

# SSANZ News January February 2017

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## Recently reported firearm thefts and burglaries

Much has been made of the “arsenal” of firearms taken recently from Dunedin, when the specific address was given out as part of the report. That the “arsenal” consisted of five MSSAs and 23 handguns, all registered and securely stored seems to have been overlooked by University of Otago Peace and Conflict Studies Professor Clements, who from Washington DC, repeated his calls for full firearm registration and increased storage requirements. Perhaps far more serious was the theft during the same incident of the club records, presumably containing details of club members and of their property.

Firstly, an arsenal is “...a building for storing and making arms and ammunition”, and “a store of anything regarded as weapons.” (Hanks,1990: 38). This is an emotive term beloved of the news media, and the Otago Daily Times journalist Shaun McAvinue did not disappoint: his choice of words was repeated in a follow-up article published a week later. The, Professor Clements called for club members to store their firearms at a central store, arguing the fact of the theft highlighted “major deficiencies” in the firearm control legislation of New Zealand. (His views have been challenged by more than one reader). Worse, Professor Clements believes that licensed firearm owners do not routinely keep records of their firearms. The fact that the firearms were all registered should of course make them easily recoverable.

SSANZ Is pleased to see that Police have arrested two men in relation to the Dunedin burglary in October, it is to be hoped that all the firearms will be recovered and returned to their owner.

## Certifying Gun Safes for B, C & E Cat firearms - Confusion Reigns

The people who drew up the 1992 Arms Regulations recognised that no level of security would defeat a well prepared and planned burglary, as seen in Dunedin in October and Dargaville earlier in the year. The regulations simply intended to prevent theft by opportunist burglars seeking valuables. That is why the regulations are non specific, simply stating:

- 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) bolted or otherwise securely fixed (in a manner approved in writing either generally or in the particular case by a member of the Police) to the building within which the pistol or military style semi-automatic firearm or restricted weapon is kept.

This issue of certifying safes is still causing confusion among importers and firearm owners. Various organisations and individuals have been engaging Police in an attempt to get the ambiguous information contained in Police Form POL67N sorted out. Rather than confuse you more by stating the various stories we have been told we will simply say to NZ Police **it is time you sorted this out** and produce clear unambiguous guidelines as to what is required of both importers of new safes and owners of existing safes and containers. One would think if a firearm container is made of 6 mm mild steel and fitted with two five lever security locks then no certificate would be necessary.

Meanwhile a Trust Fund has been set up by a number of organisations and dealers who are contemplating legal action in order to obtain a judicial review of this new Police policy. **SSANZ has contributed to the trust fund and will be part of any such legal action.**

## **Permits to import firearm into New Zealand**

The ongoing delays in the issue of permits to import have been explained in part because of Police staffing limitations and partly because of the volume of permits sought under the current import regime. However, the need for repeating the complete application after three earlier ones had not been resolved seems to be placing unnecessary bureaucratic impediments in the way of licensed people seeking the import of firearms and parts through the proper channels. It gives a bad name to Police bureaucracy and places an unworthy slur upon their integrity and competence. SSANZ has sent a letter of complaint to the Commissioner of Police and suggest all other firearm owners who have experienced unreasonable delays do the same.

## **US Presidential election**

Casting aside the 'shock, horror' outcome of an underdog unexpectedly becoming the 'overdog', the view is now a lot brighter for firearms ownership in America and ultimately, for us in New Zealand. It is possible that the news media, long accustomed to painting a somewhat unlikeable candidate in a losing vein, had for too long believed what it had written about Mr Trump. The pollsters of public opinion, a significant industry in the USA, perhaps relied for too long on landline telephones and ignored the impacts of the digitised media of cell phones, twitter and facebook?

Realistically, the possibility of candidates for the judiciary of the US Supreme Court are likely to be more positively oriented to retaining the enshrined American right to bear arms. Mr Trump, already endorsed by the NRA of America, is very likely to support concealed carry arguments in the few states where this responsibility has not yet been approved.

## **World Round up**

The failure of Australia's tough gun laws is revealed as a Firearms Amnesty is announced to recover an estimated 260,000 illegal guns in the country. In spite of the toughest gun laws in the western world London's top cop admits that 714 firearms were seized in London in 2015, most smuggled in to the UK from Europe. Meanwhile in November the EU Commission announced its intention to ban all AK47 and AR15 derivatives and restrict all magazines to 10 rounds.

## **AGM Notice**

Notice is hereby given that the Sporting Shooters Association of New Zealand will hold an Annual General Meeting at 2.00 pm on Saturday 18 February 2017 at the Bounty Room, Forum North, Rust Avenue Whangarei. This meeting will be followed by the AGM for Northland Branch. All members are invited to attend.

## **Annual Subscriptions**

Subs fall due for "regular" members on 1 January 2017, if you joined since 1 October 2016 your 2017 subs are paid, subs for NZG&H subscribers fall due on the anniversary of initial subscription.

Fees: Regular members \$20, combined sub and NZG&H magazine \$54.

Direct Credit SSANZ account: 03-0179-0160150-00 with your name as reference.

Or cheque to SSANZ, PO Box 275, Whangarei, 1040

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