

# SHOOTING RANGES: YOUR RIGHTS AND HOW TO TAKE ACTION

Living or working near a shooting range can be deeply distressing. The constant noise of gunfire can disrupt your daily life, disturb your sleep, affect your children's ability to concentrate on schoolwork, and create ongoing anxiety and stress for your entire family. For those who have experienced gun violence or lost loved ones to firearms, the sound of shooting can be retraumatizing.

You have the right to live peacefully in your home without excessive noise disturbance. South African law requires all shooting ranges to meet strict standards, including regulations about location and noise control. Shooting ranges should not be situated in residential areas, and they must comply with national safety and operational standards.

If a shooting range near you is causing disturbance, you can take action. This guide explains:

- The legal requirements shooting ranges must meet – so you can see if the range meets these
- How to verify if a shooting range is properly accredited
- How to lodge formal complaints safely
- What standards shooting ranges must comply with

**Communities have the right to safe, peaceful environments. This information empowers you to hold shooting ranges accountable and ensure they operate within the law.**

## Legal Requirements for Shooting Ranges in South Africa

According to the Firearms Control Act Regulations (Section 6), all shooting ranges must be accredited. Here's how the accreditation process works:

### Step 1: Meet National Standards

Shooting ranges must meet the compulsory specifications under the Standards Act. These standards are managed by the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS). Useful documents are:

1. NRCS Approval Process for Small Arms Shooting Ranges  
Download [HERE](#)

2. SANS 10353 (VC9088) Compulsory Specifications for Small Arms Shooting Ranges  
These are the actual standards that shooting ranges must comply with:
  - Original 2004 version – download [HERE](#)
  - 2015 Amendment – download [HERE](#)

### **Step 2: Apply to NRCS**

3. Applications must be submitted to the NRCS via an official form:
  - For indoor shooting ranges – download [HERE](#)
4. For outdoor shooting ranges – download [HERE](#)
5. The NRCS evaluates the application to ensure it conforms to standards. If approved, it issues an approval certificate.

### **Step 3: Apply to SAPS for Accreditation**

6. The next step is to apply to SAPS by completing Form SAPS 519(a).
7. The SAPS form and NRCS certificate are submitted to the Designated Firearms Officer (DFO) at the local police station. The DFO will evaluate the application and forward it to the Central Firearms Register (CFR). The CFR conducts necessary checks and informs the DFO of the outcome. The DFO then notifies the applicant.

## **List of Accredited Shooting Ranges**

SAPS maintains a list of accredited shooting ranges – download [HERE](#) – though it's unclear how current this list is:

## **How to Complain About Noise or Other Disturbances**

GFSA strongly advises against confronting shooting range staff directly, as this could put you in danger. Instead, it's essential to lodge formal complaints about noise disturbances or other issues so they are officially recorded.

Here's what to do:

1. Contact your local Designated Firearms Officer (DFO) at your nearest police station to file a complaint.
2. Request confirmation that the shooting range is properly accredited. The DFO can verify this for you.
3. Keep records of all complaints submitted, including dates, times, and reference numbers.

Formal complaints create an official record that authorities can use to take action if a shooting range is operating illegally or violating regulations.

If you need further help, please contact GFSA at [info@gfsa.org.za](mailto:info@gfsa.org.za)