

FIREARMS - CATEGORY H

**1255. Hon KEN BASTON to the minister representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:**

I refer to schedule 3 of the Firearms Regulations 1974 and the use of category H firearms.

- (1) Under the current regulations, is WA Police confiscating category H firearms from pastoralists and farmers who use them in the course of their occupation?
- (2) If yes, how does WA Police resolve the anomaly between the “genuine need” test for category H firearms listed at clause (2)(c) and the restrictions for category H listed at clause (1)(c)?
- (3) In the past five years, how many licensed category H firearms have been confiscated or otherwise removed from pastoralists and farmers?

**Hon JON FORD replied:**

I thank Hon Ken Baston for some notice of the question. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services has provided the following answer -

- (1) Yes. The WA Police firearms inquiry unit commenced an initiative in September 2006 to identify persons who possessed handguns for purposes outside of those associated with club use. The audit also captured persons who were not pastoralists and farmers. Essentially, the audit was to reaffirm that the relevant possession met the current legislative requirements, given that many of the licences were granted some 30 years ago.
- (2) There is no anomaly within the regulations in respect of the areas mentioned. Under the “genuine need” test for a category H firearm, the destruction of stock and vermin is precluded from being a reason for wishing to obtain a handgun - clause (2)(c). In effect, this is the very reason pastoralists and farmers state that they require a handgun. Further, under the restrictions - clause (1)(c) - the granting of an approval for a handgun may be considered if the handgun is required during the course of a person’s occupation; that is, as a pastoralist or farmer, why is a handgun required during the course of business, given that it cannot be used for the destruction of stock and vermin?
- (3) Approximately 200 licence holders were affected by this audit. The majority of licence holders have relinquished their firearms.