

**Seventh meeting of the Firearms Expert Committee**  
**9<sup>th</sup> January 2023**  
**Venue 51 St Stephens Green**

**Minute**

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**Attendees**

**Chair** Emma Meagher Neville

Paul Walsh

Fabian Connolly

Superintendent Doyle

Chief Superintendent Glacken (for discussion of agenda point 2, 3, 4 and 5.1 )

Superintendent Gamble (for discussion of agenda 2, 3, 4 and 5.1)

**Secretary** Aoife Byrne

**1. Introduction**

- The agenda was adopted
- The minutes of the sixth meeting were agreed.
- The report of the sixth meeting for the Department's website was agreed.

**2. The licencing of add-on devices including silencers and sound moderators, telescope sights, light beams, and telescope thermal-imaging sights.**

The Committee discussed the licencing of add-on devices with the representatives of An Garda Síochána.

- The Committee agreed that silencers and sound moderator should remain licensable to persons who are able to demonstrate to licencing officers a need for the device.
- The Committee agreed that mountable thermal imaging devices should not be licensable at this time.
- The Committee agreed that mountable night scopes should only be licensable to persons who are able to demonstrate to licencing officers that the use of lamps or otherwise is not sufficient and that they have the skills to use these devices safely. The Committee believes that these devices are suitable for use by professional users and some experienced hunters who regularly engage in pest and predator control at night.

The secretary will draft the Committee's views on the licencing of these devices and prepare recommendations based on the Committee's discussion.

**3. Draft text report 2: Should there be the limit on the number and type of firearms a person may hold?**

- The Committee discussed elements of the draft text of report 2 with the representatives of An Garda Síochána.
- The representatives of An Garda Síochána agreed with the suggestion of the Committee that increasing the security arrangements for the storage of multiple firearms would be more effective than providing strict limit in legislation.

#### **4. Draft text report 2: Should location and Purpose conditions be applied to firearms certificates?**

- The Committee discussed elements of the draft text of report 2 with the representatives of An Garda Síochána.
- The representatives of An Garda Síochána advised that they would not see the benefits of introducing a notification requirement for shooting occurring outside a range.
- The representatives of An Garda Síochána advised that they see the benefits of expanding the authorisation of shooting clubs to apply to all clubs. However, they cautioned that this could create significant resource requirements for An Garda Síochána and it may not be in line with recommendations of the COFPI report.
- The Committee agreed that consideration would need to be given if An Garda Síochána are the most appropriate body to authorise shooting clubs if Committee's recommendation is accepted.

#### **5. Discussion of Report one:**

##### **Short-firearms for humane dispatch**

- The Committee discussed the suggestion of the NPWS the humane dispatch of deer can be impeded by the restrictions placed on the licencing of short-firearms and some short-firearms should be available to be licenced for this purpose. The representatives of An Garda Síochána advised that would have serious concerns with this suggestion.
- The Committee agreed that the use of short-firearms for humane dispatch of deer by hunters should not be addressed in its report. The Committee believes that the NPSW should bring this matter to the attention of the Minister if they wish for a change in the legislation.

##### **Changes made in response to NPWS and AGS observations.**

- The Committee review changes made in response to NPWS and AGS observations to Chapter 4. The changes the Committee agreed will be updated by the secretary.

##### **Review recommendations made in Chapter 5.**

- The Committee agreed the recommendations made in Chapter 5.

### **Additional Comments on Report one**

- A number of amendments were suggested to Report one by Fabian Connolly and Emma Doyle which were noted by the secretary. The Chair directed all members to submit any comments about the draft by email before the 13<sup>th</sup> January, these comments are to be limited to one A4 page.
- The Chair and the secretary will review the comments and decision will be made as to how to incorporate them or agree them. Comments which are deemed to be an extension of what has already been discussed, will not be added to the report.

### **6. Meeting with the N.I. licensing Authorities**

- The Committee agreed that John Guinane will liaise with the Northern Irish Authorities to arrange a virtual meeting with the Committee.
- The Committee agreed that regretfully it would not be possible to arrange an in person meeting with the PSNI, however, if the term of the Committee is extended in the future the Committee will be open to meeting them.

### **7. Next Meeting**

- The Committee agreed to meet again on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February and the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March.
- The Chair agreed that Inspector Green may attend on behalf of Superintendent Doyle on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February.