

## **IAA Affiliate and Member Update, January 2009**

Dear Members and Affiliates,

Welcome to our News Update for January 2009. This is the second of our news updates for members and affiliates, and contains pretty much everything that we've been doing that concerns the IAA, the membership, and our affiliates. January has been a busy month for the IAA, so let's get started.

### - Fees

First up, we've revisited our fee structure for 2009. The details are on the front page of our site at [www.irishairsoft.ie](http://www.irishairsoft.ie), but the short answer is that we've lowered the individual membership from €30 to €10, and junior membership from €15 to €5. This is in response to feedback from existing and prospective members and affiliates, and our own thoughts on the subject. What this basically means for us is that we're going to be relying a lot more on donations from individuals, fundraisers, and other efforts to come up with working capital for our running costs. For example, our PO box for memberships, and our insurance costs for this year come to more than 500 euro. We now rely on donations from individuals in order to cover these expenses, and we would appreciate your support. Keith has also burned the midnight oil to produce our nifty new signup system, which is at <http://signup.irishairsoft.ie/>

### - Clubs

We were delighted to be invited to attend the inaugural meeting of SEAC in New Ross on the 17th, which all four of us attended. We were encouraged by the turnout, and the club looks to be shaping up well. Steve also met with the MAC committee in Longford about their club, and we are always willing to talk to other clubs about formation, permissions for land, insurance and the like. We'd like to work to lower the bar for people who want to form clubs where a commercial skirmish site may not be viable, and it's very encouraging to see the groundbreaking work from SAS-C, SEAC and MAC on this. The IAA, as always, supports grassroots efforts to further the sport, and applauds the effort so far. All credit to the people who run the Clubs. If you are in the southeast, cork, or midlands region, or know someone who is, we highly recommend joining and supporting one of these clubs. They need members to both cover their costs, and provide more players, so head along and get involved!

### - Website Updates

While it may look vaguely similar to before, the website has been given a major overhaul in terms of content. Most activity can be seen in the "Meeting Minutes and Notes" section. This section contains minutes and notes from every meeting the IAA has, either as a committee, or with any organisation. We remain accountable to the membership and the community, and want to keep you informed about what we're up to. We've also collated our most important documents, such as our constitution, membership forms, and press releases and statements into the "Official Documents" section.

### - Take AIM

Issue 3 of Take AIM, Ireland's First and best Airsoft publication, features a full-page advertisement, informing the readers about the work of the IAA. We'd like to thank Take AIM for running the ad. We realise that most of our PR effort happens online and by word of mouth at Airsoft sites, so this will hopefully get the word out to more people about the work

we do, and help us to reach out to even more of the fast-growing Airsoft community in Ireland.

#### - Department of Justice Meeting

January 27th saw our meeting with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. This meeting was also attended by a delegation from the interim committee of IASRA. Several issues of note to do with Airsoft in Ireland were discussed, and the minutes from this meeting are available online in the "Meeting Minutes and Notes" section of [www.irishairsoft.ie](http://www.irishairsoft.ie). There are also some lively threads on our forums and the boards.ie Airsoft forum. The Department brought up a plan to only allow Airsoft devices that were made of clear plastic, similar to laws in Canada. The IAA successfully pointed out the problems with approaches such as this, and successfully negotiated an alternative, which was restriction of imports of devices. We published the document we furnished to the Department on our website after the meeting, which pointed out in advance the problems with this approach, since it was one we anticipated. The Department has asked us to come up with guidelines and rules for retailer and importer licensing, and we will be working with the appropriate bodies to do so over the coming weeks.

#### - IASRA

The IAA continues to engage in an open and forthright manner with IASRA. As of this writing, we have failed to obtain any official documentation from IASRA, including their constitution, any written policy doementation, their membership or affiliation forms, or any other documentation. We have spoken by phone and in person with Derek Talbot and Alan Concannon of IASRA. They have expressed their lack of enthusiasm for continuing in their positions on the IASRA committee, despite it having been in existance for amost two months, and there being no sign of an EGM or any other meeting. We will be meeting in person with IASRA in the second week of February, where we have been assured that we will be provided with a hard copy of their constitution. It is encouraging that IASRA have already expressed an interest in there being one association, and we welcome any moves toward a situation that presents a united front for the good of Airsoft in Ireland.

#### - Illegal/Irresponsible Skirmishing

The IAA have been asked their position on Illegal or irresponsible skirmishing on public or Coillte land. It is of course our position that skirmishing without landowner permission is illegal, and needs to be stamped out. We have received and are acting upon several reports of illegal skirmishing, including skirmishes happening near Ravensdale in Dundalk, and skirmishing happening on the old "Gorse Hill" site, among other places. The authorities will be notified, and we will be passing on photographic evidence and lists of names in due course. We rely on the community to report illegal skirmish sites, and we are committed to acting on these reports. If you have information about these sites, please send it to [info@irishairsoft.ie](mailto:info@irishairsoft.ie), where it will be acted upon. This is just what we've heard of and acted on in January. If we continue to get these reports, and are helped by the community in this way, we can work together to make running an illegal skirmish site more trouble than it's worth, and stamp out this practice for good.

#### - Press

January has been a quiet month for mainstream press activity. As always, if your venue, club or shop is running an event that local or national press may be attending, the committee is happy to help out with PR or press management.

- Wrapup

January has, as we said, been a busy month for the committee. We've clocked up a lot of miles, calls, emails and documents over the past 4 weeks, and have also actually managed to make it to a skirmish or two :-). The skirmish action for the last month or so for us was brought to us by SimCom in Dundalk (home of the tyres and army of two), The Warehouse (who have caused more shotguns to be sold than all other sites combined), Fingal (where the most impressive thing you do all day may be to fall over and slide gracefully down a hill) and HRTA (where the portakabins appear to be breeding). Hope to make it to more sites in February. We'll keep you posted.

Pew pew.

The IAA Committee.