



Confederation of Hunters Associations of SA

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CHASA Notice to Members

Draft Version of SAPS Proposed Firearm Act Amendments

Dear Members

The draft document that has been the centre of much media speculation since yesterday morning came to our notice on Tues 16 Oct. I immediately addressed a letter to the Secretary of Police (SoP), Mr Phumu Rapea, copying in the Chairman of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Police (PPCP), Mr Francois Beukman. I specifically called upon the SoP to convene a stakeholder engagement to discuss the matter. I have previously called upon him to start convening stakeholder engagements, as is required of him in the Secretariat of Police Act, to no avail. Both offices have been courteous in acknowledging receipt of my mail, but neither office has as yet addressed a specific response to me. They have however, each released information through their appropriate media.

Yesterday morning I noticed that the draft was widely out in social media with the expected anxiety being expressed by the public. I also noticed later in the morning GOSA calling on people to flood the PPCP Chairman with objection emails. There are a number of reasons why I don't believe this will be a good tactic, although I must admit it appears to be the reason he made his media release. My prime reasons to not encourage barraging him with emails are that the PPCP is not the originator of draft legislation generally speaking and certainly not in this case. Their oversight and reporting to parliament mandate certainly means they can ask pertinent questions, but I have no reason to suspect they are direct party to driving this particular draft's content. Another reason it does not help to have a public flooding of the PPCP Chair's mailbox is that in reality he, and the committee are generally always open to dialogue with all stakeholder representatives, and it stands to reason that if his mailbox is flooded with massive amounts of public emails it could compromise our established communication lines with him and the committee.

But the main entity who does have a functionary role to play, and has certainly not done so, remains the SoP. My letter of Tuesday, just like other previous correspondence, has specifically pointed out the pertinent clauses in the legislation which should compel him to have engaged with us and lead a SAPS/Stakeholder engagement process from way back. He has steadfastly refused or failed in this respect. The draft in question has now been described by the PPCP Chair as "dated internal draft departmental proposals". The process of creating them must have included interaction with the office of the SoP. We have good reason to believe that Gun-free SA were engaged from time to time, and submitted inputs. This is borne out in much of the shocking content of the draft. It is abhorrent that an entity which still cannot demonstrate any broad-based citizen support and is majority funded by foreign interests is embraced by SAPS and the SoP, while the many local recognised stakeholders with many thousands of proven South African members is totally ostracised from the process that affects us directly.

We remain committed to being a responsible proactive stakeholder/partner with SAPS and the various oversight and legislative authorities towards functional, safe and logical firearm control. But the time has come for these institutions to embrace our long-standing outreach and to enter into credible stakeholder engagement processes. It is not difficult to achieve the common cause, and not just firearm owners, but all South Africans would benefit.

We shall remain vigilant and engage proactively.

Stephen Palos - CEO



Freedom to Hunt / Vryheid om te Jag