

Firearms Pānui

The latest firearms information

August 2026

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Kia ora,

In this edition of the Firearms Pānui you can find out more about the upcoming firearms reform and how it may impact you, including:

- The new regulator, Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand
- Individual licence holders
- Business (formally dealer's) licence holders
- Visitor licence holders
- Importers, Manufacturers and Collectors
- Biosecurity (formally pest) controllers
- Museums
- Shooting clubs and ranges
- Firearms Safety: Getting ready to do your firearms safety course?
- Keep up to date on the latest numbers

Today's update is based on changes contained in the Arms Act 2026. New Firearms Regulations are also currently being worked on, and may also impact licence holders. We will update the licence holder community once the Regulations are published in The Gazette.

Ewan Kelsall
Poutaki Kōtui | Partnerships Manager
Te Tari Pūreke | Firearms Safety Authority



Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand

Introducing the new regulator, Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand

Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand (FSE) will replace Te Tari Pūreke – Firearms Safety Authority from 23 September 2026. As the regulator of the firearms sector, FSE will deliver licensing and other regulatory decisions independently of NZ Police. Police will focus on criminal law enforcement.

FSE will have its own Chief Executive who will report directly to the responsible Minister, not the Commissioner of Police.

While operationally separate, NZ Police will continue to provide corporate services, including Finance, IT, facilities and HR support. FSE is developing new IT systems to make it quicker and easier for firearms users to meet their responsibilities.

From 23 September 2026 licence holders will notice that letters and emails from the regulator will feature the new name and visual identity. Licence holders will always be able to clearly see who is making contact.

What changes mean for you: Individual licence holders



On day one all firearms licence holders remain current under the new Act. All conditions in the new Act apply, and any existing prescribed conditions continue to apply, as though issued under the new Act.

The same goes for those with firearms licence applications in our system. These will continue on. Licence holders need to keep filling in the Firearms Registry and keep their information up to date.

The new legislation establishes the Firearms Licensing Review Committee, which will be the first point of review if you have a firearms licence application declined or revoked.

In the future, licence holders will be able to nominate an alternative address to their primary residence, to be their approved secure storage. This will help renters, students, and retirees to securely store their firearms at the most suitable location. The detail of this is being developed through the regulations.



What changes mean for you: Business (formally dealer's) licence holders

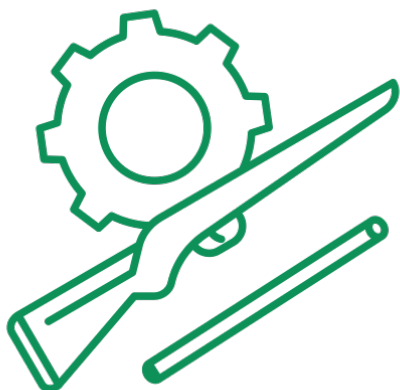
Under the new legislation, 'Dealers' become Business licence holders. All current licences will remain current.

The new law extends Business licences to a five-year licence after a compliance record has been established. This means business licence holders on their third licence (second 'renewal') will become eligible for a five-year licence. Another important change in the Arms Act 2026 is that employees won't need endorsements if handling endorsed items in the business. They will still require a firearms licence to work at a licensed business. Businesses will now enter the Registry in 2029 (previously 2028).



What changes mean for you: Visitor licence holders

From 23 February 2028, multiple trip visitor licences will allow multiple entry within an 18-month period on the one licence.



What changes mean for you: Importers, Manufacturers and Collectors

Under the new law, licence holders will not require a permit to possess items that have been with a gunsmith/business and that are returned within 21 days or less.

People manufacturing pistols, restricted weapons or pistol carbine conversion kits will require an approved permit to possess before they can manufacture.

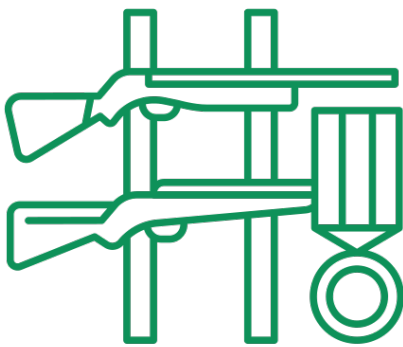
From 23 February 2028, licence holders with a collector's endorsement are allowed to store vital parts with other licence holders who do not have an endorsement.



What changes mean for you: Biosecurity (formally pest) controllers

'Pest control' will be renamed 'biosecurity control' under the new law. Biosecurity licences will shift to five-yearly from 23 February 2028.

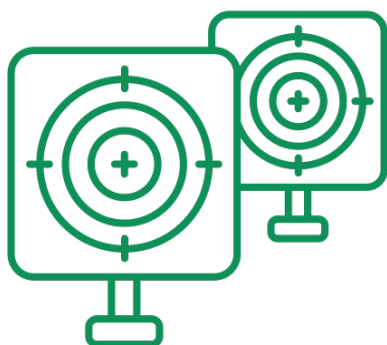
In the future, employees will be able to do short-term transfers of restricted firearms (previously known as prohibited firearms). Biosecurity employees will also be able possess more than one restricted (previously 'prohibited') magazine.



What changes mean for you: Museums

'Dealers' who are museum curators or managers will become Museum licence holders under the new law. These museum curators or managers will still require a firearms licence to apply for a Museum Licence.

But museum employees will be able to apply for a new Museum Worker licence to handle arms items at their workplace. They will not need to maintain an individual firearms licence. Current licence holders will be treated as a Museum Licence holder from 23 September 2026. A Museum licence will expire on the date on the licence holders current licence card.



What changes mean for you: Shooting clubs and ranges

New Arms Regulations are expected to drop the number of pistol shoots to maintain an endorsement to 10, though this will be confirmed when the Regulations are published. Pistol endorsement holders will continue to be able to possess large capacity pistol magazines without an additional endorsement.

Firearms safety



 **Te Tari Pūreke**
Firearms Safety Authority

Getting ready to do your firearms safety course?

We have a lot of FREE resources on our website you can use to prepare yourself for the theory and practical parts of the course. These include e-modules and the Firearms Safety Code in both English and Te Reo Māori. We also have links to the audio-visual flipbook version of the code.

Over on our [YouTube](#) page, we have short videos covering the 7 rules of firearms safety and other topics you may find useful as you go through the firearms licencing process.

Want even more free knowledge? Our friends over at Game Animal Council have their Better Hunting eLearning platform, which offers free online hunter education. [Better Hunting education | NZ Game Animal Council](#)

You can get started on your learning journey here: [Firearms safety courses | Firearms Safety Authority New Zealand](#)

Keep up to date on the latest numbers

On our website, we proactively release firearms regulatory information to help people better understand features of the firearms licence-holder community, and aspects of the performance of New Zealand's firearms regulatory framework. The information below provides a snapshot of selected data.

This section contains:

- Active firearms licences summary, by type - Individual, Visitor and Dealer.
- Firearms licensing completion summary - Individual, Visitor and Dealer. *This section now shows the total number of licences completed in the given month, rather than a percentage, and is broken down by licence types.*
- Firearms Registry update - including total firearms, parts and licence holders registered.

Two additional firearms data sets are now available, providing information on firearms regulation, Registry service performance, and Firearms Safety Course delivery.

More detailed firearms data is available at: [Firearms data and public information | Firearms Safety Authority](#)

Active firearms licences summary	
1 August 2026	
Individual	218,650
Visitor	105
Dealer*	437
Total	219,192

*A person who holds a dealer licence must also have an individual licence

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Firearms licensing completion summary		
1 August 2026		
	June 2026	July 2026
Individual	1,895	1,792
Visitor	42	28
Dealer	30	66

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Firearms Registry Update	
1 August 2026	
Total Firearms Registered	703,894
Total Firearms Parts Registered	19,263
Total Licence Holders Registered	150,663

Total Licence Holders registered refers to all current and expired individual or visitor firearms licence holders with a registered firearm or firearms part.

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If you have feedback on this pānui or there is anything you would like to see in future editions, please email firearmspartnerships@police.govt.nz