

Statistical Bulletin

Crime and Justice Series

A National Statistics Publication for Scotland

FIREARM CERTIFICATE STATISTICS, SCOTLAND, MARCH 2014
7 October 2014

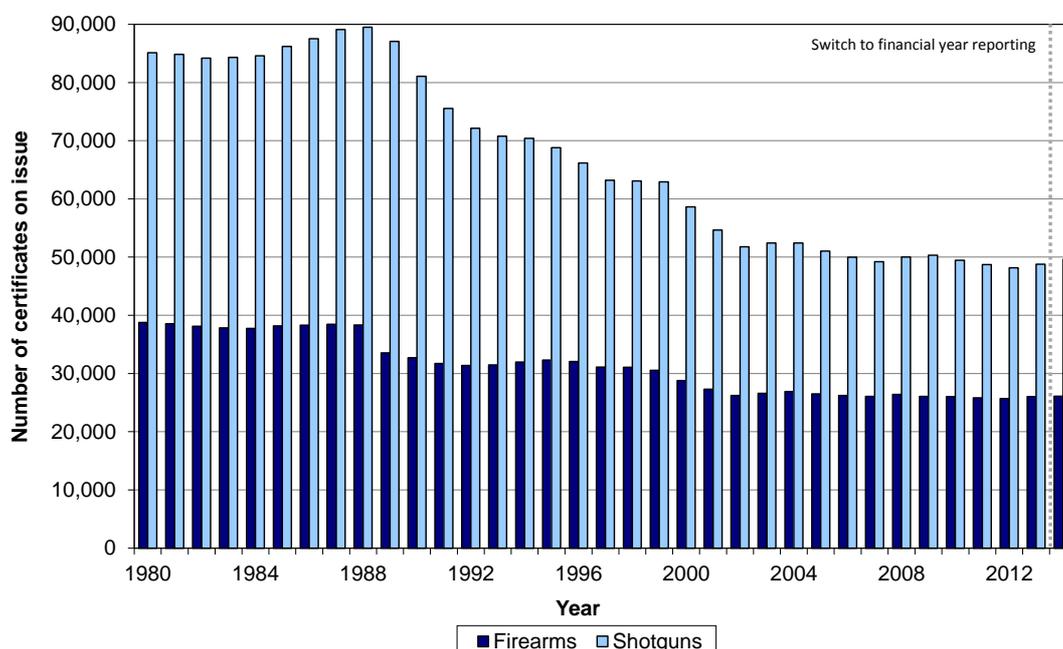


1. Introduction

This bulletin presents statistics on the number of firearm and shotgun certificates on issue under the Firearms Act 1968 (as amended), covering certificates issued by the police in Scotland over the last ten years. From 2014-15 onwards, statistics on firearm and shotgun certificates will be published for the end of a financial year instead of the end of a calendar year. The available data is as at March 2014, only three months since the previous bulletin.

In this bulletin, statistics for shotguns are shown separately from other firearms. The definitions of a firearm and of a shotgun are given in [Section 5](#), along with regulations covering firearms licensing and further background information on the data presented in this bulletin. A related publication provides statistics on the number of crimes and offences involving the alleged use of a firearm. The National Statistics bulletin '[Recorded Crimes and Offences Involving Firearms, Scotland, 2012-13](#)', was published in November 2013.

Chart 1: Number of firearm and shotgun certificates on issue in Scotland as at 31 December, 1980 to 2013 and as at 31 March 2014



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2. Main Points

- There were 26,101 firearm certificates on issue at the end of March 2014, a marginal increase (less than half of 1%) compared to the end of December 2013. Within its historical context, the figure remains relatively low ([Table 1](#) and [Charts 1](#) and [2](#)).
- The 26,101 firearm certificates on issue at the end of March 2014 covered the possession of 91,863 items. There was an artificial increase of over 12,000 in the number of items held on firearm certificates between the end of December 2012 and December 2013. This is due to a change in recording practices in relation to sound moderators and is nearly wholly attributable to an increase in the number of miscellaneous firearms. A similar issue has resulted in a further increase of around 7,500 items held on a firearm certificates between the end of 2013 and end of March 2014. Again, this can be almost wholly accounted for by an increase in the number of miscellaneous firearms. For further information please see [Note 5.2.6](#). ([Table 1](#) and [Chart 2](#)).
- There were 49,165 shotgun certificates on issue at the end of March 2014, an increase of 1% from the end of 2013. Despite increases since the end of 2012, there has been a 4% decrease in the number of shotgun certificates on issue since the end of December 2005 covered by this bulletin ([Table 3](#) and [Charts 1](#) and [3](#)).
- The 49,165 shotgun certificates on issue at the end of March 2014 covered the possession of 142,142 shotguns, the highest number of shotguns held on certificates in the period covered by this bulletin. This is an increase of 10% in the number of shotguns held on certificate compared to the end of 2005 ([Table 3](#) and [Chart 3](#)).
- The average number of shotguns held on each certificate issued has increased from 2.5 at the end of 2005 to 2.9 at the end of March 2014, which has remained the same since the end of 2011 ([Table 3](#)).
- There were 358 registered firearm dealers in Scotland at the end of March 2014, an increase of eight since the end of 2013. This is the highest number of registered dealers in the ten year period covered by this bulletin, an increase of just under a third (30%) from the 275 registered dealers at the end of 2005 ([Table 4](#)).

3. Background

It should be noted that amendments to firearm regulations in January 1995 increased the validity period of firearm and shotgun certificates from three to five years. This effectively meant that there were no certificate renewals in either 1998 or 1999 and this in turn has had a cyclical effect of increasing the number of certificate renewals, cancellations and certificates on issue in certain years, whilst reducing the number in the intervening years.

The statistics on firearm certificates are used to inform [National Outcome 9](#) – ‘we live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger’ as well as [The Strategy for Justice in Scotland](#). These statistics are also used by a wide range of stakeholders to monitor trends, for policy research and development, and for research purposes.

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 changed the policing landscape in Scotland, replacing the previous eight police forces, the Scottish Police Services Authority and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency from 1 April 2013. Police Scotland is now responsible for operational policing in Scotland and is held to account by the Scottish Police Authority.

Following the establishment of Police Scotland, a national SHOGUN firearms licensing system has been developed. The national SHOGUN system will become operational in October 2014. Due to the nature of the SHOGUN system, once the national system is introduced it will only be possible to provide statistics on the number of firearm and shotgun certificates at a national level, with no regional or geographic breakdowns being available. As a consequence, the data in this bulletin are presented on a national level only.

In addition, the new system will only be able to recover statistics from the point of introduction onwards. The national SHOGUN system will have to be running for 12 months before complete statistics on the number of firearm and shotgun certificates will be available. In the interim period, the system will only be able to provide headline statistics on the number of firearm and shotgun certificates at a given time. This means that for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 bulletins, only headline statistics for the number of firearm and shotgun certificates will be available.

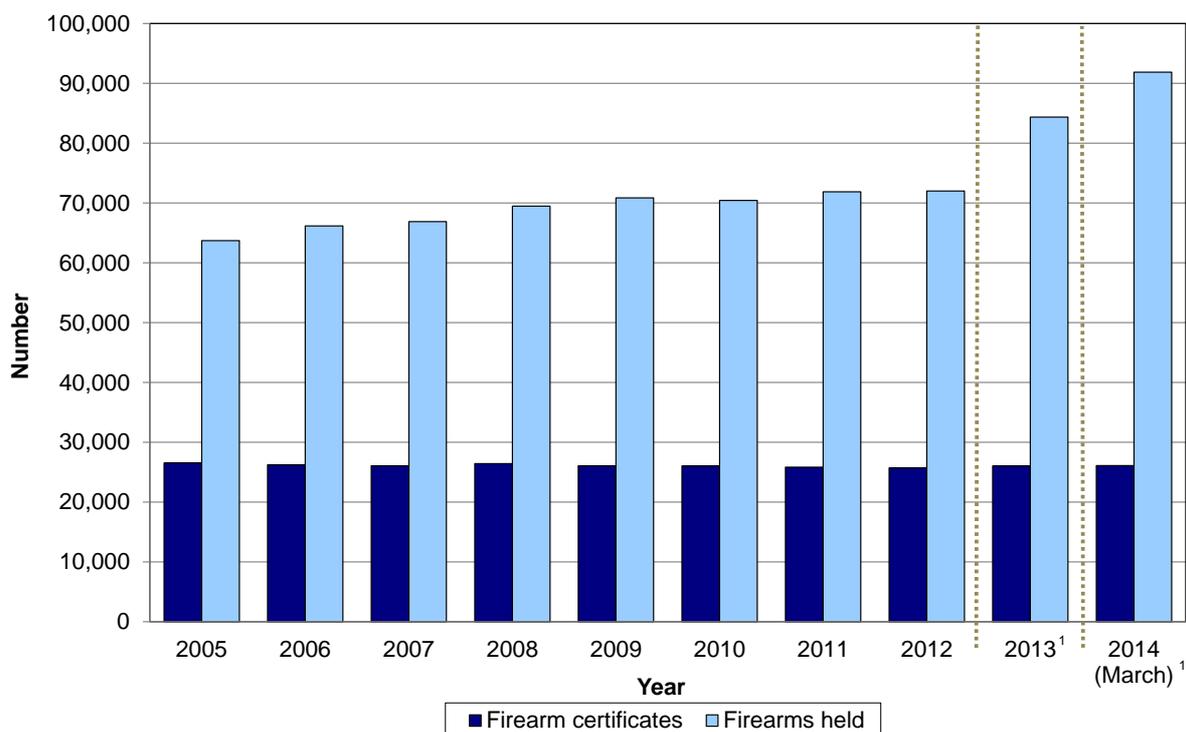
4. Commentary

To facilitate moving to presenting the data on a financial year basis, this bulletin reports for firearm certificates as at 31 March 2014. This means any changes from the previous bulletin only covers a three month period. The data are presented on a headline basis, in the same format as how we intend to present the 2014-15 and 2015-16 data.

4.1 Firearm Certificates (Table [1](#) and Chart [1, 2](#))

- There were 26,101 firearm certificates on issue at the end of March 2014, a slight increase from the end of 2013. The number of firearm certificates on issue at the end of March 2014 is lower than the figure at the start of the series, namely at the end of 2005.

Chart 2: Number of firearm certificates on issue and number of firearms held on certificate in Scotland as at 31 December, 2005 to 2013 and as at 31 March 2014



As at end of December unless otherwise stated.

1. Due to a change in recording practices relating to sound moderators, there was an increase of around 10,000 in the number of miscellaneous items held on firearm certificates at the end of 2013. The same change in recording practice resulted in a further increase of around 7,100 miscellaneous items held on firearm certificates at the end of March 2014. For further information please see [Note 5.2.6](#).

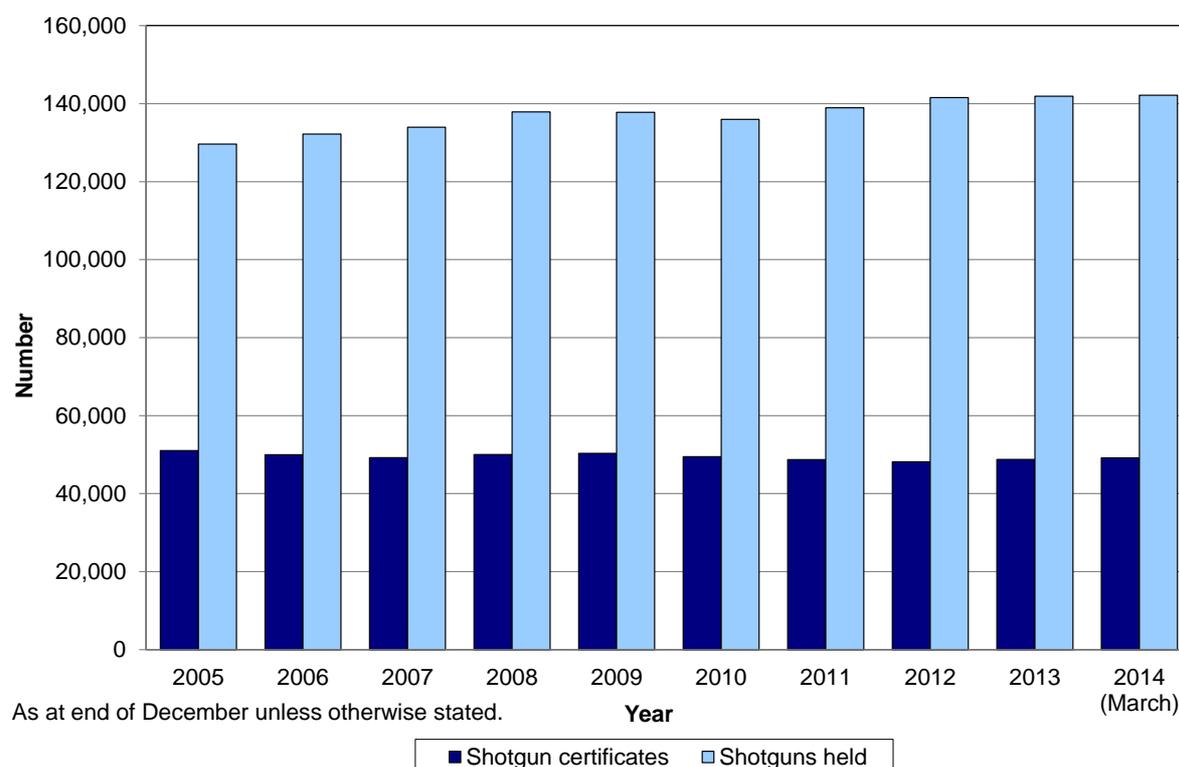
- The number of items held on firearms certificate at the end of March 2014 was 91,863, an increase of 7,505 from the end of 2013. This is largely due to a change in the recording practice in relation to sound moderators. For further information please see [Note 5.2.6](#). For 2013 and the first quarter of 2014, the increase in the number of firearms on issue are anomalous, and so should not be used in time series analysis. For further information on the number of items possessed on firearm certificates, please see Notes [5.2.8](#) and [5.2.9](#).
- Although the number of firearm certificates on issue has increased marginally in the three months period to the end of March 2014, the figures have remained relatively stable since the end of December 2005 period covered by this bulletin.
- At the end of March 2014, the number of firearm certificates on issue per head of population in Scotland was 490 per 100,000 population, an increase of two per 100,000 population compared to the end of March 2013.

4.2 Shotgun Certificates (Table 3 and Chart 3)

- There were 49,165 shotgun certificates on issue at the end of March 2014, a marginal increase from the end of 2013. This coincides with increases between end of 2012 and end of 2013. Within its historical thirty year context, the recent increases can be considered marginal after a long period of decline.
- The 49,165 shotgun certificates on issue at the end of March 2014 covered the possession of 142,142 shotguns, an increase of less than half of 1% from the end of 2013. For further information on the number of weapons possessed on shotgun certificates, please see Notes [5.2.8](#) and [5.2.9](#).
- Since the end of 2005 there has been an increase of 10% in the number of shotguns held on a certificate, while over the same period there has been a 4% decrease in the number of shotgun certificates on issue. As a result, the average number of shotguns held on each certificate issued has increased from 2.5 at the end of 2005 to 2.9 at the end of March 2014 (which has not changed since the end of 2011).

The number of shotgun certificates on issue in Scotland at the end of March 2014 per 100,000 population was 923. This is an increase of seven per 100,000 population compared to the figure at the end of 2013.

Chart 3: Number of shotgun certificates on issue and number of shotguns held on certificate in Scotland as at 31 December, 2005 to 2013, and as at 31 March 2014



4.3 Firearm Dealers ([Table 4](#))

- There were 358 registered firearm dealers in Scotland at the end of March 2014, an increase of 2% from the 350 registered dealers at the end of 2013. This is the highest number of dealers since records began.
- The number of registered dealers per 100,000 population has been steadily increasing through the period from 2005 to March 2014, but (5.4 in December 2005 and 6.7 in March 2014).

4.4 European Firearms Passes ([Table 5](#))

- There were 1,373 European Firearms Passes (EFPs) on issue at the end of March 2014, an increase of 2% on the 1,349 on issue at the end of 2013. Please note that the number of EFPs on issue in 2013-14 in the legacy Strathclyde Police force area is an undercount. For further information, please see [Note 5.2.4](#).

Table 1: Firearm Certificates – number of firearm certificates on issue and items held on firearm certificates in Scotland as at 31 December, 2005 to 2013 and as at 31 March 2014

Year	Firearm certificates on issue	Firearm certificates on issue per 100,000 population ¹	Number & Rate	
			Items held on firearm certificates	Average number of items held on each firearm certificate
2005 ²	26,511	519	63,710	2.4
2006 ²	26,234	511	66,164	2.5
2007	26,056	504	66,893	2.6
2008	26,415	508	69,481	2.6
2009	26,072	498	70,856	2.7
2010	26,035	495	70,410	2.7
2011	25,831	487	71,860	2.8
2012	25,702	484	72,005	2.8
2013 ³	26,020	488	84,358	3.2
March 2014 ³	26,101	490	91,863	3.5

Notes:

1. Mid-year population estimates are from the National Records of Scotland:

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/population/estimates/mid-year/index.html>.

2. A software problem in 2005 and 2006 affected the data submitted by the legacy Fife Constabulary. For further information please see [Note 5.2.3](#).

3. Due to a change in recording practices relating to sound moderators, there was an increase of around 10,000 in the number of items held on firearm certificates in 2013. At the end of March 2014, the same change in recording practice resulted in a further increase of around 7,100 items held on firearm certificates. For further information please see [Note 5.2.6](#).

Table 2: Firearm Certificates – number of items possessed on firearm certificates and number of additional items authorised to be purchased or acquired on firearm certificates in Scotland as at 31 March 2014

	Type of Item										Number	
	Section 1 Shotgun ¹	Rifle	Handgun ^{2,3}	Carbine		Muzzleloader		Air weapon ⁴		Miscellaneous ^{5,6}	Breakdown of type of item not available ⁷	Total
				Under Lever	Bolt Action	Rifle	Handgun	Rifle	Handgun			
Possessed ⁸	1,840	44,267	805	87	13	195	482	352	107	23,570	20,145	91,863
Authorised to be purchased/acquired	347	5,345	115	16	4	50	98	96	1	5,530	1,075	12,677
Total	2,187	49,612	920	103	17	245	580	448	108	29,100	21,220	104,540

Notes:

1. Any smooth-bore gun which has a barrel of less than 24 inches in length, has a magazine which takes more than two cartridges or has a removable magazine.
2. Includes those items which were exempt from the Firearms (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 1997, e.g. single shot humane killers, shot pistols, trophies of war, antique firearms and 'handguns' used by the SSPCA.
3. A large part of the increase in the number of handguns compared to previous years is a result of harmonised recording practises resulting from the establishment of Police Scotland. Humane killers should be recorded as handguns but in previous returns some legacy force areas had not been recording them as such.
4. For further information on the types of air weapons that a firearm certificate is required for please see [Note 5.4.3](#).
5. Includes items such as Section 5 firearms, tranquillising rifles, etc.
6. Due to a change in recording practices relating to sound moderators last year and again this year there has been increases in the number of miscellaneous items held on firearm certificates (+7,100) and the number of miscellaneous items authorised to be purchased (+1,500). For further information please see [Note 5.2.6](#).
7. For technical reasons, within the legacy Tayside Police force area it is not possible to provide a breakdown of items held on firearm certificates.
8. For further information on the number of items possessed on firearm or shotgun certificates please see Notes [5.2.8](#) and [5.2.9](#).

Table 3: Shotgun Certificates – shotgun certificates on issue and shotguns held on certificate in Scotland as at 31 December, 2005 to 2013 and as at 31 March 2014

Year	Shotgun certificates on issue	Shotgun certificates on issue per 100,000 population ¹	Number & Rate	
			Shotguns held on certificate	Average number of shotguns held on each certificate
2005 ²	51,029	999	129,630	2.5
2006 ²	49,974	974	132,181	2.6
2007	49,213	952	133,940	2.7
2008	50,021	961	137,881	2.8
2009	50,308	962	137,768	2.7
2010	49,449	940	135,987	2.8
2011	48,726	919	138,939	2.9
2012	48,168	907	141,569	2.9
2013	48,779	916	141,923	2.9
March 2014	49,165	923	142,142	2.9

Notes:

1. Mid-year population estimates are from the National Records of Scotland:

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/population/estimates/mid-year/index.html>.

2. A software problem in 2005 and 2006 affected the data submitted by the legacy Fife Constabulary. For further information please see [Note 5.2.3](#).

Table 4: Firearm Dealers – number of firearm dealers registered in Scotland as at 31 December, 2005 to 2013 and as at 31 March 2014

Year	Number & Rate	
	Registered dealers	Registered dealers per 100,000 population ¹
2005	275	5.4
2006	283	5.5
2007	301	5.8
2008	327	6.3
2009	335	6.4
2010	337	6.4
2011	346	6.5
2012	353	6.6
2013	350	6.6
March 2014	358	6.7

Notes:

1. Mid-year population estimates are from the National Records of Scotland:

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/population/estimates/mid-year/index.html>.

Table 5: European Firearms Passes – the number of European Firearms Passes on issue in Scotland as at 31 December, 2005 to 2013 and as at 31 March 2014

Year	Number
	European Firearm Passes on issue ¹
2005	891
2006	974
2007	1,092
2008	1,236
2009	1,276
2010 ²	1,043
2011 ²	1,131
2012 ²	1,237
2013 ²	1,349
March 2014 ²	1,373

Notes:

1. A holder of a European Firearms Pass must hold a valid firearm or shotgun certificate.
2. The number of European Firearms Passes issued in the legacy Strathclyde Police force area is currently an undercount. For further information please see [Note 5.2.4](#).

5. Notes on statistics used in this bulletin

5.1 Definitions

5.1.1 Within the definition of the Firearms Act 1968 (as amended), a “**firearm**” means a lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged. It includes any prohibited weapon, any component part of such a weapon and any accessory to such a weapon designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by the firing of the weapon.

It is, with certain statutory exceptions, an offence to possess, purchase, or acquire any firearm or ammunition to which Section 1 of the Firearms Act 1968 applies without holding a firearm certificate.

Section 1 of the 1968 Act applies to all firearms except a shotgun or an air gun.

A “**shotgun**” is defined as a smooth-bore gun (not being an air gun) which:

(i) has a barrel not less than 24 inches in length and does not have any barrel with a bore exceeding two inches in diameter;

(ii) either has no magazine or has a non-detachable magazine incapable of holding more than two cartridges; and

(iii) is not a revolver gun. Other smooth-bore guns may require a firearm certificate.

It is, with certain statutory exceptions, an offence for a person to possess, purchase, or acquire any shotgun without holding a shotgun certificate.

5.2 Accuracy of the statistics

5.2.1 The statistics presented in this bulletin are derived from data returns submitted by Police Scotland in respect of information held on firearm and shotgun certificates on issue under the Firearms Act 1968 (as amended).

5.2.2 As the SHOGUN system is a live operational system there can be small changes in the number of firearm and shotgun certificates on issue day to day as new applications, renewals, variations or cancellations are entered and processed through the system. As a consequence, the total number of firearm and shotgun certificates on issue as at 31 December, or as at 31 March are accurate. There may be small differences in the actual number of new applications, renewals, variations or cancellations each year, compared to those shown in the tables contained in this bulletin, depending on the exact date that data were extracted from the SHOGUN system. Any resultant differences will be minor.

- 5.2.3 A software problem in 2005 and 2006 affected the data submitted by the legacy Fife Constabulary. Subsequently, the number of applications, variations and cancellations for both firearm and shotgun certificates are not wholly consistent with the totals reported. The legacy force resolved the problem for the provision of the 2007 data.
- 5.2.4 The legacy Strathclyde Police moved to using the SHOGUN system as their firearms licensing system on 31 March 2010. At present, the version of the SHOGUN system used in the legacy Strathclyde Police force area is unable to distinguish between grants of new European Firearms Passes (EFPs) and renewal/variation applications. As a result, all EFP applications issued in the legacy Strathclyde Police force area since then have been treated as a new EFP. There is therefore an undercount of EFPs issued in the legacy Strathclyde Police force area. This undercount will be rectified as and when firearm certificates come up for renewal.
- 5.2.5 For technical reasons, within the legacy Tayside Police force area, it is not possible to provide a breakdown of items held on firearm certificates.
- 5.2.6 The previous bulletin reported that there were differences in what the eight legacy police forces had included in the miscellaneous category for the type of items possessed and authorised to be purchased or acquired on firearm certificates. This in turn affects the total number of items recorded as being held on firearm certificates. The issue related to sound moderators, which are designed to suppress noise and flash. They are not firearms in themselves but are subject to certification and as such, are included in the count of items held on firearm certificates. These should be included in the miscellaneous category but only the legacy Fife Constabulary and Strathclyde Police force areas had included them in previous returns. After further discussion with Police Scotland, it was established that the legacy Tayside Police force had also been including sound moderators in their items held on firearm certificates, but they are unable provide the breakdown of items held on firearm certificates.

For the data as at 31 December 2013, two additional legacy force areas, Grampian Police and Northern Constabulary, also included sound moderators in the miscellaneous category for the first time in the series. The inclusion of sound moderators from these two additional legacy force areas resulted in an artificial increase of around 10,000 in the number of items held on firearm certificates and 2,500 authorised to be purchased or acquired, when compared with the figures as at 31 December 2012.

For data as at 31 March 2014, sound moderators are now included in the miscellaneous category for the remaining legacy force areas: Central Scotland Police, Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary and Lothian and Borders Police. This resulted in around 7,100 additional items held on firearm certificates and around 1,500 authorised to be purchased or acquired on certificate.

- 5.2.7 The cancellation of a firearm or shotgun certificate is undertaken by the holder; revocations are at the authority of the Chief Constable and occur in instances where it is believed that the holder should no longer be allowed to possess a weapon.
- 5.2.8 A firearm or shotgun certificate permits the holder to possess one or more weapons, thus changes in the number of certificates will not necessarily reflect changes in the number of weapons held legally.
- 5.2.9 It is accepted that the total number of firearms covered by certificates will include an element of double counting, i.e. two or more individuals may each hold a certificate which permits them to possess the same firearm weapon. A certificate allows the holder to either possess or authorises them to purchase or acquire a weapon or a number of weapons.

5.3 Changes to forthcoming bulletins

- 5.3.1 With the establishment of Police Scotland and the introduction of the national SHOGUN system, it will only be possible to present the data at a Scotland level. Currently no sub-national breakdowns are available. There are on-going discussions with Police Scotland regarding the possible provisions of sub-national data. The introduction of the new system will also affect the statistics for 2014-15 and 2015-16, with only headline statistics on the number of firearm and shotgun certificates being available.
- 5.3.2 This bulletin has presented information as at 31 March 2014, relating to the three month period from 1 January 2014 to 31 March 2014 in order to aid the move to presenting data on a financial year basis from 2014-15 onwards.

5.4 Regulations on the issue of firearm and shotgun certificates

- 5.4.1 All persons acquiring or in possession of a firearm, which comes under the Section 1 of the Firearms Act 1968, or shotgun must have a certificate issued by the Chief Constable (and for the legacy police force area in which the person lives, unless they are otherwise exempt. Persons sentenced to a term of imprisonment for a period of three years or more are prohibited from possessing firearms for life. Those sentenced to three months or more but less than three years are subject to a five year prohibition from the date of their release.
- 5.4.2 There are certain conditions applicable to weapons covered by Section 1 of the Firearms Act 1968 and Section 2 of the Firearms (Amendment) Act 1988, which includes: rifles, large magazine smooth bore guns, and especially dangerous air weapons. In particular, the Chief Constable must be satisfied that an applicant has good reason for wanting a weapon, is fit to be entrusted with it and that the public safety or the peace will not be endangered. The certificate lists the number, type and serial number of each weapon held and any conditions attached, a standard condition is that weapons and ammunition are held in a secure place when not in use.

- 5.4.3 At present, a certificate is only required for air weapons that are of a type declared by the Secretary of State under the Dangerous Air Weapons Rules 1969 (as amended) to be specifically dangerous. The vast majority of air weapons held in Scotland do not require a certificate. Section 39 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 banned air weapons that use, or are designed or adapted for use with, a self-contained gas cartridge system. With effect from 20 January 2004, under section 5(3) of the 1968 Act, such weapons could not be purchased, acquired, manufactured, sold or transferred without the authority of the Secretary of State or Scottish Ministers. The offence of possession was brought into force separately under subsection 4 and came into effect on 30 April 2004. This made provision for existing owners to keep and continue to use their weapons, provided the weapons were added to a firearm certificate, new or variation. Existing owners who did not wish to apply for a certificate were able to hand their weapon into the police for disposal by 30 April 2004. This has had the result of substantially increasing the number of air weapons possessed on certificate compared to previous years.
- 5.4.4 Shotgun certificates covered by Section 2 of the 1968 Act and Section 2 of the 1988 Act permit the holder to possess any number of shotguns, which can include pump-action and self-loading weapons which have a magazine which is incapable of holding more than two cartridges but excluding large magazine smooth bore guns. Applications may not be granted or renewed if a Chief Constable has reason to believe that the applicant is prohibited by the Firearms Acts from possessing a shotgun. Nor may applications be granted or renewed unless the Chief Constable is satisfied that the applicant can be permitted to possess a shotgun without danger to public safety or to the peace (Section 3 of the 1988 Act). The certificate specifies the description of the shotguns including, if known, the identification numbers of the guns.
- 5.4.5 Certain types of weapons (e.g. machine guns) are prohibited under Section 5 of the 1968 Act, as amended by Section 1 of the 1988 Act; their possession can only be authorised by the Secretary of State or Scottish Ministers after careful enquiries by the police.
- 5.4.6 Following the Dunblane incident in 1996, changes to the existing firearms legislation were introduced to enhance public safety. As a result, the Firearms (Amendment) Act 1997 was implemented and thereafter the Firearms (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 1997. Under these Acts, all pistols, otherwise referred to as “handguns”, were banned. A number of types of handgun were exempted from the Act including muzzle-loading guns, shot pistols, slaughtering instruments, firearms used for the humane killing of animals, trophies of war etc.

5.5 Regulations on the renewal, cancellation, revocation, and variation of firearm and shotgun certificates

- 5.5.1 It should be noted that amendments to firearm regulations in January 1995 increased the validity period of firearm and shotgun certificates from three to five years. This effectively meant that there were no certificate renewals in either 1998 or 1999 and this in turn has had the cyclical effect of both

increasing the number of certificate renewals, cancellations and certificates on issue in certain years, whilst reducing the number in the intervening years.

- 5.5.2 To alter the number and type of weapons held on a firearm certificate, an application for a variation must be made to the Chief Constable. A fee is charged where the variation increases the number of firearms authorised by the certificate. The expiry date of a shotgun certificate can be aligned with the holder's firearm certificate (Section 11 of the 1988 Act).

5.6 Regulations on firearm dealer certificates

- 5.6.1 Section 13 of the 1988 Act increased the registration period for firearm dealers from one to three years. The grounds for refusal for new applications for registration were extended and a register of transactions must be retained for at least five years.
- 5.6.2 Section 31 of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 required businesses that sell air weapons to register with the police as firearm dealers. The section was brought into place in two stages: businesses were able to apply for registration from 6 April 2007 and the offence of not being registered came into effect on 1 October 2007.

5.7 Regulations on Visitor Permits and European Firearms Passes

- 5.7.1 The conditions for exemptions from holding a firearm certificate were revised in sections 15 to 19 of the 1988 Act. Visitor Permits were introduced allowing the holder to possess a firearm or shotgun without holding a certificate. Permits are in force for a period not exceeding 12 months. Group applications may be made for up to 20 persons (section 17 of the 1988 Act).
- 5.7.2 There is no charge for a Visitor Permit variation when an amendment is made to the existing conditions specified on the permit, excluding numbers of firearms authorised and expiry date. If a change is required which increases the number of firearms or shotguns authorised on the permit, or which extends the expiry date of the permit, then this is treated as a new application.
- 5.7.3 Each EU state was required to amend its firearms legislation to meet the requirements of the 1991 EC Weapons Directive. In the UK these changes were made by means of the Firearms Acts (Amendment) Regulations 1992, which made provision for the police to issue two new documents to British residents: the European Firearms Pass (EFP) and an Article 7 Authority.

The EFP is broadly speaking a passport for firearms. EU residents intending to take their firearm or shotgun to another EU state will need an EFP issued by their State of residence. There is only one criterion for the issue of an EFP to a British resident, namely that the applicant must possess a valid firearm or shotgun certificate. The EFP does not replace the certificate.

Article 7 of the Weapons Directive requires any EU resident wanting to purchase a category B firearm (e.g. short and semi-automatic rifles, carbines

and smooth bore guns), outside his or her State of residence to have the prior authority of their own State. In England, Wales and Scotland this agreement is at the discretion of the local Chief Constable for the area in which they reside. Information relating to the authority of a person to purchase or acquire a firearm/shotgun when in another EU State was first collected centrally in 1994. Firearms cannot be brought into the UK if an individual does not hold an appropriate firearm certificate, even if Article 7 Authority has been granted.

5.8 UK Statistics Authority

- 5.8.1 The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The Assessment Report, which was published in June 2011, can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-119---statistics-on-homicide--domestic-abuse--firearm-offences-and-firearm-certificates-recorded-by-the-police-in-scotland.pdf>.

5.9 UK data sources

- 5.9.1 Firearm certificates statistics for England and Wales are published by the Home Office in the 'Firearm and Shotgun Certificates in England and Wales' statistical bulletin series.

The latest bulletin for England and Wales contained information as at 31 March 2014 and was published on 7 August 2014. The bulletin can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/firearm-and-shotgun-certificates-in-england-and-wales-financial-year-ending-march-2014>.

Firearm and shotgun certificates data for England and Wales as at 31 March 2015 are scheduled for publication in late summer of 2015.

- 5.9.2 Similar statistics for the Police Service of Northern Ireland are not published; however, data can be provided through a Freedom of Information request: <http://www.psni.police.uk/directory/aboutus/publications.htm>.

5.10 Mid-year population estimates

5.10.1 Population data are derived from relevant mid-year population estimates prepared by the National Records of Scotland: <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/population/estimates/mid-year/index.html>.

5.11 Other

5.11.1 Under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, the estimated costs of responding to statistical surveys and data collection are to be published.

The estimated cost of compliance for supplying and validating the data for this bulletin is: **£300**.

Details of the calculation methodology are available on the Scottish Government Crime and Justice website at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/costcalculation>.

5.11.2 Figures for calendar years are as at 31 December. Figures for financial years are as at 31 March.

5.11.3 The following symbol is used throughout the tables in this bulletin:

- = nil.

A NATIONAL STATISTICS PUBLICATION FOR SCOTLAND

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.

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e-mail: statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics.
- are available via an alternative route.
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact JusticeAnalysts@scotland.gsi.gov.uk for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

Complaints and suggestions

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, 3WR, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: 0131 244 0302, e-mail statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

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