



Cyclone Gabrielle

In the aftermath of this devastating cyclone, the thoughts of the COLFO Board are with all of you who have been adversely impacted by this event and wish you a speedy recovery.

Changes in Government Policy

With our new Prime Minister Chris Hipkins scraping government policies that may cost him the next election, can we expect any easing of the discrimination applied to licensed firearm owners? The answer is probably NO. Remember Chris was the Police Minister under whose watch the consultation of licence fee hikes was introduced and he has since appointed our old friend Stuart Nash as Police Minister, he who guided all the draconian legislation that we now suffer under through parliament.



But there is nothing lost in trying, so get writing to your MPs and suggest that scrapping the firearms register, costing \$ 1 Million per week would fund a lot of bread and butter for poverty stricken Kiwis.

Complaint lodged against Police over error-plagued firearm rules.

COLFO lodged an official complaint, with Parliament's Regulations Review Committee over the conduct of Police in assembling new regulations governing firearm clubs and ranges.

The Arms Amendment Regulations 2022 were consulted on in March last year, gazetted in November, and came into effect just before Christmas.

The regulations were opposed by licensed firearm owners, because of basic errors made by Police staff writing the regulations, the over-reach in powers, and the failure to connect the rules with their required purpose of "safety".

In a letter to Committee Chair Judith Collins, COLFO details how the Police misused the regulations power to set rules not intended by the law, and how they made numerous procedural mistakes.

COLFO says the Police's regulations did not meet the purposes of the Arms Act, made unusual use of powers, trespassed on personal rights, and did not comply with notice and consultation requirements.

A central argument in the complaint is that many of the rules will decrease firearm safety, rather than promote it - by lowering numbers of clubs and ranges, and by collecting private information on firearm ownership.

Guidance on Cost Recovery Consultation

A few days before Christmas Police released a consultation document on their proposals to recover their costs in delivering all aspects of firearm licensing and permits from licensed firearm owners. These represented massive increases in fees of up to 400%.

Over the summer holiday period COLFO studied the proposals and sought feedback from various affected parties. With assistance from our legal and PR team a guidance package was put together on how members should respond to the questions asked in the consultation document. This was circulated to all members in late January, with submissions closing on the 16th of February.

Meanwhile COLFO has criticised these proposals through media releases, highlighting how the new fees will destroy many facets of shooting sports and firearm collecting, as well as dealer businesses. Even to the extent of breaching the Arms Act by charging victims of crime.

COLFO has made a very detailed submission.

Police to hear major problems with firearm fee increases

Submissions on the new fees for licensed firearm owners close on 16 February, and the Council of Licensed Firearm Owners (COLFO) say the submissions will reveal the true extent of problems with the extraordinary increase.

COLFO spokesperson Hugh Devereux-Mack says the submissions will reveal that the newly proposed fees have far-reaching consequences.

“The submissions will show the proposed near-500% increase will affect the bottom line of farmers, and drain the pockets of people hunting to put food on the table for their families.

“Police will hear that international film productions are going to have to pay high fees and fill out numerous forms to use theatrical firearms. Local production companies will tell them NZ-made action films will be almost out of the question – they just don’t have the budget.

Devereux-Mack says Police won’t just be hearing from businesses, but from community organisations and should hear from Government departments.

“Community remembrance events will be complaining that they’ll have to pay thousands of dollars to blank-fire a vintage cannon on Anzac Day.

“Police should also hear from DOC that Government budgets will need to increase to cover the rise in costs for pest control contractors.

“In reality, the proposed fees will see Police collect an exceptional amount of money from people just going about their livelihoods.”

Devereux-Mack says it is unavoidable that Police will have to make changes to the proposed fees and return with a stripped-back version.

“The current proposal contains an insulting attempt to charge for Police attendance at a burglary, and there is obvious double-dipping on administrative activities.

“Police will have no choice but to come back with a new version that fixes the breaches of the Arms Act and more accurately reflects the costs of its licensing scheme.

“To have majority support, the new version will need to treat licensed firearm owners with the dignity and respect hard-working and law-abiding New Zealanders deserve.”

Members had until 16 February 2023 to submit on the proposed fees. They can make a submission by going to <https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/programmes-and-initiatives/consultation-arms-regulations-review-fees-2022>

COLFO is advised that Police will accept late submissions for 2 weeks if the late delivery is caused by cyclone Gabrielle and the submission is so marked.

Submission on the Natural and Built Environments Bill and Spatial Planning Bill

COLFO made a submission to ensure that existing shooting ranges were afforded protection from interference, particularly relating to noise, as they provide essential facilities that contribute to public safety and that planners take these requirements into consideration when planning public amenities.