



**Abstract:**

***Trade-offs During a Turning Point: Implications from a Year of Change to New Zealand's Firearms Laws***

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For the past two decades, New Zealand's firearms laws were considered by many to be anachronistic and inadequate, yet multiple in-depth reviews and recommendations in recent years did not result in any substantial changes. The regulatory regime set up by the Arms Act 1983 and amendments to that statute in 1992 has therefore been left largely intact. With the March 15 shootings in Christchurch providing the political momentum to disrupt the status quo, New Zealand's firearm laws are undergoing significant reform and more attention is being placed on how Police regulate guns than ever before.

As Police take steps to implement these new legislative changes, they will be faced with new challenges and key decisions about the best approach to firearms regulation in New Zealand. Chief among these issues is how the legislative changes will affect their on-going efforts to develop a positive relationship with the gun-owning community and the balance they have struck between exercising their power to enforce laws as compared to their power to regulate using non-enforcement means.

Nate is being hosted on his Axford Fellowship by the and New Zealand Police and the Ministry of Justice.