



Tiwi Islands Regional Council

Title **Firearms safety and handling policy**

Policy No: 054

Adopted By: Council

Next Review Date: October 2023

Responsibility: General Manager Infrastructure

MagiQ Document 230874
Number:

Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	History
2	Resolution 8 on 22 January 2020	22 January 2020	Version two (230874)
1	Resolution 7 on 31 October 2018	31 October 2018	Version one

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish and maintain best practice in the safe handling, use, storage and possession of firearms by Tiwi Islands Regional Council (TIRC).

It aims to provide guidance and instruction to staff who are licensed to access or use Council firearms for TIRC purposes.

2. Summary

In the course of their duties some Council staff are required to access and use firearms, particularly in the area of animal management.

This policy seeks to address Northern Territory and Commonwealth legislation around the use of firearms and seeks to ensure TIRC meets its legislative obligations.

Overall this policy sets out guidelines for staff to deliver this service appropriately, administer firearms and provide this service with the safety of staff and the community in mind.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- to set out clear guidelines for staff regarding the storage, access and usage of council firearms
- to identify responsibilities of officers to renew and manage the corporate shooters licences and employees licence.
- outline conditions of use of firearms to resolve animal welfare concerns.



Tiwi Islands Regional Council

4. Definitions

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Firearm	A device or part of a device that is designed or adapted to discharge shot, a bullet or other projectile (a) by expanding gases produced by the device (b) by igniting combustible material (c) by compressed air or other compressed gases
Authorised Officers	Officers licensed under the Corporate and Employee Firearms Licence and approved by the Council for the purpose of administering or enforcing By-Laws under the Local Government Act or any other statutory Act, Council regulation or Council approved activity
Employee Licence	An Employee licence permits a person to possess and use a firearm owned and registered by the holder of the Corporate Licence. The licence allows the employee to only use the firearm as part of his/her work duties and not for any other purpose
Council	Tiwi Islands Regional Council

5. Legislation

All access, use and storage of firearms must comply with the following:

- National Firearms Safety Code 2002
- Northern Territory Storage and Safe Keeping of Firearms Legislation
- Northern Territory Firearms Act
- Northern Territory Animal Welfare Act 2001
- Tiwi Islands Regional Council By-laws

6. Policy

a. Management of licences

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to:

- i. ensure the TIRC Corporate licence is valid
- ii. maintain the corporate licence in compliance with legislation and regulations
- iii. renew the corporate licence in a timely manner to avoid periods of lapse
- iv. liaise with Organisational Development to ensure employee licences are valid and renewed when approaching the end of their time.

Staff who are holding or seeking an Employees Licence must:

- i. have written approval from the CEO or General Manager
- ii. be responsible for providing a copy of your valid licence to the General Manager Infrastructure and Manager for Organisational Change and Development on request

b. Misuse of equipment

Any employee who handles firearms and is not a holder of an Employee Licence or does not have the permission of the CEO or the General Manager to use Council firearms will be



Tiwi Islands Regional Council

subject to Council disciplinary procedures.

c. Storage

All firearms, bullets or shots must be locked in the gun safe provided for this purpose in the Council offices. The gun safe will be inspected annually to ensure compliance with legislation and all weapons are accounted for.

d. Access and recording

Only staff with a valid Employee licence can access firearms stored in the Council gun safes. Firearms Licences must be carried by staff at all times when they access or use Council firearms.

The General Manager Infrastructure will nominate responsible officers at each location, to control access to the gun safe (keys) and maintain the firearms register. The CEO must approve this nomination.

Firearm safety procedures must be complied with at all times

The firearm register must be updated each time any firearms are removed from the Council gun safes. The General Manager Infrastructure is responsible for maintaining an accurate register. The firearms register must include:

- Who has checked out the gun
- When was the gun checked out
- Which gun has been taken
- How much ammunition taken
- How much ammunition returned
- Purpose of usage (what was it used for)
- Any other requirements as included in the register

e. Unauthorised carry or storage

Council gun safes and council vehicles can be used to transport firearms and ammunition that is licenced to the Council.

Firearms or ammunition that is not licensed to the Council should not be stored in the Council gun safes. Firearms or ammunition that is not licensed to the Council should not be carried in Council vehicles.

f. Animal Management Firearms

Firearms are to be used to destroy savage, stray, destructive, injured or feral animals as deemed necessary by the Council and in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act and TIRC by-laws. The following procedures should be followed when using a firearm for the purpose of animal management:

- a) Only staff who hold current Employee Firearms Licences and have the permission of the CEO or the General Manager of Infrastructure are permitted to use a Council firearm.
- b) The firearm register must be updated prior to taking a firearm from the Council gun safe.
- c) While the firearm is being transported the firing bolt, magazine and bullets are to be kept in the glove box of the vehicle.
- d) Firearm user to be sure there is no life or property in the line of fire prior to shooting.
- e) Where possible shooting should be a last resort within the community limits.



Tiwi Islands Regional Council

- f) Where possible shooting should not occur in the presence of community members and especially in the presence of children.
- g) Once the animal has been hit the shooter must confirm that the animal is dead.
- h) If the animal is not dead a shot to the head may be necessary.
- i) Animals destroyed must be transported as soon as practical to the nearest waste management station for burial.
- j) Firearm register to be completed when the firearm is returned.
- k) Firearm is to be cleaned as soon as practical after use. A cleaning kit to be kept on top of the gun safe.
- l) After use, staff member should ensure that firearm supplies are kept in stock by informing the relevant General Manager of requirements.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years. Next review scheduled for October 2021.