| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-2541  Responded to: 18 October 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**For the calendar years 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 to date, could you please tell me:**

**1. How many firearm licence holders in force area currently?**

**2. How many shotgun certificate holders in force area currently?**

Please be advised that the information sought is publicly available:

[Firearms and Explosives Licensing - Police Scotland.](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/what-we-do/firearms-and-explosives-licensing/)

The information is held by Police Scotland but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

**3. How many first time firearm licence applications were made?**

The figures provided below are for the total number of grants received.

Each would have to be assessed to determine whether it was a first time application.

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process this part of your request and I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 16(4) of the Act, as section 12(1) - Excessive Cost of Compliance - applies.

2020: 1049

2021: 1087

2022: 1002

2023: 871

**4. How many first time firearm applications were unsuccessful?**

2020: 15

2021: 17

2022: 11

2023: 8

**5. How many first time shotgun licence applications were made?**

The figures provided below are for the total number of grants received.

Each would have to be assessed to determine whether it was a first time application.

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process this part of your request and I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 16(4) of the Act, as section 12(1) - Excessive Cost of Compliance - applies.

2020: 1615

2021: 1702

2022: 1562

2023: 1216

**6. How many first time shotgun applications were unsuccessful?**

2020: 30

2021: 31

2022: 29

2023: 15

**7. What the average waiting time for the successful completion of a new firearms licence application process was in your area, ie, how long on average people waited between submitting their application and receiving their first licence (renewals excluded)?**

2020: 91 days

2021: 113 days

2022: 116 days

2023: 91 days

**8. What the average waiting time for a firearms licence renewal was in your area?**

Our Firearms Licensing System does not include this information and section 17 of the Act, information not held, therefore applies.

However, it does provide percentage of certificates renewed before expiry date which has been provided below to be of assistance. The renewal process begins 16 weeks before expiry to give the above figures context.

2020: 99.17%

2021: 99.38%

2022: 98.05%

2023: 96.48%

**9. How many members of staff you employ to process firearms and shotgun licence applications?**

Section 17 of the Act would again apply to this question.

To explain, there are numerous police officers who undertake firearms licensing duties in addition to their core role and as such are involved in processing firearms and shotgun licence applications.

Police Scotland does not record what proportion of their on-duty time is dedicated to this task.

National Firearms and Explosive Licensing (NFEL) currently has 14 Police Officers and 36 members of Police Staff who are supported by colleagues in local policing.

The NFEL establishment has not changed in the last 4 years other than variations caused by flexible working arrangements.

If you require any further assistance please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.