

10 November 2025

IR-01-25-38447

**s 9(2)(a) OIA**

Tēnā koe **s 9(2)(a) OIA**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request dated 21 October 2025. You requested:

I have answered each question below.

*When a firearm is surrendered to a dealer and then passed on to Police for further inspection and inquiries under s59A of the Arms Act:*

1) *How long do those inquiries take*

The Firearms Safety Authority (the Authority) and Police need to be satisfied that the firearm has not been reported lost, stolen or used in a crime. This means that the time taken for the inquiry, however long, is required to review all relevant records.

2) *What is the purpose of the inquiries that Police make*

Please refer to Regulation 29B<sup>1</sup> of the Arms Regulations 1992 (the Regulations).

3) *Can you provide SOP's or other primary source materials that detail the process Police take when conducting inquiries*

Please refer to the attached current operational policy for section 59A of the Arms Act 1983 (the Act).

4) *How many firearms have been turned in for inspection under S59A by firearm type, in the last 3 years (prohibited firearm, restricted weapon, handgun etc)*

5) *Of those firearms, how many were retained by Police?*

6) *How many were returned to the dealer who gave them to Police?*

Data relating to firearms submitted for inspection under section 59A of the Act cannot be extracted due to the manner in which it is recorded in Police National Intelligence Application (NIA). In NIA it is recorded manually in a free text narrative text box and any information recorded in the NIA narrative relating to section 59A of the Act is not done consistently or with standard searchable key words or key word type, whether capitalisation, spaces, full stops and dashes were used.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/1992/0346/latest/LMS643311.html>

The Police data extraction tool does not enable Te Tari Pūreke to search NIA narratives for words or sentences that have a likeness to the original text being searched, it can only pull an exact match. This means that if any information referencing section 59A of the Act is recorded at all, Te Tari Pūreke are unable to extract this information.

To provide this information for you it would require a manual search of the narrative records held for each dealer in NIA (currently 431 active dealers) for any instances where there might be a reference to section 59A of the Act and would likely make an unreasonable impact the Authority's ability to carry out its other operations. Even if it were possible to extract the information, it would not be complete nor accurate due to the above.

Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the OIA that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

*7) What processes go into determining if a firearm is retained by Police as opposed to being returned to the dealer of origin for circulation as a registered firearm?*

Please refer to Regulation 29B of the Regulations.

Police has discretion whether to return firearms – each case is determined on a case-by-case basis. If the item is not identified as being lost, stolen or used in a crime, the Authority will consider returning the item to the dealer. The Authority will consider the item itself, the activities and classes of arms items the dealer is licensed and/or endorsed to possess. Then the Authority will consider whether it is appropriate to return the item, including whether to issue a permit to possess for an endorsed item, and will consider if any conditions are required for the item to return to the dealer.

Note that section 59A of the Act was introduced post the Christchurch Terrorist Attack (2020) to:

- Enable anonymous surrender of arms items to dealers.
- Exempt dealers from permit and recording requirements if they surrender items to Police within five working days.

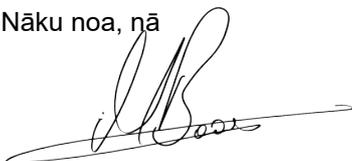
When a dealer receives an arms item surrendered under section 59A, they must surrender that item to Police in five working days.

The Authority and Police are legislatively required to determine whether the item was lost, stolen or used in a crime. Such inquiries are likely to take longer than five working days, but ultimately, it will take however long is required to diligently review all relevant records.

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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**Firearms Safety Authority**