

23 JUNE 2011

LOCAL PEOPLE INVITED TO SIGN UP FOR HUNTER NATIONAL TRAINING SCHEME COURSE

The start of the 2011 HUNTS course is fast approaching and local people who are interested in learning more about hunting or upskilling their techniques are invited to book their place now.

HUNTS, which stands for Hunter National Training Scheme is a New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association programme. The course, which will be the fourth time it has been held in Gisborne, is co-ordinated by the Gisborne branch of the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council (MSC) and delivered by qualified HUNTS instructors.

The HUNTS course is an extended course which runs over several weeks and the format includes a bushcraft weekend, range day, hunting weekend and five training evenings with topics including: campcraft, navigation, survival, firearms safety, game preparation, knife sharpening, hunting techniques, tracking and hunting ethics.

The course commences in August and runs through to September with 14 places available. Participants need not hold a firearms licence to attend as undertaking the firearms safety test (which enables participants to apply for a firearms licence) is part of the course.

There is no 'typical' participant and each year a diverse group of trainees undertake the HUNTS course ranging from young and energetic high school students to capable and determined ladies as well as the 'old hands' who are keen to upskill and keep themselves hunting safely.

As the course progresses a unique style of camaraderie develops between the participants, especially during the bushcraft and hunting weekends. Friendships develop quickly and then strengthen as trust, consideration and a willingness to look after each other increases. By the end of the course, individuals who never knew each other before, often become good friends and head out together on their own hunting trips.

The delivery of this course is totally dependant on the expertise, skill and commitment of the dedicated MSC volunteers who give their time freely year after year to make this course possible as well as the generosity of the landowners who allow their land to be used during the course. Last year more than 500 voluntary hours were put into the delivery of this course which continues to ensure Gisborne's hunters are skilled and safe in the outdoors.

If you would like to book a place on this year's HUNTS course or would like to join the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council as a trainee instructor in HUNTS, Bushcraft or other disciplines, please contact Mountain Safety Gisborne on 06 868 5233 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