



NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA LTD

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Complete New Grading System – VRA Proposal

For a number of years, member states have been asking the NRAA to rework the whole Grading System. The VRA has been trialling a new system for some time now. At the recent Board meeting a set of Draft Grading Rules was submitted by the VRA along with the following Motion which was accepted by the Board.

- (a) That the NRAA distribute the Draft Rules to all the States and Territories for consideration.*
- (b) The States and Territories be asked and prepared to discuss and vote on the proposal at the Chairman/President's and Member's Annual General Meeting and Workshop in November 2011*
- (c) That the NRAA publicise the proposal through the NRAA website and the National Magazine before the Annual General Meeting and Workshop so that the general shooting population can become aware of the proposal.*

The Grading System is based on the system that has been used originally by the VRA for F Class Grading. This F Class grading system has gradually spread around all the other States until it was finally adopted by the NRAA as the National Grading System for F Class. The success of the system prompted the VRA to trial it for their Target Rifle shooters. All results from all Open competitions in Victoria are sent to the VRA and the gradings calculated and placed on the VRA website.

A major feature of the system is that each competitor's average (or percentage) is calculated against the Top Score For The Day, regardless of Grade. This takes into account the difficulty of a particular day, and the difficulty of conditions on the day.

One result in Victoria, was that a lot of shooters who had been previously been in A Grade were actually in B Grade and this showed up on the website. After some initial resistance to this "regrading" many of these previously "A" Grade shooters began to enter in B Grade once they saw a few of their mates doing so. The end result is that attendances at VRA Open Prize meetings has grown, especially in the B and C Grade sections.

In the past the percentages of entries in grades was something like 65% A grade, 25% B grade and 10% C grade. Now in Victoria it is more like 40%, 35% and 25%. In F Class Standard, B Grade competitors often outnumber A grade, showing that the B grade competitors are happy to attend, knowing that they have a reasonable chance of success in their grade, rather than having to compete against the "elite" class of shooter all time. The same has been happening in TR Shooting. Tasmania also been trialling the same system and plans to adopt it full time next year.

If you look at the Draft Rules, you will see that the system is the same for all classes, TR and F Class. It proposes that all results for Open competition are sent to the relevant State Association, which is responsible for updating and posting grading on each State Web Site. Eventually, the NRAA has plans for this to be one combined National Grading System, placed on the NRAA web site. If you want to see how it works at the moment, go to the VRA Website at <http://www.vra.asn.au/gradings.shtml>.

Another change is the regrading provision. Under the old system, a shooter can be regraded for 12 months on the basis of 1 good shoot. Under the VRA proposal this does not happen. The last 8 shoots determine what grade a shooter is in on an ongoing basis.

The system was originally based on results in Open competition. Extra features have been added to include provision for the Divisional System that some states favour, and for Club shooters, both TR and F Class who do not attend prize meetings. There is also provision for these club shooters to transition favourably into Open competition if they wish.

There have been many calls over the years for reform of the Grading System. This proposal is being distributed as widely as possible for people to discuss. Each S&T sends its Chairman/President/representative to the AGM of the NRAA. This is followed by a Member's Workshop. S&T's are being asked to consider this proposal and come to the Workshop prepared to discuss, perhaps modify and vote on the proposal.

It seems to work in Victoria. I urge you to examine it, talk about it, and make your thoughts known to your various State & Territory Associations. It may be an opportunity to fix a Grading System that at present a lot of people describe as "broken."

Bob Pedersen
NRAA
Rules Director