

## **IAA/IASRA Meeting, 11th February 2009**

Location: The Warehouse, Coolock

Present : Derek Talbot (IASRA), Alan Concannon (IASRA), Matt Hodge (IASRA), Conor Scolard (IAA), Stephen Fay (IAA), Keith Douglas (IAA), Dave O'Connor (IAA)

Brian Regan from Airsoft Reloaded also present as chair/observer.

### **Proceedings**

Meeting begins at 19:35

- DoJ Meeting
  - It is agreed that DoJ meeting went very well.
- Formation of IASRA, Issues with IAA.
  - Formation of IASRA stems back to a disagreement between Derek and the IAA.
  - Derek not interested in being on the committee of a new org, wants there to be an org that is considered fair and just.
  - Derek believes he made a good effort to resolve the Steyr SSG issue, was told that the IAA "didn't trust him".
  - Derek Denies he was offered affiliation. Says there is still a lot of things being said about him, on boards especially. Is considering legal action.
  - Steve clarifies that trust is not an issue. It is not for the IAA to 'trust' its affiliates, that's what spot checks are for.
  - Matt asks about current spot checks, clarification here, ATS hasn't been spot checked since the new cmte came on board.
  - Derek says that he has found a totally different attitude from the IAA committee. Old committee weren't willing to listen, even after it cost Derek a lot to rectify the situation with the SSGs. Equal treatment should be dished out. There is a view that the IAA have double standards, and Derek has previously reported other retailers to the IAA and not had them do anything, whereas he was not given a chance.
  - Steve states that the IAA are trying to make clear that the new committee are taking their own approach. We have been to Longford, New Ross, are going to Limerick, etc. Showing the new face of the IAA.
  - Derek states that IASRA was an idea bounced about for a while, was not an overnight thing.
  - Derek has no problem with current IAA committee, just with certain individuals on old committee. Wants there to be one Airsoft association, which he can affiliate to, and will represent him adequately.
  - It is clarified that the IAA will affiliate with MIA if MIA is prepared to sign up to retailer guidelines and submit to spot checks. Derek acknowledges this.
  - Derek asserts that the IAA is a tarnished name that cannot be recovered.

- Some discussion of how long IAA is in existence, and how many members IAA have.
- Matt acknowledges he has received a lot more communications from the IAA that were not there before.
- Matt became involved with IASRA due to not seeing proposals from IAA, despite being on IAA website. Matt says he had not seen them advertised.
- Derek notes that a number of people at the initial IAA EGM described it as a farce.
- Derek states that a lot of things the IAA have done were a waste of time, such as not allowing Irish DPM on Airsoft sites. The IAA is not the military police, and has no business enforcing military rules. Too much time was spent on that.
- Conor clarifies that The IAA was asked its position by the authorities, and clarified. If the IAA were to wait until it became an actual issue, it would be too late.
- Boards
  - IASRA have been encouraging people not to follow up to posts on boards, as there is a lot of character assassination happening there, on both 'sides'.
  - IAA have taken a policy of an official thread for all announcements.
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  - Dave states that a lot of the negative reaction to IASRA is due to lack of information. People do not know IASRA's agenda and are scared.
  - Derek states that he is banned from Boards because he is not afraid to say what he thinks. He will always retract and apologise if he is wrong.
  - Alan went to ASI at first, because of boards infighting.
  - It is agreed that there can be a lot of unconstructiveness on boards, but it would happen anywhere, such as the internet.
- IAA issues with IASRA foundation
  - IASRA charter meeting was held within a week of IAA AGM, when individuals Derek had a problem with were going to no longer be on IAA cmte.
  - IASRA Charter Meeting was also perceived to have been rushed to pre-empt a chamber of commerce meeting being set up.
  - Derek denies this. "We did not look at dates". IASRA was planned well in advance, and was not intended to pre-empt anything else.
  - Derek, Matt and Alan deny their intention to be on the IASRA committee in advance of the meeting.
- *IASRA Constitution is requested and handed over in hard copy.*
- Proposed IAA/IASRA Merger (Wording is presented in Appendix A)
  - IAA committee has serious issues with any merger with IASRA given the conditions. The work has already been done in setting up a governing body for the sport. We are recognised by government and media outlets.
  - Steve : The IAA has to be seen like the name of the government. The name cannot be tarnished beyond repair, as there is a new committee every year, and the association is owned by its members.
  - IASRA state that the IAA name is tarnished and unrecoverable in the eyes of most airsofters, and they have not done very much for Airsoft.
  - IAA deny this, this claim could be levelled at any organisation. Any organisation could have done more, no matter how successful.
  - IASRA outlines its proposals for a merger
  - Dave points out that the proposals do not describe a merger, they describe destroying everything the IAA has done and starting from scratch. IASRA is talking about destroying both organisations, and that is not how a merge works. In a merge, there is a dominant partner, and the other partner wraps

up. IASRA could be disbanded tomorrow with no legal issues or requirements. In order to disband the IAA, an EGM would have to be run, our members would have to vote to do so, and we would have to give our finances to charity.

- IASRA asks can we work together as two associations, and eventually wean members from one to another. This could take 6 months to 2 years. The two associations could work together in dealings with DoJ. This is precedented, since there are many sports that have several associations.
  - IAA and IASRA again agree that DoJ meeting went well.
  - Dave mentions that having two identical organisations introduces a level of beurocracy that doesn't need to be there. Mentions how many sites and retailers are now seeing IAA/IASRA affiliation to be a political decision.
  - Dave outlines the IAA counter-proposal.
    - IASRA forms a Chamber of Commerce for Airsoft Venues and Retailers, working closely with IAA.
    - IAA representative on IASRA committee, and vice versa.
    - Chamber of commerce chartered by all Airsoft businesses in Ireland, in a matter similar to CoC proposed in late 2008.
    - This gives IAA and IASRA seperate remits, so there is a clear understanding and separation of duties and respnsibilities.
- Recess
  - IASRA Response to IAA proposal
    - IAA proposal does look good.
    - IASRA concerned about its existing individual members (a number of 350-400 is mentioned).
      - It is proposed that IASRA individual members would become 'affiliate members' of IAA
      - IAA looks after concerns of IASRA individual members, who have IASRA as a fallback.
      - As confidence builds, IASRA members will deal with the IAA directly.
    - Dave states that this has to be seen as a public endorsement of the IAA by IASRA.
    - Derek states that he does not have a problem with the IAA currently, has said so in the past, and will again.
    - IAA/IASRA agree that there is a lot of ill-sentiment that is going in both directions, this plan cannot work if it continues.
    - IASRA state that the CoC will look after commercial ventures, and will eventually have no need for individual member status, as individuals become IAA members. Do not think they could currently ask their individual members to just go and join the IAA.
  - Chamber of Commerce
    - The IAA is very much in favour of the chamber of commerce idea. It was mentioned to us at our AGM by our affiliates.
    - IASRA states that it is important that there be player/IAA representatives on the chamber of commerce committee, to prevent accusations of 'cartel'-like activities or price-fixing.
    - IAA states that this plan will be under a lot of scrutiny, IASRA agree.
    - IAA offers to help with chartering and legal language.
    - IASRA states that there is a view out there that some sites or retailers are 'too close' to the IAA, and this will fix a lot of that.
    - Derek states that he could encourage people to attend charter meetings by offering prizes, etc.

- IAA response with regard to IASRA individual members.
  - IAA still has issue with IASRA individual members. ie. why would someone join IASRA if IAA will be doing player representation.
  - IASRA want their members to build up confidence in the IAA over a transitional period. IASRA will encourage its members to get involved with the IAA.
  - Steve : Strictly speaking there wouldn't be an official tie, our constitution doesn't support it. We could make it work in spirit.
- Chronographing
  - IASRA brings up chronographing, describes the doppler effect. Asks if there was an official word from DoJ on tolerance.
  - Keith : DoJ representative very clearly said no tolerance at the DoJ meeting.
  - IASRA states that the Gardai are saying anything less than 1.1j is fine.
  - IAA compare this to the Irish DPM issue. IAA/IASRA need to be 'squeaky clean'.
  - IASRA state that we should ask for a percentage tolerance so quality of chrono and weather conditions can be taken account of.
  - IAA state that this may be one for the Chamber of Commerce. We've been asked by politicians if Irish retailers would consider dropping their own limits to 0.95j or 0.9j.
    - The problem with a 10% variance is that people will aim for 110% of the limit.
  - IASRA state that it does have to be policed, but there should be a tolerance there.
  - IASRA bring up the issue of hopup setting while chronoing. Mentions that some hop units go from 310fps to 260fps even with tiny adjustment. Also that guns are unusable at a game setting with hopup off.
  - Steve has written a legal brief on this for the IAA, and had it reviewed. The law is not concerned with the game, it only legislates for the output of the device. The hopup serves as a power regulator for the purposes of measurement. This is a strict liability law, with no flexibility and this position is confirmed by the DoJ.
  - Derek states that he is currently sourcing security seals for guns for sale in MIA, so tampering and upgrading is evident.
  - Conor asks Derek and Matt if ATS and MIA chronograph with hopup on or off.
  - Matt states that ATS used to spot check guns per batch, and now chronos everything both with hopup on and off.
  - Derek states that MIA chronos with hopup off on most guns, and with some at a point just where the BB doesn't roll out the end of the barrel on others.
  - Steve clarifies that if a gun is confiscated, there will be little concern for hop settings, it will be tested at its maximum configurable output.
  - IAA/IASRA agree that DoJ needs to be consulted on these issues.
  - IASRA brings up the issue of '1 joule springs'. It is agreed that an MS120 spring will not necessarily make a gun hot. It is about intent.
- Illegal/Irresponsible Skirmishing
  - IAA are getting many reports.
  - IAA/IASRA have an identical viewpoint on this.
- Next Steps
  - Dave : In terms of practices. We need to clamp down on people making libellous and slanderous comments. We need to clear the air in the airsoft community. We are not merging, we're not disbanding, but we'll be working together with mutual respect. We're all on the same side here, so the IAA

will be making a statement calling for unity within the community, and hope IASRA will do the same.

- Dave gives IASRA feedback on communications. A lot of the friction about IASRA is due to there not being enough information or communication out there. Brings up his repeated attempts to obtain a copy of the IASRA constitution.
- Alan mentions that the constitution has been changed, and the IASRA membership had asked IASRA not to give the constitution to the IAA.
- Dave : Your constitution is not a secret document.
- Alan : We will have to change it again anyway if we are going down this new road.
- Dave : The perception is that IASRA has been around for two months, and nobody has heard very much about stated aims, constitution, or other documentation. A meeting involving everyone concerned needs to happen in the next few weeks in order to charter the chamber of commerce, it needs to happen publically, and in full view of the community as a whole. Right now, the two biggest complaints about IASRA are Derek Talbot's involvement, and the lack of any information flowing out. If IASRA are to be subject to public scrutiny, it will not work if there is anything that even looks like secrecy. What we have agreed today cannot work if we continue as we are now, with sniping and character assassination on both sides.
- Derek : I don't see how this can't work if we work together.
- IAA expresses confidence that this plan will be recieved well, since it was proposed before with good reception.
- IAA/IASRA agree to make a joint statement by tomorrow.
- IAA/IASRA agree that IAA will release minutes, as they have made an audio recording of the meeting.

Meeting ends at 21:46

### **Appendix A : IASRA Proposals on IAA/IASRA Merger**

(As supplied to IAA)

#### The Irish Airsoft Sports and Retailers Association's Proposals on one Airsoft Association

1. IASRA and IAA hold a public meeting for ALL gamers ,retailers ,site operators e.t.c
2. Both Associations set up a new association eg The Airsoft Association of Ireland
3. Everyone at said meeting will vote in a new constitution and committee
4. Serving committee members of IASRA or IAA will stand down before the new Association's committee is voted in
5. All members of both associations become automatic members of the new association
6. More than 100 members needed to vote in new committee
7. Once the new association is voted in both IASRA and IAA will stand down and cease operations
8. New association will be voted on to represent or govern Airsoft by everyone present regardless if they are a member or not
9. Sub committees to be set up in each of the four provinces to represent Airsoft communities in their regions.

10. Try to reduce the influence of [boards.ie](http://boards.ie) on Airsoft and to promote dedicated Irish airsoft forums.