

ONTARGET

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69

PRECISION RIFLE • E L R • HANDGUN • OPTICS • SAFETY • GEAR • HUNTING



SAPRF PR22 WC National

22 February 2025

SAPRF PR22 WC Provincial

26 January 2025

**ITA Launches
Two New
Training Modules**

REVIEW

**Inforce WMLx White/IR Gen 3
Entry-level Dual-Spectrum Weapon Light**

**The
Endgame
Shooting Bag**

REVIEW

**Vortex Fury® HD
5000 AD Binocular:**

Precision in Every Detail



GLOCK's Versatile Hunter Edition

Distinguished by its olive-green colour and versatile features, GLOCK's Hunter edition is available in five configurations. Shooters can opt between different GLOCK 45 and GLOCK 20 setups, including the popular MOS variant and the new Aimpoint™ A-CUT™ paired with the Aimpoint™ COA™ red dot sight and GLOCK Tactical Light II.



FEB 2025

ITA's Latest Firearm Training Creates Career Pathways

By Nikki Pretorius, ITA CEO

The International Firearm Training Academy (ITA) has launched two new firearms training modules to support career development in the firearms industry. The **Maintenance Fitter** and **Firearm Custodian** modules are two-part certification programmes within a larger Certified Gunsmith Programme.

These were designed to address the growing need for training within State and parastatal organisations, the security industry, gunshops, dealerships, and firearm training centres. It includes firearm safekeeping, issuing firearms to officers on duty, general maintenance and, most importantly, serviceability inspections to ensure that firearms are fit for purpose.

Candidates are required to have already secured a **Business Purposes** competency qualification before gaining entry into these training programmes. Anyone wanting to work as an armed security officer must have the necessary firearm competency in place.

In order to apply for and be granted this Business Purposes competency, a candidate must first complete the same training as someone wanting to licence a firearm for self-defence (Knowledge of the Act and Handle & Use of a Handgun, for example), and then also complete the Business Purposes Unit Standards for the respective firearms he or she will be issued with when on duty. The training includes the safe and legal handling of the firearm by the officer.

Closing the firearms skills gap

The **Firearm Custodian** module focuses on foundational skills, including training security officers and police officials, among other firearm professionals, to field-strip firearms, conduct serviceability inspections, and ensure firearms are clean and safe for use.

Foundational skills are the basic skills required to handle firearms safely and

proficiently. They include skills such as safe handling, the fundamentals of using a firearm, the parts and functions of the firearm, how to clear malfunctions and safe storage, etc. These skills are important because they form the basis for more advanced firearms training and ensure that everyone, from security officers to police officials, can use firearms safely and responsibly.

The **Maintenance Fitter** module equips participants with the expertise to disassemble and reassemble firearm actions, identify and diagnose broken parts, and liaise with certified armourers or gunsmiths for repairs. Maintenance Fitters can perform basic repairs such as replacing a firing pin or the sights on a firearm.

This ensures that firearms requiring basic repairs can now be handled internally. Repairs that can be done on-site result in firearms spending less time in a safe waiting for a qualified gunsmith to do a basic repair.



▲ ITA module launch - Nikki Pretorius, ITA CEO

"Security officers are often issued firearms that are either unserviceable or missing critical components such as sights. This poses serious risks to both public safety and the officers themselves," explains **Andrew Fuller**, Master Gunsmith at ITA. "These training modules not only address these risks but also offer a structured pathway for career progression in a field with limited formal development opportunities."

Imagine driving down Chapman's Peak, a scenic coastal road on the western side of the Cape Peninsula in Cape Town, known for its breathtaking ocean views and popular hiking trails, on a perfect Sunday afternoon. As you approach a sharp bend, you press the brakes – nothing happens, causing panic and a wave of helplessness to wash over you, accompanied by the split-second realisation that what should save you has failed.

"Now, imagine facing an imminent threat, reaching for your firearm in self-defence, drawing from the holster, sights on target, a deep breath, the squeeze of the trigger and... *click*, nothing happens. Training and preparation can be the difference between survival and catastrophe," highlights Andrew.

He further stresses the importance of responsible ammunition control and firearm serviceability, stating that the new modules aim to instil a culture of responsibility and accountability throughout the chain of firearm handling, management, operation, and maintenance.

"We must bridge the gap between the Business Purposes Unit Standard training and firearm custodians and maintenance fitters. This is why ITA is setting a new benchmark for how firearms should be handled, serviced, and maintained in compliance with the Firearms Control Act, ensuring that all firearms issued for use are indeed fit for purpose," concludes Andrew.

For more information about the Firearm Custodian and Maintenance Fitter modules, visit www.itafirearmtraining.com.

About the ITA

The ITA is the market leader in firearm training in South Africa and supplies training material to more than 300 training providers countrywide. All training material and training programmes are accredited by the quality assurer, the Professional Firearm Trainers Council (PFTC), and are compliant with the requirements of the respective Unit Standards as set out by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

Training material is written in support of the Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000 and is recognised by the South African Police Service (SAPS). The ITA provides training for firearm instructors and assessors within the firearm training industry. An instructor and assessor must have undergone the respective Unit Standard training with the ITA to qualify to make use of the ITA training system and training material.

The ITA training material is written by subject matter experts in the firearm training industry. The training material and assessment tools have been developed by education and communications experts who understand how to share knowledge, information, and practical skills with adult learners in a safe and responsible way.

The ITA is transformative and developmental in its approach and promotes safety and professionalism in the industry. It provides training for all the Unit Standards that make up the full Certificate in Firearm Training, Qualification 50480. This qualification is available for candidates who would like to pursue a career in the firearm training industry.

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▲ ITA module launch - Andrew Fuller, Master Gunsmith at ITA