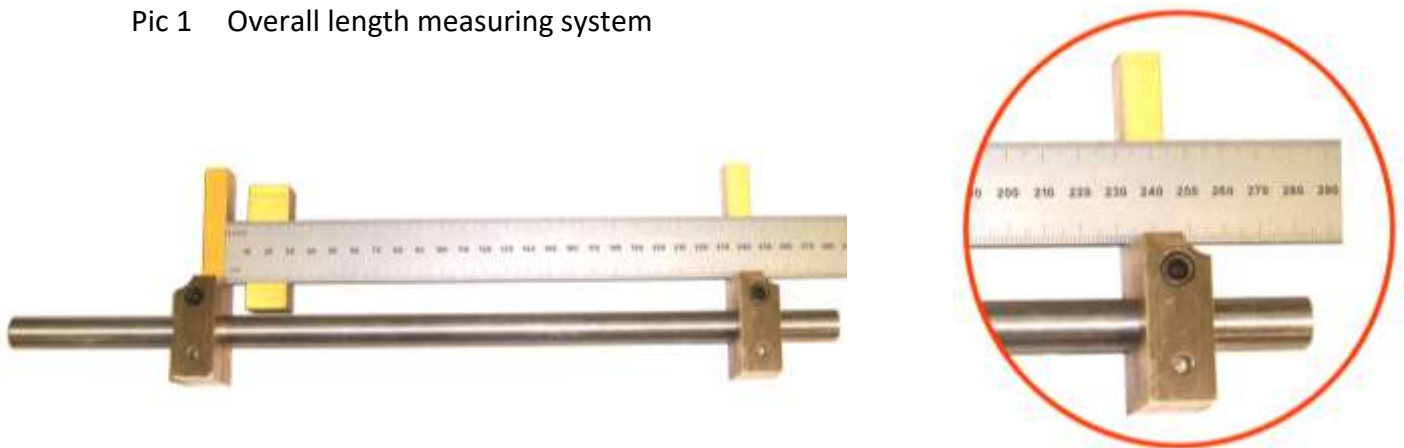


# MEASURING OVERALL LENGTHS

## OVERALL LENGTHS



Pic 1 Overall length measuring system



Note: This measuring system is suitable for the requirements of UK law.

In UK legislation overall length has legal implications for pump action and self-loading shot guns. The Firearms (Amendment) Act 1988 prohibited the possession of pump action and self-loading shot guns that have a barrel less than 24 inches (609.6 millimetres) and overall length of less than 40 inches (1016.0 millimetres), with all movable stocks collapsed or folded [1].

The Firearms (Amendment) Act 1997 prohibited the possession of all firearms with barrel lengths of less than 30 centimetres (11.81 inches) and overall length of less than 60 centimetres (23.62 inches) with exceptions.

Because 'overall length' is not defined in the Firearms Acts, it has been customary to use the longest length (this benefits the accused).

There is no reason why a report cannot include lengths as used in the AFTE guidelines (parallel to the axis of the bore) however the measurements for firearms overall lengths should include the longest measured length (opinion).

## OVERALL LENGTH MEASURING

To determine the overall length of the firearm “taken along a line which is parallel to the axis of the bore from a perpendicular tangential line which touches the rearmost point of the firearm to the muzzle”.

“4.2 The overall firearm length is determined using a measuring platform or fixture that can achieve a right angle to the bore of the axis. A measuring platform or fixture is a device which has two points (jaws); one point fixed and the other point articulates to determine the overall length”. [2]

To determine the overall length (longest length) a vernier can be used, an alternative can be a clamp assembly as described below, together with a calibrated steel rule to take the length measurement.



Pic 2 Measuring length in line with the bore, and overall length, in this case the overall length is longer.

A typical SOP:

- 1] Check to ensure the firearm is unloaded and safe to handle;
- 2] Lay the firearm/component on a flat surface;
- 3] Loosen the sliding clamp arm;

- 4] Slide the clamp arm down the alloy rod until it comes into contact with the firearm/component, finding the longest length;
- 5] Tighten the clamp arm screw to secure the arm on the rod;
- 6] Re-check length with the arm secured;
- 7] Lay the overall length measuring tool on a flat surface;
- 8] Position the calibrated steel rule along the clamp arm, with the end of the rule on the rule rest block;
- 9] Consider photography to show the position the measurement has been taken from (longest length);
- 10] Consider photographing the rule/rod set up, and a close up of the measurement for future reference.
- 11] For a critical finding check, where the measurement is close to an overall length limit, the measurement observed should be agreed by a competent colleague who signs and dates the findings.

References:

- [1] The Firearms (Amendment) Act 1988 section 1-(2)(ac)
- [2] AFTE Journal --Volume 50 Number 4--Fall 2018

Article: SWGGUN Guidelines: Barrel and Overall Length Measurements of Firearms. Pages 248-249.