



Our Reference: 17/6794/3

12 September 2017

Mr Malcolm Lock

Email: fyi-request-6443-4a169ffd@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Lock

I refer to your email dated 19 August 2017 requesting information pertaining to firearms seized by Police. Your request was made pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982 and specifically requested:

1. *During the period 20th August 2016 and 20th August 2017, how many seized firearms that were in the custody of the New Zealand police were unaccounted for when they were due to be returned to the licenced firearm owner?
Example: If three firearms were seized from a licenced firearm owner but only two were returned to the owner that would make one firearm unaccounted for.*
2. *Please list by policing district and the date of the discovery of the unaccounted firearm(s),*
3. *Please list make model and caliber [sic] of firearms that are unaccounted for.*

Exclude firearms still being held by the New Zealand police.

My response is outlined below:

In terms of your first question I can only advise the total number of firearms seized in the period 20 August 2016 and 20 August 2017. That number was 1,207 firearms were seized in searches that took place between 21 August 2016 and 20 August 2017. These were firearms seized from warrantless searches or searches under Sections 6 and 18 of the Search and Surveillance Act 2012. This means the total excludes seizures of firearms from revocations or, say dealers who have been prosecuted and all the arms held in the dealer's business are seized. I've also excluded ammunition, imitation firearms, knives, and "other".

For the second part of your first question and for your second and third questions I advise your request in its current form will be refused pursuant to section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982, as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation and research.

To assist in helping you to understand how the Police arrived at that decision I have outlined below the process that it would take to get you the requested information. In order to answer your request Police would have to:

1. Regenerate the data of 1,207 firearms seized in order to identify the file number assigned to the seizure in the National Intelligence Application (NIA) database, this will also give Police the actual number of individual files that need to be reviewed.
2. Locate and read the relevant NIA files, analysing that information to arrive at the information you seek, the steps involved would be:
 - 2.1 Regenerate the data of all firearms seized by Police under warrantless searches and searched pursuant to sections 6 and 18 of the Search and Surveillance Act 2012.

- 2.2 Enter the NIA Occurrence number.
 - 2.3 Open up the occurrence, double check against the information on the list to make sure the correct number has been entered.
 - 2.4 As the information you requested may not be held on the database Police would need to ascertain where the file is currently assigned.
 - 2.5 Locate and request the hard copy of the file.
 - 2.6 Upon receipt of the file, read through it, establish whether or not the information is held within the file.
 - 2.7 If the receipt for return of property were not held within the file, contact the relevant district Property Officer for the master copy to be emailed through for review and collation to the corresponding file.
 - 2.8 Create and collate information into a table format.
3. Depending on the amount of information and speed at which a person reads, this process for each individual entry would likely take between 5-7 mins to be very thorough and to collate the initial information and set about requesting the files, steps 2.1-2.8.
 4. Then upon receiving the file and again depending on the amount of information held within the file and the speed at which a person reads, this process to read the file, consider the information pertaining to the request would likely take 45mins – 1hr for each individual file
 5. The number of files is as yet undetermined but could be as high as 1,207, then this part would take at the most between 113 and 150 working days
 6. Then the information from the files would need to be listed, collated and printed.

Based on 1,207 files, the likely time taken to respond to your request is estimated as between 904 to 1207 hours work. Using the Justice guidelines (Justice Ministry OIAS charging guidelines) @\$76 per hour (with the first hour free) this would equate to a cost between \$68,628 and \$91,656, this of course may be less once Police determine the number of files that need to be researched and collated.. This estimate reflects just the cost of time to fulfil your request, there may be additional related charges, for retrieval of information off-site, and for photocopying or printing on standard A4 paper at 20c a page after the first 20 pages.

If you narrow your request Police may then be in a position to review this decision.

Yours sincerely



Mike McIlraith
Acting Superintendent
Arms Act Service Delivery Group