

IR-01-24-36910

19 November 2024

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request dated 18 October 2024 in relation to “[...] Sovereign Citizens losing their firearms licences.”  
<https://www.thepress.co.nz/nz-news/350415010/over-60-sovcits-lose-their-firearms-licen/ces-intelligence-op>.”

I have answered each of your questions below.

*The news report says that 158 of the group were identified as licence holders.*

To clarify, there were a total of 254 individuals (as at 23 September 2024) who had a firearms licence with a Sovereign Citizen (SovCit) alert in the National Intelligence Application (NIA). I refer you to Table 1 (below) that shows the firearms licence status of these individuals as at 23 September 2024. Of that number, 96 individuals were recorded as having a “revoked licence status” and this subset had been deducted from the set of 254 which left 158 firearms licence holders with a SovCit alert, which is the number used the news report referred to.

However, statement in the news report that “158 of the group identified as licence holders” is inaccurate because it includes individuals who had applied for a firearms licence and had their applications refused and those whose licences were being considered for revocation, temporarily suspended, expired, surrendered, refused, cancelled, pending, or in the process of being renewed or reinstated.

**Table 1: Number of firearms licence holders with a SovCit alert including their firearms licence status and sub status and definition of status as at 23 September 2024**

Licence Status	Sub status	Count of licence number <sup>1</sup>	Definition of licence status
Current		96 (38%)	Licence is current, and the licence holder can act within the Law.
Revoked	Revoked – no further reason identified	25 (10%)	This is where the licence has been revoked, but no further reason identified – these are primarily

<sup>1</sup> CAVEAT: Count is based on distinct count of licence number.

			historical revocations, prior to NIA system changes.
	Not fit and proper	<b>66</b> (26%)	Licence holder has had their licence taken off them due to not meeting the requirement to be fit and proper to hold a licence.
	Family Harm	<b>4</b> (2%)	Licence holder has had their licence taken off them due to family harm concerns.
	By Association	<b>1</b> (0%)	Licence holder has had their licence taken off them due to associating with people who are not fit and proper e.g., gang associations.
Considering revocation		<b>2</b> (1%)	Licence holder has come to the attention of Police or Resolutions and their licence has been temporarily suspended. They have the opportunity to make submissions as to why they should be able to retain their Licence.
Temporarily Suspended		<b>2</b> (1%)	Licence holder has come to the attention of Police or Resolutions and a temporary suspension has been considered, but eventually the decision was to not suspend to licence.
Expired		<b>25</b> (10%)	Licence has past the expiry date. No further application has been received from the licence holder. Firearms should not be in the possession of the licence holder as they are unlicensed.
Surrendered		<b>20</b> (8%)	Licence holder has chosen to surrender their licence; they are no longer a current licence holder. Any firearms held should be confirmed as being in possession of a suitably licenced person. Those who have surrendered their licence can submit a new application at any time.
Refused	Refused – no further reason identified	<b>3</b> (1%)	This is where the licence has been refused, but no further reason identified
	Administrative	<b>3</b> (1%)	The applicant has not supplied enough information, or the administrator has refused the licence at the pre application stage.
	Not fit and proper	<b>2</b> (1%)	Refused due to the applicant not being fit & proper to hold a licence.

Renewal in progress	2 (1%)	A licence application has been received prior to the expiry date. If a licence holder applies before the expiry date, they can use and possess their firearms until the outcome of their application has been approved/declined.
Reinstate in progress	1 (0%)	A licence application is received by an individual has previously exited our system - for example they may have let their licence expire or surrendered their licence. Licence holder is deemed as unlicensed and firearms need to be stored with a current licence holder until the application is approved/declined.
Cancelled	1 (0%)	Either the licence holder is deceased or administrative purposes
Pending	1 (0%)	A firearms licence application has been submitted by an individual who has never previously held a firearms licence
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>	

Source: NIA retrieved 23 September 2024.

Please note, the fact a firearms licence has been revoked for an individual with a SovCit NIA alert should not be taken to mean the licence was revoked for that reason. NIA information is reviewed, assessed and analysed in order to inform any decision relating to the fitness and propriety of any such person, pursuant to the provisions of section 24A of the Arms Act 1983, which are very wide ranging. The decision may turn on a single or multiple grounds for concern pursuant to section 24A.

In all cases, an individual situation is assessed holistically and with due regard to the information available, including any information provided by the firearms licence holder, following the principles of natural justice and in accordance with legislation."

*Could you please tell me how many of these 158 people held endorsements and which types of endorsements they held?*

As it is not possible to report on the total from the 158 individuals (see clarification above), however the Te Tari Pūreke data team can provide information relating to the 96 current licence holders that also have a SovCit alert on their NIA file.

Of the 96 current firearms licence holders with a SovCit alert, four individuals have current endorsements. Three hold a Pistol club member (B) endorsement, and one licence holder holds two endorsements - a Pistol club member endorsement (B), and a Bona Fide Collector – Pistol/Restricted Weapon (C) endorsement.

*I would also like to know how many of the endorsement holders lost their endorsement (but not their licence), how many lost their endorsement and their licence, and how many retained their endorsement(s). For those that retained*



*their endorsements, please say what type of endorsement it is. For those that lost just their endorsements, please say what type of endorsements they lost.*

I have interpreted this part of your request relating to “lost” endorsements or licences to mean a revoked status where action has been taken to remove a licence or endorsement or change the endorsement status from active to non-active from an individual firearms licence holder.

Note that a licence holder is unable to retain an endorsement without also retaining their firearms licence.

Of the 96 current firearms licence holders with a SovCit alert, eight have a non-current endorsement status but hold an active licence. One licence holder applied for two endorsements and was refused both P-Pest Control – Prohibited Firearm/Magazine endorsements which results in a total of nine endorsements.

I refer you to Table 2 (below) that shows the number of endorsements that have a non-current licence status where the licence holder has retained their firearms licence broken down by type of endorsement and their status as at 22 October 2024.

**Table 2: Number of Endorsements that have a non-current licence status where the licence holder has retained their firearms licence broken down by type of endorsement and status as at 22 October 2024**

Endorsement type	Status of non-current Endorsements attached to current A CAT Firearms licence			
	Cancelled	Expired	Refused (administrative)	Surrendered
B- Pistol Club Member – Target Pistol				1
E-Military Style/Semi-Automatic		5		
F Restricted – dealer employee	1			
P-Pest Control – Prohibited Firearm			1	
P-Pest Control – Prohibited Magazine			1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

One (1) licence holder held three endorsements - Memento/Heirloom – Pistol/Restricted Weapon (C), Collector – Prohibited Firearm (P), and Collector - Prohibited Magazine (P). One licence holder held one endorsement – Pistol Club Member – Target Pistol (B).

Two firearms licence holders have had their endorsement and licence revoked.

Note that this table shows the number of endorsements, not the number of firearms licence holders. (Please refer to Table 1 for the definition of each non-current status type).

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review this decision if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

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.

Nāku noa, nā



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**Acting Director Operations**  
**Firearms Safety Authority**

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982