

**Meeting minutes**

**19/ 03 / 2026**

**Arms Engagement Group**

**9:30am–12:30pm**

<b>Meeting details</b>	19 March 2026 09:30am–12:30pm
<b>In attendance</b>	<p><b>AEG members</b></p> <p>Abdur Razzaq Edwina Hughes Kiri Matiatos Maureen Gillon Philippa Yasbek</p> <p><b>Te Tari Pūreke – Firearms Safety Authority</b></p> <p>Douglas Brett – Senior Partnerships Advisor (Chair) Amanda Jongeneel – Community Integration Manager Catherine Petrey – Strategic Advisor Firearms Ewan Kelsall – Manager Partnerships Emilia Steer – Senior Partnerships Advisor (Minute Taker) Mike McIlraith – Director Communities and Corporate Mike Tarttelin – Clubs &amp; Ranges Manager Te Honiana Ataria – Senior Partnerships Advisor – Māori</p> <p><b>New Zealand Police</b></p> <p>Jenna Marsh – Senior Policy Advisor Danielle Barr – Policy Advisor</p> <p><b>Ministry of Justice</b></p> <p>Lauren Keenan – Manager (Policy)</p>
<b>Apologies</b>	

<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Karakia and Welcome, Apologies and Agenda</b>
Discussion	<p><b>Opening of meeting</b> The Chair welcomed members and opened the meeting with a karakia (prayer).</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> No apologies</p> <p><b>Membership updates:</b> The group noted that Jarrod Gilbert has resigned. Jarrod joined the group in 2024 and is widely recognised in New Zealand for his expertise in transnational, serious and organised crime, with a strong academic and research background in organised criminal networks, gangs, and criminal justice policy. He has advised a range of government agencies and brought an evidence-based, analytical perspective to discussions.</p> <p>The group acknowledged and thanked Jarrod for his valuable contributions and insights during his tenure.</p> <p><b>Confirmation of agenda</b> The agenda was confirmed and tabled.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	There were no action items
<b>Item 2</b>	<b>Confirm previous action points</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	Nil
<b>Actions</b>	There were no action items.
<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Ministry of Justice – Policy Update</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<p><b>Justice</b> provided an update on the firearms policy reform programme. The broad policy reform remains before the Select Committee and is continuing to track as expected. Work is currently underway to analyse and code both written submissions and oral submissions received through the Select Committee process. In parallel, a second stream of work is progressing in relation to the regulations, with targeted consultation currently being undertaken on the proposed regulatory changes.</p> <p><b>Key theme one under consideration as licensing and approvals.</b> MoJ outlined this includes the current licence extension criteria, with a proposed change that would enable the Arms Regulator to issue licence extensions and firearms licence cards for periods of up to three years. It was noted that this change is intended to improve administrative flexibility and system efficiency while maintaining appropriate oversight.</p>

*Arms Engagement Group Comments*

*Are you still accepting presentations submissions to the select committee?*

**It was clarified that the Select Committee is no longer accepting presentations or submissions, with the cut-off having been 16 February, and this process is managed independently by the Select Committee. However, members were advised that feedback on the proposed amendments to the Arms Regulations can still be shared directly with MoJ. MoJ confirmed they are available to discuss this feedback, with a cut-off date of next Tuesday for providing that information.**

*What is the rationale for the proposed changes within the licensing and approval's theme, particularly the ability for the Arms Regulator to issue licence extensions and firearms licence cards for periods of up to three years.*

**MoJ advised that the primary rationale is to manage the renewals bubble of firearms licences and to support the regulator's ability to process renewals effectively. It was emphasised that the change is not intended as an administrative convenience but rather provides an additional tool to ensure renewals can be managed safely and appropriately. MoJ noted that the proposal introduces an extra safety mechanism by allowing extensions in appropriate cases, resulting in a safer outcome than the current legislative settings.**

*What is the empirical rationale or data underpinning the proposed changes to licence extensions*

**MoJ advised that the proposal is data-informed, reflecting the flow-on effects of firearms licences first issued in the mid-1990s. MoJ noted that analysis of approval and renewal data shows a recurring renewal surge approximately every ten years, as a large cohort of licence holders reaches renewal at the same time. This creates a predictable renewal "bubble". MoJ clarified that specific eligibility criteria have not yet been set, as these will be addressed through the regulations, rather than in primary legislation.**

*Do the proposed changes continue to take into account prohibition orders and family violence considerations, particularly in relation to relicensing decisions?*

**MoJ advised that these matters are addressed in the Bill rather than the regulations, and as such are technically out of scope of the current regulatory discussion. However, MoJ confirmed that if members wished to raise these points as part of the process, they would be listened to and acknowledged.**

*How will MoJ know whether there have been changes to an applicant's health status or background in the context of licence extensions.*

**MoJ advised that this is an issue that still needs to be worked through as part of the criteria for licence extensions. It was noted that there is a question as to whether specific criteria should be required to be met before a licence can be extended, and that this forms part of the fact-finding and policy development work that MoJ will consider and take away.**

*Is relying on criminal history checks sufficient when considering firearms licence extensions, or should a broader security-style clearance be used to identify individuals who may pose a terrorism or extremist risk despite having no charges or convictions?*

**FSA responded that Justice checks differ from Police checks and are broader in scope than convictions or charges alone. It was noted that these checks consider events, notices, data, evidence, and intelligence, rather than relying solely on criminal history information.**

*What criteria would be used to determine who is considered low risk and fit and proper, noting that the standard should be as high as possible? Queried that this did not appear to be clearly articulated in the document and asked whether artificial intelligence was being used as part of the assessment process.*

**MoJ advised that there are no plans to use AI for this purpose.**

*A concern was raised that a significant proportion of firearms-related deaths involve older men, with data indicating that more than half are aged over 50. It was noted that, when considered over a ten-year licensing timeframe risk is not limited to mental health factors alone, but is often associated with major life transitions such as relationship breakdowns, divorce, separation of land ownership, and financial stress. It was suggested that these patterns of risk and harm (protection orders, multiple family violence callouts) may not be identified if assessments rely solely on static criteria.*

**Acknowledged.**

**MoJ Theme Three, relating to permanent deactivation and modification.** It is noted that under the current framework there is no ability to deactivate firearms or modify prohibited firearms. The Bill proposes a change to allow firearms to be permanently deactivated, enabling individuals to possess them without holding a firearms licence. LK asked for views on what administrative steps should be required to support this change.

#### *Arms Engagement Group Comments*

*Concerns were raised about the risk of deactivated firearms being re-converted to working order, or used as a source of parts, particularly given technology advances such as 3D printing. It was suggested that a highly destructive approach to deactivation may be preferable, with stronger and more permanent methods providing greater assurance.*

*Members noted the need to find a "sweet spot" that appropriately addresses different types of firearms and avoids overly fragmented or sectionalised standards.*

*Questions were raised about who would be authorised to carry out deactivation, whether this should be limited to gunsmiths or certified persons, and what validation and verification requirements would apply.*

Officials advised that these matters remain under discussion and that feedback is being sought from the community, with no final decisions yet made.

	<p><i>Members expressed concern about whether the proposal had been sufficiently developed, with comments that the document appeared incomplete and that the implications of permanent deactivation are significant.</i></p> <p>Technical questions were also raised about whether welded firearms could be flattened or mounted while retaining original components</p> <p><b>FSA noting that overseas technical standards exist that involve welding and other methods to ensure permanency.</b></p>
<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arms Engagement Group members to provide any feedback on the proposed Arms Regulations amendments to MoJ by next Tuesday.</li> <li>MOJ to follow up with NZ College of GPs to discuss the situation for rural general practitioners and licence holder reporting.</li> </ul>
<b>Item 4</b>	<b>NZ Police – Policy Update</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<p><b>NZ Police Policy</b> advised that work is underway with MoJ to connect them with subject-matter experts, including Police teams such as armoury and organised crime specialists. It was noted that there has been a significant volume of Official Information Act (OIA) requests, which are currently being worked through, with an intention to publish responses in due course.</p> <p><i>Arms Engagement Group Comments</i></p> <p><b>What planning has been undertaken for implementation once the Bill is passed?</b></p> <p>NZ Police policy advised that MoJ is leading this work, noting that while there are no confirmed commencement dates, officials are working closely with MoJ to prepare.</p> <p>A member suggested that matters such as Coroner’s reports should be considered a priority as part of this work.</p> <p><b>What engagement is there with Police family violence teams?</b></p> <p>NZ Police confirmed that they work across a range of Police teams, including prevention and family violence areas, and are making the necessary connections to support this work.</p> <p><b>Are the regulations are being developed on the assumption that the Bill will pass in its current form?</b></p> <p>Confirmed that this is the case. It was further queried whether issues arising through the development of the Bill and regulations would be fed back into the Select Committee process. NZ Police Policy advised that one of the advantages of Justice undertaking this work in parallel is that any gaps identified can inform advice to the Minister and the Select Committee, noting Justice’s advisory role in that context.</p>

	<p><b>Have Police and/or FSA are providing feedback to the Select Committee, or have Police/FSA had been excluded from that process?</b></p> <p>Officials advised that Police may provide advice to the Select Committee, but this occurs only where the Committee requests that advice.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	No action points
<b>Item 5</b>	<b>Engagement and Education</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>The <b>Community Integration team</b> gave a presentation of the Partnerships &amp; Communities 2026 focus on “<b>getting the basics right</b>”, supported by an engagement and education information pack prepared for the Associate Minister of Justice (Firearms).</p> <p>Group members will receive a copy of the full pack.</p> <p>As the firearms regulator, the Authority is responsible for overseeing the legitimate possession and use of firearms in Aotearoa New Zealand. The pack outlines planned actions to strengthen firearms education and engagement with the firearms community throughout 2026. This information has been shared with the Minister’s Arms Advisory Group, the Minister of Police, and the Associate Minister of Justice (Firearms), and the Firearms Community Advisory Forum, Māori Firearms Forum, and Arms Engagement Group.</p> <p>Significant progress made since 2022, with a wide range of resources now available. The Authority’s website is the primary source of firearms safety information. Social media reach continues to grow, with approximately 10,300 followers on Facebook, and recognition that many users access content without formally following the page. The YouTube channel continues to perform strongly, recording <i>over 120,000 views in 2025</i>.</p> <p>Key areas of focus for 2026 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community outreach</li> <li>• Targeted media campaigns around seasonal safety topics (roar, duck season etc)</li> <li>• Expanding the reach of firearms safety education</li> <li>• Keeping stakeholders informed</li> <li>• Mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Website updates</li> <li>• Training courses and schools-based delivery</li> <li>• Supporting firearms community through legislative changes.</li> </ul> <p>Members were advised that significant input has been contributed to safety campaigns, including hunter safety messaging for the 2026 <i>Roar</i> and <i>duck shooting season</i>.</p> <p>Reaching rural firearms users remains challenging. FSA recognises the importance of maintaining a visible presence at rural events, utilising radio and online interviews, and engaging influential community members to help connect with users.</p>

	<p>The dealer community is expected to be significantly affected by legislative changes. Strengthening relationships and working collaboratively with dealers was identified as a priority area.</p> <p>Engagement with iwi, rural, and isolated communities was highlighted as a key focus. The Māori Firearms Forum has played an important role in supporting this work. Members noted the importance of directing resources to places where Māori communities are based, and that <i>Whakatūpato courses have doubled in number</i>. Members expressed support for continuing this momentum through 2026.</p> <p>Further enhancements are planned to support firearms licence applicants throughout their application journey. Members were advised that <i>52 schools</i> have expressed interest in participating in firearms safety training during 2026.</p> <p>Members were also advised that collaboration has occurred with specialist firearms groups, including RSA branches and National Clay Target, with increased collaboration planned with these forums throughout 2026.</p> <p><i>Arms Engagement Group Comments</i></p> <p>FSA should be encouraged to do more work with those you term 'licence holder adjacent'. These people may be living in fear, and distrusting of authority. Increased understanding of family violence and the focus on safety are important.</p> <p>Concern expressed regarding the addition to workload for GPs responding to advice that a person granted a licence has named them as their GP, when they aren't; and the reporting of those believed not currently fit and proper to possess firearms.</p> <p>Asked if information / data is available about the numbers and types of weapons being used when committing crimes. Are the numbers and types of weapons used changing?</p> <p><i>FSA responded that currently there is no data of the type mentioned.</i></p>
<b>Actions</b>	<p><i>Investigate the possibility of reporting on the types of firearms recovered / noted as used in commission of a crime?</i></p>
<b>Item 6</b>	<b>Clubs &amp; Ranges</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Members were advised that activity within Clubs and Ranges has been relatively quiet over the reporting period. Several <i>new temporary range notifications</i> have been approved, along with approvals for <i>pistol range alterations</i> and changes to <i>enrolment status</i>.</p> <p>The revised <i>NZ Police Shooting Range Manual</i> was published prior to Christmas. A small number of minor amendments have since been identified, and a <i>Version 4</i> of the manual will be published shortly.</p>

	<p>Members were reminded that <i>Pistol Shooting Clubs</i> are required to obtain incorporated status by 5 April 2026. While many have completed this process, a number have not yet done so and are being actively followed up.</p> <p>Work has been completed on the Pistol Endorsement holder 12-shoot activity return for the 2024 / 2025 period. An overall increase in compliance has been observed, which was acknowledged as positive. Noted also that ongoing legislative changes during each reporting period have created challenges in maintaining accurate and consistent compliance reporting.</p> <p><b>Pistol club renewal:</b></p> <p>Advised that pistol club certification renewals are upcoming, noting that the majority are due in <i>June 2026</i>. Challenges have been identified in relation to the new legislative requirements. Close engagement with clubs will be required to ensure they are certified or renewed in time to continue operating beyond June 2026.</p> <p><i>Arms Engagement Group Comments</i></p> <p>No comments.</p>
<b>Actions</b>	There were no action items.
<b>Item 7</b>	<b>Other Business</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Feedback on the amended style of meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The discussion format is good, will be helpful to have the information pack circulated earlier so that we have adequate time to read beforehand,</li> <li>• The ability to have a discussion is desirable.</li> <li>• Shorter duration is better; discussion and learning are better than long presentations.</li> </ul>
<b>Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Timetable reminders at least seven days before each AEG meeting</li> <li>2. Send the discussion pack for the July meeting at least 7 days before the July meeting (23/7/26)</li> </ol>
<b>Meeting closed</b>	
The Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 11.30 am with a karakia.	
<b>END</b>	

<b>ACTION LIST</b>				
	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Meeting: 6 March 2025</b>				
1.	Chairs of AEG and FCAF to discuss possible combined meeting.	FCAF Chair	N/A	<b>Remain open.</b>
<b>Meeting: 19 March 2026</b>				
1.	Arms Engagement Group members to provide any feedback on the proposed Arms Regulations amendments to MoJ by next Tuesday.	AEG Members	24/03/26	<b>Under action</b>
2.	MOJ to follow up with NZ College of GPs to discuss the application of licensing criteria regarding rural general practitioners.	MOJ Lauren Keenan	TBC	<b>TBC</b>
3.	Timetable reminders at least seven days before each AEG meeting	AEG Chair	15/07/26	<b>Partnerships Calendar updated</b>
4.	Send the discussion pack for the July meeting at least 7 days before the July meeting	AEG Chair	15/07/26	<b>Scheduled</b>
5.	Investigate possibility of reporting on the types of firearms recovered / noted as used in commission of a crime.	AEG Chair	15/7/26	<b>Not yet started</b>