

SSANZ News November & December 2015

In addition to our Blog <http://sportingshooters.blogspot.co.nz/> you can now follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Sporting-Shooters-Association-of-New-Zealand-1500613573588729/timeline/> . Here you can read about the issues that concern us as they occur. If you follow Facebook please “ Like” and “Share” our posts, your constructive “Comments “ are welcome.



Firearms Safety

Before the duck shooting season I wrote to emphasise the importance of safety amongst shooters and hunters, but unfortunately there were accidents recorded that in reality were quite avoidable (climbing though a fence with a loaded gun is one incident and carrying a loaded gun on a quad which got dislodged and discharged another example of avoidable situations). I note that in another instance a well known former All Black was before the courts for supplying a firearm to an unlicensed person. Please be aware that in providing a firearm to an unlicensed person you are not only breaking the law but more than likely putting your friend / son / daughter in very real and potential danger of injury or death. Please encourage people that are interested and keen on firearms use to get the appropriate licence and training.

On the range or elsewhere anyone handling an MSSA must have an E endorsement for that individual firearm so please ensure those people with this endorsement are aware of this requirement, if an accident occurs the law prevails over everything else.

As you will read in the following article firearms training / licensing appears to be in disarray due to the restructuring of the MSC, so I urge all clubs to take an interest in this matter and encourage the Police to ensure adequate resources are provide by MSC or an alternative provider, to continue the timely availability of courses for people to gain the appropriate firearms training and licence.

Safe shooting,
Allan Delaney

President SSANZ

As of mid October there have been 11 non intentional shooting incidents this year with 6 of them being fatal. This is shaping up to be the worst year for over a decade and in many cases the shooter is apparently “experienced”. There is no room for complacency when it comes to handling firearms. Ed.

MSC puts New Zealand Firearm Safety Training in Jeopardy

Updating this serious problem that we first reported in the September/October issue, we can now confirm that many volunteer Firearms Safety Instructors have resigned from the Mountain Safety Council, which now jeopardises the whole firearm licensing programme, since MSC claim only their instructors can deliver the lectures and test. Furthermore MSC has cancelled all Whakatupato Programme sessions, by which firearms safety training is provided to iwi, for the remainder of the year. If you phone MSC with a firearms related query you are likely to be referred to your local Arms Officer or get an answer phone, as MSC no longer has any staff with firearms experience.

One may well ask on what does MSC now spend the \$316,000 provided by Police annually to administer the Firearms Safety Programme; a few messages on their website? The MSC stand at the recent Sika Show was left unmanned all weekend, what sort of message does that send?

SSANZ again urges the Commissioner of Police, who approves all Firearm Instructors under Regulation 14 of the Arms Act, to sack the MSC and appoint a new organisation to administrator the Firearms Safety Training Programme and test.

COLFO and SSANZ

SSANZ was pleased to support COLFO on their stand (image attached) at this year's Sika Show in Taupo Event Centre on 26 & 27 September, where we had the opportunity to meet and talk to many hunters. It was apparent that some hunters were not aware of COLFO and what this organisation does, so here is a short rundown.

The Council of Licensed Firearm Owners is a political lobby group made up of representatives from the major firearm organisations in New Zealand, of which SSANZ is but one, as well as members from the gun trade. The aims being to represent the interests of all firearm users to policy makers at various levels of government, preferably before new legislation or regulations are implemented. With many COLFO board members based in Wellington the organisation has established a good working relationship over many years with political figures, government officials and Police and is respected as an advisor on firearms matters.

Major achievements of COLFO include: being accepted by MFAT as a technical advisor on NZ firearms legislation and as a NZ delegate in international negotiations, promoting NZ firearms laws as a model of excellence at the UN, introducing interaction with Police at a strategic level at the firearms forum, reviewing existing arms policy to make it consistent and accepted by Police as a technical advisor.

Why is there a need for COLFO? Change is constant within our legal system, so is the evolution of firearms interests and design. This requires policy and law to adapt to ensure access to firearms is limited to those who are "fit and proper" to reduce the risk of harm to the wider community. International regulation continues to evolve at a rapid rate highlighting New Zealand's differences in historic, cultural and geographic risk. This is challenged further when policy makers take up residence here and seek to implement legislation from overseas that manage risks different to ours.

To be effective in protecting the access to firearms and the outdoors that many New Zealander currently enjoy all firearm users and those that supply them need to be united with a single voice. COLFO is well placed to be that voice.

As a member of SSANZ you are also part of COLFO.

Minister confirms further amendments to the Arms Act are on the way

The Minister of Police has confirmed that further changes to the Arms Act are being prepared; SSANZ will be looking out for your interests here. Don't think that just because you only own a shotgun or .22 these changes won't affect you; these two particular types of firearm are the weapons of choice of the criminal fraternity.

Member Survey

In October we carried out an online survey of our members with access to the internet. We are grateful to all 81 of you who responded. The results were as follows.

Should individual Police Officers be armed	42% For, 40% Against, 18 % Undecided.
Mandatory prison for crime involving a firearm	79% For, 9% Against, 12% Undecided.
Stolen Firearms	3 reported 1 gun, 2 reported 2 or more guns.
Length of time held a Licence	0-5 yrs 10%, 5-10 yrs 10%, 10yrs or more 80%
Member's age	16-30yrs 8%, 30-60yrs 43%, Over 60yrs 49%

SSANZ AGM

Our AGM for the current year will be held on **21 February 2016** at Forum North, Rust Avenue, Whangarei, commencing at 2.00 pm. All members who are able are asked to attend. Full details will be sent out closer to the time.