



TEJAS PISTOLEROS

"A Traditional Cowboy Action Shooting Club"



THE POSSE SYSTEM: POSSE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Posse duties encompass six distinct responsibilities: timekeeping, scorekeeping, counting misses, picking up spent brass, and manning the loading and unloading tables. **All Posse Duties are Range Officer positions:** Timer Operator, Spotters/Counters, Scorekeeper, Loading/Unloading Table officers. **The main objective of a Range Officer is to safely assist the shooter through the course of fire**, and be an authority in all areas of gun safety, any time, any place. On large posses at annual matches, these jobs should be filled by a minimum of eight people. Always have at least **three (3) counters**. On smaller posses at monthly matches, some of these duties may need to be combined.

DUTIES OF THE TIMER OPERATOR

1. Is the Chief Range Officer for the stage and is in charge of the firing line, as long as he/she is running the timer. Anticipate. Watch the gun. Stay within arm's length of the shooter.
2. Is responsible for identifying **three Counters/Spotters**. Ask in a loud, clear voice, "**COUNTERS READY?**" This will alert the spotters that the stage run is about to begin. Upon verbal or physical acknowledgement, ensures that there are three (3) shooters prepared to count misses.
3. The Timer Operator should **be aware of the skill level** of the competitors and very attentive to newer shooters, helping and coaching them through the course of fire if necessary. If you can **anticipate** what the shooter may do next, you may be able to prevent an unsafe act.
4. **Stay within arm's-length** (three feet) of the competitor until the stage is finished.
5. **Give seasoned shooters a little more room** since they tend to move very fast. Don't let them run over you because you are crowding them.
6. **Never start a competitor in a faulted position**.
7. The Timer Operator **does not count misses**, but **watches the shooter** for unsafe acts, correct target engagement, and stage procedures. This action will ensure the shooter does not holster or discard a weapon with a live round still in the chamber or break the 170° Safety Plane Safety Plane.

8. **Be alert** for **Squib Loads** and **Dropped Guns** and ensure the shooter's compliance with the appropriate safety procedures.
9. **Watch the gun**: It will help you make more exact calls, identify a squib load, keep the shooter from breaking the 170° Safety Plane, and stop the shooter in the event of a problem.
10. Ensure the scorekeeper accurately records each shooter's stage run.
 - **Observe the timer screen** during the **first two or three shots** to ensure the timer is working properly and recording the shots fired.
 - **Observe the timer screen** during the **last two or three shots** of the final string of fire to ensure the timer picked up the last shot.
 - **As soon as possible after observing the timer screen record the last shot, announce the time in a loud and clear voice** while covering the "ear hole" of the timing device. This will help ensure that the timer does not pick up any additional shots from adjoining stages.
 - Poll the Spotters/Counters **to determine the number of misses** and/or procedural penalties, and then call those numbers to the Score Keeper in a **loud, clear voice**.
 - **Observe the scorekeeper** record the time, number of misses, and any procedurals you announced on the score sheet.
11. Once the stage begins, the Timer Operator **stays within arms-length of the competitor until the stage is finished**, pistols are holstered, and long guns are action opened, muzzles pointed in a safe direction, and the shooter is heading towards the unloading table. Only then does the Timer Operator, declare **“Range Clear”** and **conveys the time to the Score Keeper in a loud, clear voice**
12. Only the Timer Operator or Score Keeper calls the next shooter to the firing line.
13. Annual/Major matches **are not** the appropriate forums in which to learn timekeeping skills. Time Operators should be among the most experienced shooters on the posse. Monthly matches should provide the opportunity for all shooters to learn to operate the timer correctly.

TIMER OPERATOR COMMANDS: START TO FINISH

1. **“SHOOTER UP”**: Alerts the next shooter to stage his weapons and report to the START position ready to begin the stage run.
2. **“COUNTERS READY”**: Alerts the counters the stage run is about to begin. Upon verbal or physical acknowledgement, ensures at least three (3) people are prepared to count misses. **The scorekeeper may be one of the spotters.**

3. **“IS THE SHOOTER READY?”** should always be said just before the **“STAND BY”** command. It alerts the shooter that everyone is prepared for his stage run. **We are not trying to surprise them with the start signal.**
4. **“STAND BY”** should always be the last words spoken with a one to three second pause before the Start Signal, unless the stage calls for the shooter to “say a line” or use a prop before the time starts. **“INDICATE READY BY SAYING THE LINE”** can optionally be used to cue the competitor to self-start the stage.
5. **“MUZZLE UP. PLEASE MOVE TO THE UNLOADING TABLE.”** At the end of a shooting sequence, often the competitor stops thinking, after all, his shooting problem is finished! He simply needs a gentle reminder of what to do next.
6. **“RANGE CLEAR.”** This command is given only after the shooter has completed their run, the pistols are holstered, the long guns are picked up and pointed in a safe direction with the actions open, and the shooter is on the way to the Unloading Table. It is now safe to gather spent brass and prepare for the next shooter.
7. **“THE TIME IS (? ? ? ? ?)”**: Given as soon as possible by the Timer Operator after the last shot is fired. The timekeeper should be looking at the timer screen and covering the "ear hole" to prevent the timer from recording additional shots from adjacent stages.

NOTE: In the unlikely event mistakes are made, the Timer’s Review Function can often be used to correct most of them.

SCOREKEEPER

1. Score Keepers must never record scores for a family member.
2. Calls out shooting order and records times and penalties.
3. Ensure the time announced by the timekeeper is accurately recorded on the score sheet for the correct shooter and for the correct stage. It is good practice for the Score Keeper to repeat in a loud, clear voice the scoring time announced by the Timer Operator.
4. The Score Keeper can be one of the Spotters.
5. If not announced by the Timer Operator, poll the Spotters/Counters for the number of misses, penalties, and/or bonus shots observed.
6. Ensure that any "mark through", "mistakes", or "corrections" are made as legibly as possible and initialed by the Posse Marshal.
7. The penalties should be recorded in a manner that is not confusing to the person inputting computer data. If there are five misses, for instance, don’t simply write “5”, since that can be confused as just a five second penalty. If there is

one miss don't write "5" thinking someone will assume it just means five seconds. They may read that as five misses and add on twenty-five seconds. **It is best to write 1/5, 2/10, or 3/15 for misses and 1/10 for a procedural.**

8. The competitor should always be aware of any misses or penalties as they are leaving the firing line. The competitor has the right to know, since once they leave the line and unload, miss penalties should not be questioned.

SPOTTERS/COUNTERS

1. Spotters must never count misses for a family member.
2. **Always have at least three (3) people counting misses.**
3. For clearer observation, counters should be in different locations, preferably on either side of the shooter, not standing beside each other.
4. Observe each and every round as it impacts on or moves the target. Misses **should not** be recorded on the basis of sound alone. A good counter must observe as well as listen.
5. **A good counter should be able to identify the shot number and the target of each recorded miss.**
6. Assist in resetting props, targets, clay bird launchers, picking up spent brass, etc. to ensure smooth stage operation.
7. If possible, observe the shooter between strings of fire for compliance with safety rules and scenario instructions.
8. Be alert to assist the Range Officer or Posse Marshal in the event Dropped Gun or Squib Load safety procedures are needed.
9. Always give the shooter the benefit of any doubt.

BRASS PICK-UP

1. Picking up spent brass is a collateral duty of the Spotters/Counters.
2. Ensure each shooter's spent brass and shotgun hulls should be picked up and delivered to the unloading table.

LOADING TABLE

1. Ensure each shooter's weapons are properly loaded with the correct number of rounds.
2. Ensure rifles and pistols are properly loaded with the hammer resting on an empty chamber, and shotgun actions are open.
3. Assist the shooter by calling to his attention any illegal firearm modifications or equipment. It may save him an embarrassing disqualification at the firing line
4. Ensure there are always two or three shooters at the loading table by calling for an additional shooter when necessary.

5. Ensure that a copy of the scenario is on the table and encourage each shooter to become familiar with it. This ensures that at least one shooter at the table should be prepared for the stage run.
6. Ensure that shooters do not holster loaded pistols until ready to approach the stage.

UNLOADING TABLE

1. Ensure that all weapons are completely unloaded, cleared, and long gun actions opened prior to the shooter leaving the unloading table.
2. Lever actions and pumps must have their actions cycled several times. This will ensure that a live round is not left in the magazine.
3. All pistols carried on a stage run must be checked whether or not they were used.
4. As each shooter completes a stage run and clears his weapons, he will remain at the unloading table to check and clear the next shooter following him. This practice should ensure that the unloading table is manned at all times.

POSSE DUTIES CHECK LIST

1. Are all posse duties and responsibilities assigned and being conducted and rotated in a competent and equitable manner?
2. Are the loading and unloading tables manned and functioning properly?
3. Is someone (other than the shooter) picking up expended brass and shotgun hulls?
4. Are there at least three counters? Do they usually agree on the number of misses?
5. Is the timer operator observing the timer screen during both the first and last few shots?
6. Is the timer operator observing the shooter during the stage run to ensure safety and scenario compliance? Is he/she using the Range Commands?
7. Is the timer operator announcing the time as soon as possible after the last shot is fired?
8. Are there always two or three shooters at the loading table with at least one prepared to shoot?
9. Do the shooters usually know the scenario and execute the stage run correctly without having to ask the timer operator for help?
10. Are the Safety Rules and Guidelines being observed?
11. Are posse members helping and coaching each other?
12. Does this posse virtually run itself without constant instruction from the Posse Marshal?
13. Is the score sheet being kept in a legible manner?
14. Do the scores entered on the score sheet accurately reflect each shooter's performance?

A negative answer to any of the above questions indicates the potential for serious problems developing on your posse!