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| **OVERVIEW:** | Describes safe work considerations and practices associated with workplace Firearms use |
| **Personnel required:**  | * Firearms use by lone workers is permitted provided they have been trained in firearms safety, hold a valid firearms licence, and are deemed fit, competent, and authorised to use firearms in a workplace environment.
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| **Equipment required:** | * Emergency response equipment including First Aid Kit
* Two forms of emergency communication equipment with access to emergency services
* Firearms and ammunition that comply with the requirements of the NZ Arms Act (1983) and the NZ Police Arms Code
* A means of effectively disabling and securely locking the firearm when it is not in use
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| **PPE required:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| **Additional PPE:** | * Snag-free clothing
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**Authorised users**

Firearms are only to be maintained and used by individuals deemed competent through a combination of:

* Formal firearms safety training
* Holding a current firearms licence
* Being deemed fit, competent, and authorised to use firearms in a workplace environment.
* Or as a trainee under direct supervision of a competent and authorised person

**General rules**

* Firearms must only be used on work sites with express (written) landowner approval.
* Never point a firearm at anyone.
* Never point or pull a firearm towards yourself by the muzzle
* .22 calibre rimfire rifles are not generally permitted on any land managed by DOC (including conservation and national parks).
* It is forbidden to shoot during the hours of darkness in any state forest, forest park or national park.
* Never shoot at a target on the skyline or where the round could travel on to an unintended target
* Military-style semi-automatic (MSSA) firearms are not to be used in the workplace

**Basic Rules of Firearms Use**

1. **Treat every firearm as loaded**
* Keep your finger off the trigger; always point the muzzle in a safe direction; open the action and inspect the chamber and magazine.
* Do not take anyone’s word that a firearm is unloaded. Check every firearm yourself. Only pass or accept a firearm that has the muzzle pointed in a safe direction; the action open; and is not loaded.
* If you do not know how to open a firearm, leave it alone.
* If it is someone else’s, ask them to show you that it is empty
1. **Always point firearms in a safe direction (loaded or unloaded)**
* A safe direction will depend on where you are. Remember that bullets can go through walls and ceilings.
* Never point a firearm at anyone else or at yourself.
* Remain focussed at all times when handling firearms.
* To avoid unintentional firing or damage, firearms should never be leant against vehicles or in any place where they could slide or fall.
* Always be particularly careful when placing firearms in, or removing them from, vehicles, boats and storage. Be aware that firearms can go off unintentionally when:
	+ Closing the action
	+ Releasing the safety catch
	+ Uncocking
	+ Opening a loaded firearm
1. **Load only when ready to fire**
* Only load a firearm when you intend to use it, and only in an area where it can be safely and legally discharged. Remember to unload it when you have used it
* Only load your ammunition into the magazine when you have reached your shooting area. (The firearm is then carried with the bolt or action closed on an empty chamber.
* Do not load the chamber until you are ready to shoot
* Unload the chamber if the target gets away. (Put the round back in the magazine and close the bolt on an empty chamber.)
* Unload completely – no rounds in the magazine or chamber – before leaving a shooting area or entering a hut or camp etc. Double check every time.
1. **Positively identify your target**
* You must positively identify your target beyond all doubt before firing. If in any doubt, do not shoot. The shooter, and anyone supervising an unlicensed shooter, must both positively identify the target.
* Make absolutely certain that the movement, colour, sound, and shape of your target is identified correctly. Identify all of the target.
1. **Check your firing zone and know your range**

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| **Projectile** | **Potential range** |
| .308 calibre | 4.5 kilometres |
| .22 calibre | 1.5 kilometres |
| Shotgun | ≤ 750 metres |
| Airgun | ≤ 400 metres |

* Be aware of what could be hit in the area between you and your target, and in the area beyond your target.
* Never fire if others are ahead of you, or if you have lost sight of them.
* Never shoot when stock, human activity or buildings are in the area.
* Never shoot at a target on the skyline.
* Night shooting is dangerous, especially if using telescopic sights, so only shoot at night if you are certain it is safe to do so. Spotlights light up only a small part of the firing zone and the projectile’s range.
* Use extra care when shooting at a moving target, particularly with telescopic sights, because your field of view is limited and changes rapidly. There is a greater danger of someone moving into your firing zone without you noticing.
* When shooting near thick bush or scrub you may not be able to see your whole firing zone.
* Ricochets can be caused by any flat or hard surfaces – rocks, snow, trees and even water. Be especially careful in rocky river beds.
1. **Store firearms and ammunition safely**
* Ammunition must be stored separately, or the firearm made incapable of firing. If possible, remove the bolt and magazine and lock away separately from the firearm.
* Make sure both the chamber and the magazine are empty.
* Firearms must be stored in a securely locked cabinet or rack system that immobilises the firearm(s).
* Never leave a firearm in an unattended vehicle
1. **Avoid alcohol or drugs when handling firearms**
* Alcohol and drugs must never be taken just before or while shooting.
* Do not shoot with others who are, or have been, drinking alcohol or taking drugs.

**General advice**

**Crossing fences**

* Never climb a fence while carrying a firearm.
* If there are two or more people, one should climb over the fence without a firearm. Then, pass the unloaded firearms across with the actions open, and pointed in a safe direction.
* If you are on your own, unload the firearm and place it, muzzle first, through the fence. Lay the firearm on the ground, and then climb over the fence.

**Transporting Firearms**

* You may not leave a firearm in an unattended vehicle.
* Make firearm(s) inoperable e.g. remove bolt/magazine.
* It is prohibited to operate vehicle on a public road with a loaded firearm. This includes the magazine – it must be empty.
* Even on private property it is dangerous to have a loaded firearm in a vehicle, or to get in or out of the vehicle with a loaded firearm.
* Be careful when moving your firearm in or out of a vehicle. Treat it as loaded. Do not point it at yourself or at anyone else. Never pull it towards you by the muzzle

**End.**

**DISCLAIMER:**

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