

Firearms Control Briefing

SA's Central Firearms Register: The collapsing cornerstone of gun control

Record-keeping: A global norm

It is now accepted across the world that accurate record-keeping is a cornerstone of effective firearms control. With the adoption of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol) in 2001,¹ consensus emerged within the international community that marking and record-keeping are basic preventive measures to stem the flow of guns from the legal to the illegal pool. The legally binding Firearms Protocol, which South Africa ratified on 20 February 2004,² requires member states to adopt these measures at the national level (see Article 7 of the [Technical Guide to the Implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms](#)).³

At a regional level, the legally binding Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community (SADC Firearms Protocol)⁴ also obliges South Africa to keep firearm-related records; a newly inserted Article 15 in the SADC Firearms Protocol (which is currently being finalised), strengthens states' record-keeping obligations in recognition that accurate and comprehensive records of firearms within a country's territory enables authorities to trace illicit weapons in a timely and reliable manner.

Record-keeping involves the collection and maintenance of information to "facilitate the identification of any weapon, its legal status and the location of its storage, at a given stage of its life."⁵ Records are generally kept across the lifecycle of a firearm: From the point of manufacture, at import, at commercial sale, at possession, in case of loss or theft, and finally at destruction.

After marking, record-keeping is the most important provision to address the problem of the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. n.d. The Firearms Protocol. (Online). Available at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/firearms-protocol/the-firearms-protocol.html (accessed 9 May 2021).

² United Nations Treaty Collection. 2021. Status as at 09-05-2021: 12. c Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. (Online). Available at https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-c&chapter=18&clang=en (accessed 9 May 2021).

³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2011. Technical Guide to the Implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. New York: United Nations.

⁴ Southern African Development Community. 2001. Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community Region (SADC Firearms Protocol). (Online). Available at [www.sadc.int/documents-publications/show/Protocol%20on%20the%20Control%20of%20Firearms,%20Ammunition%20and%20Other%20Materials%20\(2001\)](http://www.sadc.int/documents-publications/show/Protocol%20on%20the%20Control%20of%20Firearms,%20Ammunition%20and%20Other%20Materials%20(2001)) (accessed 21 February 2019).

⁵ OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe). 2003. Best Practice Guide on Marking, Record-Keeping and Traceability of Small Arms and Light Weapons. Vienna: OSCE, p. 8.

The case of South Africa

Adopted by Parliament in 2000, the Firearms Control Act (FCA) is the principal Act governing firearms control in South Africa. Its purpose is two-fold:

1. To establish a comprehensive and effective system of firearm control and management.
2. To ensure the effective monitoring and enforcement of legislation as it pertains to the control of firearms.

Chapter 17 of the FCA identifies the organisational structures responsible for implementing the Act; section 123 appoints the National Commissioner of Police as the Registrar of Firearms and section 124(2) lists the Registrar's functions, which include obligations to establish and maintain the Central Firearms Register (CFR).

Establishing a functional electronic firearms record system

The process of establishing a functional electronic firearms record-keeping system that is fit for purpose began in 2000, when the South African Police Service (SAPS) reported to Parliament that the firearms record-keeping system in use, called the Firearms Register System, was being assessed by the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) via a business process re-engineering study (BPR).⁶ The R8 million study was aimed at designing a "detailed integrated firearm control business-, information- and technology infrastructure" system to replace the current Firearms Register System.

Four years later the SAPS signed a contract with an external service provider, Waymark Infotech, for "the supply of a Firearm Control System."⁷ In its bid Waymark costed the IT system, which would "enable the police to track firearms and identify the ownership, identity and history of a firearm 'anywhere anytime'" at R42 million, though the contract price set in September 2004 was R93 million.⁸

Although Waymark Infotech's website boasted in 2018 that, "The Waymark Firearm Control System is an integrated solution that enables the management and administration of firearms and associated licenses (sic) throughout the lifecycle of a firearm,"⁹ the system does not, and has never, worked: While the contracted deadline for the system handover was 5 July 2006, repeated addendums to the contract pushed this date forward multiple times. The cost of the system escalated to R412 million, of which R343 million had been paid as of 2011/12.¹⁰

⁶ South African Police Service. 2000. Firearm Strategy in support of the Firearms Control Bill. Briefing to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Safety and Security, 24 August. (Online). Available at <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/168/> (accessed 25 February 2019)

⁷ Waymark Infotech. 2004. The supply of a firearm control system for the South African Police Service. Signed in Pretoria by Mr Pikie Monaheng, CEO of Waymark and Assistant Commissioner Meyer, SAPS Head of Information and Systems Management, 30 September.

⁸ Knoetze, Daneel. 2014. SAPS: R400 million firearms control system in shambles. GroundUp, 17 October. (Online). Available at www.groundup.org.za/article/r400-million-firearms-control-system-shambles_2359/ (accessed 14 April 2018).

⁹ Waymark Infotech. n.d. Integrated firearm control system. (Online). Available at www.waymark.co.za/firearm-control-system.aspx (accessed 14 April 2018).

¹⁰ Knoetze, Daneel. 2014. SAPS: R400 million firearms control system in shambles. GroundUp, 17 October. (Online). Available at www.groundup.org.za/article/r400-million-firearms-control-system-shambles_2359/ (accessed 14 April 2018).

Turn-around strategy

In June 2010, the Minister of Police established a Task Team led by the Civilian Secretariat for Police to undertake an assessment of the implementation of the FCA.¹¹ The Task Team's report identified a range of problems regarding both the implementation of the FCA and functioning of the CFR.¹²

This briefing outlines four of the problems identified by the Task Team and shows that eleven years later, the same problems involving the CFR continue to undermine South Africa's firearms control management system.

Problem	2010	2021
Licence processing backlog	✓	✓
Renewals confusion	✓	✓
Database invalidity	✓	✓
Corruption and irregularities	✓	✓

Problem 1: Backlog in the processing of firearm licences

The 2010 Task Team report notes "major backlogs in processing...licences and this backlog is the major cause of litigation."

Eleven years on, backlogs continue to beset the CFR: Latest figures from the SAPS show that just 57% (209,962) of the 367,237 firearm-related applications received in 2019-20 were finalised within 90 working days.¹³ This backlog raises the question whether the 90 working days set to process applications is inadequate, as was recently recognised when SAPS announced that processing firearm-related applications would now take 120 days, attributing this "delay" to "various reasons, with the Covid-19 pandemic being the leading one."¹⁴

Lengthening the time to process firearm-related applications makes sense when looking at how SAPS has dealt with backlogs in the past: In response to the 2010 Task Team's assessment, the Minister of Police acknowledged the "malfunctioning" of the CFR, which had resulted in a backlog of firearm licence applications, and promised to turn the CFR into a "functional unit" that would deal with the backlog by July 2011.¹⁵ According to the SAPS 2011/12 Annual Report, the backlog relating to 1,048,341 firearm applications (includes licence renewals) had been finalised by July 2011 i.e. the CFR processed over 1 million applications in 9 months.¹⁶ As in other ill-considered 'target-setting' measures adopted by the SAPS to assess performance,¹⁷ the focus was on reaching the target of processing applications, rather than ensuring that all firearm applicants are or remain 'fit and proper' persons to possess a gun; thereby compromising the management of the firearms control system.

Problem 2: Licence Renewals under the FCA

Firearm licence renewals are a key mechanism for the state to update information on firearms and owners and ensure that gun owners continue to comply with the requirements of the law. In addition to stipulating that competency certificates be renewed every five years, the FCA also requires the

¹¹ The impetus for this was the apparent backlog in the processing of both firearm licence applications and licence renewal applications.

¹² Civilian Secretariat for Police Service. n.d. Enquiry into the functioning of the Central Firearms Registry and the implementation of related aspects of the Firearms Control Act (No. 60 of 2000), no page numbers. Parts of this confidential report were published online at www.gunownerssa.org/documents/EnquiryFunctioningCFRandFCA2000.pdf (accessed 17 August 2014).

¹³ South African Police Service 2019-2020 Annual Report.

¹⁴ South African Police Service. 2021. Media Statement: Police management announces delay in processes of firearm licence applications. (Online). Available at www.saps.gov.za/newsroom/selnewsdetails.php?nid=30992 (accessed 9 May 2021).

¹⁵ Mthethwa, Nathi (Minister of Police). 2010. Current challenges affecting the SAPS firearms application and licensing process. Presentation made at the National Press Club, Sheraton Hotel, Pretoria, 2 November.

¹⁶ South African Police Service 2011-2012 Annual Report.

¹⁷ Bruce, David. 2011. Measuring Outputs, Neglecting Outcomes. SA Crime Quarterly. No. 38, December. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.

regular renewal of firearm licences, with renewal periods varying from two to ten years depending on the type of firearm owned and reason for ownership.

The 2010 Task Team report red flagged the issue of renewals, noting that “(t)he FCA or Regulations do not describe the processes or procedures to be followed in respect of re-application for competency, other than to state that a competency certificate lapses after five years...The area relating to the issue of renewal of competency certificates needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency in order to ensure compliance with the provisions of the FCA.” The report goes on to note that 214,548 firearm licences will have to be renewed between 2010 and 2014, and that “(t)he process around these renewals...needs to be properly communicated to gun owners.”

Despite this warning, eleven years later problems persist regarding firearm licence renewals – see Box 1 for a timeline of firearm licence renewals in South Africa.

At the time of the 2020 Supreme Court of Appeal ruling which upheld the constitutionality of firearm licence renewals, there were an estimated 450,000 firearms for which licences had

Gun ownership is not a right, it is a privilege governed by law

Constitutional Court, 2018

Box 1: Timeline of firearm licence renewals in South Africa and contestation by gun owners

- In 2016 SAPS issued a National Instruction to standardise firearm licence renewals as the process was being unevenly enforced and complied with around the country, with some police stations accepting expired licences and others not.²¹
- In response, the SA Hunters and Game Conservation Association brought an application to have sections 24 and 28 of the FCA (which deal with licence renewals) declared constitutionally invalid in the High Court.²²
- The case moved from the High Court to the Constitutional Court (ConCourt), which ruled on 7 June 2018 that gun ownership is a privilege, not a right; that firearm licence renewals are constitutional; and that when a licence expires it terminates and so cannot be renewed.²³
- In response, Gun Owners SA launched an urgent application in the High Court seeking an interim interdict to stop the police from acting on the ConCourt ruling pending determination of an application for one of two reliefs: (1) That firearm licences last for life or (2) That the SAPS accept renewal applications for expired licences.

²¹ Phahlane, Khomotso (Acting National Police Commissioner). 2016. Renewal of firearm licences in terms of section 24 of the Firearms Control Act (No. 60 of 2000). Letter addressed to the National Head, Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation; Divisional Commissioners; Provincial Commissioners; Head, Corporate Communication; All Heads and Section Heads, Head Office; All Commanders, SAPS Academy and Training Centres; All Deputy National Commissioners; and Chief of Staff, Ministry of Police, 3 February. (Online). Available at www.saga.org.za/cm4all/iproc.php/SAPS%20Instruction%203Feb2016.pdf?cdp=a (accessed 3 November 2016)..

²² The South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association. 2016. Notice of Motion to the Gauteng High Court, Case 21177/16 in the matter between the South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association (Applicant) and Minister of Safety and Security (Respondent), 16 March.

²³ Froneman, Johan (Judge). 2018. Judgement of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, Case CCT 177/17 in the matter between the Minister of Safety and Security (Applicant), South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association (Respondent), Fidelity Security Services (PTY) Limited (First Amicus), and Gun Free South Africa (NPO) (Second Amicus), 7 June. (Online). Available at www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZACC/2018/14.pdf (accessed 12 June 2018).

terminated due to non-renewal.¹⁸ In recognition that a firearm licence that has terminated is no longer valid, which means the firearm is in illegal possession and the owner risks imprisonment, within days of the Supreme Court of Appeal's judgement, and following parliamentary approval, the Minister of Police declared a 6-month national firearms amnesty from 1 August 2020 to 31 January 2021 under which a gun owner with an expired licence could hand their gun in, either for destruction or while applying for a new licence.¹⁹

In a briefing to parliament on 16 February 2021, the SAPS reported that 80,263 firearms were handed in during the 2020/21 firearms amnesty.²⁰ Assuming all of these are guns with expired licences, this is just 18% of the 450,000+ firearms for which licences have expired.

This is a dismal indictment on the police and gun owners with expired licences, particularly in light of the Supreme Court of Appeal's warning that "there is a real risk that some or many of these firearms, which are now illegally in the possession of their owners, may be stolen or lost and end up in the hands of criminals who may injure or kill others."²⁶

Latest crime statistics show that civilians are the largest source of illegal guns in South Africa, reporting the loss or theft of 8,007 guns in 2019-20, an average of 24 guns a day (police reported losing 2 a day in this time).²⁷ Despite this risk, the SAPS has not acted on its warning that "as of 01 February 2021,

- On 27 July 2018, Judge Bill Prinsloo of the North Gauteng High Court granted an interim order to Gun Owners SA,²⁴ halting action by the SAPS to the ConCourt ruling, thereby disabling the system of firearm licence renewal and termination.
- The ruling was appealed by the Minister of Police and on 23 July 2020 the Supreme Court of Appeal upheld the appeal with costs and, in a damning ruling of Judge Prinsloo's conduct and judgement, set aside the interim order.²⁵

¹⁸ On 15 June 2018, the SAPS reported that there were approximately 436,366 firearm licences that had terminated due to non-renewal. Source: Sitole, K.J. (Khehla) (National Police Commissioner). 2018. Instructions relating to processing firearms for which licences terminated in terms of Section 28(1)(a) of the Firearms Control Act, 2000 (Act No 60 of 2000). Letter addressed to All Provincial Commissioners, 15 June. When the SCA made its ruling in 2020, it estimated the figure to be 450,000. Source: Schippers, Ashton (Judge). 2020. Judgement of the Supreme Court of Appeal, Case 561/2019 in the matter between the National Commissioner of Police (First Appellant) and Minister of Police (Second Appellant) and the Gun Owners of South Africa (Respondent) and Gun Free South Africa (Amicus Curiae), 23 July. (Online). Available at www.supremecourtofappeal.org.za/index.php/component/jdownloads/summary/33-judgments-2020/3405-national-commissioner-of-police-and-another-v-gun-owners-of-south-africa-561-2019-2020-zasca-88-23-july-2020 (accessed 29 August 2020). It is likely this figure is higher, considering the two year time lag and GOSA's misinformation campaign summarised in Box 2 in GfSA. 2020. Firearms Control Briefing 2: Implications of SCA judgement upholding SA's firearm licence renewal system, 7 October. (Online). Available at www.gfsa.org.za/component/jdownloads/send/14-gun-policy-briefs/197-briefing-2-of-2020-implications-of-supreme-court-of-appeal-judgement-upholding-firearm-licence-renewals (accessed 26 April 2021).

¹⁹ Ministry of Police. 2020. Declaration of an amnesty in terms of Section 139 of the Firearms Control Act, 2000 (Act No. 60 of 2000). Government Gazette, Vol. 661, No. 43576, 31 July.

²⁰ South African Police Service. 2021. Presentation: Firearms Amnesty Report: Briefing to the Portfolio Committee on Police, 16 February. (Online). Available at [https://pmg.org.za/files/210216Presentation to PCOP. Firearm Amnesty. 16 Feb 2021.pdf](https://pmg.org.za/files/210216Presentation%20to%20PCOP.%20Firearm%20Amnesty.%2016%20Feb%202021.pdf) (accessed 15 March 2021).

²⁴ Prinsloo, Bill (Judge). 2018. Interim Order of the North Gauteng High Court, Case 46684/18 in the matter between Gun Owners of South Africa (Applicant), the National Commissioner of Police (First Respondent), and Minister of Police (Second Respondent), 27 July.

²⁵ Schippers, Ashton (Judge). 2020. Judgement of the Supreme Court of Appeal, Case 561/2019 in the matter between the National Commissioner of Police (First Appellant) and Minister of Police (Second Appellant) and the Gun Owners of South Africa (Respondent) and Gun Free South Africa (Amicus Curiae), 23 July. (Online). Available at www.supremecourtofappeal.org.za/index.php/component/jdownloads/summary/33-judgments-2020/3405-national-commissioner-of-police-and-another-v-gun-owners-of-south-africa-561-2019-2020-zasca-88-23-july-2020 (accessed 29 August 2020).

²⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

²⁷ South African Police Service 2019-2020 Annual Report.

those who are found to be in possession of illegal firearms, firearm parts and ammunition will be charged and processed accordingly acting against gun owners in illegal possession.”²⁸

Problem 3: Integrity of the database system

A core function of the CFR is keeping records of who owns what firearm for which purpose. However, the Task Team’s report noted several factors that undermined the integrity of the CFR’s database system, including:

- The existence of two systems – one for firearm licences, permits and authorisations issued under the old Arms and Ammunition Act (1969) and the other for licences, permits and authorisations issued under the FCA.
- IT systems not being used by staff, with much of the work being done manually, leading to two systems – an electronic and a manual system.

Eleven years later various database systems are still in use – an electronic and a manual system, a system with data on guns registered and gun owners licensed under the FCA as well as a system with data on guns registered and gun owners licensed under the Apartheid-era Arms and Ammunition Act (1969). The reason that the Arms and Ammunition Act database continues to exist is because the police have failed to act to set aside a 2009 interim court order under which more than a million gun owners with ‘green’ ID book gun licences have not yet re-applied for licences under the FCA – see Box 2.

Running various database in parallel, creates loopholes, which facilitates fraud and corruption in the firearms control management system.²⁹

Box 2: Apartheid-era gun law still operational under democracy

In 2009, as the FCA’s Transitional Provisions were ending, the SA Hunters and Game Conservation Association (SAHGCA) legally challenged them. The case was heard in the North Gauteng High Court, and on 26 June 2009 Judge Bill Prinsloo granted an interim court order to the Association under which ‘green’ ID book licences issued under the Apartheid era Arms and Ammunition Act (1969) remain valid pending the final outcome of the Association’s application to have certain sections of the FCA declared unconstitutional.³⁰

In the intervening years neither the police nor SAHGCA took further action, but following the 2020 Supreme Court of Appeal’s scathing judgement of Judge Bill Prinsloo’s conduct in blocking firearm licence renewals (see Box 1), the state turned its attention to this 2009 ruling, and in September 2020 the State Attorney wrote to SAHGCA to discharge the 2009 interim order and formally withdraw the main application.³¹

To date there appears to be no further progress in settling this matter, with neither party committed to ensuring that there is a single firearms licensing regime in SA.

²⁸ South African Police Service. 2021. Media Statement: On-duty member dies from gunshot wound while attending to a complaint, 18 January. (Online). Available at www.saps.gov.za/newsroom/selnewsdetailsm.php?nid=30460 (accessed 26 April 2021).

²⁹ Irish-Qhobosheane, Jenni. 2020. Gun licences for sale: South Africa’s failing firearms control. Geneva: Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

³⁰ Prinsloo, Bill (Judge). 2009. Interim Order of the North Gauteng High Court, Case 33656/09 in the matter between SA Hunters A.O. (Applicant), and Minister of Safety and Security (Respondent), 26 June.

³¹ Office of the State Attorney Pretoria. 2020. Letter to Carl Arnold (President of SAHGCA Board) and Fred Camphor (Chief Executive Officer of SAHGCA) regarding South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association v Minister of Safety and Security: Case No.: 33657/2009, 8 September.

Problem 4: Corruption and irregular issuing of licences

The 2010 Task Team’s report noted a number of instances involving irregularities and corruption in the issuing of firearms licences, including:

- Issuing of licences to people who should have had their licences refused.
- Paying of bribes to ensure that licences are issued and to avoid delays.
- Licensing prohibited firearms which are then not accurately listed on the system.

Since 2010 a range of fraud and corruption incidents have come to light involving the CFR, police officers, accredited firearms training institutions and firearms dealers.³² While moves are underway to prosecute some perpetrators,³³ the fact that a gun handed in by a member of the public during the 2020/21 national firearms amnesty was found in the possession of an alleged gangster in Hanover Park, Cape Town is deeply disturbing and confirms the systemic nature of the CFR’s breakdown.³⁴


Way forward

The problems at the CFR identified by the Task Team in 2010 persist eleven years later despite subsequent turnaround strategies and evaluations thereof, including in 2014,³⁵ 2015,³⁶ and 2017.³⁷

Kicking the collapsing CFR can down the road has facilitated a steady leak of guns into the illegal pool of weapons and an increase in incidents of gun violence in South Africa.

Nationally, guns have overtaken knives as the weapon most used in murders,³⁸ while in Gauteng more people are shot and killed than die in traffic accidents.³⁹

Without up-to-date and accurate data on stockpiles of firearms and ammunition in South Africa, the state is failing to meet its global, regional and national legal obligations, is facilitating the



ArmsTracker is a secure and affordable record-keeping solution designed for small arms, light weapons and ammunition, which is currently being used by various African and Small Island States.

³² Taylor, Claire. 2019. Gun Control and Violence: South Africa’s Story. Johannesburg: GFSa. (Online). Available at www.gfsa.org.za/component/jdownloads/send/13-research/114-gun-control-and-violence-south-africa-s-story (accessed 28 February 2020).

³³ Dolly, Caryn. 2021. Want an illegal gun in Western Cape? Not a problem. Daily Maverick, 21 February. (Online). Available at www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-02-21-want-an-illegal-gun-in-western-cape-not-a-problem/ (accessed 26 April 2021).

³⁴ Cruywagen, Vincent. 2021. Firearm sent to Confiscated Firearms Store in Pretoria ends up in hands of alleged gangster. Daily Maverick, 31 March. (Online). Available at www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-03-31-firearm-sent-to-confiscated-firearms-store-in-pretoria-ends-up-in-hands-of-alleged-gangster/ (accessed 26 April 2021).

³⁵ Portfolio Committee on Police. 2014. Central Firearms Registry: progress report by SAPS, 20 August. (Online). Available at <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/17390/> (accessed 18 March 2021).

³⁶ Portfolio Committee on Police. 2015. Central Firearms Registry: SAPS progress report, 3 June. (Online). Available at <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/21014/> (accessed 18 March 2021).

³⁷ Portfolio Committee on Police. 2017. Central Firearms Registry on Turn-Around Strategy, 1 September. (Online). Available at <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/24919/> (accessed 18 March 2021).

³⁸ South African Police Service national annual crime statistics:

- South African Police Service. 2019. Crime Statistics: Crime situation in Republic of South Africa (12) months (April to March 2018-19). Presentation to Portfolio Committee on Police, 12 September. (Online). Available at <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/28873/> (accessed 28 March 2020).
- South African Police Services. 2020. Crime situation in Republic of South Africa: Twelve (12) months (April to March 2019-20). Presentation to the Portfolio Committee of Police, 31 July. (Online). Available at www.saps.gov.za/services/april_to_march_2019_20_presentation.pdf (accessed 3 August 2020).

³⁹ Gauteng Department of Health. 2019. Gunshot wounds and stabbings top the list of causes of death in Gauteng. Media statement, 5 November: Reports that for 2018/2019 financial year, “state mortuaries recorded 2416 gunshot deaths followed by motor vehicle accidents and stabbings at 1695 and 1295 respectively.”

illicit trade, ownership and use of firearms and ammunition and is contributing to gun crime and violence in South Africa.

Eleven years on it is time to take decisive action. GFSA calls for:

- A systematic review of the entire firearms control system to identify both operational and policy gaps to stop rampant and deadly corruption spanning over a decade.
- An assessment of existing cost effective firearms control tracking systems in use in other countries, particularly in Africa, that can be customised to align with South Africa’s legislation and context. [ArmsTracker](#) is one such solution – see summary in Box 3 below.
- Appointing the Auditor-General’s office to undertake the systematic review and assessment process.
- Acting to set aside the 2009 interim court order.

Box 3: ArmsTracker

[ArmsTracker](#) is a secure and affordable record-keeping solution designed for small arms, light weapons and ammunition, which is currently being used by various African and Small Island States. It is able to import existing systems and can be customised to suit each government department, its governing legislation and practices. By digitising arms and ammunition record-keeping it:

- Improves import, export, transfer and brokering controls; owner licensing and firearm registration; stockpile management and seizure capacity.
- Enables tracing, reporting, identification, and interagency cooperation.
- Helps states to comply with international arms control treaties and agreements.



For more information on ArmsTracker click [here](#).