

NZ Game Animal Council Media Statement

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Game Animal Council
NEW ZEALAND

Firearms legislation must be fair to hunters

“The Game Animal Council is concerned that the Government’s second tranche of firearms legislation may contain unreasonable provisions that will unfairly impact hunters,” says Game Animal Council Chair Don Hammond.

“Legislators must consider this Bill from the perspective that firearms used for hunting are tools required to carry out the activity, they aren’t toys people own just for the sake of it.”

“A legislative overreaction that makes firearms ownership and compliance too onerous could have a detrimental effect on hunting as a recreational pursuit in New Zealand. This could, in turn, have a major impact on game animal management and conservation.”

“A number of provisions within this legislation may create further compliance without actually making New Zealand safer,” says Hammond. “The objective should be making sure that firearms don’t fall into the wrong hands, not unnecessarily penalising law-abiding New Zealanders.”

“The proposed new rules requiring firearms ranges to be licensed will inevitably see smaller rural ranges run by volunteers shut down, which will unfairly impact rural-based hunters. Other provisions involve extra compliance and costs for hunters that may not make a difference to public safety.”

The Game Animal Council looks forward to analysing the Bill in detail and making a submission to the select committee process that reflects the concerns of New Zealand’s hunting community and will improve the final legislation.

“I urge the select committee to consider holding hearings across the country, particularly in provincial locations, so that hunters and other firearms owners have the chance to properly participate in the process,” says Hammond.

The Game Animal Council did not oppose the Government’s first tranche of firearms reforms due to the weapons affected being largely unsuitable for recreational large game animal hunting.

The NZ Game Animal Council is a statutory organisation responsible for the sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, commerce and conservation.

Contact:

Don Hammond, Chair

Phone 0274885940

don.hammond@nzgac.org.nz