



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

*For further information call
Neil Jones (Tel no. 083-655-0348)*

CHASA SPEAKS OUT ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE END OF THE TRANSITIONAL PHASE OF THE FIREARMS CONTROL ACT

The Confederation of Hunters Associations of South Africa (CHASA) has done everything in their power over the past 4 years to assist their individual members in complying with the new Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000 since its inception in 2001. With the transitional period for the renewal of firearm licences coming to an end on 30 June, it is however unfortunate that many of their members and members of the public, especially those who under the impression that they have "legally disposed of" their firearms by selling or giving it to other individuals, now face the possibility of arrest due to no fault of their own.

CHASA is very concerned about the ignorance amongst many thousands of individuals who purchased or took over firearms from other individuals where the new firearm licence application has not yet been finalized by CFR and the fact that they face prosecution if they don't deal with the firearms in the correct manner. CHASA believes that such original owners acted according to the Firearms Control Act, by lawfully disposing of their firearms and CHASA view it as being unreasonable that such firearm owners can now be prosecuted. SAPS539 storage permits issued to these people allowing them to legally store the firearm until the new licence has been issued, will become invalid on 1 July. In an effort to address this problem, the Central Firearms Register announced recently that the original firearm owners can apply for Article 21 Temporary Permits allowing them keep the firearms in safekeeping until the new owner's application has been dealt with. Should the original owner no longer be in South Africa or have the necessary safe to store the firearms, such firearms must be handed in to the SAPS for safekeeping. CHASA urges all such people to stay abreast of the correct procedures to prevent being criminalized on 1 July.

The SAPS has issued a directive stating that firearms for which licence applications were unsuccessful, will be forfeited to the State. CHASA view this as unjust expropriation of private property.

CHASA furthermore raised their concerns on behalf of the thousands of firearm owners who applied for the renewal of their firearm licences, but where the new licences have not been issued yet. In many instances, these applications have not even been captured onto the SAPS system yet. Many applications date back to 2005/6. After the 30th of June, the onus will be on all firearm owners who have not yet received their renewed firearm licences, to **prove** that they have indeed applied for the relicensing of such firearms, should they be confronted by the SAPS.

CHASA strongly advises that individuals:

Immediately determine the status of their relicensing applications by contacting their local DFO (Designated Firearms Officer) or phoning the SAPS 24-hour call centre number 012-353-6111. If the licence or competency certificate has been issued, it **must be collected from their local DFO's immediately, as the old licence expires on the issue of the new licence.**

If a SAP523 document (Acknowledgement of Receipt of Documentation) was not issued when applying, request it from the local DFO - preferably with the details of the firearm(s) concerned as the standard financial receipt does not specify such.

If a person is stopped in a roadblock and cannot produce proof of relicensing in terms of Section 107 of the Act the official can seize the firearm(s) without a warrant and hold it until the owner can provide proof.

CHASA spokesman on firearm related issues, Mr Neil Jones, advises firearm owners who have not yet received their new licences, to carry the following documentation with them as from 1 July, which they would need to have when purchasing ammunition:

- Identity Document
- Firearm licences issued under the "Old Act" (green licences)
- A copy* of the SAP523 (Acknowledgement of Receipt of Documentation) which should have been issued by the DFO upon application; **or** A copy* of the expenditure (financial) receipt issued on application.
- The call centre's number (012-353-6111), to enable the firearm owner to verify on line that the relicensing application/s have been captured.
- *It might be advisable to have **certified** copies

*Issued by CHASA
e-mail: chasa@telkomsa.net
Tel: 041-922-5600*