

- **Pistol** means any firearm that is designed or adapted to be held and fired with one hand; and includes any firearm that is less than 762 millimetres in length
- **Restricted Weapons** include machine guns, selective-fire assault rifles, grenades and rocket launchers. This category also includes some non-firearms such as pepper spray. The NZ Government can declare things to be restricted weapons by regulation.
- **Military-Style Semi-Automatics** (MSSAs) include semi-automatic rifles and shotguns that have one or more of the following components:
 - A folding or telescopic butt
 - A bayonet lug
 - A military pattern free-standing pistol grip
 - A flash suppressor
 - A magazine that holds (or looks like it could hold) more than 15 rounds of .22 rimfire ammunition or 7 rounds of any other centre fire calibre.
- **A Category** firearms are those that do not fall into any other category, and are the vast majority of legally-owned firearms in New Zealand and includes Pre-Charged Pneumatic (PCP) air rifles
- **Antique Firearm** is any firearm that is held in the possession of any person solely as an antique (but not as a copy or replica of an antique); and is not designed for firing, and is not capable of firing, rim-fire or centre-fire cartridge ammunition. No licence is required to possess an antique firearm.

Registration is not required for "A Category" and "Antique" firearms, but firearms in any other category require both registration and a "permit to procure" before they are transferred and can be possessed.

Except under supervision of a licence holder, owning or using firearms requires a firearms licence from the police. The licence is normally issued, under the conditions that the applicant has secure storage for firearms, attends a safety lecture and passes a written test. The police will also interview the applicant and two references (one must be a close relative and the other not related) to determine whether the applicant is "fit and proper" to have a firearm. The applicant's residence is also visited to check that they have appropriate storage for firearms and ammunition. Having criminal associations or a history of domestic violence almost always lead to a licence being declined. A standard firearms licence allows the use of "A Category" firearms. To possess firearms of another category they are required to get an endorsement to their licence. There are different endorsements for different classes of firearm but they all require a higher level of storage security, stricter vetting requirements and the applicant must have a 'special reason' for wanting the endorsement. Each endorsement type has additional requirements

B Endorsement - Sporting (competition) pistols

- Applicant must be a current member of a Police approved pistol club
- Applicant must be sponsored by their club
- The endorsement holder must attend at least 12 club activities (either at their home club or to another recognised club) in a financial year
- Normally limited to no more than 12 pistols registered to their licence
- Pistols must be of an approved sporting type i.e. barrel length of more than 10 cm (3.9 in)
- Pistols can only be carried to and from the range in a locked container with ammunition in a separate container or to a gunsmith
- Pistols may only be shot on a Police approved pistol club range.

C Endorsement - Restricted Weapons, Pistols can also be held on the C endorsement instead of the B. Common special reasons include:

- Collecting (must provide evidence in the form of books, club membership, collection of A type firearms), Museum curator, Family heirlooms and Theatrical.
- C category firearms must be stored in an inoperable condition
- Can never be used with live ammunition, but blanks are allowed for movie making and re-enacting
- Can only be taken to an approved display venue, re-enactment event or to another collector for sale.

D Endorsement - Dealers / Gunsmiths Licence is required by people who by way of business sell, manufacture or repair firearms. To sell, manufacture or repair pistols, restricted weapons or MSSAs the dealer / gunsmith and employees must also hold an F endorsement.

- Renewed annually
- Further security requirements
- Must maintain a record (usually a book or register) of firearm purchases, manufactured, repaired or sales.

E Endorsement - Military Style Semi-Automatics (MSSA). Common reasons for wanting an E endorsement are professional pest destruction, collecting, competitive 3-gun and service rifle shooting. **Note:** Only People who hold an E endorsement or an F endorsement can handle an MSSA and unlike target pistols MSSAs cannot be held or used under supervision.

F Endorsement – Dealers / Gunsmiths Licence. This endorsement allows a dealer / gunsmith or person working for a dealer / gunsmith at their place of business to demonstrate or manufacture or repair a pistol, restricted weapon, or Military Style Semi Automatic, without having to have the B, C or E endorsement. This is not a well known endorsement.