

VERY LIGHT

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Police Checks on Firearms Licence Holders Found Breaching COVID-19 Restrictions

On Friday the 28th of August, the Guild along with all the other firearms owners organizations and clubs received notification from Licensing & Registration Division (L&RD) that police involved in controlling the COVID-19 CHO restrictions would also investigate firearms licence holders caught infringing these to determine if they were suitable to hold a firearms licence –

“Victoria Police takes breaches of licence conditions and CHO restrictions seriously. Blatant and deliberate disregard of the CHO’s directions endangers public safety and calls into question a licence holders suitability to be licenced in an area that requires a strong emphasis on safety.

Should a licence holder blatantly and deliberately breach the CHO’s restrictions, your licence can be suspended, cancelled or may be subject to a reprimand which could harm any future licensing.”

After consideration by the Guild Committee a request was made to L&RD for clarification of the statement on Tuesday, the 1st of September. Especially in regard to what was the level of infraction deemed to be a “*Blatant and deliberate disregard ...*”. We considered that there may be instances of inadvertent infringement that did not warrant such a draconian reaction.

The next day, Wednesday the 2nd, the Guild Secretary received a phone call from the Acting Registrar to discuss our concerns. The discussion was informative, and the Secretary was advised of the actual number of licence checks that had been carried out and the resulting action taken by the police.

Up until the 2nd of September **231** licence checks had been undertaken. Of these only **19** cases had resulted in firearms licence suspension. These were clear cut and proven (i.e. body camera) admissions. The majority of those **19** cases were people found travelling outside of the 5km limit without the proper exemptions, and were people who also had past histories of contraventions of the *Firearms Act* (i.e. before the COVID 19 situation). Several of those **19** cases were people found with drugs and, in one instance, an unsecured pistol. To give a sense of proportion to these figures there are approx. **227,000** licence holders in Victoria.

On Tuesday the 8th of September there was a meeting of the *Firearms Consultative Committee (FCC)*. They were advised by the Acting Registrar that while the cases investigated had risen to 250 the suspensions still remained 19. The members of the *FCC* accepted the Acting Registrar’s information as being correct.

Naturally all the firearms owner’s organizations have been watching the situation and over the ensuing weeks have sought updates. On the 24th of September, the Guild Secretary was again phoned by the Acting Registrar with a further update. Once again the discussion was informative, and the Secretary was advised that the licence checks had risen to **300** and the suspensions had risen to **25**. **However** of

those 25 suspensions, 8 had been reinstated so the actual number of suspensions was now 17. No cancellations have been enforced to this point.

It is the Guild Committee's opinion that the police have acted within their responsibilities under the *Firearms Act* and also in accordance with their responsibilities to implement the CHO's COVID-19 restrictions. The Guild will continue to monitor the situation.

Holder's Address on Licences

As many of you will be aware the *Firearms Act* was amended a while back so that the holder's address was no longer required to be displayed on a firearms licence.

L&RD have advised that if a licence holder would like to have their licence reissued without an address if it isn't not yet due for renewal, then they will need to submit a duplicate licence application and pay a small fee to cover the plastic for the licence card.

It goes without saying that any new licences or renewed licences will not have the holder's address.

Articles Wanted for the New Look Caps & Flints

Members will have received the August issue of the new look *Caps & Flints*. This is without doubt a major advance in the quality of the Guild's magazine. The change to an A4 size journal has given the Editor a chance to produce a commercial standard magazine.

But as we continue to remind members the journal cannot exist without content. Therefore we once again remind you, our members, that we need you to contribute articles on the interesting items you have in your collections. The journal cannot survive without the contributions of Guild members, so please consider contributing to *Caps & Flints* if you want it to thrive.

While we would prefer articles and accompanying images to be sent in digital form so that the Editor's job is simplified, we realise that some members may not be able to do that. However, we will accept handwritten articles, which will be retyped. Please ensure images are clear and focussed.

Please forward articles or enquiries to the Editor *Caps & Flints* by email to cupfire1@ozemail.com.au or by mail to PO Box 2976, Cheltenham, 3192, or contact the Guild Secretary on (03) 9584 2907.

Monday Night Club Meetings Remain Cancelled Until Further Notice

Due to public health concerns caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus the Guild Committee has decided that our regular Monday club meetings at Eley Park will remain cancelled until further notice.

We realise that this will be a disappointment, but we have no choice given that the health of our members must be our prime consideration.

Annual Membership Subscriptions 2020 - 2021

All members will have received your membership renewals for the financial year 2020 – 2021. Those who haven't yet renewed are reminded to do this promptly. The Guild is required by both the *Firearms Act* and the *Control of Weapons Act* to advise L&RD of those who have failed to renew.

Noel Hall Award

The COVID-19 restrictions that have closed our meetings since March, and the continuing uncertainty as to when we will resume our regular Monday night meetings have made it clear that there are insufficient display nights available to give all competitors a fair chance. Accordingly there will be no Noel Hall Award this year.

The Guild Committee has been concerned in recent years that there is a marked reduction in members making the effort to bring items from their collections to display on Monday evenings. This has resulted in a small group of regulars shouldering the task of presenting displays to highlight collector specialties and themed displays. Clearly this is an unhappy state of affairs and also unfair to the diminishing number who do take the effort to present displays.

In the light of the above the Guild Committee will examine the question of displays and the manner in which they are encouraged. Accordingly we will revisit the topic of displays and produce a plan for future Monday activities.

Licence Renewals and PTAs

As we have cancelled our Monday meetings until further notice, **all members** are requested to submit licence renewals, licence applications and Permits to Acquire requiring the signature of a Nominated Officer to the Guild at PO Box 2976 Cheltenham, 3192, or by email to cupfire1@ozemail.com.au

Please remember to enclose a stamped addressed envelope so that we may forward them to the required destination. Mail costs are increasing, and we appreciate members' cooperation in this matter.

The Secretary can be contacted on (03) 9584 2907 or by email at cupfire1@ozemail.com.au

Urgent Research Assistance Required

Adrian Roads is researching British Ordnance Percussion Muskets for a book and would be grateful if members would contact me please ASAP if they have any of the following percussion smooth bore muskets in any condition:

Serjeants Musket/Carbine/Fusil
Sappers & Miners Carbine
Artillery Carbine
Ordnance Musket/Carbine
Sea Service Musket

Contact: Adrian Roads, Ph: 0417 772 535 Email adrianroads1@gmail.com

Information Required on George Fuller – London Gunmaker

Peter McGowan, a collector from the UK, would like information on George Fuller, a London gunmaker he is researching. The maker made a name for producing live pigeon guns of larger bores up to 4bore. Fuller used tubelock, percussion, pinfire and centrefire ignition over the period 1830's-1870's. The guns are of excellent quality in single and double configuration. If you have information please contact Peter at petermcgowan2016@gmail.com

Name Badges

Members are reminded that the Guild is taking orders for name badges for members. The cost is \$15.00. To obtain contact the Secretary by telephone on 9584 2907, or by email at – cupfire1@ozemail.com.au



For Sale

Collection of US Civil War Signal Pistols plus rare Coston Signal Light



Contact Peter A Meyer: 0447 646 929. peter@meyer.id.au

Wanted to Buy

I am looking for a Westley Richards “Monkey Tail” carbine, contact Lee Chapman 0414 838 094 info@mrleechapman.com