

SECURING NEW ZEALAND'S FUTURE



**BUDGET
2026**

Hon Nicole McKee Associate Minister of Justice

28 May 2026

Budget backs licenced firearm owners and improves public safety

Associate Justice Minister Nicole McKee has welcomed Budget 2026 funding of \$44.9 million to implement the new Arms Act and establish Firearms Safety and Education New Zealand, the new independent firearms regulator.

“This funding ensures New Zealand can deliver a fair, effective, and modern firearms system without lumping licenced firearm owners with massive fee increases,” says Mrs McKee.

“Without this investment, the firearms system faced a major funding shortfall that could have increased firearms licence fees to up to six and a half times their current level. “Licenced firearm owners have been targeted and vilified for years. Hiking fees before any benefits of the new firearms system have been realised would compound years of unfair treatment.

“Pricing people out of the licensing system also risks driving disengagement, eroding compliance, and pushing firearms into the grey market. That would weaken public safety.

“The wider public benefits from a well-functioning firearms licensing system, including through improved public safety, pest control, and conservation work carried out by hunters and recreational shooters.

“That is why it makes sense for the costs of the system to be shared between licenced firearm owners and taxpayers, rather than falling solely on one group.

“This funding will enable the separation of firearms regulation from Police, improving the trust and confidence of licenced firearms owners while allowing Police to focus on enforcement.

“Approximately \$4.7 million of the funding will go towards establishing the new Firearms Licensing Review Committee, giving licensed firearm owners access to an independent forum to challenge decisions made by the regulator.

“Budget 2026 also secures funding through a tagged contingency to modernise firearms ICT systems, helping deliver a more efficient, reliable, and user-friendly licensing system into the future.”

The value of the ICT contingency is being withheld to protect the Crown's commercial negotiating position.

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