

SSANZ News November December 2016

www.sportingshooters.nz SSANZ, PO Box 275, Whangarei 0140



Gun Safes for B, C & E Cat firearms

In our last newsletter we reported that Police are now insisting that gun safes are certified by a mechanical engineer before Police will approve them for use and stated *“We have been advised that existing safes that have been approved in the past will be honoured by Police.”*

We have since received a further statement from Police National HQ: *“Police require that the manufacturer or importer have the safe inspected and certified by a registered mechanical engineer (or holder of a relevant trade certificate with current experience) and a certified lock smith (a member of the Australasian Master Locksmith Association), to show that the minimum standards required, as set out by the Arms Act 1983 and the Arms Regulations 1992, are met. Safes that do not have a product report that shows that the safe meets the required minimum standards, or a safe Police know does not meet the minimum standard, will not be approved. This also applies to previously approved safes.”* SSANZ has been advised that Mechanical Engineers are not “registered” in New Zealand.

We noted that the 1992 Arms Regulations do not actually specify the minimum specification required, so we applied to Police for a detailed specification against which safes may be assessed together with the qualification required for those carrying out the certification and were sent a very ambiguous document which started with the following: *“Where a safe is manufactured outside the standard 6mm mild steel (this implies that if the safe is 6 mm, certification is NOT required) or cannot be inspected by the police prior to installation, (this implies that ALL safes currently installed and previously approved by Police now also need certification) an engineer’s certificate will be required to certify their materials and their performance”.* The document goes on to detail how locks should be tested including *“You would need at least 40 bags of potatoes piled on top of each other before the lock would give way”;* but does not specify how big the bag should be!

We note that Section 28 of the 1992 Arms Regulations requires that Pistols, MSSAs and restricted weapons are *“(c) locked in a steel safe or steel box or steel cabinet (being in every case a safe, box, or cabinet of sound construction and of a type approved in writing either generally or in the particular case by a member of the Police)”*.

Our advice is if your security arrangements have already been approved by Police then you should ask them for a copy of your written approval. If Police have approved your firearm security in the past regardless as to whether you hold a “certificate” for your safe, how can they now refuse to approve it, provided nothing has changed to make it less secure?

SSANZ fully supports sensible and practical security arrangements for all firearms, but does not support retrospective certification of previously approved safes; this is an unnecessary imposition on firearm owners and goes beyond the requirements of the 1992 Regulations.

Burglaries

Burglaries involving firearms have been in the news recently and of course law abiding firearm owners are frequently blamed for being the source of guns used by criminals, so it is pleasing to see that Police are now giving a higher priority to attending at household burglaries. We hope that this will result in more stolen firearms being recovered.

Mail Order Permits

Are serial numbers required on the form? We were recently asked this question by a member and put it to the Police National HQ, who replied that all boxes on the form must be completed; this allows them to check whether the firearm is lost or stolen or is an MSSA. We then checked the Police information leaflet that announced the new mail order process introduced in October 2015 and discovered there on page 5 “All firearms and ammunition are to be fully and correctly described. In the case of firearms: Make; Model; Calibre are required.”

So in our view when buying by mail order, if you do not have the serial number just refer Police to their own document, “guide-for-applicants-for-mail-order-sales-plus-form.pdf” found on the Police website.

Firearm Licence Testing

Following the news that the Mountain Safety Council was planning to make most if not all of its volunteer firearm instructors redundant, we are very pleased to see that the Police have now announced that they will put the contract for Firearm licence testing out to public tender. As a consequence the MSC has put their plans on hold and asked all their volunteers to continue instructing for the time being.

SSANZ will be happy to support any new organisation that is awarded the contract based on using a nationwide network of volunteer instructors. Not only do these volunteers fulfil the task of licence testing, they also provide firearms safety training and advice in their local communities, especially in remote rural areas.

Select Committee Inquiry into Illegal Possession of Firearms

Since our last report the Select Committee has now taken Oral submissions from both those supporting and those opposed to the private ownership of firearms, with suggestions of registration of all guns and the banning of internet sales put forward by some. We note too that the Mountain Safety Council was questioned at length on their plans to ditch the volunteer firearm instructors.

When the Inquiry is completed the committee will present their report to Parliament with recommendations it will then be up to the government of the day to determine if there is a need for further legislation around firearms ownership. When any future firearms legislation is presented it is vitally important that ALL firearm owners make their concerns known.

Public Perception

New Zealand has some of the most practical and sensible firearms laws in the world, so it should be of great concern to us all that a recent poll commissioned by TVNZ indicated that 83% of our population think our gun laws should be tougher. No doubt this perception has been encouraged by all the media hype around gun laws in the USA, and a number of shooting incidents here. It is apparent that criminals are resorting to the use of firearms more frequently and so too are the Police with often serious consequences. Hardly a week goes by without images of AOS officers in black locking down some neighbourhood appearing on our TV News. Little wonder that the public at large are nervous about guns.

It is up to us as responsible firearm owners to do all we can to counter this negative public perception of firearms and counter the often biased stories that appear in our media.

Help Make SSANZ Stronger and More Effective

Be proactive – encourage your mates to join SSANZ