

5 Jun 2019

Our Reference: IR-01-19-7586

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you in response to your request dated 17 March 2019. You asked:

- I'm working on a big feature for tomorrow's papers and online, and I've come across what looks to be an excellently laid out resource from police, on the parliament website, regarding the problem of illegal firearms in particular.*
- This [document](#) is likely a little out of date now though - the latest figures on it, going up to 2016. I was just hoping to check whether it was possible to get an update on some or all of these figures.*
- And on the number of legal firearms within NZ, I'm working to the widely-reported topline figures of about 250,000 firearms licenses issued, approx 1.5m guns thought to be in NZ. Is there anything else police might like to add to that picture of legal firearms?*
- Is it possible to know how many people roughly own Category A rifles, legally, which fall into the semi-automatic class? (Or is that we don't know, half the problem?)*

As at 2 May 2019, there are 244,425 people who hold an active standard firearms licence (this does not include visitor licences). Of these, 236,937 people do not have an endorsement to hold a MSSA, pistol, or restricted weapon. There is no way of knowing how many firearms are possessed by these 236,937 licence holders.

The number of new pistols, MSSAs, and restricted weapons currently held by active endorsement holders is shown below. Note that E endorsement was revoked by a legislation change on 12 April 2019 and all MSSAs are held under amnesty.

Firearm Type	Firearms
MSSA	13,294
Pistol	40,387
Machine Guns	4,930
Other Restricted	1,262

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## Police National Headquarters

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The number of seized firearms by financial year is shown below.

Firearm Type	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Rifle	584	664	615	748
Shotgun	354	355	341	432
Airgun	207	178	189	214
Handgun	56	76	77	112
Imitation	27	43	32	31
MSSA	23	61	19	50

The number of firearms reported stolen during a burglary or theft offence is shown below. Some of these firearms have since been recovered.

Fiscal Year	Firearms
2015/16	1,005
2016/17	830
2017/18	832

Police has not performed any other approximation of legal non-endorsed firearms held in New Zealand since the Thorp report referenced in the document you linked. Police holds no information on how many semi-automatic firearms are held without an endorsement. These questions are refused in accordance with section 18(g) as the information is not held. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision.

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



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