

6 Sep 2018

Our Reference: IR-01-18-8858

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you in response to your request dated 20 August 2018. Your request was made pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 and requested:

- *Is there any evidence to suggest a lower rate of firearm offending by holders of a NZ Firearms license [sic] since the life time license [sic] was scrapped?*
- *Please provide the number of convictions for serious firearm offenses [sic] by license [sic] holders in the fives [sic] years before and after the change.*

I have not been able to locate any analysis of firearms offending by licence holders in relation to the move from life time licences to 10 year licences, as part of the changes introduced in the Arms Amendment Act 1992. The legislation was amended in 1992 following the 1990 Aramoana massacre. The Arms Amendment Act 1992 and accompanying regulations introduced changes to the Arms Act 1983 in relation to possession of MSSAs, required firearms licences to be renewed every ten years, provided that ammunition sales only be made to firearms licence holders, and introduced a written permit system for mail order firearms and ammunition. The same amendments added tighter storage requirements along with security checks, and gave police powers to seize weapons in cases of domestic violence.

Your first request for information is refused in accordance with section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the requested information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision.

In relation to the second request for information, there is no specific definition of 'serious firearm offence'. I have, therefore, used all offences that involve a firearm (for example, homicide with a firearm, unlawful possession of a firearm, rapes with a firearm, carried a loaded firearm in a vehicle).

The Arms Amendment Act changes came into effect on 1 November 1992. In the five years prior to 1 November 1992, there were 359 people who committed 500 firearm-related offences while holding a firearms licence, and were subsequently convicted of these offences. In the five years after 1 November 1992, there were 350 people who committed 503 firearm-related offences while holding a firearms licence, and were subsequently convicted of these offences.

Police National Headquarters

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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

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Acting Superintendent
Arms Act Service Delivery Group

Police National Headquarters

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