

COLFO News Issue 6 – December 2017

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Meeting the Police Minister

At the end of November COLFO are scheduled to hold a meeting with Stuart Nash the new Minister of Police, it is hoped he will reveal his intentions in respect of any new firearm legislation and in particular his plans for the recommendations made by the Select Committee Inquiry into Illegal firearms, of which he was a member.

Meeting with other Firearm Advocacy Groups

In early December COLFO will join other Firearm Advocacy Groups such as SSANZ, NSA, FOUNZ and Kiw Gun Blog for a strategy meeting, to see how we can best all work together to achieve our common goals.

Arms Trade Treaty Talks

COLFO was at the UN Arms Treaty Session in Geneva Switzerland in early October. COLFO understands that in the modern world, we simply cannot focus only on the picture for New Zealand, as there is an International Aspect as well. The UN Arms Trade Treaty is designed with the laudable and important goal of preventing military items from feeding conflicts in places like Sierra Leonie. Unfortunately, COLFO believes that the treaty could be used to prevent you from enjoying your sport by restricting, for example, the international shipment of ammunition. Our Rep attended the meeting to ensure that the NZ delegation did not take a stance that would restrict New Zealanders. Working closely with our friends from other International organisations, we also lobbied in relation to other aspects of international arms control such as the Programme of Action. We can report that we consider the UN ATT to be a failing treaty due to lack of international ratification. However, the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms remains very problematic for us and we will continue to ensure that your rights are not restricted via the international processes. COLFO is greatly appreciative of Grant Fletcher who volunteered his time to attend the ATT on our behalf.

World Forum for Shooting Activities

At the end of October COLFO hosted the WFSA Conference in Queenstown. The conference was attended by delegates from the USA, Australia, Europe and NZ. Retired Inspector Joe Green who now chairs New Zealand's Firearm safety Council addressed the delegates at the opening evening function.

A Win for Auckland Shooting Club and all NZ Shooting Ranges

With financial assistance from PNZ and COLFO, we are pleased to report that the Auckland Shooting Club has won its legal Battle with Auckland City Council to have its certificate of Compliance reinstated. Auckland Council had revoked the C of C on the grounds of perceived lead contamination discharges to land and water. If the Council stance had been upheld it could have heralded the end of shooting ranges in New Zealand.

Shot Expo 2018

COLFO will be present at the Shot Expo in Auckland ASB Show Ground, Greenlane on 17 & 18 February, come along to our stand and say hello. We will have Barristers Lisa Hansen from Wellington and Nicholas Taylor from Auckland, attending at their own expense, available to give out free legal advice on firearms issues on both Saturday and Sunday.

Review of Firearm Security

POL67N “Conditions and Requirements for Firearms Licences and Endorsements” dealing with endorsed firearms security has been in use for the past 20 years at least. In November 2015 Police drafted an update of this document to include A category firearms, some organisations and individuals made comment on this, attempting to keep the security requirements practical and affordable for firearm owners. In April 2017 the FCAF elected a sub-committee to further consider this subject which has resulted in a new draft dated April 2017. Feedback to the April 17 version has been sought from all FCAF members and this feedback was discussed by the sub-committee on 21 November before tabling a final draft for the full FCAF to approve at their December meeting. Meanwhile in mid November police published the unfinished April version and a new police draft dated November 17, which has not been previously shared with the FCAF, on their website and asked for public feedback by 1 December. Firearm owners reaction to these drafts, particularly the November version, which sort to amend Regulations 19 and 28 by policy, has been highly critical.

Alpers Likens Kiwi Gun Laws to the USA

Yes, he is back that vocal anti gun advocate who fled to Australia when his efforts failed here back in the late 1990s. He will be performing alongside Professor Gillespie at an Otago University Summer School to be held in Wellington on 14 February on the subject of Firearms and Public Health. Fortunately our own Nicole Mckee, a firearm safety specialist, will also be speaking to provide counter arguments.

By likening Kiwi gun laws to the USA in a recent media article, Mr Alpers is deliberately misleading the public; such a comparison is like comparing one apple to a whole fruit market. Does he not know that the USA is comprised of 50 States, all of which have their own gun laws, some very strict and other not so. Similarly the size and ethnic mix of the population and the social issues in each state vary considerably thus affecting the prevalence of gun ownership and gun crime. In the US a firearm is viewed by many people as a weapon for self defence whereas in New Zealand it is simply an item of sporting equipment or a tool for farmers and hunters. There is no comparison that can be made between the two countries.

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