



Explosives Information Bulletin 79

Storage of small arms ammunition

This bulletin provides guidelines to shooters for the storage of small arms ammunition (SAA) under section 86 (1) of the Explosives Regulation 2003. This bulletin does not apply to small arms ammunition which is collectors' ammunition.

Shooters have an obligation to comply with legislation and meet their duty of care in storing SAA. This bulletin provides guidelines and if followed should satisfy those requirements.

Section 86 (1) of the Explosives Regulation as amended to apply to SAA only states:

86 - Requirements for storing small arms ammunition


- (1) A person storing small arms ammunition—
 - (a) must store the small arms ammunition in its original packaging or in packaging or containers designed to protect the small arms ammunition individually and—
 - (i) in a secure container; or
 - (ii) on a shelf that is inaccessible to a person who is not authorised to possess the small arms ammunition; and
 - (b) must store the small arms ammunition in a secured area; and
 - (c) unless the person is authorised to do so under the *Weapons Act 1990*, must not store the small arms ammunition in a secured area in which a firearm is stored; and
 - (d) if the person stores more than 10000 safety cartridges in a secured area—must display, in the required places for the secured area, a classification sign for the cartridges stored in the secured area.
- (2) In this section—**safety cartridge** has the meaning given under AS 2187, part 0.

Guidelines for Section 86 (1) of the Explosives Regulation

The following guidance is provided for the intent of Section 86 (1)

A person must store SAA

- in its original packaging (see paragraphs 6 and 7 explanation below) or alternatively in either packaging or a container (see explanation paragraphs 8 and 9 below) designed to protect the SAA individually (see paragraph 10 explanation below), **and**
- in a secure container (see paragraph 11 explanation below) or on a shelf that is not accessible to a person who is not licensed or otherwise not allowed to access the SAA (see paragraph 12 explanation below), **and**
- in a secured area (see paragraph 13 explanation below), **and**
- in a secured area separate from a firearm's secured area (see paragraph 14 explanation below) unless permitted under the *Weapon's Act*, **and**
- with a Class 1.4S sign attached to each storage location where more than 10,000 safety cartridges are stored (see paragraph 15 explanation below).




It must be noted that there is an “and” between each dot point.

Terminology, definitions, explanations and notes

1. Small arms ammunition is ammunition for a firearm as follows and includes primers (cap type) used for reloading the ammunition –
 - A shotgun
 - Another firearm with a calibre of not more than 25.4 mm
2. Under Australian Standard AS2187 Part 0, a safety cartridge is a cartridge for small arms weapons or industrial tools which are explosives of Classification Code 1.4S (UN0012).
3. To avoid confusion in terminology, a safety cartridge should be taken to be an assembled item of SAA. A drill, dummy or inert round or cartridge is not a safety cartridge.
4. Store SAA includes keep SAA and allow SAA to be stored or kept
5. The SAA must be stored **either** in its original packaging **or** in packaging or containers designed to protect the SAA individually.
6. The term **original packaging** has the following interpretation. original packaging is the retail packaging the SAA is supplied in by the commercial manufacturer of the SAA and sold over the counter at the retail outlet, e.g. gunshop. The original packaging should be made from steel, aluminium, ordinary natural wood, plywood, reconstituted wood, fibreboard, cardboard, expanded plastics, solid plastics or in drums with removable head steel, removable head aluminium, plywood, and removable head plastic. The original packaging is regarded as a secure container and hence an additional secure container is not required in addition to the original packaging.
7. Original packaging acquired from retail premises and stored at a domestic residence is regarded as a secure container. These may be the inner packaging alone.
8. The term **in packaging or containers** has the following interpretation. This applies to the storage of SAA for own use
 - by shooters who repackage SAA from original packaging for whatever reason, or
 - for shooters who reload and package their own SAA.

The packaging or containers are acquired by the shooter for storing SAA in. Packaging or containers in this case, is not the original packaging from the commercial manufacturer (not the shooter who reloads for self use) in which SAA is originally supplied. It does not have to be dangerous goods approved packaging. The packaging or container will be similar to original packaging. No other specific requirements apply if the packaging or container is loaded into a secure container as explained in paragraph 11, or if the packaging is a plastic box made for the purpose of storing ammunition and is stored closed.



A shooter who reloads their own SAA for their own use is a manufacturer. Reloaded SAA does not have to be packed into original packaging (see paragraphs 6 and 7).

9. If the packaging or containers meet the requirements of a secure container, an additional secure container is not required. The requirements are similar in quality and material of construction as the original packaging. The packaging or containers can be made from any of the following steel, aluminium, ordinary natural wood, plywood, reconstituted wood, fibreboard, expanded plastics, solid plastics or in drums with removable head steel, removable head aluminium, plywood, and removable head plastic. While many of these options may not be common place, the packaging or containers for SAA only needs to be similar to the original packaging supplied at retail. The SAA should be
- packed in good quality packaging strong enough to withstand shocks and loadings normally encountered during handling and storage,
 - constructed and closed to prevent loss of contents during storage and handling,
 - properly closed to be a spark-proof container
 - encased in packaging that is clearly marked on the outside surface with the calibre, characteristics of the loaded SAA and maximum quantity of SAA. The information must allow responders during an emergency situation to identify that the contents of the packaging or container is SAA. This does not preclude other special information important to the shooter being marked on the packaging or container.

Ice-cream containers, take away food containers, glass jars with screw lids, plastic bags with zip-lock seals, coffee tins and similar containers are not acceptable as secure containers. They can be used as an inner packaging inside a secure container for the purposes of storage.

10. The term ***designed to protect the SAA individually*** means that each and every safety cartridge in the packaging or container (the SAA) is protected by the packaging or container from agents that can damage or harm the safety cartridge during normal activities of storage. The agents include friction, impact, static, heat in handling the packaging or container and from the impact of adjacent things that are not compatible with the packaged SAA including chemicals, dangerous goods and water. Abnormal or emergent situations such as fire are not included.
11. The SAA must be stored in a secure container. A ***secure container*** is a spark-proof container that is kept closed at all times except when the SAA are put into or taken out of the packaging or container. Spark-proof applies to the closing of the packaging or container so that a spark from an external source can not enter the opening in the packaging or container when stored and not being handled. The spark-proof does not apply to packaging or container made from steel which is in itself capable of producing a spark under conditions of friction or impact.

12. **On a shelf that is inaccessible to a person who is not authorised to possess the SAA** means that the storage on a shelf inaccessible to unauthorised people is an alternative to storage in a secure container within a secured area. It should be noted that the packaging or containers may already be secure containers.

13. A secured area is a place namely a drawer, cabinet, cupboard, room or another enclosure which is kept locked at all times when the place is not attended by a person.

14. Unless the Weapons Act authorises storage together, the SAA must be kept in a separate secured area from the firearms with different locks and different keys or combinations.

15. When more than 10,000 safety cartridges are stored in a secured area, a minimum size of Class 1.4S label at least 100mm square in accordance with section 3.6 of the Australian Explosives Code must be attached to the required place as follows —

- if the secured area is a drawer—on the outward facing surface of the drawer; or
- if the secured area is a cabinet—on the exterior surface of the cabinet; or
- if the secured area is a cupboard—on the exterior surface of the cupboard; or

