



Hangfires

This subject relates to an issue that I have had with the Immediate Action exercise of the FGASA Advanced Rifle Handling assessment for the past 8 years.

The following is an extract from the International Firearm Training Academy proficiency manual for Manually Operated Rifles Unit Standard 119651.

Hang Fire

A perceptible delay in the ignition of the cartridge, after the primer has been struck. A hang fire has been known to take up to five seconds to ignite. Hang fires are not very common in modern day ammunition.

Corrective Action

Wait five seconds before reloading [If however, you are faced with a life threatening situation, you will treat a hang fire as a misfire]. Chances however, of you experiencing a hang fire in your lifetime are about ten million to one.

All owners and users of manually operated rifles are required to have completed this Unit Standard and therefore they have read the above.

I have always maintained that if no shot goes off when faced with a potentially dangerous situation, such as a charge, the guide has a split second to decide if the problem is one of the following:

Hangfire, Short stroke or Misfire

Once the guide has determined the cause of the “click” they can then decide on the corrective action to take. Too late!!

Try to do all that when a charging elephant, hippo, or lion is now at 3 meters from you!

The correct and only response to any of the above, is to work the bolt to extract the faulty cartridge from the action, if there is one, and chamber a new round as fast as possible!

The option of turning the rifle over, and unlocking the bolt is too clumsy and takes too long. You will not have the time to do all that when an animal is charging at you – in fact you have far more important things to consider!

There is a short video that you can view that shows an actual hangfire. (<https://youtu.be/MkkKIVTdjT4>). When watching it, try to turn a rifle over to extract the hangfire before the rounds goes off. It is strongly recommended that you learn and practice the correct corrective action for a hangfire.