



New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association Inc

3 Collina Terrace, Thorndon Wellington
PO Box 12015, Thorndon, Wellington 6144
Phone: 04 499 6163 Fax: 04 472 5976
Email: info@deerstalkers.org.nz
Website: <http://www.deerstalkers.org.nz>

WRITTEN SUBMISSION TO THE FINANCE AND EXPENDITURE SELECT COMMITTEE
CONSIDERING THE BILL

ARMS (Prohibited Firearms, Magazines and Parts) Amendment Bill By New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association Inc.

3 April 2019

INTRODUCTION

1. New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association (NZDA) supports the intent of the Bill to tighten gun control.
2. NZDA has serious concerns that the haste with which the Bill has been drafted and is being progressed will result in unforeseen problems and will impact adversely and unfairly on firearm owners.
3. NZDA wishes to be heard in support of its submission.

New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association

4. NZDA is a national organisation with forty eight branches throughout New Zealand. It was established in 1937 to advocate for hunting and shooting.
5. NZDA members use firearms for hunting, range shooting, collecting and in commercial activity in agriculture, commercial guiding and meat recovery and in pest control.
6. NZDA is an advocate for safe and lawful firearm usage and is a member of the Police Community Advisory Committee and the Firearm Safety Council.
7. NZDA delivers safety training through its new hunter courses (HUNTS) and runs competitive range shooting including international events.
8. NZDA's position is based on its long experience with the full range of firearm usage and its credibility as a contributor to previous legislation.

Support for effective firearm legislation

9. NZDA is a staunch supporter of the "Fit and Proper" criteria for firearm licence holders and contends that rigorous vetting of firearm applicants and their purpose in holding a licence should be the central element around which an effective arms control regime can be built.
10. NZDA contends that any change to the existing firearms legislation should be based on solid research and consultation. NZDA contends that the changes proposed in the bill will be ineffective, will impact unfairly on law abiding people and be costly.

Specific concerns

11. Section 2 (1) removes the definition of a MSSA and subsequently does not differentiate between various types of firearm which will become a new class of firearm "prohibited". This in association

with 2(a)(1) captures a number of rifles commonly and for many years accepted and used as sporting firearms. A notable example is the Remington Woodmaster.

NZDA submits that such a firearm be exempted from the provisions of the above section.

12. Section 2B (a) relates to shotgun magazines but raises a question as to the status of magazine extensions for tubular magazines. Currently such extensions can be used to increase capacity for the longer cartridges containing steel shot but will not necessarily exceed the 5 rounds that is specified in this section.

NZDA submits that this be clarified.

13. Section 2C (b) relates to “Parts” which contribute to semi-automatic fire. Elsewhere there is reference to parts such as silencers and sights that are essential to the usage of the firearm but not to its semi-automatic function. Such parts may be used on other non-prohibited firearms but are captured by the wording.

NZDA submits that this needs clarification.

14. The “prohibiting” of classes of firearms that had been legally available for many years will impact directly on thousands of firearm users. Outside of the signals of exemptions for commercial pest control operators the people who will be affected include
- Competition shooters (Pistol NZ, Service Rifle association.)
 - Non-commercial hunters on wallaby and rabbit operations
 - Firearm enthusiasts
 - Private hunters who have increasingly moved to using A category semi-automatic firearms for general hunting because of the modern firearm technology and versatility.

NZDA submits that this impact be acknowledged and revisited in the next round of legislation.

15. The requirement to surrender prohibited firearms legally bought and held under existing law has been announced without clear statements on how a “buyback” scheme will operate. This has put firearm owners in a position of handing over property with no certainty that they will be fairly compensated.

NZDA submits that the details of a buyback scheme be urgently agreed in consultation with representatives of the firearm community and a timeline for implementation be published so that compliance with the compulsory surrender is encouraged.

16. Businesses specialising in the supply, trade and servicing of now prohibited firearms will suffer and some no doubt will fold. The losses that such businesses are incurring is the direct result of the stated intention to introduce the current bill.

NZDA submits that business losses related to this legislation be addressed as part of the “buy back” scheme.

Conclusion

NZDA represents a significant number of law-abiding firearm owners and speaks in support of the concerns of a wider group of hunters and range shooters. NZDA will call on its members to comply with whatever laws are passed. Equally NZDA expects that legislators pay full attention to the concerns raised in this submission.



National Executive
New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association

