Only individuals at the scene will use the word "EMERGENCY" to direct emergency personnel to the spot. Emergency personnel must make themselves known immediately, so they can be hastened to the scene.

Personnel trained in EAR, CPR, and basic first aid should be known to the Safety Officer. These techniques are essential to preserve life until qualified medical assistance is obtained.

In case of medical emergency, the following steps are to be carried out -

- If patient is not breathing, commence EAR, or if no pulse, commence CPR

COMPLIANCE

Individual.

Willful failure to comply with the provisions of these Guidelines may result in the individual's expulsion from the event or, in cases of severe breaches, security or law enforcement may be brought to intervene. Individuals who commit minor violations of these Guidelines *without serious consequence* should be corrected on the spot.

Unit

1. Deliberate failure to comply, or willful circumvention of these Guidelines by a unit may result in censure, or, in severe cases, suspension of the unit from participation in an event.
2. Units which display a proportionally inappropriate number of safety infractions by individuals within the unit may be deemed to be in deliberate noncompliance with safety procedures and subject to censure or suspension.

ANNEXURE A: PYROTECHNIC DEVICES

GENERAL.

This annex details the construction, approval, and storage of pyrotechnic devices; smoke devices of ALL types; mortar and mortar smoke bombs; rifle launched and hand thrown grenades; light producing devices; and ANY explosive device intended to increase the atmosphere at the event, whether it be thrown or launched in any manner. The term "projectile" or "pyrotechnics" as used in this annex are used as a general term to cover ANY of the above listed devices.

I. Approval.

Before any use at any event, pyrotechnics will be tested and approved. A specific time and place for this testing will be arranged with the Pyrotechnic Marshal. Two samples of the device are required; one will be exploded in the presence of the Pyrotechnic Marshal and the other will be retained as a sample. Only pyrotechnics which have been tested and approved may be used on the field; all others will be considered illegal, and the violators dealt with accordingly. It is the Unit Commander's responsibility to see that personnel use only approved pyrotechnics.

II. Construction

- a. Hand thrown grenades must agree in size and shape with a documented pattern or type used in the respective conflict. Designs must be approved before use.
- b. Projectiles of any type shall not be more than 10 ounces (allows for a sabot for launched projectiles) of projected weight and 8 ounces of impact weight.
- c. Burst charge will not exceed 30 grains FFG black powder or equal charge of Pyrodex, and must conform to State and Federal Guidelines. Charge should only be sufficient to burst the container to attain the effect desired. Charges shall not be overly-compressed; use as little powder as possible based upon the design of the projectile to produce the desired effect.
- d. Projectile case must exhibit a palpable flexibility under finger pressure to lessen kinetic transfer of energy upon impact. Grenades utilizing wood handles (e.g., stick or paddle type grenades) must have rounded edges and be of all glued construction. Use of nails, staples, or any sharp or potentially dangerous material that can be exposed upon detonation or impact is forbidden. Wood handles should be made of soft (lightweight) wood.

- e. No part of the projectile can contain any metal, with the exception of kitchen aluminum foil, no more than double layer thickness. This is the material that must be used to wrap the bursting charge, as it will not smolder and ignite fires after exploding.
- f. No part of any projectile shall be constructed of any material that is, in the opinion of the inspecting Pyrotechnic Marshal, likely to produce hazardous fragments that can cause injury, likely to "flame", or likely to throw burning parts/sparks.
- g. No launched projectile, due to velocity attained, shall display any sharp or hard protruding parts, and shall be securely sealed to prevent "leakage" of filler that may obstruct the tube of a firing device.
- h. Projectile and grenades will be filled with commercial Baking Soda to assist in preventing brush fires. ANY OTHER FILLER IS PROHIBITED.
- i. Projection charges will be either FFG black rifle powder or Pyrodex only.
- j. Any smoke-making devices designed for projection must be such as to generate the smoke within the container and exit as a cloud, thus making no sparks or leaving residue to destroy clothing and materials in the vicinity, or causing fires. All smoke devices, including commercial, fall into the pyrotechnic device category and MUST be approved for use.
- k. Projectiles cannot contain an "impact" detonation device, but must incorporate a sufficient time fuse to detonate well after impact (5 seconds). "AIR BURST" projectiles are forbidden.

III. Storage

All ammunition and storage containers for pyrotechnic devices must contain a well fitting "hard lid", and must be kept closed when not in immediate use.

IV. Artillery Simulation

The following applies to in-ground, electrically-detonated pyrotechnics designed to replicate the terminal effects of artillery fire.

- a. In ground charges must be placed in "no man's land", or behind the trench system at sufficient distance to ensure the safety of those in the trenches when exploded. Such distance is to be determined by the size of charge used.
- b. Each area chosen for a "charge" must be well marked, numbered, and wired off to prevent anyone from entering the area. Wire will be of sufficient height and a standard pattern (4 steel wire loop stakes w/red stripes) that will designate to all an "in-ground" charge area.
- c. Co-ordination and use of such charges must be done with both sides to ensure everyone is prepared when charges are detonated. Only the combat commanders may give permission to fire charges.
- d. Any charges that do not detonate must be cleared before any action can begin.
- e. Charges will be in self-contained seamless pipe set on a base so as to be portable. Each charge and chamber will be numbered to match the number on the detonating device to facilitate safe firing and removal of unexploded charges.
- f. Wires, if left in place, must be buried in conduit so as not to cause a safety hazard.
- g. Charges are to be topped with peat moss only and will be demonstrated before use at each event.

ARTILLERY

Specific guidelines for artillery pieces using black powder as an explosive are to be found in the QLHF Guidelines for Black powder Weapons.

For all other artillery, the following should apply:

1. A suitable safety zone (15 metres wide) should be maintained between spectators and the gun. When preparation for and/or firing is taking place, only crew members and authorised personnel are to be forward of the muzzle at the appropriate times.
2. Public should be warned to cover their ears and open their mouths.
3. On ignition, no projection of any solid matter should be evident from the muzzle of an artillery piece. All parts of the charge should combust upon ignition. A sufficient report can be obtained without the use of any wad.

ANNEXURE B: MORTARS AND AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

I. GENERAL

All mortars, automatic or semi-automatic weapons must be under the overall charge of a person licensed to possess and discharge them. The Marshal, or a designated Safety Officer, shall initially inspect each MG and mortar pit before the begin of scenario play.

II. MORTARS

- a. Reproduction mortar tubes must be constructed of drawn or rolled seamless mild steel or high pressure metal tubing.
 1. Tubing thickness shall not be less than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.
 2. No part of the tube may be of cast metal.
 3. End caps (breech) shall be securely welded or threaded. If threaded, it will extend for a minimum 1 inch depth.
 4. Tube must be securely mounted in such a manner so as to remain stable during firing.
- b. Original mortars must be in a safe operable condition.
- c. Mortar tubes, whether reproduction or original, will be inspected and approved by the Pyrotechnic Marshal before use.

III. AUTOMATIC AND CREW SERVED WEAPONS

a. Stationary MG positions must have RANGE MARKERS established to designate the "danger zone" for weapon firing. Concentrations of barbed wire or easily identifiable range stakes to mark these danger zones are acceptable to comply with this regulation.

b. It is the responsibility of the gunners to cease fire when individuals enter those areas.

c. MG positions will either surrender or place themselves out of action when scenario play indicates obvious destruction of the position.
