

New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association Inc



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Firearm users must follow the rules

“The Arms Code must be followed to keep hunters safe. Failure to do so puts lives in danger and only idiots and criminals would do that,” says Bill O’Leary, President of New Zealand Deerstalkers’ Association.

The release of Coroner Bain’s report on the accidental shooting of an unlicensed and unsupervised teenager was a timely reminder to firearms users that the basic rules of firearm safety and the law in respect to possession of firearms exist to keep people safe, he said.

“Analysis of non-intentional shootings clearly shows that putting a firearm in the hands of an unlicensed person without providing immediate supervision by a licenced person is inherently dangerous as well as unlawful.”

With the increased interest in firearms and hunting, the Coroner’s report on this tragic incident should remind all firearms users and parents that they have an absolute responsibility to follow the rules and set an example of safe and responsible firearm use, O’Leary said.

“The red deer roar is in full swing and opening day of duck season is eagerly awaited by thousands. Police-approved firearms instructors and national shooting organisations such as NZDA and Fish and Game will be pushing the basic rules.”

He emphasised the basic rules:

- Get a licence
- Get specific approval for where you hunt
- Always point the firearm in a safe direction
- Positively identify your target
- Consider your firing zone

NZDA is a national organisation of hunters with 48 branches across the country. NZDA delivers training in safe firearm handling and is a member of the Firearm Safety Council, Aotearoa New Zealand.

For more information contact Bill O’Leary, 0274 305 008