

# MEDIA RELEASE

**For immediate release**  
**19 March 2013**

## **Mountain Safety Council calls on hunters to buddy up this roar**

The Mountain Safety Council is asking hunters to buddy up and stick in sight of their mates this roar to avoid a repeat of last year's tragedies.

Mountain Safety Council Acting Firearms Programme Manager, Tracy Wakeford says, "All three deer hunting fatalities last year were preventable and were the result of hunters not following one or more of the seven basic rules of firearms safety."

"In the majority of fatal hunting accidents, the shooter and the deceased were in the same party and the shooter knew their companion was in the area. These accidents are preventable if hunters observe the Firearms Safety Code."

To follow the Firearms Safety Code (set out in full below) when hunting with companions, the Mountain Safety Council and Police recommend hunters should buddy up and stay in sight:

1. Stay in visual contact with each other when hunting in the same area
2. Stop hunting if visual contact is lost
3. Reestablish visual contact before continuing to hunt

"The bottom line is that it's never safe to shoot if you have lost visual contact with your hunting companion. If you can't confirm your companion is out of your firing zone, it isn't safe to shoot!"

"Even if you are still in visual contact with your companion you still need to check your firing zone and identify your target beyond all doubt. This should be done with the naked eye or low-powered binoculars, rather than with high-powered rifle scopes which narrow your field of view.

"It's too late to have second thoughts once you've fired your shot".

"The Mountain Safety Council wishes hunters a safe and successful roar this season."

## **The Firearms Safety Code**

- 1. Treat every firearm as loaded:** Check every firearm yourself. Pass or accept only an open or unloaded firearm.
- 2. Always point firearms in a safe direction:** Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction.
- 3. Load a firearm only when ready to fire:** Load only the magazine after you reach your shooting area. Load the chamber only when ready to shoot. Completely unload before leaving the shooting area.
- 4. Identify your target beyond all doubt:** Movement, colour, sound and shape can all deceive you. Assume colour, shape, sound, and shape to be human until proven otherwise.
- 5. Check your firing zone:** Think: What may happen if you miss your target? What might you hit between you and the target or beyond? Do not fire when you know others are in your firing zone.
- 6. Store firearms and ammunition safely:** When not in use, lock away the bolt, firearm and ammunition separately. Never leave firearms in a vehicle that is unattended.
- 7. Avoid alcohol or drugs when handling firearms:** Good judgement is the key to safe use of firearms.



**OUTDOOR SAFETY**  
NEW ZEALAND MOUNTAIN  
SAFETY COUNCIL

For more information see <http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz/Safety-Tips/Firearms-Safety.asp>

**About the Mountain Safety Council**

The Mountain Safety Council works to see more people participating safely in land-based outdoors activities. The Mountain Safety Council delivers a range of bushcraft and first aid courses, and delivers firearms safety training and testing to every firearms license applicant. Every year more than 9000 applicants in 147 locations receive training from 480 Mountain Safety Council instructors.

**For more information contact: Tracy Wakeford on 021 510 907 or [tracy.wakeford@mountainsafety.org.nz](mailto:tracy.wakeford@mountainsafety.org.nz)**

**ENDS**