

9 September 2019

Our Reference: IR-01-19-23454

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you in response to your request dated 26 August 2019. You said:

*I have been told that:*

- 1. A Wellington Arms Officer that was found not to have completed a great MANY vetting processes correctly due to massive backlog. He just signed off on the applications to clear the overload. When the failure came to light he was asked to resign.*
- 2. No effort was made to vet the licenses he had issued as Police management (Wellington District Commander) when informed and asked 'what do we do with this issue?', said 'it would be too much work' and that it would be easier to leave them until license renewals were required and re-vet them then.*
- 3. The Palmerston North Police station evidence locker had a history of being broken into before the criminal managed to rob them of 11 firearms. Historic firearm thieves were internal, including more than one Senior Sargent from the station. They were 'moved on' from what I am told.*

*Is there any truth to these allegations?*

With respect to your allegations about issuing of licences in Wellington District, you have provided no information to enable us to know what time period you are referring to. Nevertheless, Wellington District staff have been consulted and there is no one who is aware of any information, records, or evidence to support your allegation.

I am informed that in 2015, there was a backlog in processing firearms licence applications in Wellington District owing to staff shortage. In that period, one firearms licensing officer was on long term sick leave. This backlog was later progressed in accordance with due process. The result was that some applicants experienced considerable delay before receiving their licences. If this is the period you are referring to,

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## **Police National Headquarters**

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I can confirm there is no truth to your allegation. Furthermore, I can confirm that the individual on sick leave was not asked to resign.

There is no truth to the allegation of internal firearms thefts at Palmerston North station. There is no record of firearms being stolen from Palmerston North other than the April 2019 instance you referred to. In addition to a database search being performed for firearms thefts, two police officers who have worked in Palmerston North for 28 and 35 years respectively have been consulted, and neither of them has any memory of previous firearms thefts at that station.

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

Yours sincerely



**Mike McIlraith**  
Acting Superintendent  
Arms Act Service Delivery Group