

3 March 2025

IR-01-25-4196

s 9(2)(a) OIA

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request dated 5 February 2025 where you asked for information in relation to firearms licences.

I have answered each question below.

*1. The number of people who applied but were not granted a firearms licence by Police since 24 June 2020.*

When a firearms licence application is made, a 'licence application event' is entered into the National Intelligence Application (NIA). Once a final decision has been made in relation to the licence, the event is closed and comment added of 'Approved', 'Refused', or 'Withdrawn'.

There has been a total of 1,909 firearms licence applications refused since 24 June 2020.

I refer you to Table 1 below, which shows the number of firearms applications refused, broken down by year, licence application type, number per Police district, number of distinct licence holders and total from 2020 to 10 February 2025.

Note that this number includes events closed in NIA as 'Refused' since 24 June 2020 to 10 February 2025. This includes A-Standard (individual), Dealer, and Visitor licence applications. A licence holder may submit more than one application (for example, a Dealer licence on top of their individual licence), therefore a licence holder may have more than one 'event'.

From 2021, licensing activities were impacted by an internal file review, COVID-19 and the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCOI). This resulted in unactioned licence applications building up. To address this, the Historic File Support Team (HFST) was established in July 2021 and worked on licences that had been in the system for more than 365 days. During this time, until the HFST was disestablished in June 2023, there was an increased level of throughput in terms of licence processing, and subsequently an increase in licence refusals.

**Table 1: Number of firearms applications refused broken down by year, application type, number of distinct events, and distinct licence holder totals from 2020 to 2025**

Year	Application type	Distinct Events <sup>1</sup>	Distinct Licence Holders <sup>2</sup>
2020 (part year)	Dealer Application	0	0
	Licence Application	35	34
	Visitor Application	0	0
2021	Dealer Application	0	0
	Licence Application	256	253
	Visitor Application	4	4
2022	Dealer Application	2	2
	Licence Application	619	618
	Visitor Application	2	2
2023	Dealer Application	6	6
	Licence Application	543	543
	Visitor Application	7	7
2024	Dealer Application	2	2
	Licence Application	346	345
	Visitor Application	35	34
2025 (to 10 February)	Dealer Application	0	0
	Licence Application	51	51
	Visitor Application	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,909</b>	<b>1,902<sup>3</sup></b>

Source: NIA, retrieved 10 February 2025.

## 2. The number of firearms licences surrendered to Police since 24 June 2020.

A total of 5,626 licence holders have surrendered their licence<sup>4</sup> between 24 June 2020 and 10 February 2025.

Note that a licence holder may surrender their licence or endorsement for a variety of reasons, and licences that are surrendered in one year may also be reinstated the same year.

I refer you to Table 2 below that shows the number of firearms licences surrendered broken down by year, licence types and totals from 24 June 2020 to 10 February 2025.

There are a number of factors which could have contributed to the increase in surrendered firearms licences in 2024. These include an increasing ageing cohort of licence holders, changes to the licensing process and the implementation of the Firearms Registry in June 2023. There has also been engagement from our Partnerships Team with the licence holder community including enhanced information around licence holders proactively surrendering their licence in certain situations and enhanced information on the website around the process to surrender your licence.

### **Table 2: Number of firearms licences surrendered broken down by year, licence types and totals from 2020 to 2025**

<sup>1</sup> Distinct count of events is a count of the Event ID. A licence holder may submit more than one application and an individual may therefore be counted more than once.

<sup>2</sup> Count is based on a distinct count of Licence Number; therefore, an individual will only be counted once.

<sup>3</sup> Total is not a distinct count of licence holders, rather the total across each year. Therefore, a licence holder may be counted more than once in this total.

<sup>4</sup> Data has been captured based on the licence status change date occurring between 24 June 2020 and 10 February 2025 and includes A-Standard and Dealer licence holders.

Year	A-Standard	Dealer	Total
2020 (part year)	904	13	917
2021	961	30	991
2022	678	15	693
2023	991	11	1,002
2024	1,640	13	1,653
2025 (to 10 Feb)	373	0	373
<b>Distinct events<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>5,547</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>5,629</b>
<b>Distinct licences<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>5,544</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>5,626</b>

Source: NIA, retrieved 10 February 2025

### 3. The number of firearms licences revoked by Police since 24 June 2020.

There has been a total of 4,222 licence revocations recorded in NIA. This includes both A-Standard and Dealer licence holders.

When a licence is Revoked, the licence status in NIA is changed to a 'Revoked' status.

I refer you to Table 3 below that shows the number of firearms licences revoked broken down by year, number of revocations each year and total from 24 June 2020 to 10 February 2025.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 3: Number of firearms licences revoked broken down by year, number of revocations each year and total from June 2020 to 10 February 2025**

Year	Revocations
2020 (part year)	442
2021	1,161
2022	832
2023	898
2024	781
2025 (to 10 February)	108
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,222</b>

Source: NIA, retrieved 10 February 2025

### 4. The number of appeals lodged by firearms licence holders against licence revocations since 24 June 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Distinct count of events is a count of the Event ID. A licence holder may submit more than one application and an individual may therefore be counted more than once.

<sup>6</sup> Count is based on a distinct count of Licence Number; therefore, an individual will only be counted once.

<sup>7</sup> Occurrences of licences that have been changed from one revoked status to another are not included. When a licence is Revoked, the Revoked status must remain in place until either the revocation has been overturned or the licence holder has reapplied and had a licence reinstated after the mandatory 5 years. There are times where this revoked status is incorrectly changed to another status when a revoked licence holder re-applies and is subsequently corrected back to a Revoked status. Due to how this is recorded, these situations are unable to be excluded and therefore a licence may appear as having two separate revocation occurrences rather than one. These can only be excluded through individual interrogation. Figure One provides a count of Revoked Licences and does not count revocations at the Endorsement Level where the licence remains in some other status. Revoked Licences can be revoked in a given year and later reinstated. These numbers are a unique count of licences that were revoked each calendar year; however, their status may have since changed.

In total, 958 events were created, 10 of which are pending an outcome.<sup>8</sup> There is no data available for 2020 and this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held.

When a licence holder has been issued a notice of revocation, they may apply to the Commissioner for a review of the decision under Section 62 of the Arms Act 1983<sup>9</sup> (the Act).

The applicant must state:

- a. The decision that the applicant wishes to be reviewed; and
- b. The reasons why the applicant thinks the decision should be reviewed; and
- c. The outcome the applicant is seeking.

An application for review must be made within 28 days after the date on which notice of the relevant decision has been given to the applicant.

The Commissioner may accept a late application no later than 28 days after the closing date if satisfied that there are extenuating circumstances that affected the ability of the applicant do so by the closing date.

I refer you to Table 4 below that shows the number of revocation review events, made under section 62 of the Act, broken down by revocation review outcome, year and total between 24 June 2020 and 10 February 2025.

**Table 4: the number of revocation review events broken down by revocation review outcome, year and total between 24 June 2020 and 10 February 2025**

Outcome	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Revocation Upheld	155	198	166	137	4	660
Revocation Overturned – No further action	40	16	35	22	1	114
Revocation Overturned – Warning	41	27	16	11	0	95
Revocation Overturned – Conditions Applied	9	15	6	6	0	36
No right of review	0	5	6	7	2	20
Review Withdrawn	4	4	5	3	0	16
Pending outcome	0	0		3	7	10
Licence surrendered	1	0	3	3	0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>958</b>

Source: NIA, retrieved 10 February 2025

*5. The number of successful appeals by firearms licence holders against licence revocations since 24 June 2020.*

<sup>8</sup> Data has been captured where the event started on date was between 24 June 2020 and 10 February 2025.

<sup>9</sup>[https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1983/0044/latest/whole.html?search=sw\\_096be8ed81ec89e9\\_benefit\\_25\\_se&p=1#DLM73319](https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1983/0044/latest/whole.html?search=sw_096be8ed81ec89e9_benefit_25_se&p=1#DLM73319)

A total of 245 revocations were overturned following the successful revocation review, as of 10 February 2025.

If a licence holder is dissatisfied with the outcome of their review, they may make an appeal to the District Court under Section 62B of the Act.

Te Tari Pūreke's Resolutions Team receives notification of the appeal and maintains liaison with the relevant Crown Solicitor who is engaged to represent Te Tari Pūreke on such matters.

Such appeals are undertaken within the civil jurisdiction and heard on a 'de novo' ("anew", "from the beginning", or "afresh") basis. An outcome is provided determining whether the appeal is withdrawn, upheld, or dismissed.

All appeals are scrutinised individually to determine the outcome on a case by case basis. Examples of the reasons a decision may be upheld include the passage of time (e.g., a revocation is issued to the behaviour of an individual at a point in time) or changes in circumstances.<sup>10</sup>

I refer you to Table 5 below that shows the number of District Court review appeals broken down by year, outcome<sup>11</sup> which can be, dismissed or withdrawn or upheld, and totals from 24 June 2020 to 10 February 2025. The 109 appealed to a District Court is 2.5 per cent of all revocation decisions across this period being taken to review; and the 37 appeals upheld represents less than one per cent (0.88 per cent) of all the revocation decisions made.

**Table 5: number of District Court review appeals broken down by year, number dismissed or withdrawn, upheld and totals from 24 June 2024 to 10 February 2025**

Year	Appeal Dismissed or Withdrawn	Appeal Upheld <sup>12</sup>	Total
2020 (part year)	0	0	0
2021	0	0	0
2022	23	10	33
2023	19	14	33
2024	27	12	39
2025	3	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>109</b>

Source: NIA, retrieved 10 February 2025

*6. How many "revoked" firearms licence holders are awaiting the five years (or more) necessary to reapply for their firearms licence?*

To answer this part of your request would require the manual inspection of each firearms licence holder whose licence had previously been revoked and subsequently reapplied in order to accurately establish a length of time between the revocation and reapplication.

<sup>10</sup> A change in individual circumstances could include, but is not limited to, cases where good character has been exhibited, or undertaking of character improvement.

<sup>11</sup> The date is based on the date the event was completed, and the outcome applied at the time of completion, and does not include court appeal events that are not yet resolved.

<sup>12</sup> Appeals upheld indicate those which were found in favor of the licence holder.



If a licence holder who had been revoked and had reapplied for their licence prior to the end of the five-year period, their licence application would not be processed. Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the OIA, as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Please refer to the caveats (footnotes) for additional context around the data provided in this response. The data contained in this response is drawn from a dynamic operational database and is subject to change as new information is recorded or updated.

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



Matthew Boddy  
**Acting Director Operations**  
**Firearms Safety Authority**