

New firearms legislation will relieve stress on hunters

New legislation that will enable firearm licence holders to continue to lawfully possess and use firearms, while their application for a licence is being processed, will go a long way to relieving the stress on the hunting community caused by the current application backlog, says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale.

“The delays in processing licence applications have not only meant that many hunters have been unable to partake in their chosen sport, but has created unnecessary stress as renewal applicants scramble to find someone else who can lawfully store their firearms and ammunition.”

“Delays in renewals are often stretching out for several months and we have heard stories from some hunters of the process taking well over a year,” says Gale.

The new legislation, once passed, means that if the holder of a firearms licence applies for a new licence before the expiry of their current licence, their current licence will continue to be in force until they are notified of the outcome of their application.

“This change will provide hunters and other firearms users with confidence that as long as they submit their application in advance of their licence expiring, they will still be able to possess and use their firearms.”

“I am glad the Police and Government have listened to the advice of the GAC and other firearms user groups on this issue.”

The Bill also provides that if the renewal of a dealer’s licence is issued after the expiry of the licence, the renewal takes effect from the date of its issue and not from the expiry of the previous licence.

“Again, this is a sensible and necessary amendment,” says Gale.

The GAC welcomes the Government’s desire to address these issues and encourages the swift passage of the legislation.

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

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