



**Te Tari Pūreke**  
Firearms Safety Authority

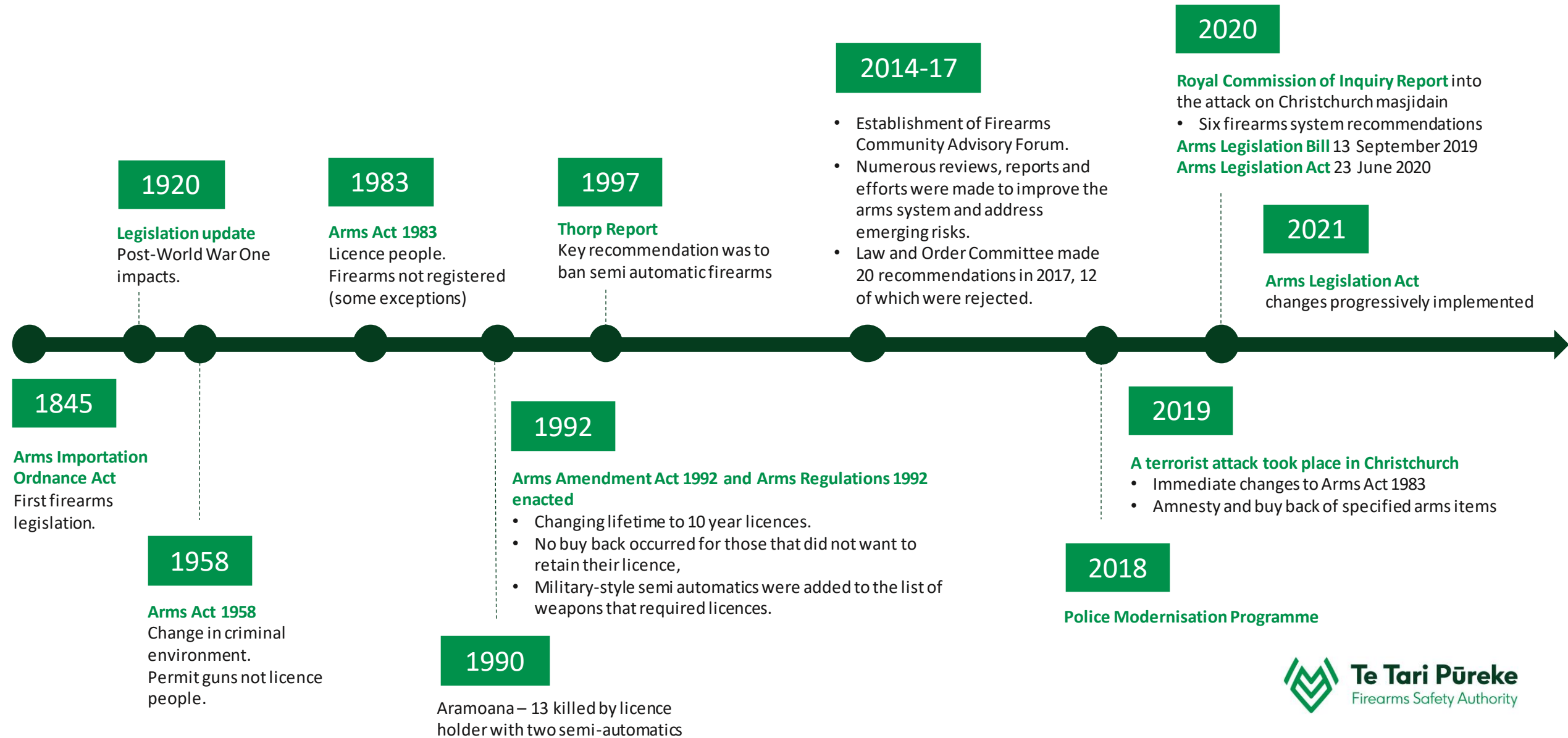
# ***The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners***

## ***Arms safety and control overview***

Superintendent Mike McIlraith – Director Partnerships | Te Tari Pūreke

Acting Inspector Mathew Knowsley – Subject Matter Expert/Product Lead | Arms Transformation Programme

# History of arms regulation in New Zealand



# ***Since 2019 – RCOI recommendations 19-23***

**Recommendation 19:** to make policies and operational standards and guidance for the firearms licensing system clear and consistent with the legislation

**Recommendation 20:** to introduce an electronic system for processing firearms licence applications.

**Recommendation 21:** to ensure firearms licensing staff have regular training and undertake periodic reviews of the quality of their work.

**Recommendation 22:** to introduce performance indicators that focus on the effective implementation of the firearms licensing system. Key indicators should include:

- A. Regular performance monitoring of firearms licensing staff to ensure national standards are met;
- B. Public confidence in the firearms licensing system is increased (as measured by New Zealand Police citizens' satisfaction survey reports or similar mechanism).

**Recommendation 23:** to require two new processes in the case of applicants who have lived outside of New Zealand for substantial periods of time in the ten years preceding the application:

- A. Applicants should be required to produce police or criminal history checks from countries in which they have previously resided; and
- B. Firearms Vetting Officers should interview family members or other close connections in other countries using technology if the applicant does not have near relatives or close associates living in New Zealand.

# *The new Regulator*

*Our vision is for the possession and use of firearms in Aotearoa is the safest in the world*

## **OUTCOMES NGĀ PUKENGA**

### **Our Arms Regulator system will:**

- Assure safety in the legitimate possession and use of firearms
- Contribute to reducing harm from criminal and negligent use
- Achieve equitable outcomes for Māori and all our communities
- Trusted and respected by all communities, partners and stakeholders

## **HOW WE WORK PEHEA TE MAHI**

- Take a system wide view that is focussed on risk-based proportionate regulatory interventions
- Enable and promote safety and compliance
- Engage, educate, encourage and enable people to comply and enforce compliance when necessary
- Approaches are intelligence based and informed by evidence and information
- Committed to excellent service that is safety focused, forward thinking and responsive

## ***Key things for General Practitioners***

The Arms Act 1983 is about safe use and possession of firearms.

- » The New Zealand licensed firearms community numbers around 240,000 (just under 5% of the total population). The vast majority are pakeha males aged >40.
- » Obligation on every applicant to provide health practitioner details at the time of application, S23.
- » There is a fit and proper criteria to meet in order to hold a firearms licence. S24A. (includes consideration of mental/physical illness or injury that affects their ability to safely possess a firearm. Use of alcohol and/or drugs (legal or illegal) that is detrimental to their judgement or behaviour.
- » Obligation that Police must advise the health practitioner that a licence was issued S24.

## ***Key things for General Practitioners***

The Arms Act 1983 is about safe use  
and possession of firearms.

- » Health practitioners must consider notifying police if they have concerns related to their patient's suitability to hold a firearms licence, or to have access to firearms S92 (it may involve police seeking a second medical opinion).
- » There is good faith protection about these notifications under S92(5) of the Arms Regulations 1992 for those registered with the medical council, nursing council psychologist board, DAO under the MH Act.
- » 'Fit and proper' determination rests with the Police. Nobody else.
- » Work on recommendation 24: mandatory of firearms injuries to police by health professionals (work underway).
- » If you are in doubt, review the health pathways website, liaise with the medical council, or the RNZCGP. Our website has an information for health practitioners tab.

## *Key things for General Practitioners*

The Arms Act 1983 is about safe use and possession of firearms.

- » Resolutions Team (renamed from compliance) monitor daily reports generated from police databases
- » We also get information from health practitioners via our website 'information for health practitioners' tab
- » 277 reports since Dec 2020 – mainly to advise a licence holder is not a patient. Around 60 reports contained concerns about patient's suitability to hold a licence
- » Our aim is to 'resolve' the matter rather than default to suspensions and revocations
- » Options include no action, surrender, improvement notices, licence conditions, warnings, suspensions and revocations

# ***Scenarios***

35 year old recreational hunter presents with an acute depressive episode on a background of inpatient mental health admission in her early twenties



# ***Scenarios***

50 year old male going through a difficult marriage breakdown with a history of previous aggression in the context of alcohol misuse

# ***Scenarios***

70 year farmer recently diagnosed with metastatic cancer (could potentially have brain lesions that might impair judgement in the future, or have suicidality due to his terminal diagnosis)

# ***Scenarios***

You receive notification from police that a 30 year old male has been granted a firearms licence. You check records and cannot find anyone with that name.



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***Kia ora / Thank you***