

12 February 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to the email of 6 December 2017 you sent to Police seeking information pertaining to the classifications of firearms licence holders and firearms over the past 20 years. Your request was made pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 and specifically requested:

1. *Please advise the numbers of firearms licence holder of different classifications over the past 20 years.*
2. *Please advise the (estimated) numbers of firearms of different classifications over the past 20 years, or if 20 years is not feasible, then as far back as is reasonably possible.*
3. *Please advise the type of sources used to estimate/calculate the numbers of firearms.*

My response is outlined below.

1. *Please advise the numbers of firearms licence holder of different classifications over the past 20 years.*

Police are unable to provide you with the different classifications of firearms licence holders over the past 20 years as the data is drawn from a dynamic operational database. They are subject to change as new information is continually recorded. The below data were drawn on 20 December 2017.

Listed in the below table are all people who have a current, expired, awaiting action, or a renewal of their licence in progress. Some people have more than one licence (eg, a licensed dealer who may also have a personal firearms licence). Hence the number of licences may be greater.

Number of Persons who hold a firearms licence as at 20 December 2017.

No. of Licence Holders	
A - Standard	242,712
D- Dealer	35,186
V-Visitor	2,458
Total	245,107

2. Please advise the (estimated) numbers of firearms of different classifications over the past 20 years, or if 20 years is not feasible, then as far back as is reasonably possible.

There is no requirement for firearms to be registered in New Zealand nor is there any obligation to provide Police with the serial numbers of firearms. Registration of firearms was ceased with the implementation of the Arms Act 1983 that came into force in July 1984.

The Arms Act 1983 centres on the licensing of persons who can satisfy Police that they are fit and proper to be in possession of firearms.

The potential risks associated with some particular types of firearms are dealt with through the endorsement system. Endorsements on firearm licences are required for the possession of pistols, military style semi-automatic firearms (MSSAs) and restricted weapons which require Police to consider further criteria. Endorsed firearms and weapons must be registered.

The below table shows the number of firearms that were created in the Police database by date of creation regardless of the current status of the firearm or whether the entry of the firearm was through registration or stolen occurrence, permits or seizures. Note that restricted weapons could include any restricted weapons as defined under Schedule of the Arms (Restricted Weapons and Specially Dangerous Airguns) Order 1984.

	Pre 2010/11	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18 YTD	Total
MSSA	9,382	390	267	223	2,062	1,189	908	729	492	15,642
Pistol	35,186	1,185	1,135	1,130	1,628	2,122	2,338	2,501	1,281	48,506
Other Restricted Weapons	1,061	87	86	78	242	230	325	407	163	2,679
Machine/Sub- Machine Guns	3,740	133	148	221	293	257	666	524	181	6,163

3. Please advise the type of sources used to estimate/calculate the numbers of firearms.

The data for this response has come from Police databases.

If you are not satisfied with my response to your request you have a right under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982 to ask the Office of the Ombudsmen and seek an investigation and review of my decision.

Yours sincerely



Mike McIlraith
Acting Superintendent
Arms Act Service Delivery Group