LAW AND ORDER SELECT COMMITTEE RANGE VISIT 1st JUNE 2016

As you will be aware the Law and Order Select Committee are undertaking an inquiry into issues relating to the illegal possession of firearms in New Zealand. We have no doubt that the process involved in this inquiry will put all firearms owners and users under scrutiny. The outcome of the inquiry could induce recommendations that will potentially affect each and every licensed firearms owner in the country. It is quite a daunting prospect.

Today was indeed a benchmark day for the New Zealand shooting, hunting and collecting community. Through the judicious work of COLFO and the good grace of members of the Law and Order Select Committee, we were able to host a delegation of Select Committee members at a local Wellington range.

COLFO Board members with assistance from members of a Pistol Club and a local NZDA delivered a day that educated the Committee in A, B, C & E category firearms. The range and on site club facilities were set up ready to go prior to the arrival of our guests.

When the Select Committee members arrived they were welcomed to the range then ushered inside and out of the rain for a look at the items on display and morning tea. Some of the Committee members had little experience with firearms, some no experience at all. Others have had military service or rural upbringings and had previously handled and used firearms.

Much interest was shown in the exhibits and many questions were directed to the attentive owners relating to firearm types and uses. Back ground information on our particular interests and hobbies. Questions answered related to owner’s knowledge, financial expenditure, safety considerations, uses, relevance, mindset and legitimacy of our respective interests. There was no negativity and the questions were well balanced, genuine and relevant to a group wanting to increase their knowledge. We answered all questions giving well-reasoned, balanced and informative answers and have confidence that they were to the satisfaction of the enquirers.

A break in the weather gave those that were interested a chance to shoot a selection of firearms. Some of the Committee were keen to have a go but others were a little unsure having never used a firearm before. Under the guidance of COLFO, pistol reps and NZDA hosts all members of the Select Committee were soon on the firing line and sending rounds down range with great enthusiasm.

It certainly appeared that the Select Committee genuinely enjoyed engaging with us as representatives of the New Zealand Firearms Community. For COLFO and those involved in hosting the Select Committee this was a real pleasure to see.

From COLFO’s perspective we thoroughly enjoyed interacting with the Select Committee members. Any day on the range where you have the chance to change someone’s perception of firearms is a good day. The Law and Order Select Committee left COLFO today with some understanding of how and why New Zealand’s Firearms Owners are so passionate about our interests and hobbies.

Thanks and acknowledgement due to the NZDA and Pistol Club guys that supported this effort today. Also to the Law and Order Select Committee for hearing the voices of New Zealand’s Firearms Owners.