



SUMMER 2010-11

What you don't know CAN HURT YOU!

Recently my wife and I have been on holidays to the land of the long white cloud, New Zealand, to tour the north and more importantly to visit friends in Lake Tekapo in the south island. The trip was also to include one days hunt for Himalayan Tahr which is an introduced species that exist on the hills and mountains around the lake which is close to New Zealand's highest peak Mt Cook. A vastly experienced local hunter from the area and close friend of my contact had generously offered to guide me to show the Australian what it is all about.

To prepare for the event I had a month or so earlier dusted off my Winchester .338 magnum which I had purchased nearly 30 years ago with a plan to hunt in Alaska which has yet to be fulfilled. I had organised a suitable load and tested it at a range adequate for the intended game and all worked well with a 50mm group at 200 metres. The rifle is set up for my unusual left eyed but right handed use which had precluded me from borrowing a rifle from my guide.

To ensure that I had the appropriate documentation to travel to and from New Zealand I researched on the web and found the NZ Police site and duly filled in the application for a visitors license along with the rifle details from the registration pink

slip which I had retained since it was registered with the firearms branch immediately after it was purchased. The return email granted me approval but stated that I would need to prove that I was a "fit and proper person" to hold their license through a statement from my local police along with my authority to possess firearms in my home country. To meet this requirement I subsequently phoned the local firearms branch and relayed what was needed then emailed the detail. Shortly thereafter I received in the mail a B709A "Importation of Firearms – Police Confirmation and Certification" which restated the detail I had provided along with a note to indicate that this firearm is currently registered in South Australia

Unfortunately the firearms branch would not supply a statement of my standing as a "fit and proper person" instead directing me to the department that handles the National Police Check which would supply a statement to that effect providing of course that my record was clean and of course at the expense of another fee. Why this was beyond the firearms branch considering that as a licensed pistol shooter this is done as a matter of course annually is difficult to comprehend. Never

mind as luck would have it I had a check done recently as part of my employment so that would suffice.

Reading through my flight details I also noticed that I needed to also inform the airline that I would be travelling with a rifle and ammunition so I contacted them and a note was attached to their flight details and follow on flights for security purposes.

The departure date arrived and complete with luggage we headed for the airport and the airline check in some two and a half hours prior to the international flight feeling confident that I had all the appropriate paperwork. This confidence was short lived as soon found out that in fact I did not have all the appropriate paperwork and was directed along with my firearm to customs. Apparently I was not registered with customs as a "Client in the Integrated Cargo System" nor did I have the "Restricted Goods Permit" or the "Export Declaration" and furthermore there was nobody at the airport with the appropriate delegated authority to authorise this paperwork. It would seem at this point that my plans were being dealt a significant blow and that my firearm would remain in Adelaide while myself and the already checked in ammunition would be in NZ.

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What you don't know CAN HURT YOU (cont'd)

Fortunately sanity prevailed and with the aid of a dedicated customs officer and a fax machine the appropriate paperwork was constructed but time was now a major concern. The firearm was rushed to the check in then to the oversize luggage collection where all my troubles were now on the way to the flight. Well not quite as the security check for the hand luggage became the next frustration. Being security minded about my own equipment I had packed the bolt for my firearm in my bag which apparently is not allowed. My rationale being that if the firearm became lost in transit it could not be used without the bolt and therefore rendered useless which was also confirmed by the airline in my conversation with them and with the customs officers while the paperwork was being sorted. Why the bolt is such a security issue is still a mystery to me as it cannot function without the rest of the firearm and its ammunition and furthermore it makes a very ineffectual club. Never the less having this item with me required the attendance of the Australian Federal Police who turned up to investigate and take my details. At this point the airline liaison officer came to my rescue and offered to take the offending item to the pilot for safe keeping to which I agreed. By now the last call for the flight had been issued and our name had been called over the PA system. One last security station to pass through where again I was checked, then onto the flight and at last we were on our way some two and a half hours after getting to the airport.

On arrival at Auckland airport with the bureaucracy of Adelaide still fresh in my mind the approach and systems of the New Zealand Police were a refreshing change. Having located the Police office opposite the baggage pick up there was a quick check of my paperwork and temporary license along with the payment of \$25

and a cursory inspection of the rifle and we were done. I asked about the proof of the "fit and proper person" to which I was told that as I was travelling with my wife, who was standing next to me at the time, then I must be alright and that was the extent of the paperwork. The luggage and the rifle then passed through customs without a hitch with the only concern being the cleanliness of my hiking boots which I had cleaned and waterproofed before leaving so everything was fine.

The hunt itself was another experience with a walk up a valley which included multiple crossings of a knee deep fresh water stream that soon water logged my socks and numbed the feet with the freezing water. The hillsides were steep and covered in loose footing rocks punctuated with tussock grasses and a shrub called a Spaniard which has sharp blade like leaves with a point that even penetrates gloves. My guide Barry and his Labrador, Bear, climbed the hillside like the Tahr we were searching for while I unfortunately realised all too soon that my physical preparation was grossly inadequate for the job at hand. After climbing for what seemed like an eternity to me and no doubt for Barry as I kept him waiting on the top of the ridge until I finally joined him. Bear was also happy with my appearance as throughout the climb he had made numerous trips back to check on my progress and to give me the questioning look of "what seems to be the problem" and "is this going to take long". I remembered at this point the previous evening's conversation, something about having done some reconnaissance and the whole affair should only take about an hour or so but without a watch I could not verify the time taken but it certainly was over 2 hours since leaving the vehicle. I would remind Barry later of his estimate.

Taking a couple of minutes to survey the landscape and to let my heart rate and breathing return to some sense of normality the wow factor hit me. The place is absolutely fantastic with snow covered peaks all around and with the lake in the distance. My senses were also struck with the realisation that it was now snowing to the extent that visibility was diminishing rapidly until we could only see a metre or so in front of us. Barry made the decision that we should go down as it is not wise to stay in these conditions and I agreed even though a rest was really what I desperately needed. Climbing down the hillside proved to be as difficult a task as the ascent with the snow making everything slippery while trying to avoid the cutting edges of the Spaniards.

At a point toward the bottom of the climb now suffering from very wobbly legs I did manage to bag a couple of Tahr across the valley for Barry's refrigerator but unfortunately no trophy. I guess I will have to do it again to tick that box. Certainly the time and effort setting up the rifle and ammunition for the task was now evident so I could at least hold my head up in that department which seemed some minor consolation to my poor showing in the climbing.

The trek out of the valley was exhausting with again many crossings of the cold running stream with legs that were having difficulty complying with instructions. Finally arriving back to the vehicle that brought us in we enjoyed a hot cup of coffee noting that we had been out hunting/walking/climbing for over 5 hours. After the event and returning to my friends place there was a good deal of light hearted conversation about my experience and shell shocked body. Luckily for me Lake Tekapo has hot baths which my wife and I took advantage of the next day to relieve some of the aches and bruises from the previous day's activity.

What you don't know CAN HURT YOU (cont'd)

After a couple of days sightseeing in this beautiful part of the world it was time to return to Adelaide leaving Christchurch airport which was still subject to earth tremors even as we were leaving. The check in process was uneventful and having learnt my lesson I left the bolt in another suitcase consigned to the hold. The domestic flight to Auckland then on to Adelaide took 7.5 hours having left my bed at 3.30 in the morning. On arrival at Adelaide and a quick stop in the duty free for medicinal supplies we collected our luggage and the firearm then headed to customs. One of the customs dog squad officers approached me about the rifle and whether it had been fired and left uncleaned which I confirmed. The purpose of this enquiry was to allow his young dog to sniff the contents of the now partially opened case to confirm its contents which he passed with flying colours. Onto the counter with the case and now one of the officers that had been involved with my predicament before I left came over to inspect the contents.

I now presented him with the paperwork and fully opened

the case for him to confirm the contents. He looked closely at the serial number on the receiver and checked it against the paperwork so carefully completed 14 days earlier. Unfortunately the two did not match. It would seem that all the prior inspections by customs and the NZ Police had failed to spot that the number reproduced from the registration slip (N21*****) did not match the number on the receiver of the rifle (N01*****). I must admit that when I received the registration slip some 30 years ago I didn't then or since check that the details on it were in fact correct which in this case they were not. Everybody at the desk was dumfounded by the discovery, how could this mistake have gone through so many hands and not been spotted? Luckily for me it was on the way back into the country and not leaving as this would have seen it being left behind. Never the less the firearm has now been seized awaiting a new B709A from the firearms branch which will allow me to retrieve the firearm from customs and place it back in the safe after a well earned cleaning.

I trust that in writing this episode that if you have the opportunity to shoot overseas then you might learn from my experiences and not repeat my mistakes. If I had my time over I would have checked the registration slip against the rifle and have contacted the customs department at the start of my trip preparation and of course to have contacted the relevant airport authorities to find out if there are any restrictions regarding carryon luggage but hindsight is a wonderful thing. I have since contacted customs who have sent me a step by step instruction of the process for future reference.

Below is the guide to how to get a RGP. Steps 1-3 can be completed before you leave, by going down to Port Adelaide. When you do step one, be aware that you will need to provide evidence of identity, including primary documents like a passport or birth certificate. You only need to register once with Customs, so if you ever do this again you start at step 2.

I trust this helps,

Peter Hayward, Chairman ■

— RESTRICTED GOODS PERMIT — QUICK GUIDE —

STEP ONE

- Complete a B319 Registering as a Client in the Integrated Cargo System Form
- Lodge the form with Customs
- Obtain a Customs Client ID (CCID) or if applicable an ABN can be registered with Customs
- Use the CCID or ABN for all subsequent transactions with Customs

STEP TWO

- Complete a B957 Export Declaration Form
- Lodge the form with Customs
- Receive an Export Declaration Number (EDN)

STEP THREE

- Complete an RGP Form and provide completed form, plus all relevant documents to Customs, including:
 - Current Firearms Licence;
 - Certificate(s) of Registration for all firearms;
 - Evidence of identity documents.

STEP FOUR

- Prior to export present your RGP form along with the goods to Customs for physical examination at the international port of departure. EXPORT AUTHORISATION IS NOT VALID UNTIL AN EXAMINATION OF THE FIREARMS HAS BEEN COMPLETED
- To allow you to re-import them, get a B709 form from the SA Police Registry before you leave, and declare them on arrival.



VOLUNTEER CONTACT FORM

NAME

PHONE

EMAIL

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Captain's Corner

WORKING BEE SATURDAY 11TH DECEMBER

ALL RANGES WILL BE CLOSED

The aim of the working bee is to clean up all the ranges, grounds and clubrooms in preparation for the Pistol Australia Nationals next Easter.

Please bring along some gloves and a hat. We'll supply lunch and soft drink.

The Pistol Australia Nationals in I.S.S.F. and P.A. matches is a huge event and generates quite an income for the club. We last hosted this event in 2007 and it was extremely successful and profitable.

The event runs from April 17th – 24th.

Saturday the 16th we will also require help in the clubrooms to feed and water all the competitors that will turn up to check out the ranges and facilities and maybe have a practice shoot.

Please fill in the above volunteer contact form and contribute some time and effort to make next years' event even more successful.

Many thanks to the few members that volunteered their time and effort to help at the recent IPSC STICS Match and the Police and Services National Championships. Their help is greatly appreciated and without it we couldn't run these events.

Steve Baldry, Club Captain ■

Season's Greetings!

As Christmas is almost upon us again, Board Members would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and safe festive season and a prosperous new year. We hope you are able to find time to relax and enjoy yourselves.



Please note that the Club will NOT be officially opening over the Christmas period. These dates therefore extend from Friday 24th December through to Wednesday 5th January. We will re-open on Thursday 6th January 2011.

