

Dealer Pānui

The latest information for firearms dealers

August 2026

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Kia ora,

In this pānui you can find:

A new Arms Act - a high level introduction.

- **Dealers becoming business licence holders - what that means for you.**
- **What's going to be different for employees of businesses.**
- **An extra year for Registry requirements.**
- **Other proposed changes that may interest firearms businesses.**
- **What will be different for the regulator.**

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Communities and Corporate Directorate Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand

Important Arms Act Changes

Firearms Businesses

Dealers' become 'business licence' holders

- The new Act sees dealer licences renamed 'business licences'.
- For people who previously had a dealers licence because they were involved in museum curation or management, a 'Museum licence' will be available. Licence holders can hold both a business and a museum licence or choose to only hold the one licence type.

Dealer licence will last five years (after compliance record is established)

- The first licence applied for will continue to last for one year; as does a second licence issued (the first renewal). Thereafter, the business licence will last five years.

Current licences stay current

- On “day one” your dealer licences will remain current under the new Act as a business licence. All conditions issued under the previous Act continue to apply as if issued under the new Act. All new conditions of the 2026 Act will also apply. Your business licence expires on the date specified on your existing licence card.

New licence card when you ‘renew’

- Dealers will receive a new business licence card when they renew their licence. When you get a new business licence, if this is your third time licence (second ‘renewal’) that licence will then last five years.

Except if your card is lost, stole or you notify us of changes

- The exception to this is if you have a lost or stolen card; make any notification (for example, for a change of premises, or change of employee; or you apply for a new business activity). In these circumstances we will issue you a new business licence card before the expiry (this information will be added to the NIA system).

New licence cards will look different

- From 23 September to around March 2027, if issued a new licence card, you will notice it will look different– the card will no longer have the red band at the top saying ‘New Zealand Dealer’s Licence’. Instead, on the face of your card you will see the words ‘Business Licence’. This is an interim card solution, and from around March 2027 we’ll be introducing a new permanent card solution for all firearms businesses. We expect to reissue all businesses a refreshed card at that point, though final decisions on this aspect are still pending.

Licence applications started, continue on

- Applicants who have applied for a new business (formerly dealer) licence before day one (23 September 2026) and it has not been finalised, will continue to be processed but under the new Act. The applicant will not be asked to submit the application form again. If any further information is required during processing, this may be asked for.

Endorsements already held by business licence holders continue on

- Business licence holders (formerly dealers) who have endorsements before day one (23 September 2026) will continue on and after that day.

Employees will not need endorsements

- Employees of a firearms business (former 'Dealers') will not need endorsements or permits to possess to handle restricted firearms and other arms items in the course of their duties'.
- They still require a firearms licence to work at a licensed business. They will still be unable to make an application for a permit to possess independent of the business licence holder.

An extra year for Registry requirements

Registry obligations for businesses push out to 2029

- There is also a small change related to businesses' Registry obligations. The final date by which all business (formerly dealers) must have registered arms items in their possession as part of their business licence will now be 24 June 2029.
- This timeframe has moved out by one year. This will allow the new digital Arms System to be operational, which is expected to help simplify how dealers can register their arms items.

Other proposed changes that may interest firearms businesses

Ammunition sellers change in July 2027

- There is a change coming for ammunitions sellers, but not until July 2027. At that time, ammunition sellers will require prior approval from the regulator, instead of just notifying of their intention to sell ammunition.

Changes for permits to import

- Businesses will be able to bring in multiple consignments. Those consignments will be able to spread over the course of 12 months, as opposed to current requirements where permits are valid for 12 months but once a first consignment arrives, they have 30 days for all remaining consignments to come in, or the permit expires and a new permit required.
- For permits to import that have been issued before commencement date (23 September, 2026), permitholders can still import their items using the permit that was issued to them prior to day one.

Business can only sell blank firing guns to licence holders

- Under the new Arms Act, a person will require a firearms licence to possess a blank-firing gun. At commencement (23 September, 2026) anybody who already has a blank-firing gun does not need to apply for a firearms licence. But if you seek to purchase or import a new blank-firing gun, you will need a firearms licence before you can legally obtain any further blank-firing guns.

Approval required to manufacture items

- Business licence holders can still manufacture arms items that they received specific approval for before day one (23 September 2026).
- When business gets to their next expiry, they will need to apply again and there will be new requirements. But those who can manufacture currently will be able to continue to from day one.
- From 23 September 2026, any arms item manufactured by licence holders can only be on-sold to business licence holders or via business licence holders.

Privately manufactured firearms can only be on-sold by business licence holders

- From 23 September 2026, any arms item manufactured by licence holders can only be on-sold to business licence holders or via business licence holders.

Firearms Dealer Employees Advised on Proposed Arms Act 2026 Changes

- Firearms dealer employees whose Firearms F endorsements are due to expire in the coming months are being encouraged to contact the Firearms Compliance Dealer Team to discuss their circumstances to ensure continuity of business operations.

Under the proposed Arms Act 2026 legislation, the category of dealer employee will no longer be a requirement for those employed by licensed firearm dealers. After the commencement of the new Act, employees will only be required to hold a firearms licence, removing the need for a separate dealer employee status.

We recognise that the proposed legislative changes may create uncertainty for some dealer employees and employers. The Firearms Safety Authority, soon to be Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand, Dealer Team will work directly with affected individuals to identify practical options and help ensure business continuity during the transition period.

To minimise disruption and support affected businesses and employees, those with F Endorsements expiring between now and the expected introduction of the legislation

are advised to contact the Dealer Team by email at
firearmscompliance@police.govt.nz.

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