

1

Ministry for Home Affairs and
National Security

Amendments to Malta's Firearms Legislation

TARGET SHOOTERS (SEMI-AUTOMATIC FIREARMS), COLLECTORS (AUTOMATIC
AND SEMI-AUTOMATIC FIREARMS), RENEWAL OF LICENCES AND FIREARMS PASS

2

Target Shooters: No ban on semi- automatic firearms

- ▶ You shall be able to keep all the centre-fire semi-automatic firearms that you own and also acquire new ones. You shall also be able to use almost all of them at the range. However, you shall have to abide by new conditions for ownership and use of these firearms.

Target Shooters: Change in Licensing Conditions on Semi Automatic Firearms

3

- ▶ These changes apply only if you own at least one of the following centre-fire semi automatic firearms:
 - a) **Short firearm** which can hold more than **21** rounds internally or in combination with a removeable magazine that you also own;
 - b) **Long firearm** which can hold more than **11** rounds internally or in combination with its removeable magazine that you also own;

Short Firearms

4

- ▶ **“short firearm”** means any firearm with a barrel which is not more than thirty centimetres long or with an overall length of not more than sixty centimetres with its stock folded or removed if so provided.

Long Firearms

5

- ▶ “**long firearm**” means any firearm with a barrel which is more than thirty centimetres long or with an overall length of more than sixty centimetres.

How does it work out for semi automatic **short** firearms?

6



+ Fixed Magazine = maximum 21 rounds

Target Shooter Licence A suffices!



+ Removeable Magazine = maximum 21 rounds

How does it work out for semi automatic **short** firearms?

7



+ Fixed Magazine = over 21 rounds

Target Shooter Licence A Special required!



+ Removeable Magazine = over 21 rounds

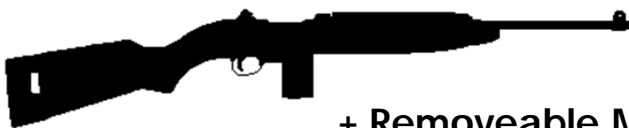
How does it work out for semi automatic **long** firearms?

8



+ Fixed Magazine = up to 11 rounds

Target Shooter Licence A suffices!



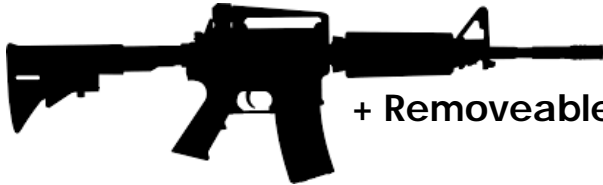
+ Removeable Magazine = up to 11 rounds

How does it work out for semi automatic **long** firearms?

9

? *Unknown - this is a theoretical scenario* + Fixed Magazine = over 11 rounds

Target Shooter Licence A Special required!



+ Removeable Magazine = over 11 rounds

Transitional Provisions for Target Shooters

10

- ▶ If you are in possession of a current Target Shooter Licence A you shall be issued with a '**Target Shooter Licence A Special**' if you apply for one with the Police Weapons Office by December 2018.
- ▶ You shall continue to fulfil the conditions for your current licence until the first renewal.
- ▶ There are no additional fees for the new licence.

11

New Conditions Target Shooters

- ▶ However, in order for the '**Target Shooter Licence A Special**' to be subsequently renewed from 2019 (for the year 2020) onwards, you shall be required to comply with new conditions required by the Directive.
- ▶ Be sure that you are in a position to comply with these new conditions **before you apply for the new licence!**

12

Target Shooter Licence A Special: New Conditions

- ▶ You must prove that you have been participating in or practising for shooting competitions for 12 months.
- ▶ You must submit records of attendance at target shooting events, sessions and training, duly endorsed by your club, when renewing your licence.
- ▶ You must obtain your club's recognition that the firearm/s that you are using fulfil the requirements of a shooting discipline.

Target Shooter Licence A Special: New Conditions

13

- ▶ If you are not prepared to comply with these new conditions, you have the option to retain your existing **Target Shooter Licence A**. However, this licence does not permit you to keep and use the following:
- ▶ Semi Automatic Firearms with fixed magazines with capacities which exceed the afore-mentioned limits.
- ▶ Magazines which in combination with such firearms increase their capacity beyond the afore-mentioned limits.

Target Shooter Licence A Special: New Applicants

14

- ▶ If you wish to obtain a **Target Shooter Licence A Special**, you shall be required to first obtain a Target Shooter Licence A and wait until you have been licensed for at least 12 months before applying for the **Special** licence.
- ▶ You shall be required to comply with all the conditions relating to the **Target Shooter Licence A Special**, including submission of records of attendance to target shooting events etc... and club recognition that your firearm/s fulfil requirements for a shooting discipline.

15

Collectors: No ban on semi-automatic or automatic firearms

- ▶ You shall be able to keep all the centre-fire semi-automatic and automatic firearms that you own and also acquire new ones. However, you shall have to abide by new conditions for ownership and use of these firearms.

16

Collector Licence A Special: Schedule I Firearms only

You shall require a new '**Collector Licence A Special**' to acquire and keep firearms falling under Schedule I of the Act, namely:

- ▶ **semi-automatic firearms with fixed high capacity magazines;**
- ▶ **automatic firearms which are of pre-1946 manufacture, or approved as historical, rare or artistic by the Weapons Board.**

Collector Licence A Special: Schedule I Firearms only

17

- ▶ The '**Collector Licence A Special**' shall also enable you to acquire and keep Schedule II firearms as for the Collector Licence A', including semi-automatic firearms. Hence, the **Special** licence shall permit you to acquire and keep all types of semi automatic firearms permitted by law.
- ▶ If you already possess firearms that will now fall under Schedule I you shall be issued with the new **Collector Licence A Special** if you apply for one with the Police Weapons Office by December 2018.

Collector Licence A Special: Schedule I Firearms only

18

- ▶ You shall continue to fulfil the conditions for your current **Collector Licence A**.
- ▶ If you are also in possession of a **Target Shooter Licence A** you shall still be permitted to carry and use your **Schedule II** semi automatic firearms to a licensed shooting range.
- ▶ There are no additional fees for the new licence.

19

Collector Licence A Special: Schedule I Firearms only

- ▶ If you upgrade to both a **Target Shooter A Special** and a **Collector Licence A Special**, you shall be permitted to carry to a licensed range and use **semi automatic firearms with capacities that exceed the thresholds mentioned earlier** that are listed under your Collector Licence, provided that they fulfil the requirements of a shooting discipline.

20

Collector Licence A: Schedule I Firearms only

- ▶ If you do not yet own Schedule I firearms and wish to obtain a **Collector Licence A Special**, you shall be required to first obtain a **Collector Licence A** and wait until you have been licensed for at least 24 months before applying for the **Special** licence.
- ▶ This 2-year requirement results from the EU Directive's imposition of strict conditions to authorise the collection of Category A firearms.

21

Licence Renewals

- ▶ Licences shall continue being renewed on a yearly basis as they are now. The procedure for doing so shall remain the same.
- ▶ However, once every 5 years the Police shall be required to review each licence issued. Each licence holder shall be required to produce a medical certificate. The Police shall also be re-assessing the applicant's conduct.

22

Firearms Pass

- ▶ The Firearms Pass has now been divided into three categories, namely Re-enactors, Target Shooters and Hunters.
- ▶ If you intend to make use of the Pass you shall be required to produce an invitation or other proof of your hunting, target shooting or historical re-enactment activities.
- ▶ Remember that even though your firearms are listed on the Pass, you must first make sure that the firearm(s) you intend to carry is permitted in the Member State of destination.

23

Firearms Pass: Re-Enactors

- ▶ **If you are a Historical Re-Enactor, you shall be permitted to enter any of the following firearms on your Pass:**
 - a) Repeating Long Firearms, excluding repeating or semi-automatic long firearms with smoothbore barrels that are 60cm in length or less;
 - b) Long firearms with single shot rifled barrels;
 - c) Rim-fire and centre-fire semi auto long firearms whose loading device and chamber cannot hold more than 3 rounds;

24

Firearms Pass: Re-Enactors

- a) Single shot short firearms with rimfire percussion whose overall length is not less than 28 cm;
- b) Deactivated Firearms;
- c) Single shot long firearms with smoothbore barrels.

25

Firearms Pass: Target Shooters

- ▶ **If you are a licensed target shooter, you shall be permitted to enter any of the following firearms on your Pass:**
 - a) Firearms in Schedule I that may be acquired by holders of a **Target Shooter Licence A Special** (as explained in the preceding slides);
 - b) Firearms falling under Schedule II, except Item 8 (air guns)
 - c) Firearms falling under Schedule III.

26

Firearms Pass: Hunters

- ▶ **If you are a licensed hunter, you shall be permitted to enter any of the following firearms on your Pass:**
 - a) Repeating long firearms, excluding repeating or semi-automatic long firearms with smoothbore barrels of 60cm length or less;
 - b) Rim-fire and centre-fire semi automatic long firearms whose loading device and chamber cannot hold more than 3 rounds;
 - c) Single shot long firearms with smoothbore barrels.

27

Outcome of Public Consultation

All the aforementioned changes result from the new EU Directive, which Malta is required to implement.

However, following the public consultation process, government has introduced further amendments which continue to improve the local legislative framework.

28

Outcome of Public Consultation and Related Initiatives

1. The maximum number of firearms that may be kept in terms of your Target Shooting Licences has now been **increased from 10 to 20 pieces**.
2. Firearms of pre-1900 manufacture which do not use cartridges (e.g. flintlock & percussion guns) **shall no longer be registered**.

Scheduling of Semi-Automatic Firearms

29

3. The Police shall only transfer to Schedule I semi automatic firearms with **fixed** magazines (over 21 rounds for short and over 11 rounds for long arms).
4. Semi automatic firearms with **removable** magazines shall remain in Schedule II and the only difference is that persons who own such firearms in combination with high-capacity magazines shall be required to obtain a Target Shooter Licence A Special or a Collector Licence A Special.

Licensing Options in relation to Firearms with High-Capacity Magazines

30

5. Finally, thanks to the structure of our firearms legislation, persons who are in possession of **both** a current Target Shooter Licence A and a **Collector Licence A Special** may keep their semi automatic firearms with high capacity magazines at home and take them to the range with magazines that keep the firearms' capacity below the thresholds that require a **Target Shooter Licence A Special**.

31

When will the new regulations come into force?

The Arms Act has already been amended and the Legal Notices updating the regulations are being published.

However, they will only come into force in March 2019. Until then, the current regulations shall continue to apply.

32

Ministry for Home Affairs and
National Security

Amendments to Malta's Firearms Legislation

CONCLUSION

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SECTOR WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS, AND TO MR. STEPHEN A. PETRONI WHO OFFERED HIS ADVICE AND FEEDBACK IN RELATION TO THIS PRESENTATION, IN PARTICULAR THE DIFFERENT SCENARIOS RELATING TO SEMI-AUTOMATIC FIREARMS