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MANGAMUKA LEADS THE WAY WITH NEW FIREARMS SAFETY PROGRAMME IN NORTHLAND

Recently the Tautoko FM Radio Station in Mangamuka hosted a new programme called 'Whakatūpato – a firearms safety programme'. The programme has been running in Te Urewera for the past year, but this was the first official delivery of the programme in Northland.

Whakatūpato is a joint venture between the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council (MSC), New Zealand Police and Iwi to provide comprehensive firearms safety training for Māori and other rural persons. The programme gives rural communities the opportunity to have firearms safety training delivered in their own community and provides a pathway for interested person to obtain a firearms licence.

Whakatūpato Project Co-ordinator, Tracy Wakeford said:

“It is exciting to see the range of people from the rural communities that are benefiting from this programme. A variety of people attended included those interested in obtaining a firearms licence, people with licences who wanted a training refresher plus a number of children who benefited from hearing safety messages at an early age.”

Typically the programmes are held in rural communities at appropriate venues such as marae and community halls. Whakatūpato adopts MSC's model of using local qualified volunteer instructors to deliver firearms safety to their own community. Already two local people with firearms experience from Mangamuka have been recruited as instructors for their area. The Mangamuka Whakatūpato Programme attracted 23 participants and planning is underway for further deliveries of this programme in the district.

“We would like to deliver many more of these programmes around rural Northland and our goal, subject to continued funding, is to achieve coverage throughout New Zealand within five years, “ said Mrs Wakeford.

“Firearms safety is an important message and I would like to see as many people as possible receiving the training,” added Mrs Wakeford.

If you are interested in setting up a Whakatūpato Programme in your area, please contact the Mountain Safety Council on 04 385 7162 or visit www.mountainsafety.org.nz

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ABOUT THE NEW ZEALAND MOUNTAIN SAFETY COUNCIL

The New Zealand Mountain Safety Council was formed in 1965 in response to the increasing number of mountain, bush and firearms fatalities. Today, NZMSC is a national organisation responsible for safety in land based outdoor activities. We facilitate the setting of standards, offer training, distribute resources, lead public awareness campaigns and foster positive support in the community so that more people can discover and enjoy New Zealand's outdoors safely.

MSC's volunteer firearms instructors are approved by NZ Police to deliver firearm safety training and administer the Firearm Safety Test to new firearms licence applicants. MSC is also proactive in delivering key firearms safety messaging campaigns throughout New Zealand and produces publications including the 'Going Hunting' pamphlet.

www.mountainsafety.org.nz