

# Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Victoria)

*A fair go for responsible people.*



October 12, 2016

## Range Officer Rob happy to be paid in smiles

Driven by a desire to help people, Rob Loricco has found himself working just as hard in retirement as he did in the workforce.

When he retired from work about three years ago, Rob - a Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Victoria) member of more than 27 years - decided it was time to give back to a sport that he loved.

The long-time sporting shooter is now a regular Range Officer at Eagle Park Shooting Range in Little River. His vital role involves enforcing range orders, ensuring the strictest of safety standards are upheld and ensuring all shooters feel welcome, safe and comfortable on the range.

"I do four or five shifts a month at the range and I love it," he said. "Any time someone is sick I jump at the chance to do an extra shift. The drawcard for me is seeing the smile on somebody's face because I've helped them with their firearm and the joy that I see after someone hits a target. Sometimes all they need is a bit of guidance."

Working as a volunteer Range Officer can be demanding, particularly at times when the range is full. On a weekend, more than 80 people could be on the firing line and a dozen more people could be waiting to shoot.

"The support that shooters get from Range Officers is really good. We're all professional with our approach. Number one is their safety – that is our top priority," Rob said.

"We get new shooters come up onto the range and ask for help," Rob said. "That's where we come in and that's a joy for us. We show them the safest way to use that firearm and when they leave the range they can't thank us enough."

Rob's patience and empathy make him popular among new and experienced shooters alike. He credits his disability for strengthening those skills.

"I am blind in my right eye," he said. "As a right-handed person it is quite difficult to shoot with pistols because I have to use my left eye. Then when I shoot with the rifle I shoot left-handed.

"I don't care if I miss a target – I have a disability and I know I have a disability. I just shoot because I really enjoy it and I always come away happy. I just want everyone to enjoy their time as much as I do."

The desire to share his love of the sport is what led to Rob to become a Firearm Safety Instructor with Victoria Police. In that voluntary role, he educates people on firearm safety before they apply for their licences.

Rob began running courses at Geelong but was recently promoted to become Senior Instructor for Williamstown and Werribee. In his first two months in the new role Rob instructed more than 150 people. He is now among a team that is rewriting the firearms safety course for Victoria Police.

**CAPTION:** Rob Loricco has devoted much of his retirement years to educating shooters, particularly those new to the sport. **PICTURE:** Tatjana Plitt

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