



# NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.

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Dear members

I wanted to send out a brief note to you all before I become engrossed with NZ and U25 team duties and head to South Africa at the end of February. It will be April before I return and I'm able to deal with NRA business. I'm sorry about this, but the NZ and U25 team commitments were made long ago. Whilst this is not ideal, I have always found that meeting with our international friends to be of real value and it is an opportunity to learn from the way they do things and hear of their experiences and challenges.

Thank you all for your vote of confidence and the trust you have placed in me as the new President of the National Rifle Association of New Zealand. The organisation has done much for me over the years, and I will do what I can to repay the debt that I feel I now owe to the organisation. Not only does our sport provide a fantastic opportunity for people to compete with equality across all ages, sexes and abilities, it also provides a valuable public service by teaching respect and safety of firearms in our community. Our country is a safer and better place because of the work done week in and week out by our law abiding and responsible members.

As an organisation we face many challenges, but none are more urgent or important than that of membership. Without members we will not have people to keep our clubs running and our ranges open. We see the same people doing the same work year after year. Many of those people continue to give willingly of their time just as they have always done for our sport, but they are all getting older. New members bring enthusiasm and new ideas. I have had the pleasure of witnessing this first hand within my own club, with new members giving the place a real lift, and greatly assisting the old tired and worn-out members. New members provide us with our only opportunity to survive and remain relevant into the future.

Our organisation has recognised this issue for many years now, but somehow, we have always had our attention diverted to more pressing issues that have been forced upon us (such as the closure of the Trentham range, the review of firearms laws and the licencing of clubs and ranges) I feel that the time has now come for us to prioritise membership above all other issues.

At the last June Council meeting a decision was made to hold a "Membership Symposium" in Wellington. The Council have agreed to fund the travel costs of two club members from each club to and from Wellington. The idea is that we will ask those clubs who have been successful in growing their membership to share their ideas with all the other clubs. It is also hoped to have presentations from other organisations to see if we can learn from their experiences. You will hear more about this over the next few months. It will not be a "silver bullet" to fix our memberships issues, but it will mark the start of an important job that we must all take responsibility for.

Another important part of the membership issue is closely related to our constitutional review. What does a member look like? Are there other types or classes of membership? What is an associate member? Can there be a direct membership of the national office? A member may not even come to the range, they might just be happy to pay a membership fee in the knowledge that they have an organisation that is a voice that speaks on their behalf. If we get these issues right, we may find that we are able to increase our membership significantly just by being more flexible and relevant to more people.

As with all things in life, nobody is going to come along and give them to you for free. They must be worked for and earned.

This is not going to be easy, but I feel that if we all work together, we may surprise ourselves. I reckon it can't be any harder than shooting a 50 at 1000 yards at Trentham, and we all know that despite the odds, that can be done!

All the best to you all,

Brian Carter  
NRANZ President