

Regulations for shooting clubs and shooting ranges

Questions and answers for shooting clubs and shooting range operators



12/2022

Since 24 June 2022, all shooting clubs and shooting ranges in New Zealand are regulated by Police.

What is the change and who is affected?

The [regulations for shooting clubs and shooting ranges](#) came into effect on **15 December 2022**. The regulations implement amendments made in 2020 to the Arms Act 1983 that established a regulatory framework for shooting clubs and shooting ranges.

What does this mean for an existing shooting club or shooting range?

The regulations require that:

- » Shooting clubs and operators of shooting ranges that existed before 24 June 2022 must apply to Police for approval or certification by **24 June 2023** to continue operating, (with exception of pistol shooting clubs and ranges that have already been recognised or approved). If they do not apply by this date, they must cease operating.
- » A new shooting club or shooting range that was not in operation at 24 June 2022 may not operate until it has been approved or certified by Police.

Where do I find the legislation and regulations for shooting clubs and shooting ranges?

The legislation is sections [38A to 38X of the Arms Act 1983](#) under 'Part 6 Shooting clubs and shooting ranges'. The regulations that support the legislation came into force on 15 December 2022. See regulations 28E to 28GZF of the [Arms Regulations 1992](#).

Guidance documents on the new regulatory framework for clubs and ranges available on the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#) on Te Tari Pūreke – Firearms Safety Authority website.

I want to start a new shooting range and/or shooting club – how do I do that?

- » If your range was not in operation before 24 June 2022, you will need to make an application for range certification and Police grant and issue your range certificate before you can operate your range.
- » If your shooting club did not exist before 24 June 2022, your club may not operate until it applies for approval and Police grant that approval and issue your club with a certificate of approval.

How much will the applications for approval or certification cost and where do I pay?

The fees for processing applications and renewals for club approval and range certification are available on the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#) on Te Tari Pūreke website.

Where do I find more information and who can I speak to?

Information regarding the processing applications and ongoing compliance is available on the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#). If you require further assistance, please contact the Clubs and Ranges Team by email to clubsandranges@police.govt.nz.

Te Tari Pūreke – Firearms Safety Authority is a business unit of New Zealand Police.

What happened to the submissions received from the public consultation of the draft regulations?

Earlier this year, Police held a six-week public consultation on a proposed regulatory approach for shooting clubs and shooting ranges. Police analysed the 1,038 submissions received and conducted workshops with established advisory groups.

Police listened to the feedback and has addressed the key themes in the final regulations, including changing proposed age restrictions, reducing fees, reducing the burden of compliance, removing the requirement for committee members to hold a firearms licence, and removing the requirement to record details of when individual duty officers are on duty.

What is defined as a shooting club?

A shooting club as a voluntary association of people who act in accordance with a set of written rules and intend to participate in shooting activities on a regular basis.

Where and when do I apply for approval of a shooting club?

Please see the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#). The application process and ongoing compliance requirements are detailed in the Shooting Club Guide.

What is defined as a shooting range?

A shooting range as a facility (whether indoor or outdoor), or a designated area of land, used by a shooting club or members of the public for the primary purpose of carrying out shooting activities; and includes any defence area (as defined in [section 2\(1\) of the Defence Act 1990](#)) used by a shooting club.

What are defined as shooting activities?

Shooting activities are activities that are carried out using a firearm or an airgun for the purpose of shooting at inanimate targets (whether fixed or moving), but excludes paintball shooting and airsoft shooting.

Airgun includes – any air rifle; and any air pistol; and any weapon for which by the use of gas or compressed air (and not by force of explosive) any shot, bullet, missile or other projectile can be discharged.

Airsoft guns fire plastic pellets and are pre-charged pneumatic air rifles are not regulated under the Arms (Restricted Weapons and Specially Dangerous Airguns) Order 1984.

Who is a Shooting Range Operator (SRO) – and what do they need to do?

A Shooting Range Operator is the person or body (entity) that operates a shooting range (see [s38M\(1\) of the Arms Act 1983](#)). They are responsible for the Range Standing Orders (RSOs), and the operation of their shooting range(s) including compliance with:

- the Arms Act 1983 and associated regulations
- all conditions attached to the range certification
- remedial or preventative action required by an improvement notice
- renewal of range certification, and

The SRO will also need to have a good understanding of the guidance and requirements set out in the New Zealand Police Shooting Range Manual. To understand what a Shooting Range Operator's requirements and review New Zealand Police Shooting Range Manual, see the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#).

What is a Shooting Range Inspector (SRI)?

Shooting Range Inspectors (SRI) are members of the firearms community who have completed the Police Shooting Range Inspector course. They have been recognised by Police as able to inspect shooting ranges, ensuring the ranges meet the safety standards set out in the regulations. They are familiar with and take guidance from the New Zealand Police Shooting Range Manual, on the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#) on Te Tari Pūreke website.

Contact details for SRIs are available on the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#).

If you're interested in future SRI training, register your interest with the [Clubs and Ranges Team](#).

Where and when can I make application for a shooting range?

Please see the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#), where you will find the Shooting Range Manual and contact details for Shooting Range Inspectors. The Shooting Range Manual outlines the application process and ongoing compliance requirements. The [Clubs and Ranges Team](#) is also available to provide guidance.

What are Range Standing Orders (RSOs)?

The RSOs provides greater detail on how the range operates. They are prepared by the SRO, and are required for all ranges and must be available on-site. The RSO should be read and understood by all persons undertaking shooting activities on the range. See the CR2: Shooting Range Standing Orders Template on the Apply for range certification under Forms & Resources section. ([Clubs and Ranges webpage](#))

What is a range certificate?

All shooting ranges as defined by the Act must be certified by the Police Commissioner. Certification includes the inspection of range structures both man-made and natural features that constitute the shooting range. It also includes a review of the Range Standing Orders (RSOs) required to ensure the safe operation of the shooting range.

The process for making an application for range certification is available on the [Clubs and Ranges webpage](#) on Te Tari Pūreke website along with the final application documentation.

How long does a range certificate remain in force?

A shooting range certificate remains in force 5 years after the date it is issued unless the certificate is surrendered or cancelled earlier. Application for renewal should be made before the 5 years is up, not afterwards.

Operators of an approved pistol shooting range that was in operation immediately before 24 June 2022 must apply for renewal of their range certification within 5 years, or earlier if the approval of the range is cancelled.

How did Police determine the measurements for range danger areas and backstops, etc.?

The New Zealand Police Shooting Range Manual is based on international best practice to maintain consistency with professional subject matter experts and the best available research. It includes shooting practices from all the shooting disciplines.

What does this mean for limited-use shooting ranges (temporary ranges)?

Limited-use ranges operate for a specific time period within the 5-year certification period. This could be for a day or a weekend. Applications for limited-use range certification will be treated as a priority application due to the time-sensitive nature of the application.

What is an improvement notice?

An Improvement Notice is issued when a breach has been detected or prevent a non-compliance issue. The notice highlights an area that doesn't meet standards and needs to be rectified or improved for the range to continue operating safely (see [section 38V](#) of the Arms Act 1983). The notice may be issued to a club or SRO when Police reasonably believes that a club or SRO:

- » has contravened, or is contravening or is likely to contravene the Act or regulations
- » has failed, or is failing or is likely to fail to comply with a condition of its certification.

The Improvement Notice must stipulate the breach (or likely breach), the provision that is being breached (or is likely to be breached) and provide a time period (a compliance period) by which the SRO must comply with the notice.

The notice may also contain advice, such as measures that may be taken to rectify the breach and helps to focus the club or SRO on the tasks to be carried out to remedy a breach within a set timeframe. Note some improvements are not necessarily required or able to be corrected immediately.

What is a temporary suspension notice?

Police may temporarily suspend the operations of a shooting club or shooting range if the club or range operator has failed to comply with an improvement notice. The purpose of the suspension is to enable Police to consider whether the club's certificate of approval or the range's certification should be cancelled.

Why are my application files not uploading?

If using the upload page on the Police website file types must be jpg, jpeg, png or pdf and each file size must not exceed 5MB. It will also not accept uploads where the total of all the files being uploaded is over 30MB.

Please review and your file size and type, and try to reduce your file size. Alternatively you can print off you completed application form and your supporting documentation, and post it to Clubs and Ranges, Te Tari Pūreke - Firearms Safety Authority, DX PX10012, Palmerston North.

Need more help?

- » Review the information on [the Clubs and Ranges webpage](#) on Te Tari Pūreke website. Contact a Police trained and recognised Shooting Range Inspector in your area, available on the Clubs and Range webpage.
- » Ask the [Clubs and Ranges Team](#).