

SSANZ Newsletter January 2015

Message from our President

SSANZ is under new management, with those involved passionate to represent all shooters to ensure our voice is heard. You may have enjoyed a good hunting season last year even bought yourself a new gun for Christmas. That's great BUT do we collectively realise our passion to hunt, shoot or collect is constantly under threat from all manner of regional and national authorities. Some examples of which we are aware of at the present time are listed below.

1 Police Headquarters in Wellington have, we believe, issuing instructions to local arms officers to advise collectors that any weapon imported specifically for their collection cannot be on sold! They won't say how long you have to own an imported item before you can sell it.

2 At present a collector can transfer a C cat pistol onto a B cat licence but the police won't allow the reverse (there is nothing in the Arms Act that we know of preventing this). You can sell it to a friend who can put it on a C cat and he can then sell it back to you as a C cat. How daft is that?

3 Police have advised that they want to charge for issuing of "permits to procure" and "import". Licence fees are supposed to cover all this. If this fee structure was allowed to be introduced without challenge where would this cost finish for processing work? Typically councils are charging \$120.00 per hr to process documentation. Fees to police are paid through NZ Post, so would arms Officer be able to process transfers at auctions and gun shows as they do now, or will the process be delayed until the fee is paid and so incur further cost and inconvenience for the new owner.

What next is in the sights of Police National HQ?

It has also recently come to our attention that the Whangarei District Council is reviewing noise levels for all activities in the district, and have singled out shooting while exempting all other sports activities. Briefly, they propose that the noise level be REDUCED to 50db from 65db AND the hours available to use the shooting ranges be limited to between the hrs of 9 am and 5pm ONLY. Could this be your council next?

SSANZ wants to represent all firearms owners and oppose these encroachments on our sport/hobby.

To be a credible voice we need YOUR MEMBERSHIP. Please continue your membership, \$20 is a cheap investment for firearm owners to have a united and strong voice. Individually we will not be listened to!

I hope you all enjoyed the festive season and found time for family, friends and a little shooting, whatever your passion, shout yourself a late Christmas present, or someone else, join SSANZ now.

Thanks, Allan Delaney National President SSANZ

AGM

SSANZ was happy to welcome MP Ron Mark (NZ First) as guest speaker at our recent AGM. Ron recently returned to Parliament as a list MP in the last election. He started off by telling us a few home truths – firstly, that despite the fact that there are 250,000 shooters in New Zealand, when an election comes very few are willing to give their party vote to elect a pro-shooting MP. When he was last in parliament he said NZ First were in a strong position to influence legislation helped put the brakes on some bad firearms laws. This time they are in opposition and now they can only influence decisions by using diplomacy and cunning. Ron tells us he is the only MP in Parliament with a broad experience with firearms, and there are very few MPs that we are aware of with any firearms experience at all.

Ron considers New Zealand firearms laws to be generally good compared to other nations and there does not appear to be any mood in parliament to make further changes. He reminded us that encroachment on our sport could come from other directions: for example the RMA can impact on shooting ranges; the long term plans of District and Regional Councils can affect where we can shoot; and the policies of DOC and the Environmental Protection Agency in particular can be of concern because many of these policy makers are now urban dwellers who have no knowledge of country life.

Ron expressed an interest in hearing about the things that concerned SSANZ and we discussed with him recent issues such as the unannounced change in policy on retrospective import permits, the MSSA pistol grip saga, and lead shot on gun ranges. We thank Ron for taking the time to talk to us.

Our annual general meeting brought changes to the SSANZ committee, who especially want to thank the both the outgoing President, Stuart Hayman, and the Secretary/Treasurer Tom Humphrey for their hard work and dedication over their many years of involvement. SSANZ looks forward to their ongoing advice in the coming years.

The new officers are: President: Allan Delanay, Vice President: Chaz Forsyth, Secretary : Phil Cregeen, and Treasurer: Alan Webster.

Despite the relative lull in gun politics in New Zealand at the moment, SSANZ plans to increase links with politicians and provide a forum for debate. SSANZ will continue to observe the politics surrounding firearms in New Zealand and overseas. We encourage the shooting public to contact us with any concerns they have regarding the legitimate and lawful use of firearms in this country – we all need to be vigilant against the erosion of those rights.

Of cabbages and kings by Stuart Hayman

The last SSANZ newsletter published in NZG&H suggested that the Nightcaps cows might have been killed by eating GM swedes rather than cabbage containing lead shot. It contained two inaccuracies which have been pointed out by a sharp-eyed Oamaru member.

Firstly they were in fact feeding on fodder beet. The difference is that they eat the bulb/root as well as the leaves of fodder beet. This means they could ingest shot from the soil, which they would not do just eating leaves.

Secondly, the fodder beet may or may not have been a type that was selective breed to be resistant to the herbicide Telar® - These HT cultivars are widely grown but they are not genetically modified.

We would however reproduce this excerpt from a report by PGG Wrightson:

"The mild winter and lush growth of leaf material on brassica crops, especially swedes, has caused problems where dairy cows have been introduced onto the late winter swedes after wintering on other types of crops," PGW Seeds general manager David Green said.

With extra swede leaf material available because of the unusually mild winter, it appeared some cows had consumed more leaf and less bulb than normal, Green said. "This has combined to amplify risk factors that can cause liver disease."

"Initial reports from veterinary advisors suggested glucosinolate toxicity was the cause of the illness. Glucosinolates are natural components occurring in many pungent plants, especially brassicas".

So what killed them? A number of people believe that ingestion of lead in any form does not normally lead to a sudden rapid death like these cattle had. Exposure to lead will lead to a number of developing symptoms which may culminate in death, but which also should allow for diagnosis during the illness prior to this. So far we have not been able to winkle out of the system any pathology report which confirms lead poisoning as the cause of death of these particular cows. Merely being dead and having lead shot in the stomach does not mean it killed you unless administered by a shot gun (in which case the cause of death is bleeding out as they charmingly call it).

The cause for the cow deaths at Nightcaps is still not 100% clear, and the knee-jerk reaction was to blame the lead fall from the gun club. Various SSANZ committee members have written to the authorities involved to attempt to get confirmation either way, but if anyone knows more and can contribute to this saga, please do.