



Home Office

Minister of State for Policing, Fire
and Crime Prevention

2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Mrs Rachael C Griffin
HM Senior Coroner for Dorset
Civic Centre
Bourne Avenue
Bournemouth
BH2 6DY

BY EMAIL ONLY

4th September 2025

Dear Mrs Griffin,

INQUEST FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF JAIRUS JOSHUA TIMOTHY EARL

**REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS UNDER REGULATIONS 28 AND 29 OF THE
CORONERS (INVESTIGATIONS) REGULATIONS 2013**

I am writing to thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 28 July 2025 following the inquest into the death of Jairus Joshua Timothy Earl on 14 April 2024, which involved the use of a licensed shotgun. You reference in your report the differences in the controls that apply to the licensing of shotguns and other firearms, and you have highlighted two specific concerns that you consider present a risk of future deaths unless action is taken. We are grateful for your report as we are always looking to ensure we have effective controls to mitigate potential firearms risks.

The first of these concerns was about the lack of a system for sharing and flagging information between police forces regarding shotgun licence holders and the location of shotguns. This applies in particular to situations where shotguns are located from time to time in a certificate holder's second home, which could be without the knowledge of the relevant police force, if that force is different to the force that issued the certificate holder's firearm at their primary address. All police forces have been alerted to this as an issue. It is possible for the police to check whether an individual is a firearm or shotgun certificate holder, for example, when responding to an incident by checking the firearms licensing data system, known as the National Firearms Licensing Management System (NFLMS). Also it is a requirement that all firearm and shotgun holders must keep their firearms stored and locked securely away at all times when not in use to ensure that no one else can access them.

There is, however, presently no requirement on those applying for a firearm or shotgun certificate to provide details of a second home when submitting their application, and the details of the second home will not, therefore, be routinely recorded on the NFLMS. In the

light of your Regulation 28 Report, we will be amending the firearm and shotgun application form as soon as is practicable to request details of any second (or additional) residences where guns may be held, so that police are aware of where firearms are being stored, including where guns are being stored in different police force areas. This change to the application form will be implemented via Statutory Instrument and will also require a change to the NFLMS to ensure such details are recorded. We are therefore adding this change to planned adjustments to the system, which we expect to be completed in early 2026. In the meantime, this issue will be addressed by the police when undertaking suitability interviews with applicants or certificate holders.

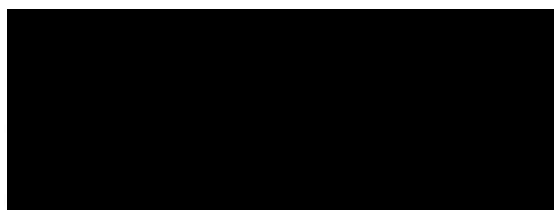
Your second concern was about police access to medical information about other persons living at the same property as the applicant, or at their second homes, when considering firearm and shotgun licence applications. You will therefore wish to note that the most recent revision of the Statutory Guidance for Chief Officers of Police on firearms licensing, which was published on 5 August, now includes a specific requirement that the police should consider the mental wellbeing of both the applicant and other household members during home visits associated with an application for a firearm or shotgun licence. The Statutory Guidance says that such interviews are crucial in providing the police with a more comprehensive picture of both the applicant and other household members' circumstances, including in relation to domestic circumstances or possible mental wellbeing issues, in order to assist in undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the safety of the applicant and others, as well as the suitability of the applicant.

I am aware that you have also sent your Regulation 28 Report to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. That Department will be able to address and respond to the issue of the police having access to information about the health of persons other than those who are seeking to obtain a firearm or shotgun certificate. However, as this is a clear risk which has been identified, we will be engaging with the DHSC directly on this point and how to mitigate that risk despite the data protection and consent issue concerns involved.

Public safety, including the safety of shotgun and firearms certificate holders, their families and the wider community, is at the heart of firearms licensing controls. It is right that we learn from the circumstances of all shooting incidents to see whether there are changes that should be made to the controls on firearms to help to prevent future incidents and tragedies. In relation to the differences in the controls on shotguns and other firearms which you referenced in your Regulation 28 Report, you will be aware that this was raised by the Senior Coroner for Plymouth, Torbay and South Devon in his Prevention of Future Deaths Report following the Inquests into the deaths of those who were shot and killed in Plymouth, on 12 August 2021. The previous Government held a public consultation in 2023 on recommendations that had been made by the Coroner, although not those recommendations concerning shotguns, and a formal response to that consultation was published on 13 February this year, in which we therefore committed to having a consultation later this year on the controls on shotguns. This will be consulting on greater alignment between these controls and the controls on other firearms.

Thank you again for your report. We continue to keep the controls on firearms under close review to ensure that the strongest possible safeguards are in place.

Yours sincerely,



Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP

