



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-03636

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Shotgun Licence/Firearms Certificate

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has now completed its search for the information you requested and the answers to your questions are as follows.

Question 1

What age is the youngest person granted a shotgun licence in Northern Ireland?

Answer

The PSNI Firearms Branch has advised that in Northern Ireland (NI) there is no distinction between shotguns and firearms in terms of the type of certificate issued. All types of firearms are authorised by way of a firearm certificate. Shotgun certificates do not exist in NI legislation. The youngest person to be granted a firearm certificate is 16 years of age as stipulated in Article 7 of the Firearms (NI) Order 2004.

Question 2

If any are teenagers, how many and what ages?

Answer

For the purposes of the response to this question the PSNI Firearms Branch have interpreted 'teenager' as persons aged 16 or 17.

There are currently 21 certificates issued to persons aged 16 and 17.

Question 3

Is it correct to say there is a minimum age of 14 for a firearms certificate, but no lower limit for a shotgun licence.

Answer

As explained in the response to Question 1 in NI there is no distinction between shotguns and firearms in terms of the type of certificate issued. All types of firearms, including shotguns, are authorised by way of a firearm certificate. Shotgun certificates do not exist in NI legislation.

The minimum age at which the Chief Constable may grant a firearm certificate to a person is 16 as

per Article 7 of the Firearms (NI) Order 2004.

For your information the legislation in respect of firearm certificates for young persons can be viewed on the following website www.nio.gov.uk and further guidance is also available on PSNI website: www.psni.police.uk/firearms.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psni.police.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.