



Safari Club International

New Zealand Chapter Inc.

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May 19, 2017

Mr Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi
Chair, Law and Order Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Dear Mr Bakshi,

Re: Inquiry into issues relating to the illegal possession of firearms in New Zealand.

As the New Zealand Chapter of the world's largest hunting and conservation organisation Safari Club International, we would like to make a submission in respect to this inquiry.

We have examined this report with interest and wish to advise that the chapter is strongly **against** the recommendations of this report. The chapter believes:

- Current NZ firearm laws are amongst the best in the world.
- The report unfairly targets and punishes the "law abiding" 250,000 firearms owners and users in NZ imposing further restrictions on them including increased administrative and cost burdens.
- That a national gun register would not have any positive effect on limiting illegal firearm ownership and would in fact be extremely expensive to administer, unwieldy and impossible to keep current (refer to the costs and failures of similar schemes in Canada and Australia).
- The report states the Police "believe" that most illicit firearms have entered the illicit market by way of theft from legal firearms owners but offer no factual evidence to support this. This may be because the Police currently have a very low rate of either solving or even investigating reported thefts of firearms.
- That the recommendations will have no effect in reducing the amount of illegal firearms held by gang members and criminals unless backed by a marked increase in activity by NZ Police on investigating and solving reported thefts of firearms.
- That parts of the report recommend what is actually already current law, ie only licensed firearm owners be able to buy ammunition.
- The report itself states that NZ has a very low crime rate with firearms at about 1.4% of all violent crime. The chapter would like to know what percentage of these crimes were carried out by legitimate firearms owners?

The chapter does support the following recommendations however:

- That gang membership be treated as an exclusion from firearm ownership.
- That a permanent amnesty be applied for legal disposal of ‘grey’ firearms.
- That there be a stand down period after revocation of a firearms license.
- That there be an increase in police focus on investigating/solving theft of firearms.
- That there be a significant increase in penalties for theft of firearms.
- That there be a significant increase in penalties for use of a firearm when committing a crime.
- That Tourist Firearm Licences be followed up with either the sighting of the firearm on export or provision of the holder of the retained firearm NZ Firearms Licence number.

We would appreciate your Committee giving due considerations to our submission and are available for further discussion or input on this subject if required.

Please confirm receipt of this submission.

Sincerely,

Mike Knowles
President,
SCI(NZ).