



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**21 April 2022**

### **Bay of Plenty shooting clubs under threat of closure due to proposed new regulations**

Bay of Plenty shooting clubs fear many will be forced to close if proposed new police regulations governing their operations are adopted.

Clubs across the region have united in their objections to the proposed new rules which they say threaten their financial viability by creating extra certification costs and ongoing compliance requirements.

If adopted, the changes could force smaller clubs and those unable to pass on the extra costs to its members to permanently close their ranges and disband.

They are now appealing to all firearms users to make urgent submissions expressing their objections to the police proposals.

This month delegates from more than 10 Bay of Plenty shooting clubs met in Tauranga to discuss the police regulations that govern their clubs and shooting ranges, and the proposed changes. The clubs cover rifle shooting, service rifles, pistol, black powder, and clay target disciplines.

Changes, if implemented, would include costly certification of clubs and ranges, onerous ongoing compliance requirements and could even include banning firearms safety training for under 16-year-olds and those new to shooting, as well as the end-of-school shooting teams.

Founded in 1950, the Bay of Plenty Branch of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association (NZDA) is the largest and most established shooting club in the region with more than 600 members. It shares the views of other clubs who agree that the proposed rules governing their future club operations simply go a step too far.

In 2020, a number of changes were made to the Arms Act 1983 to further control and regulate firearms in New Zealand. New regulations to increase oversight of shooting clubs and ranges have now also been proposed, and Police are inviting feedback during a consultation period, with submissions closing 4 May 2022.

NZDA Bay of Plenty Branch president Reuben Hayward says shooting clubs already provide a safe, controlled environment for users of all sporting and recreational shooting disciplines. Ranges also offer hunters a safe environment to sight-in rifles before heading into the bush.

There is a real risk that smaller clubs and ranges will close, leaving users with fewer facilities to use their firearms and educate shooters on best practice.

“The clubs believe that the new regulations are trying to fix a problem that doesn't exist and are not aligned with the stated purpose of enhancing public safety,” says Hayward.

“There is no link between shooting clubs and criminal firearm use. The regulations go well beyond the requirements of the Act and the Police have clearly overstepped the mark.”

Before the consultation period ends on 4 May, clubs are urging every firearms user to [make a submission here](#).

The discussion document can also be found on the [New Zealand Police website](#).

*This statement is supported by the following local clubs:*

- *New Zealand Deerstalkers Association Rotorua Branch*
- *Bay of Plenty Clay Target Club*
- *Kaimai Pistol Club*
- *Te Puna Hunting and Fishing Club*
- *Western Bay of Plenty Fish and Game Club*
- *Te Puke Rifle Club*
- *Tauranga Precision Rifle Association*
- *Bay of Plenty Service Rifle Association*

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