



SAPS Central Firearms Registry Accreditation as a Hunting Association: no. 1300050

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Newsletter

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RENEWAL OF FIREARM LICENCES

It's that time of the year again ! People with birthdays falling in April, May and June must renew their firearm licences before or on 31 March 2007.

The SAPS (Central Firearms Registry) has assured us that they will as they did last year, again keep offices open between 07:00 and 19:00 during the whole of March to assist with the process. DFO offices are already open on Saturdays also during February mornings to assist.

Please do not wait until the last few days – you are going to get fried in the sun waiting in long queues !

Make sure you follow the instructions on how to complete the different forms to the letter (indicated at the front of the form) – download forms from the NSA web site <http://www.natshoot.co.za/guidelinesLicenApp.php> - make sure you complete the correct forms – see the information on the quoted page on the web site

Also make sure you have 2 passport size photo's of yourself for your competency application and 2 further for renewals (2 passport photo's per every new application), and R70 (exact amount) for application for competency, and R70 (exact amount) per firearm you want the licence of renewed.

APPLICATION FOR COMPETENCY CERTIFICATES

Irrespective of the fact that it might still not be the year in which you have to renew your firearm licences, it is our firm belief that one should rather try and apply for competency sooner than later.

The rational has always been to wait until it is your turn to renew firearms before also applying for competency.

However, practical issues at DFO offices make the application for competency when application is made for renewals and for a new licence at the same time, more complicated. Because the process of renewals is not seen as so urgent by the SAPS, it means that applications where application for competence, renewals and a new licence are made at the same time, are put onto the renewals heap at the DFO – to be handled "...when we get to it...". That means applications for new firearm licence get unnecessary delayed.

If one, however, already has competency, applications for new firearm licences go quite smooth and quick (we have a commitment form the SAPS for 3 months turn around).

We think it might not be such a bad idea to apply for competency from April this year, even if your are not up for renewals until next year or the year thereafter.

Bit it remains your choice.

FIREARMS CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2006

The Bill has, as we understand, gone through all the processes of Parliament and will be promulgated within the foreseeable time.

We shall inform members when this happens.

As you will remember the Bill was not the changing document we expected and rather only brought about minute changes – especially in connection with muzzle loaders and in terms of firearm collections. It did smooth the way for licensing semi-auto firearms though.

AMENDMENTS TO THE REGULATIONS OF THE FIREARMS CONTROL ACT

Proposed changes to the FCA's Regulations were published in January this year with request that comments should be in with the SAPS by 19 February this year.

The proposed amendments to the Regulations were a serious let down. We as hunters have since 2004, requested the SAPS to take the prerequisite of Dedicated Hunter status being attached to SASSETA approval out of the Regulations (thus a formal unit standard underwritten by SASSETA). This was, it seems, not even contemplated.

The amendments actually mean very little, as they have only included a large number of references to Muzzle loaders, and to some aspects regarding firearm and ammunition collectors.

As a matter of fact the consultation process was, to say the least, nonexistent, as someone somewhere sat down and drafted the amendments without even asking what should be included in the process. Thus missing reality totally.

Through the Hunters-SAPS Consultative Forum we have requested the SAPS to open a discussion on the proposed changes before such are drafted into a final document. Whether this will materialise remains to be seen.

We are slowly but surely becoming fed up with the high handed manner in which the SAPS legal section is treating the firearm, hunting, and sport-shooting fraternity. We are the law abiding citizens that try and assist in all the processes of implementing the FCA, and yet we are side lined as if passed by a thundering and speeding train. We have put processes in place to try and rectify this situation.

Both the proposed Regulation changes and the NSA's comments, which was also the Hunters-SAPS Consultative Forum's comments thereon, are available on the NSA web site www.natshoot.co.za

HUNTERS-SAPS CONSULTATIVE FORUM

As some of the old-timers may well know, a Hunters Forum was established in September 2004, to act as a forum between the SAPS (Central Firearms Registry) and the CFR accredited hunters' associations.

On 1 August 2006 the forum split into two, namely the Hunters Forum of South Africa, and the other the Hunters-SAPS Consultative Forum.

The Hunters-SAPS Consultative Forum continues as the forum between the SAPS (CFR) and the accredited hunters' associations, while the Hunters Forum of SA has become a body where current accredited hunters' associations discuss matters of common concern for hunters in the country. All processes surrounding the functioning of the Hunters Forum have not yet been finalised, and a meeting of hunters associations in the country is to be organised through the SA Hunters and Game Management Association (SAHGMA) and the Confederation of Hunting Associations of South Africa (CHASA) to finalise this process.

This is an exciting and innovative development that has transpired from the original Hunters Forum, and we look forward to be involved in it's development.

Once this body starts functioning properly, we will communicate all happenings that take place there.

DEAT NORMS AND STANDARDS ON HUNTING

The final document on the norms and standards on hunting will see the light within days of this writing. We have gone through a lengthy process to get here, and DEAT needs to be highly commended for the public participation process they had initiated around the drafting of the final document.

The process started in late 2005 and continued through 2006, with the DEAT Wildlife Forum being identified as a forum to keep on with it's activities for as long as the hunting industry has something to say to DEAT – or they to us. It will thus not be a body which will disappear once the final documents are on the table. Yet another innovation of DEAT in terms of a public consultative process which needs to be supported and highly commended.

The next step in proceedings there will be the discussions on the lists of endangered and other species that need to be included in the relevant sections of the Biodiversity Act.

We shall keep you informed of any happenings there.

SPECIAL EDITION NEWSLETTER RE POSTAL SHOOTING COMPETITIONS

A special edition of the Newsletter follows directly after this newsletter and contains all relevant information on the changed and adapted Postal Shooting Competition's Rules and Tables.

Watch out for it !!

Remember to recommend joining the NSA to your friends and family

Be Safe at all Times !!!

Best Regards



Herman Els
Executive Chairman: NSA