

STRATEGIC POSITION ON PRODUCT QUALITY

To those inside the company it is obvious that Remington has been troubled in recent years by quality concerns in its firearms business. In the past, maintaining product standards has been part adherence to process record, part selective fit of parts and assemblies, and part "know-how" that was learned on the bench. All three of these practices have been neglected to the point that core products (870s, 700s, 1100s, etc) are exhibiting unacceptable quality deficits. Furthermore, these quality control failures are the subject of increasing negative attention from key customers.

For Remington to maintain and grow share, this trend must be permanently reversed.

A single coherent strategy is needed to maintain a high-quality product line. Such a central plan avoids the organizational confusion that can cause duplication of effort, poor communication, and a drain on valuable resources. Ultimately this plan will have to come from Manufacturing. In support of this, *Marketing's position going forward is that no new firearms products will be approved for shipment until all requisite testing has been administered and passed.* To be clear, requisite testing is that level of test necessary to confirm new designs in which there have been changes or innovations that reflect on the safety or performance of the product. This position will help to avoid the problems that have been experienced recently with some products that did not undergo proper testing protocol and that are now significant problems at the consumer level.

Product Archive

For 2003-2004, a firearms product archive will be enacted that contains the approved samples of each gun in the line. This will reduce the confusion surrounding quality standards and provide a permanent record so that "quality drift" in the specifications of the gun is eliminated.

Increased Testing

For revolutionary new product like the Model 2100 gas-operated shotgun, the standard test protocol will be expanded to include a significant increase in functional testing. Extended field tests in hot/cold/clement conditions will be added to the plan prior to product launch to help ensure that the reliability and durability of the guns are at their maximum level.