

The Walther Pro PL70r torch mounted on Darren Marks's .22 rifle, ready for some bunny busting.



The Walther Pro PL70r torch

by Darren Marks

Anyone who enjoys the outdoors needs a reliable light source. Whether that need arises from fishing, hunting or just camping, a torch with the power to illuminate your surroundings is essential.

The Walther Pro PL70r torch comes nicely packaged in a display box and is supplied with a lithium ion 3.7 volt rechargeable battery. This is an 18650 cell, which, for those not familiar with these batteries, simply denotes the size and type of battery. Also included is a charger and adaptor for different batteries, as well as various attachments to allow charging from mains power or a vehicle. A sturdy nylon belt pouch, lanyard and instruction manual round out the contents.

The light itself is quite compact, being

only 143mm long with a 26mm diameter aircraft-grade aluminium body, tapering up to a 40mm head. It weighs in at 142g.

Thanks to the multi-battery system, it can use a pair of CR123 disposable batteries, three AAA batteries, or the single lithium ion battery supplied with the package. The beauty of this system is that spare batteries can be purchased easily if the rechargeable battery goes flat.

Light output is rated at a maximum of 935 lumens, depending on which batteries are used. Light is produced by a Cree XM-L2 LED, which is bolstered by a temperature protection system to prevent damage to the LED from overheating. The smooth reflector is crafted from high-grade anti-reflex aluminium, polished for maximum light transmission, while the

lens is scratch-resistant glass. Obviously, a product used outdoors needs to have some resistance to the elements and this torch is rated at IPX4 standard, meaning it is splash waterproof.

That takes care of the technical aspects. Now it is time to put the light to work. There are three brightness settings: 100 per cent, 40 per cent and 10 per cent, as well as a strobe setting. Each power level has a three-second delay, which means that if the power button is pressed within three seconds of the last press, the light goes down one setting. If you wait longer than three seconds, then the light turns off with the next press. Holding the power button in for a few seconds activates the strobe mode, which in an emergency situation may be useful for signalling, or for those in

The Walther Pro PL70r torch

a law enforcement or security situation to disorient an individual.

A useful attribute of the light is the fast focus feature, where you can simply slide the head in or out to achieve a wide angle beam or a spot beam. The wide angle would be useful for around camp or wherever an extensive field of view is needed. The spot beam comes into its own for searching at a distance, spotlighting or whenever a concentrated ray of light is required. To lock the focus setting, a firm twist of the head to the left stops the focus from changing.

I was keen to see how the light performed in a hunting scenario, so I took the PL70r along on a recent trip to see how it went with a bit of walkabout spotlighting. Things were quiet, but the torch gave me a chance to see how good a light it could throw. Using the torch mainly on the spot beam setting, I was impressed with how well it lit up the bush. Possums were everywhere and the light easily picked up their eye shine from more than 100m away.

Eventually, a pair of bunnies were spotted at about 50m, nervously munching



on some grass as they looked in our direction. The torch lit them up clearly and the first fell instantly at the sound of the shot. The other one hopped away a short distance, then stopped and looked around for its mate. He too fell to a perfect headshot. Continuing on, another rabbit appeared in the light and was also cleanly despatched.

I found the spot beam excellent for searching for game, with enough spill to see where I was walking, while the flood setting made striding along in uneven terrain much easier by allowing me to spot and pace around obstructions such as logs and rocks.

I was impressed with the PL70r and found it to be an excellent light for hunting, as well as everyday use. With a long run-time thanks to the large-capacity battery and the use of LED technology, it would be a useful addition to anyone's camping and hunting kit.

The Walther Pro PL70r torch retails for around \$155 and is distributed in Australia by Frontier Arms. For more information, ask your local gunshop or visit www.frontierarms.com.au

A couple of bunnies collected at night with the help of the PL70r torch.