

TIFAM Safety Policy

The Irish Foundation for Archery and Mentorship (TIFAM) CLG

1. Policy Statement

TIFAM is committed to providing and promoting safe participation in traditional archery.

TIFAM will take all reasonably practicable steps to protect members, affiliated clubs, volunteers, officials, visitors, spectators and members of the public who may be affected by activities organised or sanctioned by TIFAM.

Activities will be conducted in accordance with:

- applicable Irish law;
- T.A.I. Sporting Regulations;
- TIFAM rules and procedures;
- insurance requirements;
- landowner and venue conditions;
- event-specific risk assessments.

Irish health and safety legislation requires employers and persons controlling workplaces to identify hazards, assess risks and introduce proportionate controls. Where TIFAM has employees or controls a workplace, it will maintain the written risk assessments and Safety Statement required by law.

This policy provides the general framework for TIFAM activities. Each club, range, course and event must also consider its own location, participants and particular hazards.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- TIFAM members and volunteers;
- TIFAM-affiliated clubs;
- TIFAM-controlled ranges and woodland facilities;
- T.A.I.-sanctioned competitions administered through TIFAM;
- coaching, training and educational activities;
- course setting, range preparation and equipment handling;
- visitors, spectators and contractors attending TIFAM activities.

Affiliated clubs retain responsibility for the safe management of their own ranges, training sessions, club shoots and other activities.

3. Responsibilities

TIFAM Board of Directors

The Board has overall responsibility for approving this policy and ensuring that reasonable resources and arrangements are available for its implementation.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer shall:

- advise the Board on safety matters;
- support clubs and event organisers with risk assessments;
- assist with range and competition-course inspections;
- receive reports of serious accidents, near misses and safety concerns;
- recommend appropriate corrective action;
- maintain basic safety records;
- suspend an activity where a serious and immediate danger exists.

The appointment of a Safety Officer supports the organisation's safety arrangements. It does not transfer the responsibilities of the Board, clubs, land occupiers, event organisers or persons supervising an activity.

Affiliated Clubs

Each affiliated club shall:

- appoint a responsible person to oversee safety;
- assess the hazards associated with its range and activities;
- maintain suitable emergency arrangements;
- provide members with relevant safety instructions;
- inspect its range regularly;
- report serious incidents to TIFAM;
- comply with TIFAM and T.A.I. requirements.

Event Organisers and Session Leaders

The person managing a competition, training session or club shoot is responsible for operational safety during that activity.

That person shall ensure that:

- the range is checked before shooting begins;
- participants receive appropriate instructions;
- shooting is controlled by clear commands;
- unsafe conduct is addressed promptly;
- changing conditions are monitored;
- shooting stops whenever safety becomes uncertain.

Members and Participants

Every participant must:

- follow safety commands and instructions;
- use equipment suitable for safe shooting;
- report damaged equipment and dangerous conditions;
- behave responsibly towards other participants and the public;
- avoid shooting until authorised;

- stop shooting immediately when instructed;
- take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of others.

4. Risk Assessment

A suitable risk assessment must be completed for every permanent range, temporary course and TIFAM-sanctioned event.

The assessment should identify significant hazards, the people who may be affected and the measures required to control the risk. Irish guidance confirms that risk controls should remain proportionate to the actual level of danger and should concentrate upon meaningful hazards created by the activity.

Risk assessments must be reviewed when:

- a range or course is substantially changed;
- new activities or equipment are introduced;
- forestry work, storms or land-use changes affect the site;
- an accident or significant near miss occurs;
- existing controls appear inadequate.

Minor everyday risks require sensible management. Significant archery, terrain, public-access and emergency-access risks require written controls.

5. Range and Course Safety

Ranges and courses must be planned and used so that arrows are directed into controlled shooting areas.

Particular attention must be given to:

- shooting direction;
- overshoot and side-clearance areas;
- public roads, paths and neighbouring land;
- hidden approaches and crossing routes;
- target stability;
- ricochet and deflection risks;
- safe movement between targets;
- steep, wet or unstable ground;
- trees, branches and storm damage;
- streams, drains, bridges and platforms;
- emergency access.

A T.A.I.-sanctioned course must be inspected and approved under the applicable TIFAM procedure before official use.

Approval confirms the condition of the course at the time of inspection. The organiser must complete a further check before shooting begins and must respond to changing conditions during the event.

Platforms, bridges, steps and other structures provided for participants must be kept in a safe condition. Irish occupiers' liability law places particular importance upon the reasonable maintenance of structures provided primarily for recreational users.

6. Shooting Safety

The following basic rules apply at every TIFAM activity:

- arrows may be nocked only at the shooting position and when shooting is authorised;
- every archer must confirm that the shooting area is clear;
- bows must remain directed towards the target area while an arrow is nocked;
- nobody may enter the course or target area until shooting has stopped;
- archers must follow the marked route between targets;
- participants must remain behind the active archer unless instructed otherwise;
- alcohol or intoxicating substances are prohibited before and during shooting;
- smoking and vaping are prohibited at every TIFAM-sanctioned course or activity;
- deliberate sky drawing, uncontrolled releases and unsafe handling are prohibited;
- shooting must stop immediately when a person, animal or unexpected hazard enters the controlled area;
- an archer who hears the agreed emergency command or signal must cease shooting immediately.

The event organiser, referee, range captain or Safety Officer may remove any unsafe target, lane or participant from active shooting.

7. Equipment

Archers are responsible for ensuring that their personal equipment is safe and suitable for use.

Equipment with visible damage must be withdrawn until repaired or replaced. Particular care must be taken with:

- cracked or damaged bows;
- worn or damaged strings;
- loose nocks;
- split or bent arrows;
- arrows that are too short for the archer's draw;
- loose points or components;
- unstable target stands;
- damaged target bosses.

Equipment inspection at a competition addresses compliance with sporting rules and does not remove the archer's responsibility for the continuing condition of their equipment.

8. Underage Participants

Underage archers must participate under the supervision and safeguarding arrangements required by TIFAM.

Where required by an event or registration procedure, a parent, guardian or designated shooting guardian must be identified.

The supervision provided must reflect the age, experience and needs of the participant. TIFAM's Safeguarding Policy applies alongside this Safety Policy.

9. First Aid and Emergencies

Every organised event must have emergency arrangements proportionate to its location, size and level of risk.

The organiser must establish:

- how shooting will be stopped;
- who will coordinate the response;
- how first aid will be provided;
- how emergency services will be contacted;
- the exact location of the venue;
- the route and access point for emergency vehicles;
- how a casualty will be reached or evacuated.

Woodland events should have a course map or another clear method of identifying target locations and access routes.

The location of first-aid equipment and the names of designated first aiders must be communicated before the activity begins.

10. Accidents and Near Misses

All injuries, serious near misses and significant safety concerns must be recorded and reported to the activity organiser.

The following must also be reported promptly to the TIFAM Safety Officer:

- serious injury;
- emergency-service attendance;
- an arrow leaving the controlled shooting area;
- public exposure to active shooting;
- significant equipment or structural failure;
- any near miss capable of causing serious injury.

TIFAM will review the circumstances and introduce reasonable measures to reduce the risk of recurrence.

Where TIFAM is legally required to report a workplace accident or dangerous occurrence to the Health and Safety Authority, the report will be made within the applicable statutory period. Current

HSA rules include immediate notification of fatal workplace accidents and reporting of qualifying non-fatal employee injuries and dangerous occurrences.

11. Unsafe Conditions

Any person who identifies an immediate danger must warn others and stop the affected activity where possible.

The Safety Officer, referee, event organiser, range captain or responsible session leader may suspend:

- an individual target;
- a shooting lane;
- part of a course;
- an entire activity.

Shooting may resume when the hazard has been removed or adequately controlled.

Participants will never be penalised for raising a genuine safety concern in good faith.

12. Communication

This policy shall be made available to TIFAM members and affiliated clubs.

Relevant safety instructions must be communicated:

- before competitions and organised shoots;
- during member or volunteer induction;
- whenever a significant risk or procedure changes;
- following an incident where wider learning is required.

Clubs and organisers may issue additional local instructions where their range or activity requires them.

13. Review

The Board shall review this policy annually and following:

- a serious accident or near miss;
- a significant change in TIFAM activities;
- changes to applicable law or T.A.I. regulations;
- changes to insurance or landowner requirements;
- evidence that an existing arrangement requires improvement.

The Board may approve minor operational procedures beneath this policy without rewriting the entire document.

Approval

This Safety Policy was approved by the Board of Directors of The Irish Foundation for Archery and Mentorship (TIFAM) CLG.

Each TIFAM-controlled venue and affiliated clubs ranges should also retain its own short written risk assessment, while any statutory Safety Statement required through employment or workplace control must reflect the organisation's actual operations. The HSA recommends annual review and revision whenever significant changes affect safety arrangements.