

19 December 2018

Our Reference: IR-01-18-16093

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you in response to your email dated 12 November 2018. You said:

Regarding the Police reporting of firearm crime in official statistics:

1. Do police count this case in 'firearm' statistics? <https://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/news/108431676/police-respond-to-reports-of-man-toting-a-firearm-instead-find-broom-with-a-silver-handle>
2. Do police count inert replica guns in 'firearm' statistics when discovered?
3. Do police count airsoft guns in 'firearm' statistics?
4. Do police count airguns in 'firearm' statistics?
5. If a robber had his hand under a jumper during a robbery, but said it was a gun, would police count the case in 'firearm' statistics?
6. Do police count the discovery of a round of ammunition in 'firearm' statistics?

New Zealand Police official statistics are published on <https://policedata.nz> and consist of Victimisations (Recorded Crime Victim Statistics) and Proceedings (Recorded Crime Offenders Statistics). Additional available data set is Demand and Activity.

The specific incident you describe was recorded with an offence of Present Object like Firearm/Restricted Weapon and that offence falls within the group Misuse of Regulated Weapons/Explosives. This group is not in the scope of the Victimisation data set and therefore this incident would not be included in the official victim statistics.

The Proceedings data counts all alleged offenders who have been proceeded against by police. In this particular incident, police did not proceed against the alleged offender. Therefore, this offence would also not be included in the official offender statistics.

The incident would appear in the Demand and Activity official statistics, under Prohibited and Regulated Weapons and Explosives Offences, because Demand and Activity includes everything reported to and recorded by New Zealand Police.

Police National Headquarters

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The incident would also be included in any specific responses to OIA requests (for example, number of firearms offences) as it is an offence under the Arms Act 1983, but such responses do not constitute 'official statistics'.

Regarding questions 2, 3, 4, and 6, if an item is seized, it will be recorded in the Firearms Search and Seizure database and this includes imitation, airgun, and ammunition options. These are not published as official statistics, but if information is provided in a response to an OIA request, this is included or omitted as specified in the request (and usually explicitly listed by column names).

Regarding question 5, if an alleged offender of a robbery threatened a person by presenting an object like a firearm this would be considered and recorded similarly as the incident in question 1. This is because presenting an object like a firearm is an offence under the Arms Act 1983, section 52(2):

Every person commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or to both who, except for some lawful or sufficient purpose, presents at any person anything which, in the circumstances, is likely to lead that person to believe that it is a firearm, airgun, pistol, or restricted weapon.

For your information, Police has developed a process for proactive release of information, so the response to your request may be publicly released on the New Zealand Police website.

Yours sincerely



Superintendent Chris Scahill
National Manager: Response and Operations

