

Notice

18 December 2019



Game Animal Council
NEW ZEALAND

Prohibited Firearms Pest Management Exemption Process

Thanks to our friends at Federated Farmers for this useful summary.

Summary

The Police have recognised that the approach taken to granting endorsements for individual landowners, such as farmers, to obtain a prohibited firearm needed to be adjusted to deliver on Parliament's intent. The Police's revised approach to the application process for an exemption will allow for a limited number of landowners who can demonstrate that prohibited firearms are needed to control wild animals or animal pests as part of their commercial business. The process will require applicants to have a pest management plan for the property, evidence of the pest problem from an expert party and the creation of a business that will solely work to control pests on the property in question or on contract to other properties. Any prohibited firearms that are obtained under the pest control exemption can only be possessed and used for pest control purposes.

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible the applicant must be a firearms licence holder and an 'occupier' of the economic unit where the pest problem is. Occupier may include the person who physically occupies the place, the owner of the place (in relation to places that are not physically occupied) and any agent, employee, or other person acting in the general management or control of the place. For those undertaking work for other economic units with pest problems, these must be in the same area, such as neighbouring farms.

What pest species are eligible for control?

The wild animals and animal pests which can be controlled with prohibited firearms are restricted to those listed under Clause 2C of the Arms Regulations 1992. These are all deer species, chamois, tahr, feral pigs, feral goats, wallabies, feral rabbits, feral hares and Canada geese.

Note: expert evidence must be provided through a property pest management plan that these species are causing economic or biodiversity harm to the property and can only be economically controlled using prohibited firearms.

What is a property pest management plan?

A property pest management plan is required to provide evidence of the pest problem on the property and how it is managed. This will include the pest species, the damage that they are causing and evidence that prohibited firearms are the only effective control option. Evidence will also be required of how the control will be undertaken, what firearms and equipment is used, the amount of time necessary for control and how control has been undertaken in the past. Estimated annual pest control hours and budgets and evidence of previous pest management expenditure will help Police to understand the extent and scale of the pest problem on the property. Experts to verify the pest issue on the property can include farm advisors, Regional Council Biosecurity staff, Landcare Trust or QE II Trust representatives.

Why do you need to form a new business?

Most farmers have traditionally undertaken pest control as part of general farm management. Forming a new stand-alone business is necessary as Section 4A (1) (i) of the Arms Act 1983 states that only a business where the sole, or substantial part of the business, is controlling wild animals or animal pests is eligible for an exemption to use prohibited firearms for pest management.

What type of firearm could be possessed with a prohibited firearm endorsement?

The prohibited item could be a semi-automatic centrefire rifle, a semi-automatic rimfire rifle with magazine capacity greater than 10 rounds or a semi-automatic or pump-action shotgun with magazine capacity greater than 5 rounds. It is necessary to explain why the particular item is needed.

How to apply

If you can meet all of the criteria listed above you can apply for an exemption at the link below. For the Police application forms and more detail on the process go to:

<https://www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/firearms-and-safety/apply-endorsement-and-permit-possess-prohibited-items>

<https://www.police.govt.nz/sites/default/files/publications/pest-control-flow-chart.pdf>