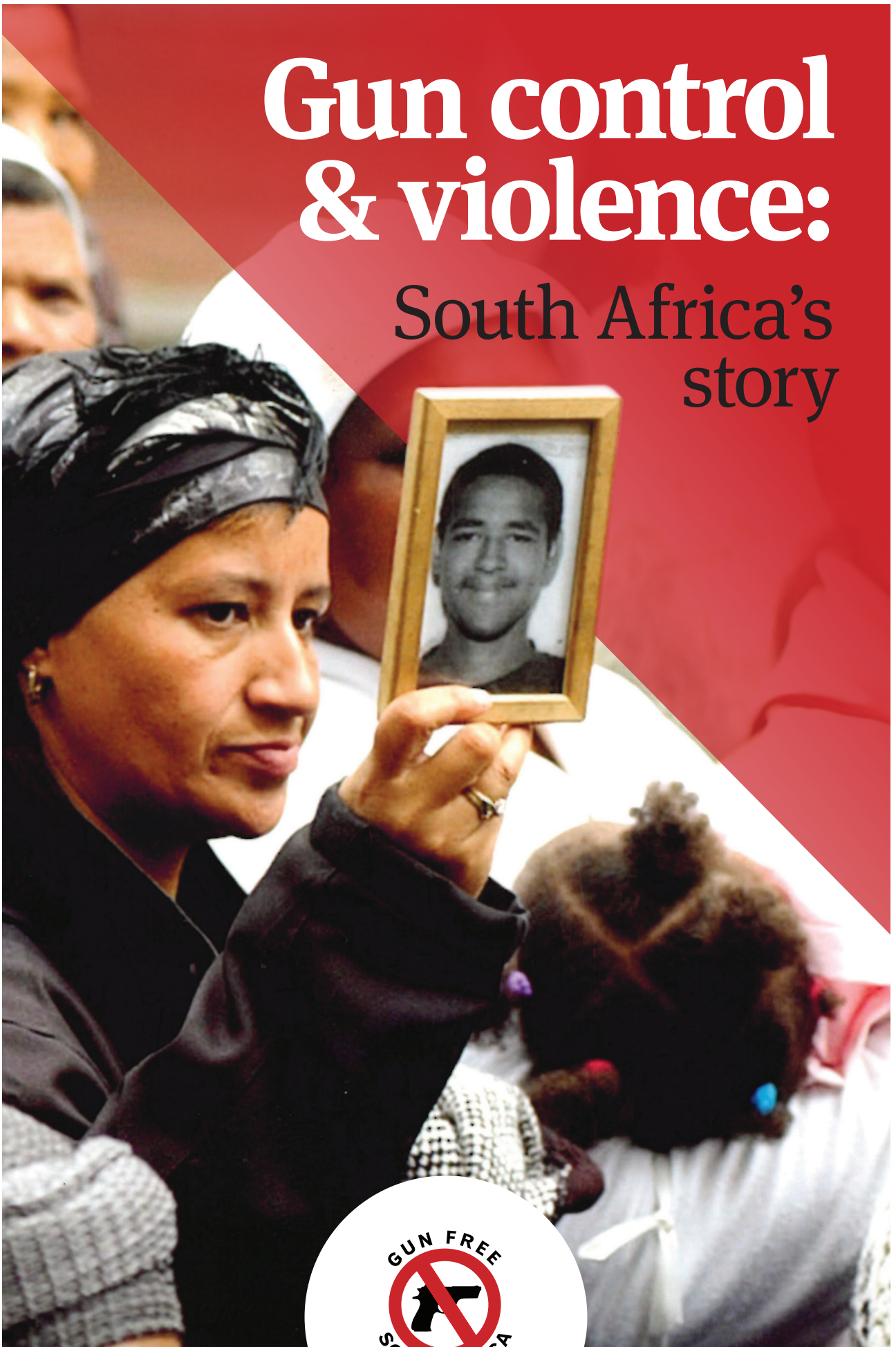


Gun control & violence:

South Africa's
story





Gun control and violence: South Africa's story

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Summary

This report documents the history of gun control in South Africa from the 1990s to date. It collates and analyses available data about the three key players in every incident of gun violence – the victim, the perpetrator and the gun – to show that changes in gun control over the years have a direct impact on the probability of gun violence.

Data on gun-related murders, injuries and other gun crimes in South Africa since 1990 show a distinct 'up-down-up' pattern. From a high in the late 1990s, all these crimes began to decline in 2000, dropping steadily until 2010, when they reverse.

Data on gun availability show the same pattern.

A number of published research reports have noted the decline in gun-related violence in South Africa, attributing this to the Firearms Control Act of 2000.

However, gun control is more than strengthening legislation. It is a comprehensive and co-ordinated strategy to reduce the availability of firearms through interventions that collect and destroy existing weapons stockpiles and limit the flow of new weapons into communities. Using this broad definition, this report shows that stricter gun control saved thousands of lives from 2000 to 2010.

In late 2010 gun violence began rising, and currently 23 people are shot and killed and 138 survive an incident of gun violence every day in South Africa. As of March 2018, gun-related murders equalled stab-related murders and gun violence has overtaken motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of paralysis following a traumatic spinal cord injury.

The steady increase in gun violence from late 2010 can be directly linked to a breakdown in gun control. Poor implementation and compliance, whether inadvertent or deliberately criminal, have created a vacuum leading to an increase in the availability of guns.

Guns are designed to kill. Data show that gunshot injuries are 18 times more lethal than stab wounds. One in three people who are shot will die, while one in 55 people who are stabbed will die. Globally the link between the control of firearms to limit their availability and a reduction in gun-related death and injury is well documented and endorsed as an effective strategy to reduce crime and violence levels.

South Africa's own experience proves that gun control saves lives. What it also shows is that poor enforcement kills.

Unless urgent action is taken to recover and destroy existing stockpiles and limit the flow of new guns into communities, South Africa will again experience the unprecedented levels of gun violence of the 1990s.



Acronyms

ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
BPR	Business Process Re-engineering
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIAC	SAPS' Crime Information Analysis Centre
CFR	Central Firearms Registry
ConCourt	Constitutional Court
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CSPS	Civilian Secretariat for Police Service
DFO	Designated Firearms Officer
EFRS	Enhanced Firearms Register System
EPS	Enabled Police Station
FCA	Firearms Control Act, No. 60 of 2000
FFZ	Firearm Free Zone
FRC	Firearm Registration Centre
FRS	Firearms Register System
IT	Information Technology
MVA	Motor vehicle accident
PFTC	Professional Firearms Training Council
Policy Committee	Committee for the Investigation into a New Policy for the Control of Legal Firearms in South Africa
PSIRA	Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority
SA	South Africa
SABS	South African Bureau of Standards
SADC Firearms Protocol	Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community Region
SAPS	South African Police Service
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SITA	State Information Technology Agency
SMS	Short Message Service (text message)
UN PoA	United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
WHO	World Health Organization



Acknowledgements



This publication was made possible with the support of the Raith Foundation and Millennium Trust.

Author: Claire Taylor

Inspiration: Bernie Fanaroff

Editing and layout: String Communication

Photography: File photo Discott/Wikipedia (front and back covers)

Acknowledgement: Parliamentary Monitoring Group

Date of publication: 2019

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Introduction

South Africa's story of gun control and violence is one in which lives are saved and lives are lost. It is both a heartening story of life and a horror account of death, injury, heartache and suffering. It is a story that shows how gun control saves lives while its poor enforcement kills and maims people, destroys families and communities, and impacts the country as a whole.

Like any story, it has a large cast of characters. One of these is 16-year old Dillan Cornelius, a young man from Manenberg in Cape Town, shot and killed in August 2013 as he walked home after visiting his friends (Dano, 2013).

Dillan's story is about the victims of gun violence, the weapons that kill, and the chain of events bringing the two together. It mirrors our country's story of gun control and violence, and is told in three parts:

- **Part 1: Victims:** This analyses the detail of gun-related violence in South Africa, including deaths and the injuries experienced by victims.
- **Part 2: Weapons:** Gun-related violence cannot happen unless there is a gun. Part 2 looks at patterns of gun distribution and ownership in South Africa over time.
- **Part 3: Gun control:** The final part of this story unpacks public policy changes, implementation successes and subsequent governance failures that have increased the prevalence of gun violence in South Africa. This includes the senseless death of Dillan Cornelius, a teenager walking in his neighbourhood on an evening in 2013.



Part 1: The victims – gun violence in South Africa

Summary of Part 1: The victims

Gun-related death and injury in South Africa has changed significantly since 1994, following this broad pattern:

- An increase in gun-related death and injury from 1994 to 2000.
- A decrease in gun-related death and injury from 2001 to 2010.
- An increase in gun-related death and injury from 2011 to date.

Gunshots were the leading cause of violence-related deaths in South Africa until 2006, when stab wounds replaced gunshots. However, since 2011 there has been a steady increase in the number of gunshot-related deaths. As of 2017/18, gun-related murders equalled stab-deaths (41.3% of murders in 2017/18 were gun-related and 42% resulted from sharp instrument injuries, of which 30.7% were knives).

Gunshot wounds are 18 times more lethal than stab wounds – making death much more likely. Gunshot wounds are also more complicated to treat and more likely to result in permanent disability, which – in addition to contributing to the pain, suffering and trauma of survivors, their family and friends – drains South Africa’s health and social support budgets.

Murder

South African Police Service (SAPS) crime statistics show that the number of murders committed in South Africa (irrespective of weapon used) have changed significantly between 1994 and 2018.

As shown in Figure 1,¹ murder dropped significantly between the years 1994/95 and 2010/11. It declined 3% between 1994/95 and 1998/99 (from an average of 71 to 69 murders a day), 22% between 1998/99 and 2003/04 (from an average of 69 to 54 murders a day) and 20% between 2003/04 and 2011/12 (from an average of 54 to 43 murders a day).

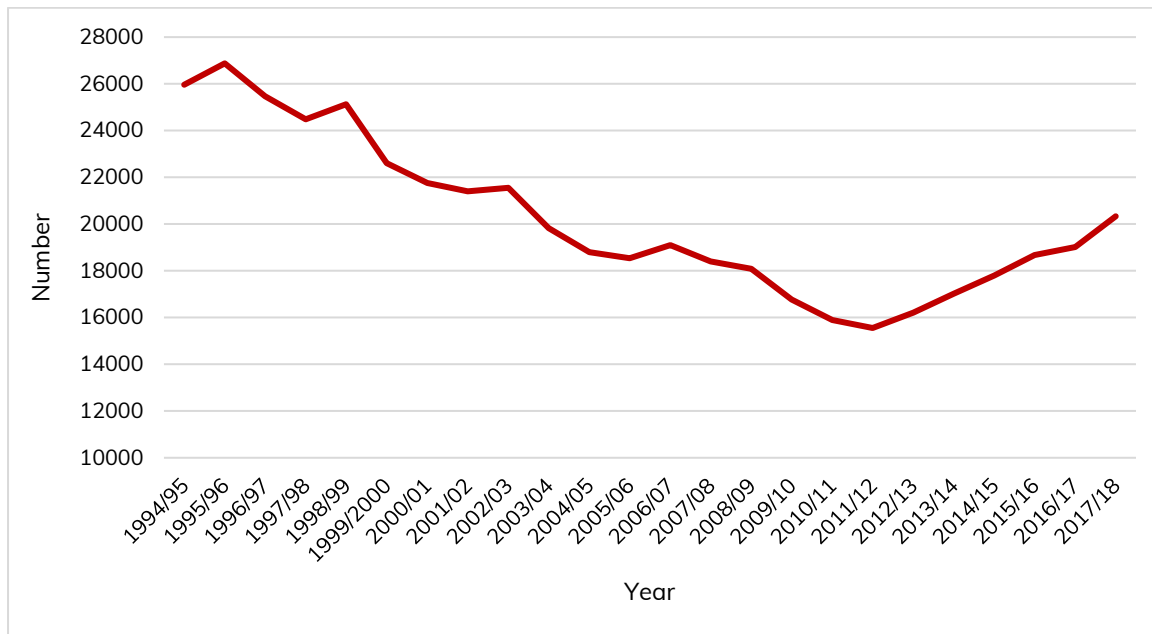
Between 2011/12 and 2017/18 murder increased 30% (from an average of 43 to 56 murders a day). Put differently, 12 more people were killed each day in 2017/18 than were killed eight years previously, which means 12 more families and communities suffer loss, trauma and fear every day than almost a decade ago.

¹ Data for:

- 1994/95 to 2004/05: Lamb, 2008.
- 2005/06 onwards: SAPS national annual crime statistics.



Figure 1: Murders in South Africa 1994/95 – 2017/18 (N)



An analysis of the murder rate in South Africa shows a 17% increase over the last six years after dropping 55% in the 18 years between 1993 and 2011. The murder rate is currently 35.2 per 100,000 – which means that South Africa remains one of the 10 most murderous countries in the world (Gould, 2018).

Gun-related death

While police crime statistics are an important source of information to assess crime and violence levels, death (mortality) rates are considered a particularly reliable gauge of other indicators, including levels of violent crime. This is because in South Africa (as in many other countries), any death, whether from homicide, suicide, accident or illness, is linked to a corpse which is examined by a health official to identify various details, including cause of death; this information is then recorded both on the death certificate and death registry, which is collated as vital statistics. Consequently, South Africa’s vital statistics register includes information on how many deaths are due to gunshot.

While vital statistics are an important monitoring mechanism, mortuary-based research is considered the ‘gold-standard’ of injury and violence surveillance. A national mortuary study undertaken in 2009 found more than three times as many deaths from homicide and road-traffic injury than were recorded by vital registration and 13% more homicides than the 16,834 cases recorded by the SAPS that year (Matzopoulos, 2015). As such, the information in this section cites a number of data sources to identify patterns in gun-related deaths rather than exact figures.

The ‘up-down-up’ pattern of gun-related deaths in South Africa is shown in Figure 2:²

² The SAPS’ Crime Information Analysis Centre (CIAC) stopped publicising information on the weapon-type used in murders from the late 1990s, so these data cannot be used to trace annual trends beyond 1998, though in 2017/18 the SAPS again provided this information. Data in Figure 2 are sourced from: SAPS (1994-1998 data: Chetty, 2000; 2017/18 data: SAPS national annual crime statistics); StatsSA (1997-2013 data: Matzopoulos, 2016; 2014 and 2015 data: StatsSA Nesstar); Urban mortuary (2002-2008 data: MRC); Department of Health (2010-2014 data: Motsoaledi, 2015).

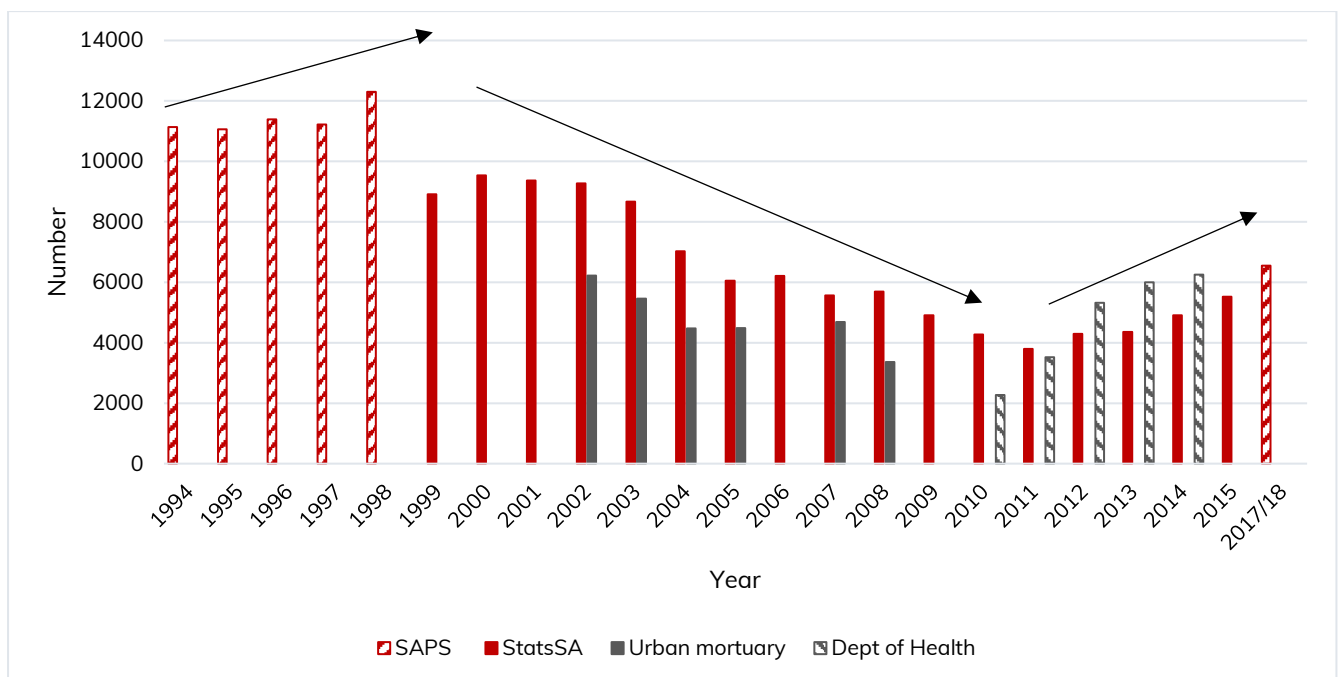


Up: Gun-related deaths were at their highest between 1994 and 1998. In this period between 30 and 34 people were shot and killed a day. Dillan Cornelius was born in 1997.

Down: From 2000/01 there was a steady decline in the number of gun-related deaths as shown by both StatsSA and urban mortuary data (the latter are available from 2002 to 2008, though data for 2006 have not been published). A national mortuary study undertaken in 2009 revealed that an average of 18 people were shot and killed each day in South Africa that year (Matzopoulos, 2015). As a child, Dillan Cornelius was growing up in a country where gun violence was in decline.

Up: In 2011 this downward trend reversed and gun-related deaths started increasing, as shown by both StatsSA and Department of Health data. In 2016/17, a SAPS murder study estimated that between 18 and 21 people were shot and killed a day while in 2017/18 this increased to 23 people a day, though these figures are likely to be underestimates due to the discrepancy between mortuary data and vital statistics and police crime data described above. Dillan Cornelius was killed in the winter of 2013.

Figure 2: Firearm-related deaths: A comparison of available data 1994 – 2017/18 (N)



A report commissioned by the Civilian Secretariat for Police Service (CSPS) on gun-related crime in South Africa between 1999 and 2014 confirms this ‘up-down-up’ pattern of gun-related deaths, noting that in 2000/01, 50% of all homicides in South Africa were firearm-related, dropping to 30% in 2011/12 before rising to 35% in 2013/14 (Wits School of Governance, 2015).

Gun-related deaths have steadily increased over recent years and currently equal stab-related deaths in South Africa. As shown in Figure 3:³

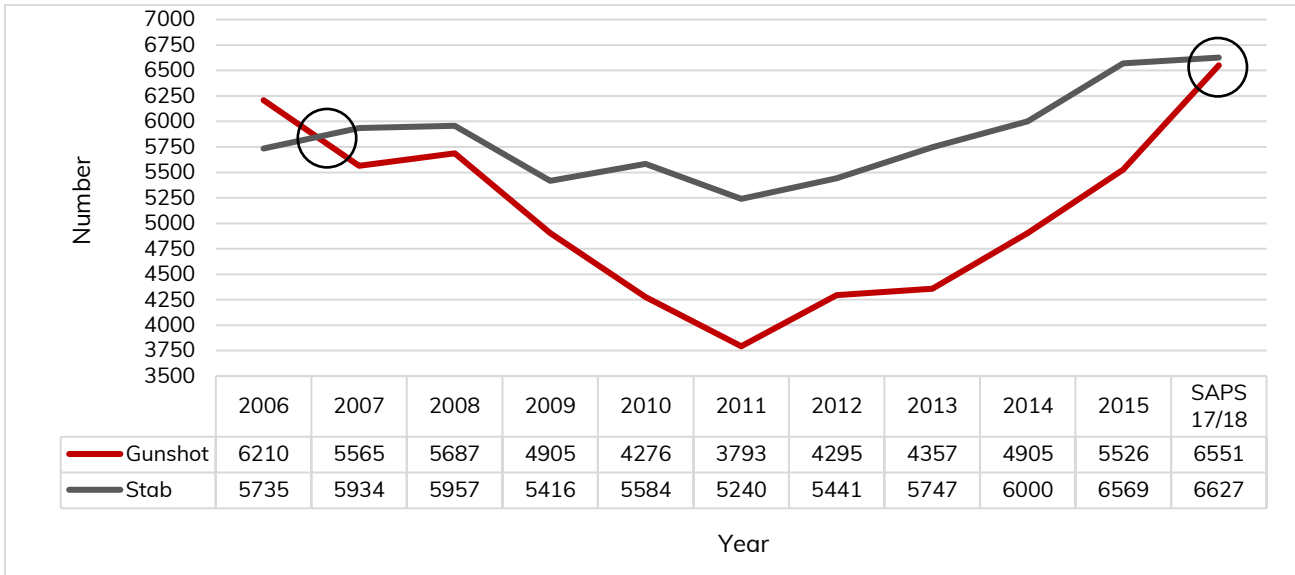
- More people were shot and killed nationally than were stabbed until 2006, when stab-related injuries overtook gun-related deaths. What is important to note is that even though stab deaths overtook gun deaths at this time, South Africa’s murder rate continued to decline showing that one weapon was not substituted for another and the net effect was lives saved.

³ Two data sources are illustrated in Figure 3: 2006 to 2015 data: StatsSANesstar; 2017/18 data: SAPS national annual crime statistics.



- While both stab and gunshot-related deaths began increasing in recent years, the rise in gun-related deaths has been much steeper, so narrowing the gap between the two. The 2017/18 crime statistics from the SAPS show that gun-related murders equalled stab-deaths (41.3% of murders in 2017/18 were gun-related, and 42% resulted from sharp instrument injuries of which 30.7% were knives).

Figure 3: Firearm and stab-related deaths nationally 2006 – 2017/18 (N)

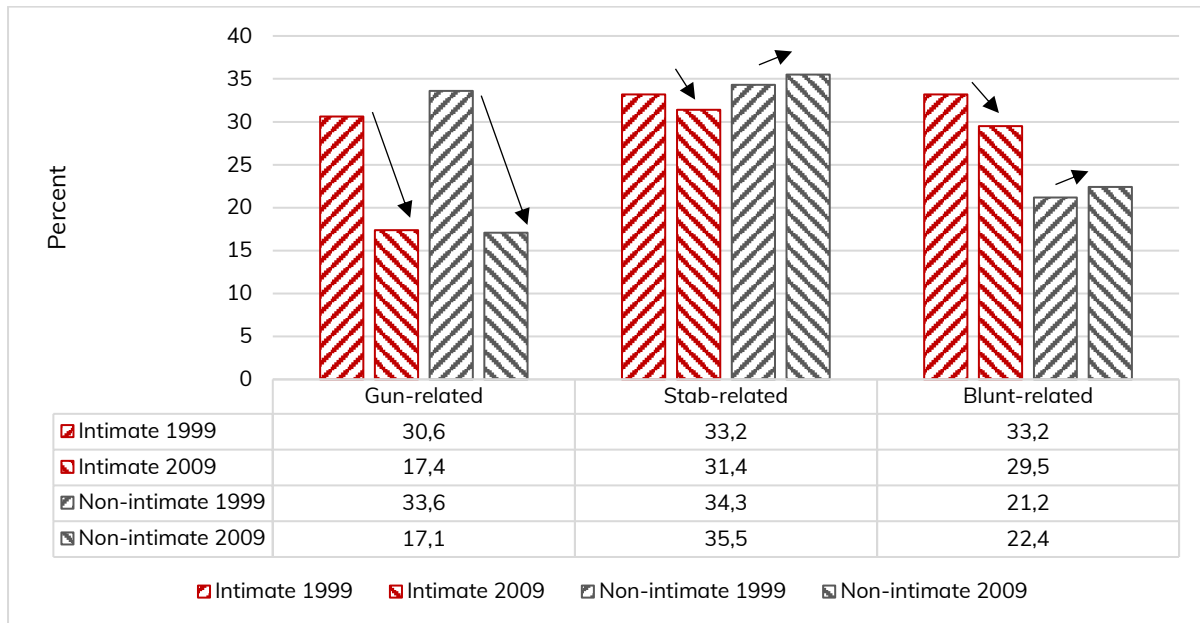


Two national studies of femicide (the murder of women) undertaken by the Medical Research Council in 1999 and 2009 show that the number of women killed by their intimate partner (intimate femicide) dropped from four women a day in 1999 (translating into one woman killed every six hours) to three women a day (one every eight hours) in 2009 (Abrahams, 2012).

As shown in Figure 4 (Abrahams, 2013), the reason for this drop in intimate femicide is a substantial decline in the number of women that were shot and killed compared to deaths resulting from stab and blunt injuries, with gunshot-related deaths almost halving from 30.6% in 1999 to 17.4% in 2009. Of significance is that this study also confirmed that gunshot-related deaths were not replaced by deaths from other weapons – both stab and blunt-related deaths dropped slightly, from 33.2% to 31.4% and 33.2% to 29.5% respectively – indicating that weapon substitution did not occur, and that the overall benefit of reducing gun deaths is lives saved.



Figure 4: Manner of death for women killed by intimate and non-intimate partners in South Africa in 1999 and 2009 (%)



Gun-related injuries

As with gun deaths, data on gun injuries in South Africa are also patchy, which means relying on available information and estimates.

A comprehensive global study on gun violence and disability calculates that for every person shot and killed as many as six victims will survive, often with severe disabilities (Buchanan, 2014). Using South Africa's most recent gun-related death rate of 23 people a day,⁴ it is estimated that as many as 138 people survive a gunshot each day across the country.

Severe disabilities are closely associated with spinal cord injury. According to a World Health Organization (WHO) global study on spinal cord injuries, trauma – specifically motor vehicle accidents (MVAs) – is the leading cause of these injuries worldwide, followed by falls and violence. In 2013, South Africa was identified by the WHO as having a very high violence-related traumatic spinal cord injury rate at 21% (Bickenbach, 2013, p. 20), though the rate is likely to be much higher now, as gun violence has steadily increased since this time.

While South Africa does not keep a database of spinal cord injuries (Joseph, 2015), local research shows a changing pattern in the causes of traumatic spinal cord injuries. As illustrated in Figure 5 below:

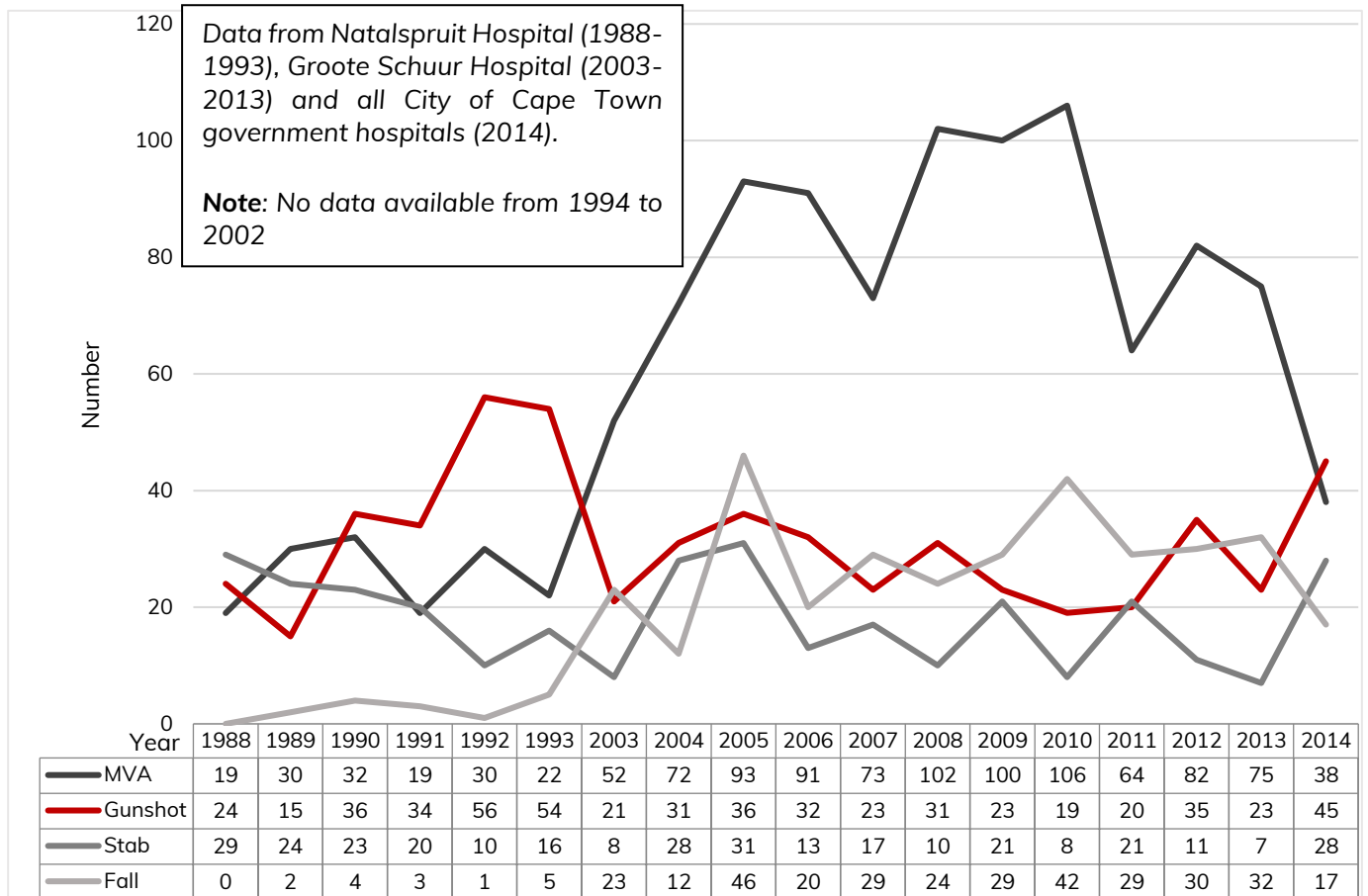
- Between 1990 and 1993, gunshots were the leading cause of traumatic spinal cord injuries (data from Natalspuit Hospital: Hart, 1994).
- While we do not have data from 1994 to 2002, from 2003 motor vehicle accidents overtook gunshots, becoming the leading cause of traumatic spinal cord injuries (data from Groote Schuur Hospital: Sothmann, 2015).

⁴ 41.3% of the 20,336 murders in 2017/18 were gun-related, source: SAPS national annual crime statistics.



- From 2005 the number of gunshot traumatic spinal cord injury cases started dropping unevenly until 2011, when numbers started rising (data from Groote Schuur Hospital: Sothmann, 2015).
- In 2014 gunshots became the leading cause of traumatic spinal cord injuries, overtaking motor vehicle accidents (data from all Cape Town government hospitals: Joseph, 2015).

Figure 5: Leading causes of traumatic spinal cord injury: Available data 1988 – 2015 (N)



It has been estimated that R6 billion (4% of South Africa’s National Health Budget) was spent treating gunshot injuries in patients at state hospitals nationally in 2014, which (accounting for inflation), is worth R7,2 billion as of mid-June 2018.⁵

Other gun crimes

A report analysing gun-related crime in South Africa between 1999 and 2014 (Wits School of Governance, 2015) shows a steady decline between 1999 to 2011 in:

- Crimes for which guns are the preferred weapon (such as murder, attempted murder and robbery at residential premises); these crimes dropped 8% in the 11 year period between 1999/2000 and 2010/11.

⁵ The figure of R6 billion is a significant under-estimate as the costs of emergency transport, fees of surgeons and allied health professionals and rehabilitation were not included. Source: van As, 2014. The figure of R7,2 billion was calculated using Inflation Adjustment Calculator.



- Crimes dependant on guns (such as car and truck hijacking, bank robbery and pointing or discharging a gun) also reduced (by 9%) in this period.

However, the study found a steady increase in both types of crime from 2011, and as of 2013/14 guns were used in 69% of attempted murders and 57% of robberies with aggravating circumstances.

An analysis of aggravated robberies shows that guns were used in 62% of robberies at residential premises, 80% of robberies at non-residential premises, 85% of carjackings, 86% of truck hijackings, 98% of cash-in-transit heists and 93% of bank robberies in 2013/14.

The Western Cape

As will become clear, the experience of the Western Cape is of significance in South Africa’s story of gun violence. This section summarises key information on gun-related murder and injury in that province.

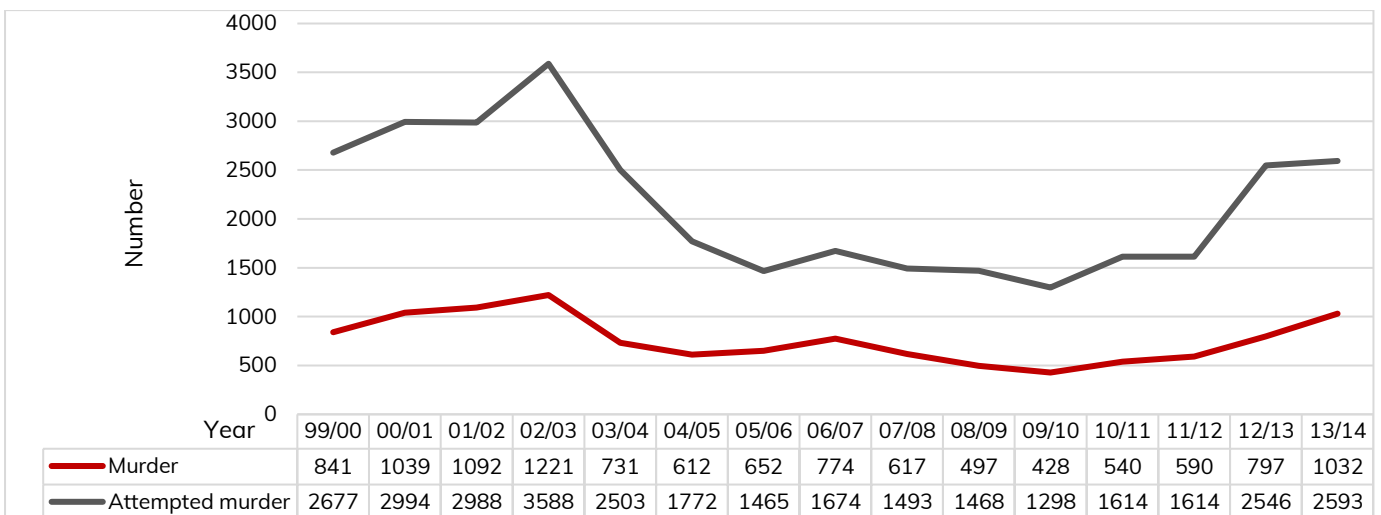
Figure 6 (Department of Community Safety, 2015) shows that gun-related murder and attempted murder in the Western Cape broadly follows the national ‘up-down-up’ pattern of gun-related mortality (see Figure 2):

Up: Gun-related violence increased from 1999/2000 (prior data are not available so we cannot track deaths in line with Figure 2), peaking in 2002/03.

Down: From 2002/03 to 2009/10 there was a marked and steady decline in gun violence, albeit with a slight rise and plateau in 2006/07.

Up: In 2009/10 this trend reversed and gun-related violence started increasing. According to surveillance at the Western Cape’s 16 mortuaries, gunshot deaths in the province doubled in the seven years between 2010 and 2016, in contrast stab and blunt-related murders remained relatively stable (Evans, 2018).

Figure 6: Firearm-related murder and attempted murder in the Western Cape 1999/2000 – 2013/14 (N)



Mortuary surveillance analysing who is shot and where, shows that it is men in the Cape metropolitan area who are most at risk (Evans, 2018). The number of men murdered with a gun doubled between 2010 and 2016, mainly in the metro sub-districts of Klipfontein, Tygerberg and Mitchells Plain.

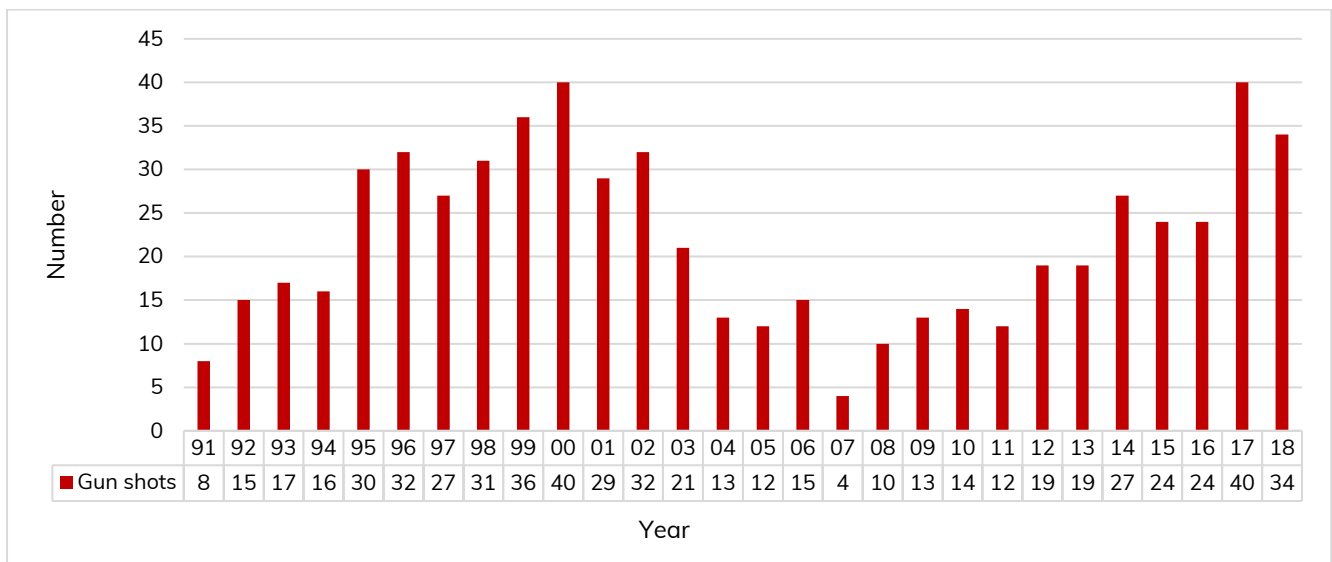


As a result, the number of men that were murdered in the Western Cape increased 39% between 2010 and 2016 (to 96 deaths per 100,000 population). In contrast, the female homicide rate has remained stable since 2010 (nine deaths per 100,000 population, equivalent to one female homicide per day).

Data from the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital in Cape Town (the only dedicated health institution in South Africa for children aged 0 to 12 years) confirm the ‘up-down-up’ pattern. As shown in Figure 7:⁶

- Between 1991 and 2000, there was a steady increase in the number of children admitted for treatment after being shot.
- The number of children requiring treatment for gunshot injuries significantly declined from 2001 to 2007.
- From 2007 the number of children needing treatment after being shot steadily increased and in 2017, 40 children were admitted – one less than those admitted in 2000 – which is the highest number recorded.

Figure 7: Children (0 to 12 years) treated for gunshot injuries at the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital, Cape Town 1991 – 2018 (N)



The Cape Flats

A national study of gun-related crime in South Africa shows that while murder and attempted murder rates have increased nationally since 2011/12, increases have been highest in the Western Cape. However, 50% of murders there are linked to just 14 of the 150 police stations in the province: Bishop Lavis, Delft, Gugulethu, Harare, Khayelitsha, Kraaifontein, Lingeletu-West, Lwandle, Mfuleni, Mitchells Plain, Nyanga, Philippi, Philippi East, and Worcester. In other words, “the high murder rate in the Western Cape is more a Cape Flats phenomenon than province-wide” (Wits School of Governance, 2015, p. 21).

⁶ Two data sources are illustrated in Figure 7: 1991 to 2010 data: Campbell, 2013; 2011 to 2018 data: Baker, 2019.



This is confirmed by research undertaken by the University of Cape Town in partnership with the University of Washington (USA), the Medical Research Council of South Africa and the Salt River and Tygerberg mortuaries (Matzopoulos, 2018).

The study, which assessed if there is an association between changes in legally and illegally held firearm availability and gun homicide rates in Cape Town, made three key findings:

- **Gun deaths are linked to gun availability:** As guns become less available, fewer people are shot and killed. In contrast, as guns become more available, the number of people that are shot and killed increases.
- **Guns that are supplied illegally to criminal networks kill more people in the short term:** While increased availability of guns – whatever their legal status – increases gun violence, guns that are illegally acquired kill more people in the short term. Over time though this difference starts stabilising as legally held guns leak into the illegal market through loss and theft (see Appendix 1: Mechanisms through which guns leak from the legal to the illegal pool).
- **Communities living on the Cape Flats experience much higher levels of gun-related violence than other Western Cape communities.** This is directly linked to the increased availability of unlicensed guns in this area from 2007 (see Box 2: The gun that killed Dillan Cornelius on page 22 below for additional information).

The face of gun violence

Part 1 has traced in broad strokes the pattern of gun violence – showing how lives have been saved, and lost, to guns in South Africa over 24 years. This section examines who is most at risk of gun violence. Data show that the face of gun violence is someone like Dillan Cornelius, a young black man living in a metropolitan area (Matzopoulos, 2015):

- Men make up 89% of gun murder victims in South Africa.
- Men living in metro areas have a “notably higher” rate of murder (Matzopoulos, 2015, p. 307).
- Murder rates are highest among teenagers and young adults in the 15–29 years age group in metro areas, followed by the 30–44 years age group.
- Homicide rates among people categorized as black are highest in metro areas.
- While young men are disproportionately affected by gun violence – both as victims/survivors as well as perpetrators – young women are an important component of the victim/survivor profile.

To put a name and story to just one of the thousands whose lives have been permanently impacted by a gunshot, Box 1 below includes a brief excerpt of Dillan Cornelius’ life and death.

Box 1: The life and death of Dillan Cornelius⁷

1,032 people were shot and killed in the Western Cape in 2013 (Department of Community Safety, 2015), a statistic that conceals the fact that each was a person, with a name and a story, who left behind a family and community devastated by their loss.

One such individual was Dillan Cornelius, who died aged 16, in Manenberg on the Cape Flats.

Dillan had only recently returned to the area after spending two years away. His parents, who were worried about his wellbeing, had sent him to live with his uncle in the quiet rural village of

⁷ Unless otherwise noted, information is from Dano, 2013.



Vredendal on the West Coast. They had taken this drastic step in response to the stabbing to death of one of Dillan's fellow pupils at Phoenix High. This had taken place in front of young Dillan and "we feared for his safety," said his father.

Dianne and André Cornelius' efforts to keep their son safe failed on Saturday, 10 August 2013. As Dillan walked home that evening after visiting friends he is said to have argued with a middle-aged man. The man left but returned shortly afterwards with a gun. He opened fire on Dillan, hitting him in the arm, leg and abdomen. Dillan was transported to GF Jooste Hospital where he later died.



Part 2: The weapons – guns in South Africa

Summary of Part 2: The guns

As of 2015, there were 4,5 million guns licensed to 1,8 million gun owners, 90% of whom were civilians.

The majority of licensed gun owners live in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape, which are characterised by high levels of gun violence.

The main reason for owning a gun is self-defence, followed by occasional hunting and sports-shooting.

Handguns (pistols and revolvers) are the most commonly licensed gun. Handguns are also most likely to be lost or stolen and are the preferred weapon of crime, being used in almost all murders, attempted murders and aggravated robberies (94%, 94% and 97% respectively).

While there is no accurate information on how many unlicensed guns are in South Africa, most unlicensed guns were once legal before being leaked into the illegal pool. Loss and theft are the main mechanism by which legal guns are diverted, with civilians reporting the loss/theft of seven times as many guns as the police since 2001/02, though this ratio has increased significantly in recent years. As of 2017/18 civilians reported an average loss or theft of 24 guns a day, while police members lost one gun a day.

There are two main mechanisms to recover illegally held guns:

- Police stop, search and seizure or crime intelligence-led operations that 'push' illicit guns into the legal pool; and
- Campaigns that 'pull' guns into the legal pool through voluntary surrender, for example amnesties and gun buy-backs.

Unless the taps through which legal guns leak into the illegal pool are closed, the problem will never be addressed. This requires effective stockpile management, which involves:

- Securely storing stockpiles to prevent loss and theft;
- Regularly auditing stockpiles to ensure that stocks have not been breached and to identify obsolete and unwanted stocks;
- Collecting excess, obsolete, unwanted and recovered stocks;
- Regularly destroying stocks; and
- Keeping accurate records of who owns what weapon for which purpose.

By its very nature, gun violence, including death, injury or threats thereof, must involve a gun. This section is concerned with the gun – the 'what' of gun violence.

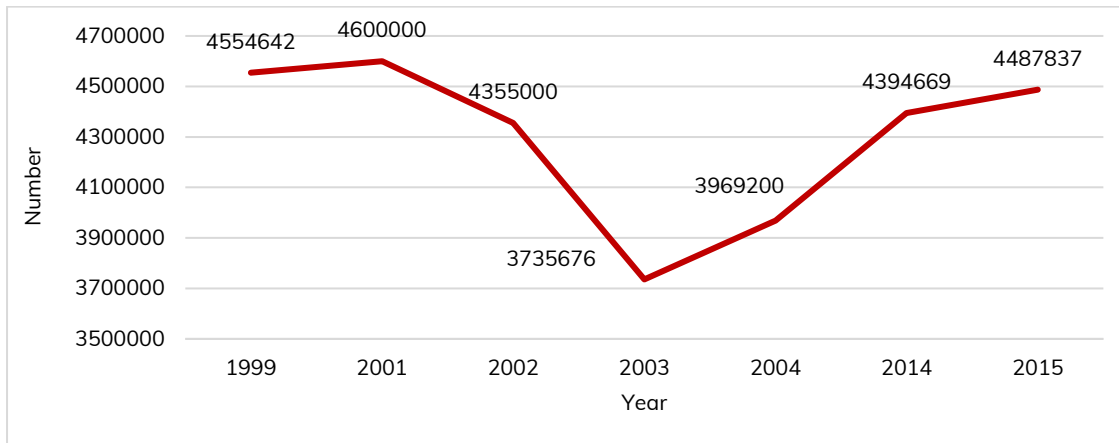


Licensed guns

Guns and gun owners

Figure 8⁸ shows that the total number of registered guns in South Africa (owned by civilians, private security companies as well as the state) has dropped and risen over 16 years. The steep decline in gun availability from 2001 coincides with the phased implementation of the Firearms Control Act, No. 60 of 2000 (FCA), which is described in detail in Part 3: Lives saved or lost – the role of gun control in South Africa.

Figure 8: Number of licensed firearms in South Africa 1999 – 2015



While the total number of guns in South Africa in 2015 (the latest data available) almost matches that of 1999, the profile of gun ownership and type of gun that is owned has changed

There are fewer civilian gun owners

In 1999 there were 2,027,411 individual gun owners (Chetty, 2000). By 2015 this dropped 14% to 1,749,034 individuals (Phiyega, 2015). Additional information on the number of civilian gun owners in South Africa can be found in the section titled Record-keeping on page 55 below.

There are fewer guns owned by civilians

In 1999 civilians owned 3,554,366 guns – 78% of all firearms licensed in South Africa (Chetty, 2000). In 2014 individuals owned 2,990,256 guns – 68% of all guns in South Africa (Wits School of Governance, 2015).

⁸ Seven data sources are illustrated in Figure 8:

- 1999: 4,554,642, source: Chetty, 2000.
- 2001: 4,600,000, source: Minnaar, 2001.
- 2002: 4,355,000, source: ISS, 2002.
- 2003: 3,735,676, source: Gould, 2004.
- 2004: 3,969,200, source: SAPS, 2004.
- 2014: 4,394,669, source: Wits School of Governance, 2015.
- 2015: 4,487,837, source: Phiyega, 2015.



There are fewer licensed handguns but more long guns⁹

In 1999 there were 2,784,420 licensed handguns (pistols and revolvers) and 1,740,114 long guns (rifles and shotguns) registered to both state and non-state actors (Chetty, 2000). By 2014 these numbers had changed; handgun ownership dropped 22% to 2,164,322 while long gun ownership rose 21% to 2,192,898, showing that long guns have replaced handguns (Wits School of Governance, 2015).

Profile of licensed gun owners¹⁰

As of late 2014 (the latest data available) 90% of gun owners are civilians. Of the 1,763,161 licensed gun owners in South Africa at that time (excluding the SAPS) 1,753,839 were civilians, 2,330 were private security companies, 6,569 were non-official institutions other than security companies and 423 were government departments excluding SAPS. Assuming that all 150,000 SAPS Act employees own guns, civilians make up 92% of gun owners in South Africa.

Almost two-thirds of licensed individual gun owners live in three provinces: Gauteng (37%), KwaZulu-Natal (14%), and the Western Cape (12%).

The overwhelming majority of licensed gun owners in South Africa – 81% – are men.

Almost two-thirds of licensed gun owners are over the age of 50: 25% are between 51 and 60 years, 19% are aged 61–70, 11% are 71–80 and 9% are older than 81 years.

In stark contrast to the older profile of licensed gun owners is the age of people accused of illegal possession of a firearm or ammunition: 27% are below 21, the lawful age to own a gun, (14% are between 12 and 15 years and 13% are between 16 and 20), 16% are 21–24, 21% are 25–35 and the remaining 23% are 36 years and older.

Reasons for gun ownership

The FCA provides for several categories of licence to possess a firearm and ammunition: For self-defence, occasional hunting and sports-shooting, dedicated hunting and sports-shooting, a private collection, a public collection, for business purposes as well as to be a licensed manufacturer, dealer or gunsmith. The holder of a firearm licence is required to renew it on a regular basis, with periods of validity ranging from two to 10 years depending on the type of licence held.

Data from the Central Firearms Registry (CFR) show that the majority (52%) of firearm-related applications submitted in the 10 years between 2004 and 2014 were for self-defence followed by applications for occasional hunting and sports-shooting (33%) (CFR, 2014).

⁹ Weapons classified as “combinations”, “light machine guns”, “carbines”, “machine guns” and “other” make up the difference between the total number of guns licensed in South Africa in 1999 and 2014 as shown in Figure 8 (1999: 4,554,642 and 2014: 4,394,669) and the combined total of handguns and long guns licensed for these years (1999: 4,524,534 and 2014: 4,357,220).

¹⁰ Wits School of Governance, 2015.



Unlicensed guns

Being unlicensed, it is impossible to accurately estimate the number of these guns in South Africa. What is important to note is that unlicensed guns are highly prized by people who cannot access them through legal channels.

Most unlicensed guns were legal before they leaked to the illegal pool (the terms previously-legal and unlicensed guns are used interchangeably in this report).

Leakage occurs through one of three means (see Appendix 1: Mechanisms through which guns leak from the legal to the illegal pool for additional information):

1. Loss and theft, which is the most significant way in which legal guns are diverted into the illegal pool. Contrary to public perception, civilians are the greatest source of unlicensed guns in South Africa, losing (through negligent loss or criminal theft) on average seven times more guns than the police since 2001/02,¹¹ though 2017/18 figures show that civilians reported the loss or theft of 8,867 guns that year (an average of 24 a day) while members of the police lost 358 guns (an average of one a day, source: SAPS 2017–2018 Annual Report).
2. Cross-border trafficking, though indications are that handguns are more likely to be smuggled from South Africa to neighbouring countries (Burger, 2018b; Cross, 2003; Hennop, 2000; McKenzie, 1999).
3. Fraud, corruption and poor implementation of the law, which means that people who do not meet the criteria of “fit and proper” are fraudulently granted gun licences. This has become increasingly prevalent from 2010/11 (see section Deliberate criminality in the discussion of Phase 6: Breakdown 2010 below).

Contrary to popular belief, AK47 assault rifles are seldom used to commit crimes, instead handguns (pistols and revolvers) are the weapon of choice. Handguns feature prominently on the list of guns that are lost or stolen – a pattern that has remained constant from 1999 to date (Wits School of Governance, 2015). Between 1999/2000 and 2013/14, handguns were used in 94% of murders, 94% of attempted murders and 97% of aggravated robberies involving a gun (97% of car-jackings, 96% of truck hijackings, 97% of robberies at residential premises and 96% of robberies at non-residential premises); shotguns trailed behind at an average of 3% (Wits School of Governance, 2015).

Guns are robust commodities and once a legal gun leaks into the unlicensed pool of guns it can be used repeatedly to commit crimes until it is ‘mopped up’. There are various ‘push’ and ‘pull’ mechanisms by which previously-legal guns can be recovered, though these are often costly and dangerous (see Appendix 2: Mechanisms to recover unlicensed guns).

Unless the taps through which legal guns leak are closed, the illegal pool will keep being filled. Proper stockpile management is central to closing these taps. Through five distinct actions – safe storage; scheduled audits; regular collections; frequent destructions; and accurate record-keeping, effective stockpile management ensures the state knows at any given time who owns what weapons for which purpose (see Appendix 3: Stockpile management).

In 2000, the SAPS identified reducing unlicensed guns as a central pillar of its firearms strategy (see Table 2: The five pillars of the SAPS' Firearms Strategy on page 29), and between 2000 and 2004, various police operations to reduce and eradicate the illegal pool and criminal use of firearms were

¹¹ SAPS Annual Reports from 2001–2002 to 2017–2018.



undertaken, including focused recovery campaigns such as Operations Crackdown, Sethunya and Normalization, which recovered over 60,000 unlicensed firearms (see Appendix 2, particularly the section titled 'Push' through police operations for additional information).

Conclusion: The weapons of gun violence

Part 2 has traced the weapons of gun violence – showing how the number and type of guns and gun owners has changed over time, and the link between legal and previously-legal guns, with unlicensed guns being especially valued by people who cannot access a gun through legal channels.

It concludes by examining the history of the gun used to kill Dillan Cornelius in Box 2.

Box 2: The gun that killed Dillan Cornelius¹²

Sixteen year old Dillan Cornelius was shot three times by a man armed with a handgun. The gun was once legally owned by a private individual or a police member before it was either lost or stolen. This particular gun was then recovered by the police or surrendered to them for destruction. Along with thousands of other guns recovered by or handed in to the police, it was kept in a secure SAPS-managed weapons store before being destroyed. Police records indicated that the gun had been destroyed.

But in 2012, the year before Dillan's death, police officers began to notice that guns registered as having been destroyed by the police were being found at crime scenes on the Cape Flats, in gang-infested areas in Gauteng and in taxi violence incidents in KwaZulu-Natal. What was noteworthy about these recovered guns was how professionally their serial numbers had been removed.

A coordinated campaign called Operation Impi began in December 2013, a few months after Dillan was killed. It involved recovering and ballistically testing recovered guns to trace and arrest perpetrators and permanently shut crime syndicates down. Having examined thousands of ballistics reports, the team realised that one or more corrupt police officials were involved in the nationwide syndicate.

In 2015 Colonel Christiaan Prinsloo, the Gauteng commander of Firearms, Liquor and Second Hand Goods Control at the SAPS was arrested. In a plea bargain, Prinsloo admitted to stealing 2000+ guns and selling them to gang leaders for R4,500 per firearm.

One of these guns killed Dillan Cornelius on 10 August 2013. Dillan's killer, who fled after the shooting, was identified by witnesses as having been recently released from prison.

¹² Dano, 2013; Pauw, 2017.



Part 3: Lives saved or lost – the role of gun control in South Africa

Summary of Part 3: Gun control saves lives, poor enforcement kills

Part 3 tracks changes in gun control policy and practice in South Africa over six time periods: Colonialism and Apartheid (1652–1993), the first years of democracy (1994–1998), negotiating a new gun law (1999–2000), phased implementation of the law (2001–2003), full implementation of the law (2004–2009) and breakdown in enforcement (2010 onwards).

By doing this one is able to show the link between gun availability and associated violence over this time. As gun availability decreased, so too did the number of gun-associated deaths and other crimes. Conversely, as guns became more available so gun violence increased.

Part 3 also identifies gun control policies and practices that have helped save lives as well as those that have increased the risk of gun violence and associated death, injury and trauma.

This section contains important lessons for gun control interventions in South Africa and globally. It also raises issues of government accountability and liability given that the state has a duty to uphold everyone’s “right to life and the right to security” as made implicit in the FCA’s Preamble.

Part 3 of this report identifies interventions and actions that either saved thousands of lives from gun violence or resulted in thousands of people, including Dillan Cornelius, being shot and killed (or injured, threatened or intimidated) by a gun-wielding perpetrator. It shows that changes in South Africa’s gun control regime, which entail both changes in policy and the implementation of and compliance with such policies over the years, have had a direct impact on life or death.

Six distinct phases have been identified in the history of gun control in South Africa, as summarised in Table 1:

Phase	Year	Action	Hyperlinked page number
Colonialism and Apartheid 1652-1993	1775	First attempt to regulate the ownership of firearms in SA.	26
	1969	Arms and Ammunition Act (No. 79 of 1969) passed to regulate firearms and firearm ownership in SA.	26
First years of democracy 1994-1998	1994	16 December: 24-hour national firearms amnesty.	27
	1996	Government develops the National Crime Prevention Strategy, which identifies firearms control as a priority.	27
		Operation Rachel begins.	32



	1997	The Minister of Safety and Security appoints the Committee for the Investigation into a New Policy for the Control of Legal Firearms in South Africa.	27
Negotiating new gun law 1999-2000	1999	7 March: Section 8(1) of the Arms and Ammunition Act amended to prohibit lending of guns.	27
		17 November: Cabinet approves the Firearms Control Bill.	27
		3 December: The Firearms Control Bill is gazetted, submission deadline: 31 January 2000.	27
	2000	1 April: Operation Crackdown launched by SAPS.	31
		19 May: Firearms Control Bill (B34 of 2000) tabled in Parliament.	27
		19-21 June and 15-23 August: Public hearings on Firearms Control Bill.	27
		24 August: SAPS presents Firearms Strategy to support the Firearms Control Bill.	28
		August:	
		• Audit of state owned firearms begins.	52
		• Overhaul of the CFR begins.	61
• SAPS begin piloting Designated Firearms Officer and Firearm Registration Centre models.	60		
• SAPS begin campaign to encourage the voluntary surrender of legal firearms.	31		
• SA Gunowners Association lodges application to reveal government's "secret policy" underpinning increase in gun licence refusals.	32		
12 October: National Assembly approves the Firearms Control Bill.	28		
30 October: National Council of Provinces approves the Firearms Control Bill.	28		
Phased implementation 2001-2003	2001	SADC Firearms Protocol comes into force, SA is a signatory.	32
		UN Programme of Action adopted, SA has ratified.	32
		Operation Rachel ends.	32
		4 April: President assents to the Firearms Control Act (No. 60 of 2000), signing it into law.	28
	SAPS start capacity building to support implementation of the FCA, including appointment and training of new staff and acquisition of new equipment.	30	
	Firearm Free Zones pilot project begins.	31	
	2002	26 April: The first firearms registration centre opens in Pretoria.	30
June: Minimum unit standards for firearm competency approved by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).		30	



		November: South African Bureau of Standards 953-1 and -2 prescripts for the storage of firearms and ammunition gazetted.	31
	2003	27 March: Draft Firearms Control Regulations published, submission deadline: 29 April 1 April: Operation Sethunya launched by SAPS. 1 October: Operation Normalization launched by SAPS. 22 December: Firearms Control Amendment Act (No. 43 of 2003) approved by Parliament (clarifies certain definitions). ¹³	- 31 31 -
Full implementation 2004-2009	2004	30 June: Court bid by SA Gunowners Association to halt the FCA fails. 1 July: Firearms Control Regulations (2004) promulgated and Firearms Control Act (No. 60 of 2000) fully implemented; SAPS five-year Firearms Strategy informs enforcement.	33 33 28
	2005	1 January: Licence renewal process under FCA based on gun owner's birthdate begins – to be phased in over 4 years. 1 January to 30 June: National firearms amnesty.	35 35
	2006	Firearms Control Amendment Act, 2006 (No. 28 of 2006) approved (to be operationalised once Regulations approved). ¹⁴	-
	2007	Firearms Control Amendment Regulations, 2007 approved. Christiaan Prinsloo begins selling guns from police stores to gang leaders on the Cape Flats.	- 40
	2009	9 May: Jacob Zuma inaugurated as president of SA. 26 June: North Gauteng High Court interim court order granted to SA Hunters and Game Conservation Association, whereby firearm licences issued under the 1969 Arms and Ammunition Act remain valid. 30 June: SAPS five-year, five-pillar Firearms Strategy ends.	- 68 38
Breakdown "Implementation Relapse"¹⁵ 2010 to date	2010	Audit of CFR by CSPS and announcement of turnaround strategy by Minister of Police. 11 Jan-11 April: National firearms amnesty.	38 41
	2011 and 2012	SAPS reports clearing the CFR's backlog by processing over one million firearm-related applications in nine months.	38

¹³ SAPS 2003-2004 Annual Report.

¹⁴ SAPS 2006-2007 Annual Report.

¹⁵ Phiyega, 2015.



	Incidents of firearm-related fraud and corruption start surfacing.	39
	15 August: National Development Plan 2030 launched.	43
2013	May: Minister of Police establishes a Committee of Inquiry to investigate allegations of questionable practices by firearms dealers and training institutions. December: Operation Impi launched.	39 40
2014	Legally binding Arms Trade Treaty (ATT, adopted in 2013) comes into force, SA is a signatory.	-
2015	UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 adopted.	43
2016	3 February: SAPS issues National Instruction to standardise licence renewals processing; ruling challenged; case referred to Constitutional Court. Operation Impi effectively shut down due to political interference.	68 40
2018	15 February: Cyril Ramaphosa inaugurated as president of SA. 29 March: Lieutenant-General Peter Jacobs (from Operation Impi) appointed head of Police Crime Intelligence. Various cases against alleged gun smuggling syndicates revived and charges reinstated. 7 June: Constitutional Court rules that firearm licence renewals are constitutional and that gun ownership is a privilege, not a right. 27 July: North Gauteng High Court interim court order granted to Gun Owners of SA, halting action by SAPS in response to ConCourt ruling until case heard as part of normal court roll.	41 49 41 68 69

Phase 1: Colonialism and Apartheid

↑ GUN NUMBERS ↑ GUN DEATHS

When European settlers arrived in South Africa in 1652 their guns were used to oppress, control and dispossess indigenous people. Recognising the power that guns hold, various laws were passed from 1775 to keep guns in the hands of colonisers. The last of these, the Arms and Ammunition Act (No. 79 of 1969), underwent 20 amendments over 30 years (Cross, 2003), including an amendment in 1984 that enabled black people to possess guns.¹⁶

¹⁶ Kirsten, 2008. To note that prior to 1984, the 1971 Regulations under the Arms and Ammunition Act of 1969 made provision for an applicant designated as “bantú” and later “black” to apply for a firearm licence. Source: Department of the South African Police, 1971; Department of Police, 1978.



Phase 2: First years of democracy 1994–1998

↑ GUN NUMBERS ↑ GUN DEATHS

On 16 December 1994, five months after calls for South Africa's first democratic election on 27 April to be gun free, then Minister of Safety and Security, Sydney Mufamadi, declared a 24-hour, no-questions-asked gun amnesty in which anyone handing in a weapon would be exempt from prosecution (Kirsten, 2008). While the impact of this amnesty was insignificant in terms of weapons surrendered, it signalled the first move by South Africa's democratically-elected government to address gun violence in the country (see Appendix 4 for information on the three amnesties that have been held in South Africa and their impact).

In the years following the 1994 amnesty there was growing recognition that violent crime was one of the greatest threats to the consolidation of democracy in South Africa. In 1996 Cabinet approved the National Crime Prevention Strategy as South Africa's 'roadmap' for dealing with crime by focusing on seven priority areas – firearms, crime against women and children, inter-group violence, motor vehicle theft (including hijacking), organised crime, white collar and commercial crime and corruption (Secretariat for Safety and Security, 1999b).

In 1997, Minister Mufamadi appointed the Committee for the Investigation into a New Policy for the Control of Legal Firearms in South Africa (called the Policy Committee) to "produce progressive policy proposals which will contribute to a drastic reduction in the number of legal firearms in circulation in South Africa" (Kirsten, 2008, p. 110).

Phase 3: Negotiating a new gun law 1999–2000

↑ GUN NUMBERS ↑ GUN DEATHS

As the Policy Committee undertook its work, the state started tightening policies regulating firearms in South Africa. For example in March 1999 an amendment to the Arms and Ammunition Act was passed by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Safety and Security to close a loophole in the Act (Secretariat for Safety and Security, 1999a). In summary, the amendment aimed at regulating the circumstances under which a gun licence holder "may lend" his or her gun to another person, as section 8(1) of the 1969 Act allowed a gun to be lent without any screening of the borrower as long as they had a letter of consent from the gun owner. According to the minutes of the parliamentary meeting, "South Africa is the only country in the world, which has a formal licencing (sic) procedure, yet allows guns to be lent out to people who do not have licences." The minutes further noted that while the police were "pleading for the amendment to be passed" the gun owning fraternity was "vehemently opposed to the amendment" (see Appendix 10 for a summary of other actions by gun lobby groups over the years opposing government's attempts to more effectively control firearms).

The Firearms Control Bill, which would replace the 1969 Arms and Ammunition Act, was approved by Cabinet on 17 November 1999 (SAPA, 1999), and published in Government Gazette Number 20688 in early December. The public was given until the end of January 2000 to make submissions. In total, the Safety and Security Portfolio Committee received over 3,000 written submissions (Kirsten, 2008).

On 19 May 2000 the Firearms Control Bill (B34 of 2000) was published in Government Gazette Number 21193. Public hearings on the Bill were held over two time periods – 19 to 21 June and 15 to 23 August 2000. In total, 93 oral submissions were made to the Safety and Security Portfolio Committee (Kirsten, 2008).



On 24 August 2000, the day after the final oral submissions on the Firearms Control Bill were made to Parliament, the SAPS gave a detailed presentation to the Safety and Security Portfolio Committee, outlining its Firearms Strategy in support of the Firearms Control Bill – additional information on this Strategy can be found in Table 2: The five pillars of the SAPS' Firearms Strategy on page 29 below (SAPS, 2000).

Presenting to Parliament, SAPS' leaders noted that:

"Firearms change the nature of violent crime. Crimes committed with guns are more likely to cause serious injury and fatality. Gun crimes make headline news, striking fear into the hearts of local communities and international tourists and investors alike. We cannot afford to live with current levels of firearm related violence and we welcome the Firearms Control Bill as a vital mechanism to assist the SAPS in our efforts to police both legal and illegal firearms so as to achieve our objective of a safe and secure society...The Firearms Control Bill... represents a major tool, essential to our fight against violent crime...(it) will help us reduce gun violence through more effective control of legal firearms and the resultant containment of loss of firearms into the illegal pool...It will help us develop a culture of responsible gun ownership and usage" (SAPS, 2000).

On 12 October 2000, 10 months after first being gazetted, Parliament's National Assembly approved the Firearms Control Bill and on 30 October 2000 the National Council of Provinces approved the Bill. Press reports noted that the law would be phased in over five years, allowing gun owners time to re-apply for their licences (Dempster, 2000).

Phase 4: Phased implementation 2001–2004

↓ GUN NUMBERS ↓ GUN DEATHS

The FCA (2000) was assented to and signed into law by the president on 4 April 2001 (Presidency RSA, 2001) and published and "enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa" six days later, on 10 April (Government RSA, 2001).

While it took a further three years for the Firearms Control Regulations to be finalised and adopted, as will be detailed below, "from (the) time the legislation was passed in 2000, the SAPS began to 'roll out' a new, more intensive firearms control regime in line with the new law's provisions. Thus, over the period 2000–2004 it is possible to look for effects of the new regulations, though the picture is difficult to see because of a lack of comprehensive data" (Lamb, 2008, p. 6).

The morning after the final day of public hearings on the Firearms Control Bill, the SAPS presented its Firearms Strategy to Parliament, which is summarised in Table 2: The five pillars of the SAPS' Firearms Strategy.¹⁷

¹⁷ SAPS' initial Strategy identified four pillars, Pillar 5 was added in subsequent presentations, and the aims and objectives of each pillar became more detailed over time; for ease of reading, all five pillars and refinements in objectives are presented in Table 2. Information sourced from: SAPS, 2000; SAPS, 2001; SAPS, 2002; SAPS Annual Reports.



Table 2: The five pillars of the SAPS' Firearms Strategy

Pillar 1:	Pillar 2:	Pillar 3:	Pillar 4:	Pillar 5:
<p>REGULATORS</p> <p>Finalise legislation and policies to manage the flow, possession and use of guns in SA, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FCA and Regulations • National instructions and standing orders • Training unit standards for firearm competencies 	<p>CAPACITY BUILDING</p> <p>Support the implementation of the FCA, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointing and training new staff and acquiring new equipment • Overhauling the CFR's Firearms Record System 	<p>ADDRESS ILLEGAL AND CRIMINAL GUNS AND USE</p> <p>Use an "operational crime combating approach" to stop the leakage of legal guns, reduce the demand for guns, and recover legal and previously-legal guns, including through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditing state and private security companies' guns • Supporting the voluntary surrender of legally owned guns • Clarifying procedures to deal with deceased estates' guns • Specifying safe gun storage standards • Mobilising intelligence driven operations to recover previously-legal guns 	<p>AWARENESS AND SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION</p> <p>Prevent crime and violence through public awareness and education and social crime partnerships. Included raising public awareness on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions in the FCA to support responsible ownership and use of legal firearms • Voluntary surrender of guns • Firearms in deceased estates 	<p>REGIONAL AND SECTOR CO-OPERATION</p> <p>Coordinated planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of firearms control initiatives in the region. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreements to regulate small arms and light weapons trade, storage, possession and use • Regional operations to recover and destroy firearms, the most notable of which was Operation Rachel



While the SAPS publicly claimed that its five-pillar Firearms Strategy informed enforcement of the FCA only after the law was implemented on 1 July 2004 (FCA: Date of commencement), minutes of meetings, presentations and media reports show that it was being implemented years earlier, as summarised on the next three pages.

Pillar 1 – Regulators

Mechanisms to ‘raise the bar’ to qualify for gun ownership were put in place prior to 2004, such as the approval of training unit standards for firearm competencies by SAQA in 2002 (SAPS 2002-2003 Annual Report); competency certification is the first step in the firearm licence application process (see Box 3 on page 34 below for information on the FCA’s two-tier licensing process). Also in 2002, the first firearms registration centre under the FCA was opened in Pretoria to serve nine police stations in the Pretoria North region. Speaking at the launch, Central Firearms Director Jaco Bothma said, “legal firearm owners would have to come to the centre to re-register for new licenses (sic) as from early next year” when 22 centres would be in operation in the province. Moreover, “It is essential that gun owners, including dealers and gunsmiths, come here to have their licenses (sic) renewed. Failing that, their firearms will be declared unlicensed” (SAPA, 2002). A study undertaken in 2003 to assess the role of the criminal justice system in excluding unfit people from gun ownership noted that even though relevant sections of the Arms and Ammunition Act (1969) were being used as the FCA had not been promulgated, “DFOs (a new position under the FCA – see Box 5 on page 60 below) had one eye on the new Firearm (sic) Control Act’s requirements with the view to implementing...expanded processes and procedures” (Mistry, 2002, p. 27).

Pillar 2 – Capacity building

In August 2000, the SAPS “described new initiatives that would pave the way for the implementation of the Firearm (sic) Control Bill,” including additional budget allocations for staff and equipment and an overhaul of the CFR’s Firearms Record System (SAPS, 2000). These initiatives are summarised below, but additional detail is in Appendix 6: Pillar 2 of the Firearms Strategy: Capacity Building and Appendix 7: Overhauling the CFR’s Firearms Record System.

- **Staff:** An additional R73 million was earmarked for human resources for the next two financial years to appoint staff, including Designated Firearms Officials (DFOs), and to fill additional posts at the CFR, Criminal Record Centre, Forensic Laboratory, Border Police Unit and Illegal Firearms Investigation Units.
- **Equipment:** An additional R62 million was allocated to provide logistical and IT hardware to police stations, the CFR, Border Police Units, and Illegal Firearms Investigation Units for the next two financial years in support of the Bill’s implementation.
- **Overhaul of CFR:** In May 2000 the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) began a business process re-engineering (BPR) study on the “re-engineering of all processes involved in the regulation and licensing of legal firearms, in close cooperation with internal and external role players” after which a new “integrated” firearm control system would be implemented in the SAPS to replace the current Firearms Register System.

Pillar 3 – Address illegal and criminal guns and gun use

Various initiatives and operations began well before the FCA was fully implemented on 1 July 2004 to recover and destroy both legally and illegally held guns, including:

Auditing/recertification of state and private security companies’ firearms

According to the SAPS, the purpose of these audits was to rectify records held by the CFR and relevant state departments and to identify obsolete/redundant firearms for destruction (see additional information on auditing stockpiles in Appendix 3: Stockpile management).



Supporting the voluntary surrender of legally owned guns

The day after the final public hearings on the Firearms Control Bill, the SAPS reported that a national instruction detailing the procedure to be followed for owners wishing to hand their guns in at police stations had been developed, and that “an awareness and education campaign will support this instruction both internally and externally” (SAPS, 2000. See Appendix 5: Encouraging voluntary surrender of licensed guns for additional information).

Clarifying procedures for dealing with deceased estates’ guns

With approximately 190,000 firearms licensed in the name of deceased owners in circulation in South Africa in August 2000, the SAPS launched an awareness campaign to “clarify procedures for licensing, to allay unfounded fears of prosecution and to ensure that these firearms are officially licenced (sic) or alternatively destroyed before the actual implementation” of the Firearms Control Bill (SAPS, 2000. See Appendix 8: Deceased estate firearms for additional information).

Specifying safe gun storage standards

At the end of 2002, the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) passed two Standards, 953-1 and 953-2 (SABS, 2002). In summary, these specify the requirements of gun safes and strong rooms to reduce the risk of accidental death and injury in the home and theft of firearms.

Mobilising intelligence driven operations to recover unlicensed guns

While various sub and parallel-operations successfully recovered previously-legal firearms, three notable national operations were undertaken between 2000 and 2004 (additional detail is in Appendix 2, see particularly the section titled ‘Push’ through police operations):

- Operation Crackdown, an “immense, intelligence-driven endeavour” targeting high crime police station areas, recovered almost 38,000 unlicensed guns between 2000 and 2002 (Lamb, 2017, p. 138);
- Operation Sethunya recovered almost 14,000 unlicensed guns between 1 April and 30 September 2003 (GCIS, 2002; GCIS, 2003); and
- Operation Normalization recovered over 12,000 guns between 1 October 2003 and 31 March 2004 (GCIS, 2003; SAPS Annual Report 2004-2005).

Pillar 4 – Awareness and social crime prevention

In early 2001 the SAPS reported that a “comprehensive communication plan was drawn up to deal with...effective communication of the Firearms Control Bill internally and externally in the SAPS” (SAPS, 2001). Such communication would “motivate the community to reduce firearm related violence and to become responsible firearm owners over the next three years.” Moreover, issues such as the “voluntary handing in of firearms, destruction of firearms and the successes regarding the investigation and the confiscation of firearms will also be addressed through communication” (see Appendix 9: Communication is key for additional information on the SAPS’ firearm-related communication).

In addition, in recognition that schools are often the site of violence, in 2001 the SAPS’ Social Crime Prevention Division together with the Department of Basic Education put out a tender for a pilot project



to operationalise section 140 of the FCA, which deals with Firearm Free Zones (FFZs).¹⁸ Gun Free South Africa in partnership with Clacherty & Associates and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), was awarded the tender, which entailed piloting a model to develop, implement and maintain firearm-free schools for national rollout (Crime Prevention National Research Resources Centre, 2002). A total of twenty-seven primary and secondary schools were included in the pilot after which all applied to the Minister of Police to be declared as FFZs under the FCA; to date none has been and, despite its success, the project has not been rolled out nationally.

Pillar 5 – Regional and sector co-operation

Between 2000 and 2004, South Africa signed two international agreements. Regionally, South Africa is a signatory to the legally-binding Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community (SADC Firearms Protocol) of 2001 (SADC, 2001).

Globally, South Africa has ratified the non-binding United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN PoA), adopted in 2001 and in force (UNGA, 2001).

In addition, Operation Rachel, a five-year bilateral co-operation agreement on arms destruction between the SAPS and the Police of the Republic of Mozambique sourced and destroyed a significant number of unlicensed weapons that had been destabilising the southern African sub-region. Using a combination of intelligence to uncover weapons caches as well as “an undeclared amnesty and a series of buy-back programmes” to recover weapons, Operations Rachel 1 to 7 destroyed over 19,000 firearms between 1996 and 2001 (Hennop, 2001).¹⁹

These coordinated and wide-ranging interventions by the state to control firearms led to various complaints and legal challenges. In July 2001 the Democratic Alliance said it was referring a number of cases in which members of the public had been refused firearm licences to the Public Protector and Human Rights Commission (SAPA, 2001). In August 2001, the SA Gunowners Association lodged a court application to compel the government to reveal its “secret policy” under which firearm licences were being “arbitrarily” refused (Cook, 2001). In addition, various media reports quote gun dealers and lobbyists’ claims that “the police have introduced a quota system for firearms;”²⁰ with anywhere between 68% to 90% of gun licence applications being refused (Ellis, 2003b; Ellis, 2003c; Ellis, 2004). See Appendix 10 for additional information on opposition to gun control, including legal challenges.

As a result of state-led interventions to recover and destroy existing licensed and unlicensed firearms and begin limiting the number of new guns entering the market, the number of guns available in South

¹⁸ Section 140 of the FCA gives the Minister of Police the power to declare any premises or category of premises a Firearm Free Zone (FFZ). It is a criminal offence to contravene the FFZ status of a premises. Schedule 4 – Penalties of the FCA – lists the maximum period of imprisonment:

- For allowing a firearm or ammunition into an FFZ: Five years.
- For carrying a firearm or ammunition in an FFZ: Ten years.
- For storing a firearm or ammunition in an FFZ: Twenty-five years.

¹⁹ A total of 19,259 firearms were destroyed between 1996 and 2001 as part of Operations Rachel: Rachel 1: 1,128; Rachel 2: 488; Rachel 3: 5,662; Rachel 4: 4,738; Rachel 5: 1,963; Rachel 6: 2,412; and Rachel 7: 2,868.

²⁰ Martin Hood, spokesperson for the SA Gunowners Association and an attorney who specialises in firearm law, quoted in Ellis, 2003b.



Africa reduced (as illustrated in Figure 8 on page 19). As gun availability declined, so did gun-related crime and violence as has been described in Part 1: The victims – gun violence in South Africa on page 8 above.

Phase 5: Full implementation 2004

↓ GUN NUMBERS ↓ GUN DEATHS

In June 2004 various gun lobby organisations including the SA Gunowners Association approached the High Court with an urgent application to stop government from enacting the FCA. Judge Ben du Plessis, describing the application as ill-advised and having no merit, dismissed it with costs (SAPA, 2004).

The Firearms Control Act (No. 60 of 2000) was fully implemented on 1 July 2004 following the promulgation of related Regulations (2004). The FCA meets the gold-standard of firearms control set by Zimring in that it regulates who can own what weapon for which purpose (Zimring, 1991). It differs significantly from the Arms and Ammunition Act (1969), as illustrated in Table 3.

Zimring standard of limits	Criteria	AAA 1969	FCA 2000
Who	Age limit to own a gun	16 years	21 years
	Competency certificate showing knowledge of law and gun	No	Yes
	Comprehensive background checks including three interviews, one with spouse	No	Yes
	Licence renewal	No	Yes
What	Limit on number of guns	12	Yes Not more than one handgun for self-defence
	SABS specifications on safes for secure gun storage, including safe inspection	No	Yes
Why	Limits on reason for gun ownership	No	Yes, must show need and belong to an association if special category gun owner

A cornerstone of the FCA is the introduction of a two-tier licensing system of competency certification and licensing as well as licence renewal. See Box 3: Two-tier licensing under the Firearms Control Act below for additional information on how these provisions help ensure that only “fit and proper” people are granted gun licences.



Box 3: Two-tier licensing under the Firearms Control Act

The FCA has two key elements to certify that only “fit and proper” people are granted firearm licences. These are:

1. **A two-tier licensing system:** This involves establishing competency before issuing a licence to possess a firearm.

Competency certificate – setting a minimum standard

Like a learner’s licence to drive, anyone applying for a competency certificate as a first step for a firearm licence must meet certain requirements, including having completed practical and theoretical training at an accredited firearms training institution. The competency certificate thus sets a minimum standard for owning a firearm.

Firearm licence – giving official permission

Having obtained a competency certificate, the person wishing to own a firearm has to then apply for a licence. A separate licence is required for each firearm a person wishes to own. The issuing of a firearm licence documents the state’s recognition that the person has been judged “fit and proper” to own a firearm.

2. **Renewals:** The FCA requires firearm licence holders to regularly renew their licences (depending on the licence type, renewal periods vary between two, five and 10 years). Imposing a limited duration on a gun licence provides:
 - Regular confirmation that the licensed owner is still qualified to have a firearm.
 - An incentive for complying with the law – this places responsibility on the licence holder to maintain “fit and proper” behaviour since there is a risk the licence may be revoked.

Defining “fit and proper”

The FCA defines a “fit and proper” person as “a person who complies with the requirements of section 9(2) and any regulations relevant to the competency of a person to possess a firearm in terms of this Act” (FCA: Definitions). Section 9(2) is a list of criteria by which the state determines, through interviews and based on the applicant’s track record, whether they can be entrusted with the responsibility of gun ownership; it takes into account previous convictions, domestic violence orders, mental health and addictions.

Consolidating the trend that began in 2000, between 2004 and 2010, there was a continued decline in the number of guns available in the country. This was as a result of two processes – reducing the number of existing guns in communities and limiting the flow of new guns into communities.

Reducing existing guns

As described in the section entitled Phased implementation on page 28 above, from 2001 the SAPS undertook a number of initiatives to recover existing legally and illegally held guns, including encouraging the voluntary surrender of legal guns (see Appendix 5: Encouraging voluntary surrender of licensed guns) and continuing police-led interventions to recover illegally held guns (see Appendix 2: Mechanisms to recover unlicensed guns).



In addition, a national six month firearms amnesty was held in 2005 which recovered over 80,000 guns and gun components (33,823 and 46,631 respectively (Kirsten, 2007); additional information on this amnesty is in Appendix 4: Amnesties in South Africa). The key slogan of the 2005 amnesty campaign was 'Don't be caught in the crossfire ... be on the right side of the law!', thereby targeting both those with unlicensed guns and gun owners who did not meet the criteria of the FCA, by, for example, owning too many guns or being under 21 years of age (Kirsten, 2007). A study examining the impact of the 2005 amnesty found that the most common reasons for handing in a gun were that it was part of a deceased estate, the owner no longer wanted or needed it, the owner did not want to go through the renewal process or there was uncertainty over meeting the new, stricter criteria of the FCA (Kirsten, 2007).

Limiting new guns

Requiring existing gun owners to comply with the FCA

The transitional provisions of the FCA gave existing gun owners with 'green licences' issued under the 1969 Arms and Ammunition Act a period of four years to renew their licences under the stricter provisions of the FCA starting in 2005 (though the deadline was extended by a further six months, to 30 June 2009, source: SAPS 2005-2006 Annual Report).²¹ Many chose to not renew, opting instead to surrender firearms to the state, particularly during the 2005 national firearms amnesty when over 45,000 legal firearms were handed in (see Appendix 4: Amnesties in South Africa for details of the 2005 amnesty).

As illustrated in Figure 9, the vast majority of all licences renewed were issued in the transitional period between 1 January 2005 and mid-June 2009.

Of significant concern though is the number of existing gun owners that have still not complied with the law: As shown in Figure 9, while approximately 1,3 million licence renewals were issued by the CFR between 1 January 2005 and 2014/15, this is just 33% of the 3,969,200 firearms licensed to 2,075,864 gun owners in South Africa as of September 2004 (SAPS, 2004). After deducting the approximately 259,968 firearms voluntarily surrendered during this time as gun owners responded to voluntary hand-in campaigns, including amnesties (see Appendix 4 and Appendix 5), it appears that only 36% of guns licensed under the Arms and Ammunition Act have been relicensed under the FCA, while 64% have not. This is a dismal show of non-compliance by gun owners despite claims of being "South African's most law-abiding section of society" (Schoeman, 2015).²²

²¹ The transitional provisions of the FCA gave gun owners licensed under the 1969 Arms and Ammunition Act four years to renew their licences under the stricter provisions of the FCA. To streamline the process, renewals were staggered according to birthdate:

Birth date	Year to renew licence
1 January and 31 March	2005
1 April and 30 June	2006
1 July and 30 September	2007
1 October and 31 December	2008

²² Claims that licensed gun owners are law abiding citizens who comply with gun-related legislation have been made over the years, for example by SA Gunowners Association spokesperson Juan de Greef (Mvoko, 2000); National Firearms Forum Chairman Alex Holmes (SAPA, 2000); SA Gunowners Association spokesperson Martin Hood (Meyer, 2005).



Requiring new gun owners to comply with the FCA

From 1 July 2004, all applications for gun licences were officially issued under the FCA. However, from as early as 2001 there were allegations that gun licence applications were being declined by the police. Speaking at a Democratic Alliance media briefing on 31 July 2001, the party's deputy leader, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, called for an "immediate investigation" into the firearm licensing process, reporting that he would be referring a number of cases in which members of the public had been refused firearm licences by the CFR to the Public Protector and Human Rights Commission (SAPA, 2001). A month later the SA Gunowners Association lodged an application in the Pretoria High Court to "compel the government to reveal an allegedly secret policy" under which about 300 people had been "arbitrarily" refused firearm licences (Cook, 2001).

Indeed, from 2001 to 2010 complaints that the state had a quota system for approving gun-related applications, that applications were arbitrarily granted or refused due to inconsistently applied policies as well as lengthy delays processing applications and growing backlogs were made by gun lobby groups (Hartley, 2006; Magubane, 2011; Ndenze, 2004; Waka-Zamisa, 2009). Although the state denied these claims, in late 2010 it admitted to backlogs when it announced a turnaround strategy at the CFR aimed at making it a "functional unit" that would deal with the backlog by July 2011 (Mthethwa, 2010). While we can speculate on the reasons contributing to backlogs building up, what is clear is that applications were not being processed, limiting the number of new firearms entering the system. To illustrate, in June 2004 (just days before the FCA was fully implemented) a newspaper reported that "refusals for gun licences rocketed from 16 percent in 1998 (according to a study by the Institute for Security Studies) to 70 percent last year. And dealers believe that this year's figures might be as high as 90 percent" (Ellis, 2004).

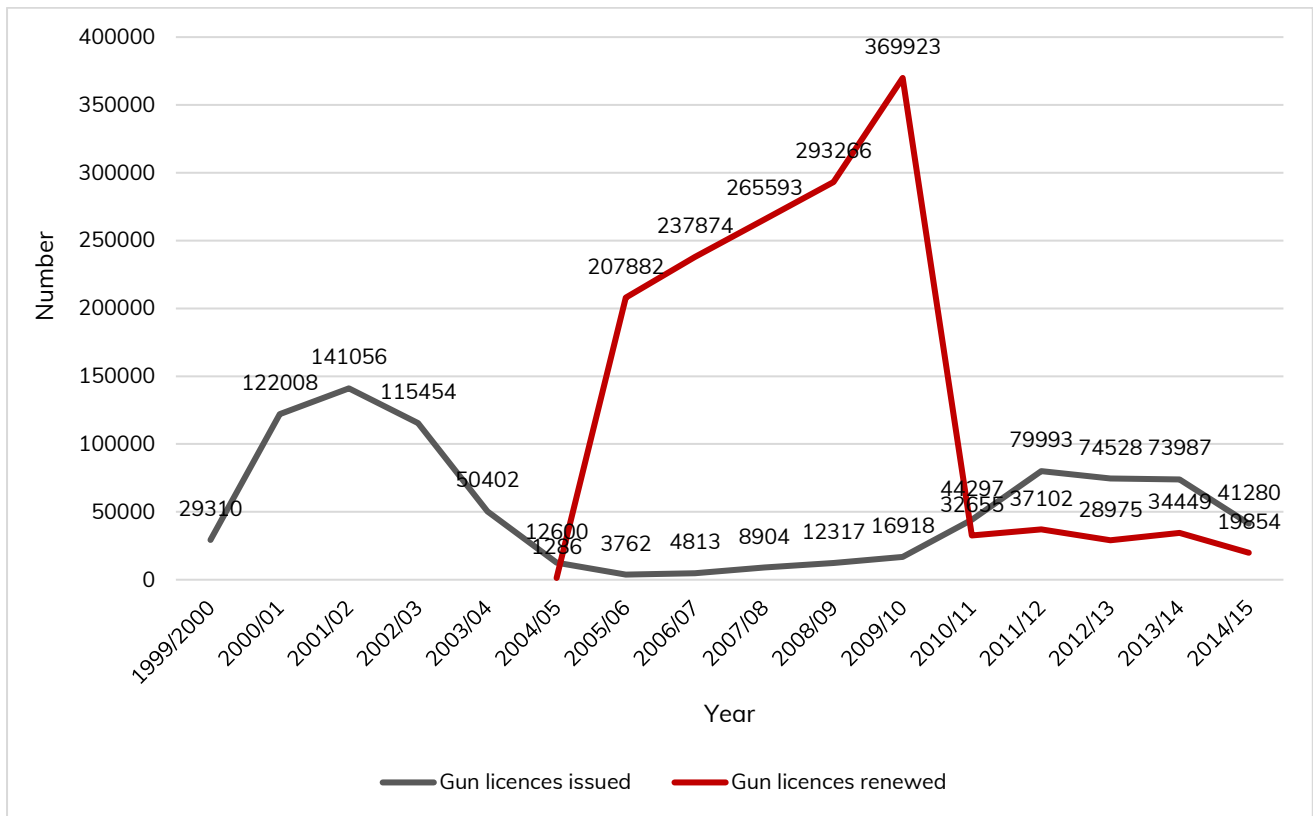
The raised bar for gun ownership under the FCA (summarised in Box 3 on page 34 above) included the introduction of a two-tier licensing system in which prospective gun owners have to prove they are "fit and proper," with secondary verification from the police before a time-bound licence is granted. As illustrated in Figure 9 (Department of Community Safety, 2015):

- The number of new gun licences issued peaked in 2001/02 – as the FCA was being finalised and phased in, when 141,056 licences were granted.
- From 2001/02 there was a steady drop and levelling out in the issuing of new gun licences before numbers rose in 2010/11.

The spike in gun licences issued and renewed in 2010-2011 is a red flag, signalling part of the breakdown in gun control in South Africa – see Phase 6: Breakdown 2010 on page 37 for detailed information.



Figure 9: Number of new and renewed gun licences issued nationally 1999/2000 – 2014/15



As gun availability declined in South Africa, so too did gun violence, including the number of people shot and killed. This has been noted in a range of published and peer-reviewed journals:

- The "strength, timing, and consistency of the decline in (the number of people shot and killed in five South African cities between 2001 and 2005) suggest that stricter gun control through the FCA accounted for a significant decrease in homicide overall, and firearm homicide in particular" (Matzopoulos, 2014, p. 459).
- "There was a very substantial difference in the rate of (women that were shot and killed between 1999 and 2009). The decrease is most likely explained by gun control legislation (Firearms Control Act) ...with provisions for safer firearm use and ownership amongst its key features" (Abrahams, 2013, p. 3).
- "Our study shows a decline in total firearm injuries in children from 2001 (to 2010 in the Western Cape) ...demonstrating that strengthening firearm legislation can reduce firearm-related injury" (Campbell, 2013, p. 95).

Phase 6: Breakdown 2010

↑ GUN NUMBERS ↑ GUN DEATHS

In late 2010, incidents of a breakdown in the implementation of and compliance with the FCA started being publicised. Most often these were not undertaken with criminal intent, though fraud and corruption have played a role in increasing the availability of guns and associated gun violence. This section describes breakdowns resulting inadvertently or from deliberate criminality.



Inadvertent breakdowns in implementation

Poor enforcement of the law need not be criminal in intent and derelictions of duty can result from a range of factors, including inappropriate target-setting, lack of resources and poor planning.

Inappropriate target-setting

In June 2010, the Minister of Police established a Task Team led by the CSPS to undertake an assessment of the implementation of the FCA. The Task Team's confidential report notes "major backlogs in processing...licences and this backlog is the major cause of litigation" (CSPS, n.d). It states that as of 30 July 2010 there was a total of 1,387,487 firearm applications for processing – 804,942 for renewals and 582,545 for new licences.

In November 2010, the Minister of Police publicly acknowledged the "malfunctioning" of the CFR, which had resulted in a backlog of firearm applications, and promised to turn the CFR into a "functional unit" that would deal with the backlog by July 2011 (Mthethwa, 2010).

SAPS' figures reveal that the CFR met this target (see Figure 10 on page 43 below), processing over one million applications in nine months. According to the SAPS 2010/11 Annual Report the "remarkable increase" in the number of firearm licences, renewals and competency certifications that were processed during the financial year was due to "the implementation of a nine-month turnaround strategy that was intended to address outstanding applications, championed by the Minister of Police and the National Commissioner" (SAPS 2010-2011 Annual Report, p. 71).

Like other ill-considered 'target-setting' measures adopted by the SAPS to assess performance, the focus was on the target of a zero application backlog, rather than ensuring that all firearm applicants are or remain "fit and proper" to possess a gun. This fast-tracking likely compromised the firearms control management system.

Under-resourcing

Designated Firearms Officers (DFOs), the police members who are specifically appointed and trained to implement the FCA at station level, are integral to the FCA, particularly in excluding unfit people from owning a gun.

For instance, DFOs are required to undertake three interviews with individuals known to a firearm licence applicant, including the applicant's spouse and must inspect the applicant's safe to ensure that it conforms to SABS specifications. Fulfilling requirements like this is dependent on DFOs having the necessary means, including time, phones and vehicles. However, parliamentary oversight visits and research show that resource shortages, including a lack of personnel, equipment (such as vehicles to conduct visits), time and capacity all impact on the state's ability to fully implement the FCA (Bopape, 2008; PCOP, 2014).

Poor planning

The implementation of the FCA, which was phased in from 2000, was informed by the SAPS' five-year, five-pillar Firearms Strategy. This coordinated a range of interventions at various levels (local, national and regional) and involved various stakeholders (the executive, gun owners and the public) in reducing the availability of guns in South Africa.

In mid-2009, the Firearms Strategy ended, but was not replaced. As a result, the coordination facilitated by having a long-term comprehensive and integrated strategy stopped, which contributed to implementation and compliance failures and an overall breakdown in South Africa's firearms control management system.



Deliberate criminality

Unlike poor implementation, which is inadvertent, cases of criminality are intentional, and include fraud and corruption as well as the diversion of legal guns into the illicit market.

Fraud and corruption

In 2010, the Task Team appointed to turn the Central Firearms Registry around noted a number of instances of irregularity and corruption in the issuing of firearms licences, including (CSPS, n.d):

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

Since then there have been a range of instances of fraud and corruption involving various stakeholders within the firearms management system. A detailed list of high-profile incidents is in Appendix 11; these include:

- The section head of the CFR being suspended with immediate effect and later dismissed for bribery and corruption related to firearms licensing; and
- CFR police officers arrested for selling fraudulent licences to gang leaders.

It is not only the police that are involved; to address fraud and corruption in the issuing of firearm competency certificates, the quality assurance of firearms training institutions was transferred from the Safety and Security Sector Education Training Authority to the Professional Firearms Training Council (PFTC) in 2015, after the former had its quality assurance certification removed due to lack of performance and the latter successfully registered with the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations as a professional body (Sitole, 2015). However, in March 2016, the Secretary of the PFTC, Andre van Tonder, was caught on camera selling a fake firearms proficiency certificate (SABC, 2016). He was subsequently found guilty of engaging in fraudulent practice and de-accredited as a training provider from both the PFTC and SAPS (Wicks, 2016).

In response to ongoing assertions of fraud and corruption in the firearms control management system, particularly by “unscrupulous firearms dealers and illegally operated firearm training institutions,” the Minister of Police established a two-person Committee of Inquiry in May 2013 to investigate allegations of questionable practices (DefenceWeb, 2013). Public submissions were solicited²³ and the Committee’s report finalised and submitted to the Minister of Police. Despite two applications under the Promotion of Access to Information Act by Gun Free South Africa to both the Ministry of Police and Parliament, the Committee’s report has not been made public.

Diversion

Over the years various incidents of legal guns being leaked into the illegal pool by insiders have come to light, for instance guns handed in during the 2010 national firearms amnesty were found in an arms cache in Johannesburg in 2014 (Hosken, 2014).

²³ Gun Free South Africa responded to the Committee’s call for submissions, making both an oral and written submission in which the Committee was urged to examine the systemic nature of corruption within the firearms control management system rather than just individual incidents under investigation with a view to identifying and closing both operational and policy gaps and weaknesses.



One of the most high profile cases of leakage involving the police is that of Christiaan Prinsloo, a senior police official who pleaded guilty to selling guns in police stores to gang leaders on the Cape Flats – see Box 4.

Box 4: The Prinsloo Case – gangsters armed with stolen guns²⁴

From 2011 various incidents of fraud and corruption in the management of firearms in government's care began surfacing (see Appendix 11: Summary of high profile gun-related fraud and corruption cases). The most publicised of these involves Christiaan Prinsloo.

In 2012, the police began recovering an inordinate number of guns on the Cape Flats that had been professionally 'cleaned' of identifying marks, proof that a sophisticated gun smuggling syndicate was at work. To track the supplier and the guns, two senior police officials, Peter Jacobs and Jeremy Vearey, registered Operation Impi in December 2013. By analysing the serial and laboratory numbers on the components of recovered guns, the team realised that one or more corrupt police officials were central to the syndicate. They narrowed their investigation down to Colonel Christiaan Prinsloo, commander of the Gauteng Firearm, Liquor and Second Hand Goods Control and respected "firearms guru," raiding his house in January 2015. Under interrogation, Prinsloo confessed to his role in smuggling guns and entered into a plea bargain with the state; providing detailed information on the syndicate in return for a lesser sentence. In June 2016 Prinsloo was sentenced to 46 years imprisonment, though as some sentences run concurrently, this amounts to 18 years for selling guns that were confiscated by or surrendered to the police for destruction to gang leaders on the Cape Flats. Court papers show that (Jacobs, 2016):

- 888 of the guns stolen by Prinsloo were forensically linked to 1,066 murders in the Western Cape between February 2010 and 31 May 2016.
- 261 children between the ages of one and 18 years old were shot between February 2010 and December 2015 with guns stolen by Prinsloo, 89 of whom were killed, including Dillan Cornelius.
- Of the 2,000+ guns that Prinsloo admitted to stealing as part of his plea bargain with the state, more than 1,100 are still missing.

With Prinsloo in prison, Operation Impi then turned its attention to prosecuting two of his alleged accomplices, Alan Raves (a firearms dealer with a particular interest in heritage firearms and alleged right-wing links) and Irshaad Laher (a businessman who allegedly acted as a middle-man, selling stolen guns to gang leaders).

However, after Operation Impi was given an affidavit in 2016 implicating President Zuma in state capture, efforts to shut the 'guns to gangs' syndicate down were themselves shut down. Instead of being lauded for their work, Jacobs and Vearey were demoted and Operation Impi "decimated.... There has never been an operational handover. The whole operation has been allowed to grind to a halt" (Pauw, 2017, p. 289).

²⁴ Information in Box 4 sourced from: de Wee, 2016; Dolley, 2015; Dolley, 2018; Mzants, 2016; Pauw, 2017.



When Jacobs and Vearey challenged their demotion in the Labour Court, and won their case in August 2017, the SAPS responded by challenging the Labour Court's findings.

As a result, the trial of Raves and Laher, as well as cases involving police officials implicated in fraudulently issuing sports-shooting licences to gang leaders, thereby allowing them to accumulate arsenals of ammunition as there are no limits on the amount of ammunition sports-shooters can own (Dolley, 2015), stalled.

When Cyril Ramaphosa replaced Jacob Zuma as South Africa's president in 2018, he directed various changes to 'clean up' state institutions, including Police Crime Intelligence. As a result, efforts to shut the 'guns to gangs' syndicate down seem to have strengthened. The Raves and Laher case pre-trial hearing has been rescheduled and 23 suspects, including 28s' gang boss Ralph Stanfield, his wife and sister and three SAPS officers are again facing charges of corruption, fraud, possession of firearms and ammunition after these were dropped in 2016 (Dolley, 2018).

In addition to these breakdowns in the firearms control management system and an associated increase in the number of licensed and unlicensed firearms flowing into communities, the period from 2010 to date is characterised by a slowing down of 'push' and 'pull' interventions to recover firearms.

Apart from localised and short-term search and seizure 'push' police operations such as Duty Calls and Festive Season (undertaken in the summer months between 2007 and 2015) and Combat, an intelligence driven operation undertaken between 2012 and 2016 on the Cape Flats (Lamb, 2017), there has not been a national intelligence-led operation like Sethunya, which aimed to "eradicate the proliferation of firearms for the use and availability in crime and violence in South Africa" (Kruser, 2003).

While a four-month national firearms amnesty held in early 2010 as part of South Africa's preparations for hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup 'pulled in' over 40,000 guns (see Appendix 4: Amnesties in South Africa for additional information), allegations of some of the guns handed in to the police being found in arms caches have surfaced, eroding trust in the police's commitment to safety and security and the potential for future amnesties to recover firearms (Hosken, 2014).

With more guns flowing into communities and limited efforts to 'mop' them up, gun availability has steadily increased since 2011. At the same time, gun violence has been increasing. For instance, a detailed study on assassinations and hits in South Africa from 2000 to 2017 found that there was "a marked increase in the total number of assassinations carried out in South Africa since 2012" and that "firearms were by far the main choice of weapon used in the incidents (83%)" (Thomas, 2018, pp. 4-5). As of 2018, 23 people are shot and killed a day in South Africa, up from 18 a day in 2009.²⁵

²⁵ Two sources of data are cited: 2018: 23 people shot and killed a day, source: SAPS 2017-2018 national annual crime statistics; 2009: 18 people shot and killed a day, source Matzopoulos, 2015.



Conclusion: Gun control saves lives, poor enforcement kills

Guns are designed to kill, with data showing that gunshot injuries are 18 times more lethal than stab wounds (CDC, 2017). One in three people who are shot will die. In contrast, one in 55 people who are stabbed with a sharp object will die. Globally the link between controlling firearms to limit their availability and reduce gun-related death and injury is well documented and endorsed as an effective strategy to decrease crime and violence levels (Anglemyer, 2014; Matzopoulos, 2018; Santaella-Tenorio, 2016; van Kesteren, 2014; WHO, 2014).

South Africa's own experience proves that reducing gun availability through gun control saves lives. What it also shows is that poor enforcement kills.

For a law to achieve its objectives, it needs to be implemented by authorities on the one side and complied with by citizens on the other.

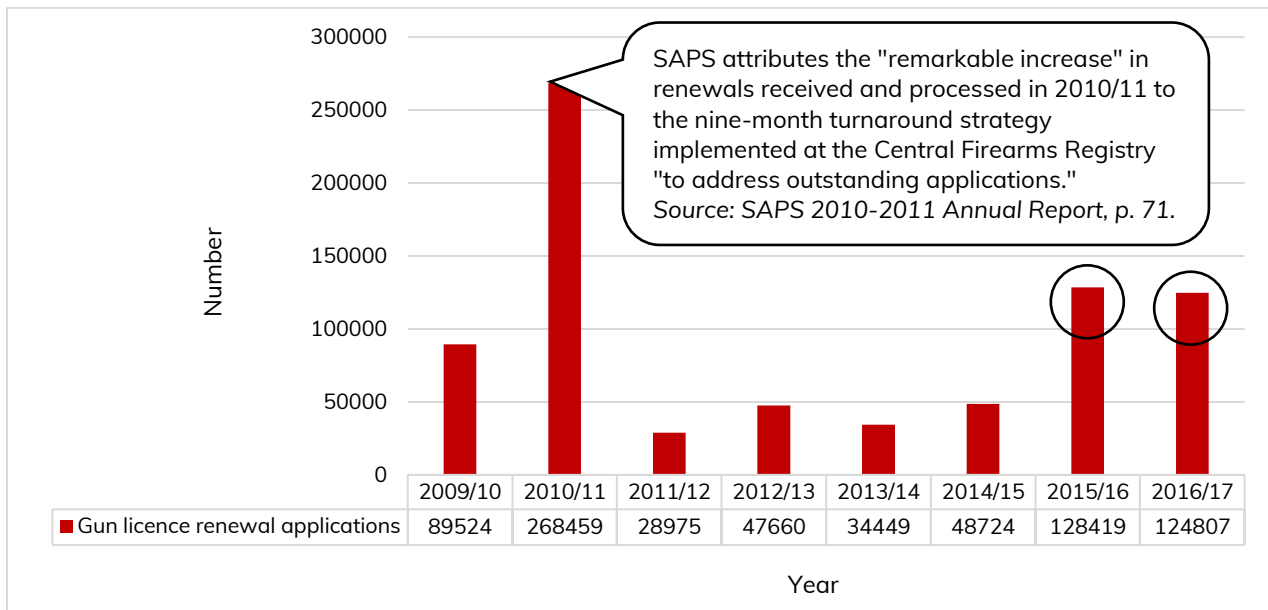
The FCA marks a dramatic break from the Apartheid-era Arms and Ammunition Act of 1969, but there has been significant resistance and non-compliance from citizens, which has been facilitated by poor implementation on the part of authorities.

This enforcement vacuum is illustrated by the fact that 33% of gun owners licensed under the FCA failed to renew their licences in 2015/16. SAPS data show that of the 191,488 firearm licences up for renewal in this period, 128,419 applications were received (SAPS 2015-2016 Annual Report).

Yet when the Acting National Police Commissioner issued a directive within the SAPS in February 2016 to standardise the firearm licence renewal process, which had been unevenly enforced around the country, the impact was immediate. As soon as the law was implemented, compliance levels increased. This is illustrated in Figure 10, which shows that figures for gun licence renewal applications increased significantly in 2015/16 and 2016/17 (when an average of 126,613 gun licence renewal applications were submitted annually) compared to the previous four years (when an average of 40,000 applications were submitted).

Moreover, it appears that a legal challenge to the SAPS' 2016 directive (see Appendix 10) did not impact on applications, with licence renewal applications remaining high in 2016/17.

Figure 10: Firearm licence renewal applications received by the SAPS 2009/10 – 2016/17



The development of policy to reduce gun violence and make South Africa a safer place for all citizens and residents led to the adoption of the FCA in 2000. The enforcement of this important law over nearly two decades, as documented here, is a significant case study of the development and enforcement of policy in democratic South Africa.

It attests to the waxing and waning in the quality of governance and administration over this period in a clearly discernible pattern that is underscored by multiple studies and analyses. The pattern is one of high levels of gun violence in the colonial and Apartheid eras that did not shift until the adoption and implementation of the FCA in 2000 under the new democratic dispensation in South Africa.

The following decade registered a steady decline in gun violence in the period in which the FCA was implemented and enforced. What looked to be a vigorous trend, however, began to be reversed from 2010. A sharp increase in gun violence and deaths followed, attributable to poor implementation and associated compliance, under-resourcing, fraud, corruption and criminality; the result is that gun-related deaths now match stab-related deaths.

Dillan Cornelius was just one of the victims of this, murdered by a gun that leaked into a growing illegal pool of firearms. His death at only 16 is all the more devastating as the gun that killed him was sold by corrupt government officials from where it had been lodged for safe-keeping in a SAPS-managed weapons store in Gauteng. It found its way to the gang-infested Cape Flats of Cape Town and in an instant it was used to inflict the wounds that would end his life. Poor enforcement killed Dillan Cornelius.

Dillan is a poignant character in South Africa's story of gun control over the past 25 years, a story that illustrates how inextricably gun control is linked to the risk of deadly violence and thus to whether lives are saved or lost. It shows that if South Africa is to achieve the overarching vision of a safe country as articulated in the aspirational 2030 National Development Plan (National Planning Commission, 2012) as well as contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 16 which calls for "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions" (UN, 2015), urgent action is needed to control guns by 'mopping up' the existing pool of guns in the country and stopping new guns from entering communities in a coordinated and integrated way that is informed by a comprehensive, long-term strategy.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Mechanisms through which guns leak from the legal to the illegal pool

There are three main ways in which legal guns are diverted into the illegal pool of weapons in South Africa:

Loss and theft of licensed guns

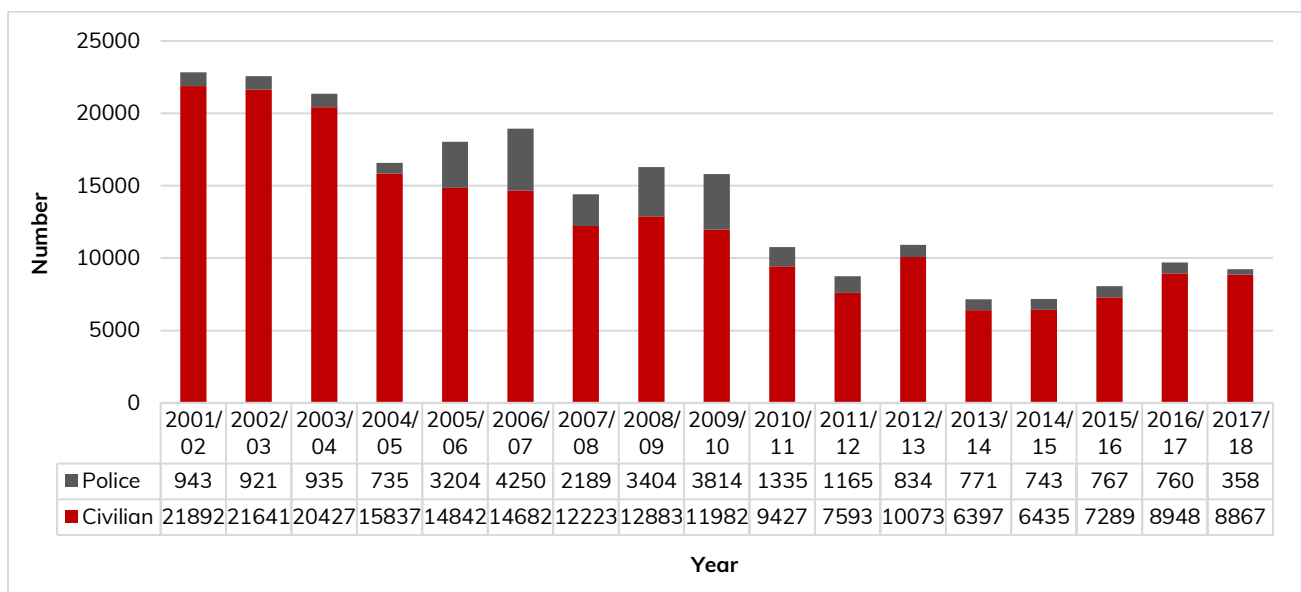
Legal guns that are lost and stolen are the biggest source of unlicensed guns in South Africa, with handguns making up 90% of guns that are reported as lost or stolen (Wits School of Governance, 2015).

Civilians are the largest source of illegally held guns in South Africa – 67% of guns reported as lost or stolen between 2000/01 and 2013/14 (the years for which breakdowns are available) were lost by, or stolen from, civilian gun owners, 12% were from the police, 10% from government departments and 9% from the private security industry (Wits School of Governance, 2015).

As shown in Figure 11, which compares civilian and police gun losses over 17 years, 240,247 firearms were reported lost by or stolen from civilians and police members between 2001/02 and 2017/18 (the years for which such data are available). This is an average of 39 guns lost or stolen every day over the past 17 years (SAPS Annual Reports from 2001-2002 to 2017-2018).

On average, civilians reported seven times more guns being lost or stolen than police members did in this time, losing 34 guns a day compared to the five a day lost by police members. While gun loss and theft numbers have declined, they nevertheless remain excessively high. In the 2017/18 financial year, civilians reported losing 8,867 guns, while police lost 358 guns, an average of 24 and one gun/s a day respectively (SAPS 2017-2018 Annual Report).

Figure 11: Number of firearms reported lost or stolen by civilians and police members 2001/02 – 2017/18





It is important to note that the figures cited above are an under-estimate of the true extent of firearm loss and theft nationally. An analysis of police circulation figures shows a 13% under-reporting rate of lost and stolen guns between 2000 and 2014 (Wits School of Governance, 2015). Forty percent (40%) of guns that were lost or stolen from gunsmiths and a quarter of gun losses by gun dealers (26%) and gun manufacturers (25%) in this time were not reported. In addition, government departments (excluding the SAPS) failed to report the loss or theft of 22% of guns, followed by institutions (16%), individuals (12%) and the private security industry (9%).

Smuggled guns

The second mechanism involves legal guns being smuggled into South Africa. Research indicates that this has been low, and that firearms, particularly handguns, are more likely to be smuggled from South Africa to neighbouring countries than the other way around as South Africa's neighbours have much stricter gun laws (Burger, 2018b; Cross, 2003; Hennop, 2000; McKenzie, 1999). However, this trend is beginning to change as high-calibre automatic firearms are being smuggled into the country by organised crime syndicates involved in poaching and cash-in-transit heists (Austin, 2019; Beukman, 2018a).

Fraud, corruption and poor enforcement of the FCA

The final mechanism involves fraud, corruption and poor enforcement of South Africa's firearms control legislation and related policies, whereby people who are not "fit and proper" to own a gun are issued with firearm certificates, licences, permits or authorisations. This became increasingly prevalent from 2010/11 and is extensively described in Phase 6: Breakdown 2010 on page 37 above.

Appendix 2: Mechanisms to recover unlicensed guns

There are two key ways in which unlicensed guns can be ‘mopped up’, either by ‘pushing’ or ‘pulling’ them into the legal pool.

‘Push’ through police operations

Unlicensed guns can be ‘pushed’ back into the legal pool through two types of police operations, either broad stop, search and seizure or targeted intelligence-led operations. Both are costly and often dangerous to police members who risk getting shot by criminals armed with unlicensed guns. Moreover, while stop, search and seizure policing operations are effective in that they improve police visibility, thereby boosting the SAPS’ public image and disrupting crime; their long-term crime-reduction impact has been questioned (Newham, 2017). Rather than running temporary broad-brush crime prevention operations, crime reduction experts argue that targeted, intelligence-driven operations are significantly more effective at identifying and closing organised crime syndicates, thereby helping prevent crime over the long-term.

As shown in the following three graphs, the number and impact of police-led ‘push’ operations to recover unlicensed firearms has varied over the years, with a distinct clustering in the early 2000s, as the FCA was being phased in.

Figure 12 illustrates how the number of guns checked by police (e.g. at a roadblock to ensure the owner is licensed and gun registered; if unlicensed the gun will be confiscated) has increased and decreased over the years (SAPS Annual Reports from 2001-2002 to 2017-2018). Numbers significantly grew between March 2003 and February 2005 – as the FCA was being implemented (21% of guns were checked in these two years) and again between March 2011 and February 2014 – coinciding with the CFR’s turn-around strategy (when 28% of guns were checked). Since March 2014 just 9% of guns were checked by the SAPS.

Figure 12: Number of firearms checked by the SAPS 2001/02 – 2017/18

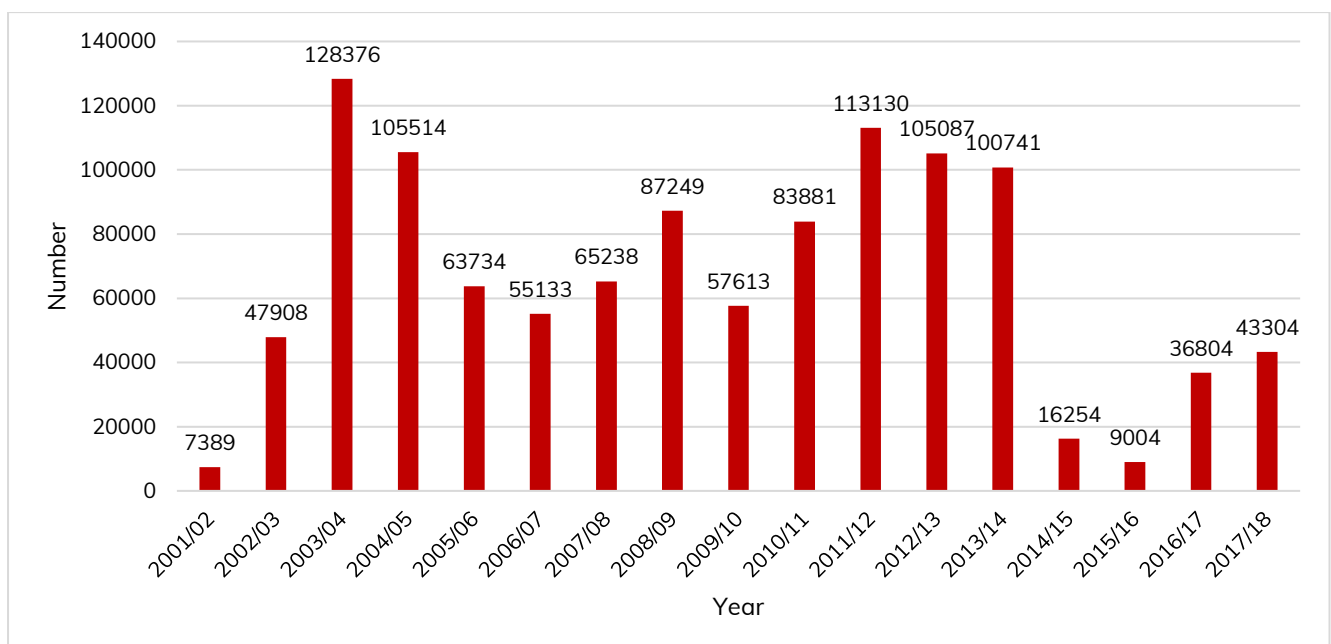
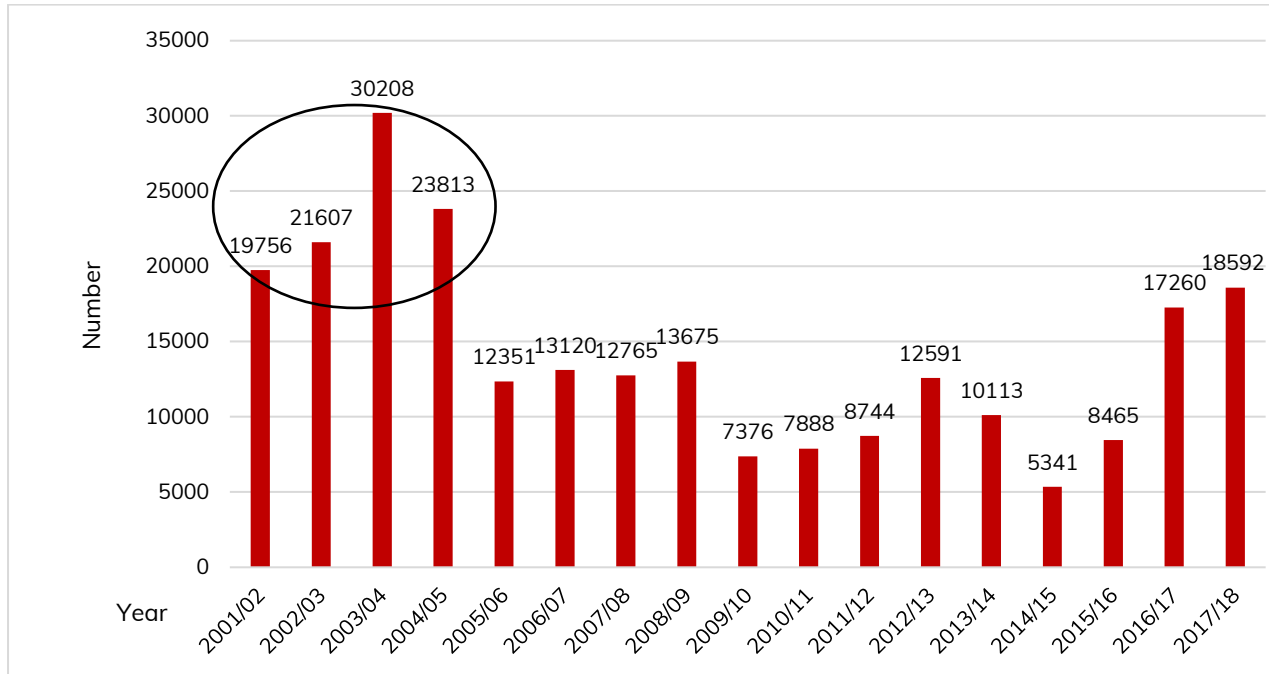




Figure 13 summarises SAPS' data on gun recoveries²⁶ between 2000/01 and 2017/18. As illustrated, a significant 30% (95,384) of guns were recovered between 2001/02 and 2004/05. Also noticeable is the increase in gun recovery numbers as of 2016/17.

Figure 13: Number of firearms recovered by the SAPS 2001/02 – 2017/18

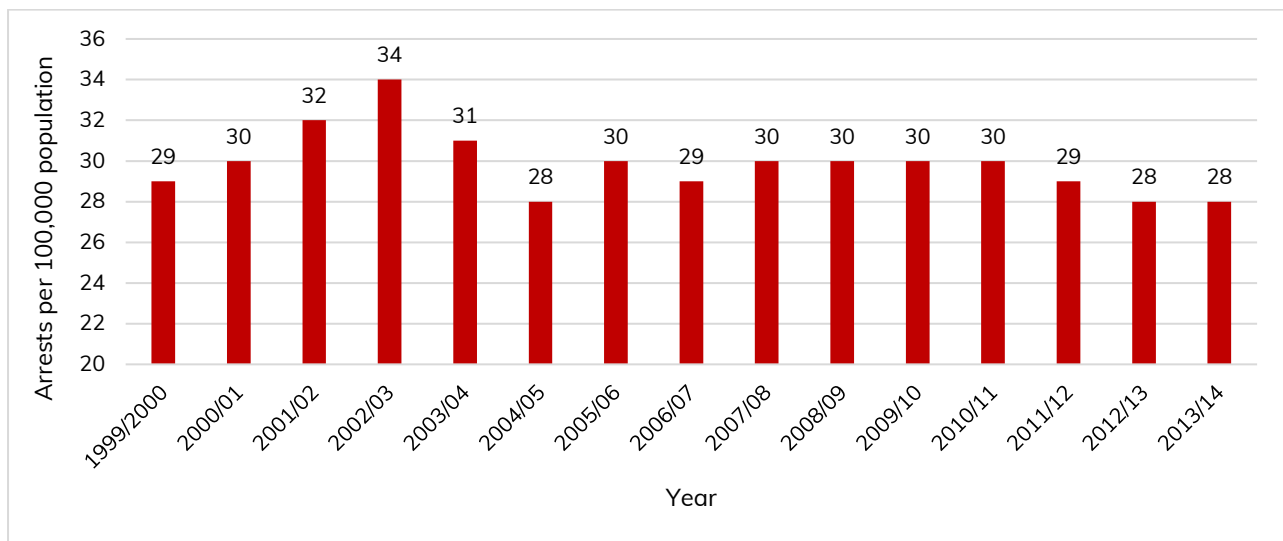


While arrests for unlawful possession of a firearm or ammunition may result from interventions other than police search and seizure and intelligence-led operations, Figure 14 shows that arrests peaked between 2003/04 and 2005/06 – coinciding with the full implementation of the FCA (Wits School of Governance, 2015).

²⁶ Recoveries refer to when the police find and recover a lost or stolen gun e.g. at a crime scene, and are distinct from voluntary surrender, which is when the legal gun owner voluntarily surrenders his gun to the state; additional information on the latter can be found in Appendix 5.



Figure 14: Arrests per 100,000 for unlawful possession of firearms or ammunition 1999/2000 – 2013/14



In 2000, the SAPS identified reducing unlicensed firearms as a central pillar of its Firearms Strategy (see Table 2 on page 29 above), and between 2000 and 2004 over 60,000 firearms were recovered in various police operations that targeted the illegal pool and criminal use of firearms, including:

Operation Crackdown

Launched on 1 April 2000 under the National Crime Combatting Strategy, this was touted as a three-year, nationwide “immense, intelligence-driven endeavour” targeting 169 high crime police station areas to “stabilise what was perceived to be rampant criminality in South Africa, as well as improve public confidence in the police” (Lamb, 2017, p. 138).

While Operation Crackdown did not complete its three-year lifespan, two years on (by May 2002), almost 38,000 previously-legal firearms had been seized through a combination of searches (persons, vehicles and premises) roadblocks and intelligence operations (GCIS, 2002; GCIS, 2003).²⁷

In addition, various sub and parallel operations to Crackdown were undertaken, including Operation Tsipa (28 January to 15 March 2002) which recovered 994 firearms (GCIS, 2003) and Operation Slasher (March to November 2001) which concentrated on five Cape Flats communities “to attain stability and normality in gang infested areas by way of pro-active policing,” recovering 97 firearms, 1,265 round of ammunition and various drugs (Kinnes, 2017, p. 137). Short-term focused Operation Crackdown interventions also took place in Hillbrow, where 97 previously-legal firearms were recovered in a week-long operation (Lamb, 2017) and Khayelitsha, where 24 previously-legal firearms were recovered between 28 March and 1 April 2000 (Dlakavu, 2000).

Operation Sethunya

Launched on 1 April 2003, Sethunya’s aim was the “(e)stablishment of a combating operation to eradicate the proliferation of firearms for the use and availability in crime and violence in South Africa”

²⁷ In total 37,874 firearms were collected between 1 April 2000 and May 2002 (20,580 between 1 April 2000 and 31 March 2001 and 17,294 between firearms between 1 April 2001 and May 2002).



to be achieved through two key objectives: 1) Tracing of previously-legal firearms (using targeted intelligence) and 2) Legal compliance by individuals, dealers, private institutions and government institutions (Kruser, 2003).

Operation Normalization

Launched on 1 October 2003, Operation Normalization aimed to “introduce firearm related operations as standard activities” (SAPS 2003-2004 Annual Report, p. 13).

Date	Name of operation	Number of firearms recovered	Number of rounds of ammunition recovered
1 April 2000 – May 2002 (26 months)	Operation Crackdown (excludes parallel and sub-operations)	37,874	NA
1 April – 30 September 2003 (6 months)	Operation Sethunya	13,859	1,562,873
1 October 2003 – 30 March 2004 (6 months)	Operation Normalization	12,116	117,067

Gun-related violence in South Africa started increasing in 2011 as various public policy changes and governance failures led to an increase in gun availability. Under former president Jacob Zuma (May 2009 to February 2018), the Crime Intelligence division of the SAPS – like a range of other organs of state – broke down, as various individuals, including Richard Mdluli, the head of Crime Intelligence, were appointed irregularly as part of Zuma's campaign to appoint "dishonest, corrupt or incompetent people to head various government and state-owned agencies...to prevent accountability for the large-scale looting of public funds and corruption that characterised his presidency” (Burger, 2018a).

The breakdown of Crime Intelligence as well as a range of other state institutions has had untold knock-on effects, including the steady leakage of legal guns into the illegal market – see Box 4: The Prinsloo Case on page 40 above for information on one of the most high profile cases which directly links lost and stolen guns to hundreds of gun-related deaths. The Prinsloo case further highlights how political patronage can repeatedly block the efforts of law enforcement agents to close down criminal syndicates.

There is some space for optimism though; after almost 10 years of dysfunction and following the appointment of Cyril Ramaphosa as South Africa's president in February 2018, various interventions have been instituted to clean up state institutions. Police intelligence-related work was kick-started with the March 2018 appointment of Lieutenant General Peter Jacobs as the Divisional Commissioner of Crime Intelligence (Cele, 2018a) and a number of stalled cases involving gun-related crimes have been re-opened.

²⁸ GCIS, 2002; GCIS, 2003.



'Pull' through incentive-led collections

The second mechanism to recover unlicensed guns is by 'pulling' them back into the legal pool through campaigns, such as gun buy-backs or amnesties. These incentivise the voluntary handing in of unlicensed guns either through conditions that guarantee non-prosecution or an exchange for cash or cash-equivalent (such as a voucher for groceries or airtime).

South Africa has never held a buy-back campaign but since 1994 three amnesties have been held recovering a total of 45,000 unlicensed firearms (see Appendix 4).



Appendix 3: Stockpile management

Most if not all unlicensed guns in circulation were once legally held until they were diverted into the illegal pool through loss and theft, trafficking, fraud, corruption and poor enforcement of the law. Unless the taps through which legal guns leak are closed, licensed guns will keep making their way into the illegal pool. Here they need to be recovered through costly and often dangerous operations.

Effective stockpile management can prevent the diversion of legal firearms, and involves five distinct actions:

1. Securely storing stockpiles to prevent loss and theft;
2. Regularly auditing stockpiles to ensure that stocks have not been breached and to identify obsolete and unwanted stocks;
3. Collecting excess, obsolete, unwanted and recovered stocks;
4. Regularly destroying stocks; and
5. Keeping accurate records of who owns what weapon for which purpose.

1. Storing stockpiles

The physical space in which firearms and ammunition are stored, whether by state departments (including the SAPS and the military), weapons-related businesses (gunsmiths and gun dealers) as well as civilian gun owners (including the private security industry), is central to effective stockpile management to prevent loss and theft. This includes (Parker, 2015):

- Choosing appropriate locations to store firearms and ammunition;
- Putting in place security measures that protect against intrusion and which can withstand attempts at forced access; and
- Controlling access to stocks.

In recent years many losses resulting from poor storage by the state have come to light. In 2016 the South African National Defence Force reported that military weapons (including hand grenades, explosives and heavy-calibre machine guns) were stolen from the Simon's Town naval base armoury when six storerooms were broken into (TMG, 2016).

The most high profile case of unsecured weapons stocks involves Christiaan Prinsloo, a senior police officer who was sentenced to 18 years for stealing and selling over 2,000 guns confiscated by or surrendered to the police and held in storage awaiting destruction to gang leaders on the Cape Flats (see Box 4: The Prinsloo Case on page 40).

Moreover, even though the FCA requires that privately-owned firearms be stored in quality-approved safes, in 2017/18 civilians reported the loss or theft of almost 9,000 guns – an average of 24 guns a day (SAPS 2017-2018 Annual Report).²⁹

2. Auditing stockpiles

Auditing both state and privately-owned weapons stockpiles is an integral component of effective stockpile management.

²⁹ The exact figure for civilian loss and theft was 8,867; police members lost 358 that year.



Auditing state-owned weapons

In 2000, the SAPS began auditing and re-certifying national and provincial state-owned firearms. The aim of this was to (SAPS, 2000):

- Rectify records held by the CFR;
- Correct the relevant state agency's records; and
- Identify obsolete/redundant firearms for destruction.

Progress reports indicate that various institutions were audited, though it's unclear whether this process was finalised or what its impact was. Despite reporting gaps, it would seem that government did undertake a process of firearm and ammunition audits, and that a percentage of stocks were surrendered and eventually destroyed, though it is uncertain exactly how many state institutions were fully audited or how many firearms and rounds of ammunition were destroyed. To illustrate:

National and provincial government departments

In 2002 the SAPS reported that 173 state institutions were being audited and that the "audit indicates that a total number of 1,106,754 firearms are under the control of national and provincial government departments" (SAPS 2001-2002 Annual Report, p. 45). A year later the SAPS reported that the audit of state departments had continued, with the number of departments being audited increasing from 173 to 182 (SAPS 2002-2003 Annual Report). No further updates were provided.

Municipalities

In 2002 the SAPS reported that "an additional process" to audit local government departments' firearms started in June 2001 (SAPS 2001-2002 Annual Report, p. 45). Of the 856 municipalities participating, 316 were audited by February 2002. No further updates were provided.

Auditing privately-owned weapons

The SAPS has also attempted to audit privately owned firearms, including those held by the private security industry and civilians:

Private security companies

In 2002, the SAPS reported that private security companies had been audited to:

- "Determine the existence of the security companies and the firearms in their possession;
- Update the records of the CFR and the Security Officers Board; and
- Identify existing dysfunctions in the firearm industry" (SAPS 2001-2002 Annual Report, p. 45).

No further updates on this audit were given, though in 2007/08, the SAPS reported that it had begun negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding with the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) to "introduce a workable framework for cooperation for firearms control to ensure the proper monitoring of the issuing, possession, use and disposal of firearms within the industry" (SAPS 2007-2008 Annual Report, p. 88).

In 2008/09 the SAPS reported that, a "draft working document was developed" between the two (SAPS 2008-2009 Annual Report, p. 77). No further updates on this were provided; though speaking at a private security imbizo in September 2018, PSIRA's CEO, Manabela Chauke, said an ongoing firearms audit had revealed that nationally, 2,700 security companies controlled about 70,000 firearms, down from 101,000 in 2013 (ANA, 2018).

Civilian-owned guns

The auditing of guns held by individuals is facilitated through two provisions in the FCA – both of which have failed in this intention, as summarised in Table 5:



Table 5: Firearms Control Act (2000) provisions aimed at auditing privately-held guns in South Africa³⁰

	Provision 1: Transitional Provisions	Provision 2: Regular licence renewal
Description	The Transitional Provisions gave all gun owners with 'green' licences issued under the 1969 Arms and Ammunition Act four years to re-licence under the new and stricter provisions of the FCA after it was fully implemented in 2004.	Sections 24 and 28 require gun owners to regularly renew their firearm licences or forfeit guns for which licences have expired.
Impact	<p>In mid-2009, as the FCA's Transitional Provisions were ending, the SA Hunters and Game Conservation Association legally challenged them.</p> <p>On 26 June 2009, Judge Bill Prinsloo granted an interim court order in the North Gauteng High Court to the Association under which 'green' licences remain valid pending the final outcome of the Association's application to have certain sections of the FCA declared unconstitutional (Prinsloo, 2009).</p> <p>The interim order (under which more than one million firearm owners have not yet re-applied for licences under the FCA) has still not been set down for a hearing as the Minister of Police has not filed an answer, thereby preventing full implementation of the FCA.</p>	<p>In 2016, the SA Hunters and Game Conservation Association challenged sections 24 and 28 after the police issued a directive to standardise the renewal process, which had been unevenly enforced and complied with around the country (Phahlane, 2016).</p> <p>The case was referred to the Constitutional Court, which unanimously ruled on 7 June 2018 that both sections are constitutional (Froneman, 2018).</p> <p>In response, Gun Owners SA lodged an urgent appeal in the North Gauteng High Court to stop the police acting on the ConCourt ruling. In an egregious order, which directly contradicts the ruling of the highest court in South Africa, Judge Bill Prinsloo granted an interim interdict halting any action by the police until the case has been heard as part of the normal court's roll (Prinsloo, 2018). The Minister of Police has lodged an appeal.</p>

3. Weapons and ammunition collection

While audits are an important collection mechanism, obsolete and unwanted weapons and ammunition can be recovered through various operations that encourage voluntary surrender, including public awareness campaigns to encourage the voluntary handing in of guns (see Appendix 5: Encouraging voluntary surrender of licensed guns). Firearm amnesties can be particularly effective, as has been recognised by the state, which sees amnesties as having two broad aims. These are to (SAPS 2004-2005 Annual Report):

- Recover unlicensed guns, so that people in possession of previously-legal guns and ammunition can hand these in for destruction without fearing prosecution; and
- Encourage the voluntary handing in of unwanted licensed guns for destruction by legal owners.

³⁰ See Appendix 10: Gun violence denialists attack and undermine gun control, including evidence it has saved lives on page 68 for additional information on these legal challenges.



Two national gun amnesties have been held in South Africa under section 139 of the FCA – in 2005 and 2010 – which have collected over 120,000 firearms (78,973 legal and 42,329 previously-legal) (Kirsten, 2007; SAPS 2009-2010 Annual Report). See Appendix 4 for additional information.

4. Destruction

The destruction of excess, redundant, obsolete and unwanted firearms is recognised globally as the only way to guarantee that these guns are not leaked (through loss, theft, fraud or corruption) into the illegal pool of weapons.

South Africa's commitment to stockpile destructions kick-started in 2001/02 with two events. First was the destruction of 13,815 of the 30,023 firearms destroyed that year on 9 July 2001, the United Nations Small Arms Destruction Day, "as a token of the South African government's commitment to eradicating illegal firearms from the country" (SAPS 2001-2002 Annual Report, p. 45). Secondly, the SAPS signed an agreement with the Norwegian government under which it would receive donor funding to destroy more firearms during that financial year (SAPS 2001-2002 Annual Report).

Over the years South Africa has destroyed thousands of weapons, reducing gun availability and use in crime. Conversely, fraud, corruption and a dereliction of duty in safeguarding weapons stocks have facilitated the leakage of guns from legal stockpiles into criminal hands.

In documenting how gun control can either reduce or increase the availability of guns and thus increase the chances of lives being saved from or lost to gun violence, Figure 15 offers some insights: The two peaks in gun destructions (in 2006/07 and 2009/10) seem to coincide with the 2005 and 2010 national firearm amnesties (see Appendix 4 for details on amnesties).

A close examination shows that while the peak in 2006/07 coincides with the 2005 amnesty (with enough time given to process firearms handed in and update official records before destruction), the pattern linked to the 2010 amnesty raises a red flag. As illustrated, gun destruction figures peak in 2009/10 – yet the amnesty only commenced on 11 January 2010 – before dropping significantly in 2010/11 – which is when one would expect a peak as this would provide sufficient time for guns to be processed before being destroyed.

This discrepancy may go some way to explain how some of the guns handed in during the 2010 national amnesty have since been recovered in arms caches, proof that some police officers were stealing guns handed in during the amnesty and selling them to criminals (Hosken, 2014).

Interrogating what changed between the 2005 and 2010 amnesties to facilitate this leakage shows two likely contributors:

Leadership changes

Mid-2009 saw a raft of leadership changes in South Africa, including in the presidency, various ministries, the police and CFR. A day after Jacob Zuma was inaugurated as President of South Africa on 9 May 2009, he replaced Charles Nqakula with Nathi Mthethwa as Minister of Police, a few months later Richard Mdluli became head of the police's Crime Intelligence (7 July) and Bheki Cele was appointed as National Police Commissioner (2 August). A year later, in November 2010, the head of the CFR, Jaco Bothma and seven other senior CFR officers were transferred for allegedly failing to perform their duties. After successfully challenging his transfer in the North Gauteng High Court, on 10 December 2010, Bothma was accused of "serious misconduct" by the SAPS and suspended. Although Bothma was found not guilty of all charges, he was transferred from the CFR in August 2011 (de Clercq, 2011). During Bothma's absence, Mirriam Mangwani was appointed Acting Head of the

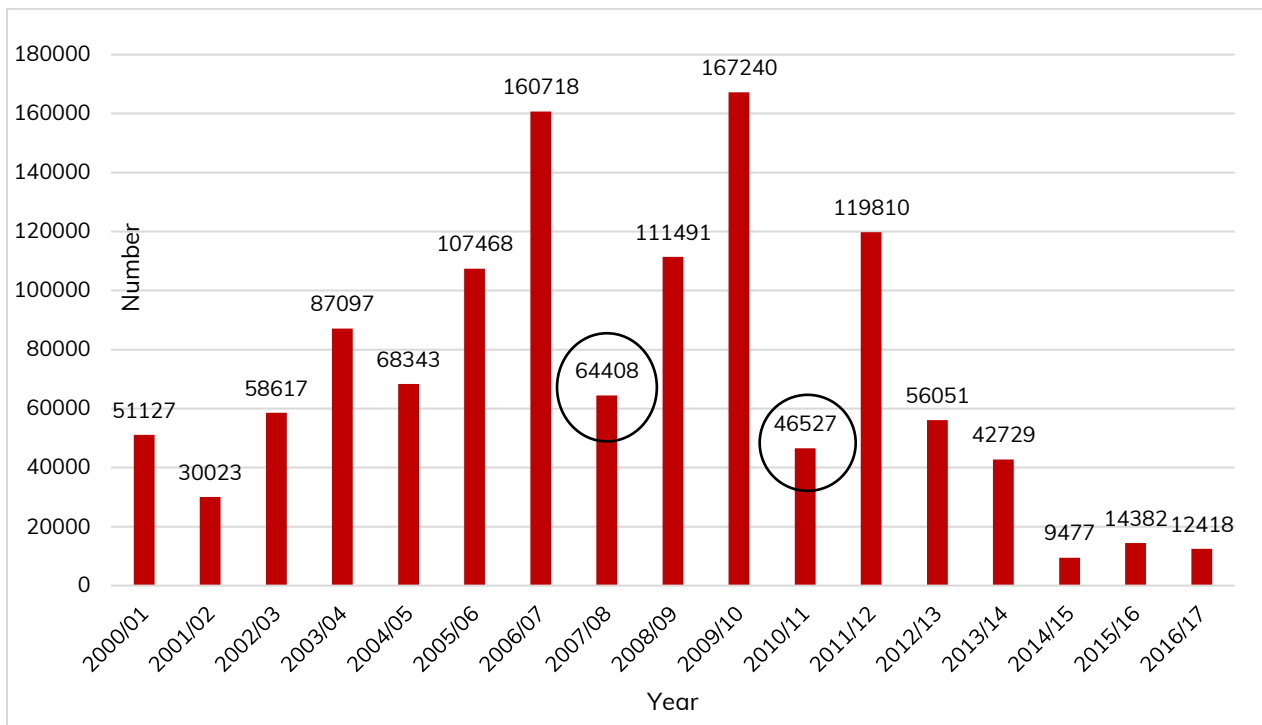
CFR; she was subsequently suspended with immediate effect (in July 2013) and later fired (April 2014) for corruption (Serrao, 2014).

Procedure changes

Changes in the procedures followed also played an important role. According to the SAPS, the 33% increase in guns destroyed in 2003/04 compared to the previous year resulted from the "decentralization of the destruction of confiscated firearms to the various provinces" (SAPS 2003-2004 Annual Report, p. 13). In contrast, the 60% decrease in guns destroyed in 2007/08 compared to 2006/07 was due to the SAPS deciding "to change from one recycler plant to another as a result of security risks (SAPS 2007-2008 Annual Report, p. 88). According to the SAPS, "this process created a backlog in the number of firearms destroyed" (SAPS 2007-2008 Annual Report, p. 88).

It was at this time that Prinsloo and his accomplices began stealing guns earmarked for destruction from SAPS stores and selling them to gang leaders on the Cape Flats. One of these guns killed 16-year old Dillan Cornelius.

Figure 15: Number of firearms reported as destroyed by the SAPS 2000/01 – 2016/17



5. Record-keeping

Accurate record-keeping, which tracks a firearm from 'cradle to grave' is globally recognised as a cornerstone of effective firearms control.

Section 124 of the FCA requires the Registrar of Firearms (who is the National Police Commissioner) to establish and maintain the CFR. However, as detailed in Appendix 7: Overhauling the CFR's Firearms Record System, as of 2018, a functional CFR has yet to be established. In its absence, authorities are unable to identify who owns what and how many weapons and for which purpose.



To illustrate, Figure 16 contrasts data provided by the police on the number of civilian gun owners in South Africa from 2010/11 to 2015/16.³¹ The data for the ‘various sources’ series include:

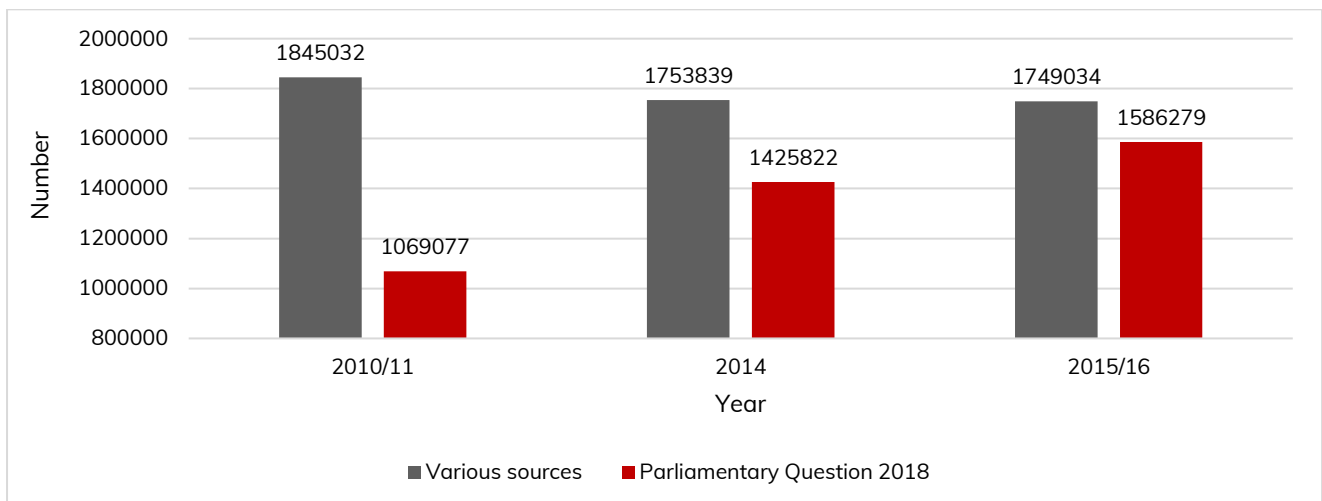
- An affidavit made by the Minister of Police (Mthethwa, 2011).
- Research commissioned by the CSPA which accessed data from the CFR (Wits School of Governance, 2015).
- A presentation given by the National Police Commissioner at the 2015 National Firearms Summit (Phiyega, 2015).

The 2018 figures were provided by the Minister of Police in response to a parliamentary question (Cele, 2018b).

As Figure 16 illustrates, the numbers are wildly divergent and depict a completely different pattern of civilian gun ownership. The data from ‘various sources’ show that the number of civilian gun owners in South Africa has declined slightly in the six years reviewed, while the figures responding to a parliamentary question show a steady and marked increase.

In sum, Figure 16 is a disturbing illustration of how poorly the state is fulfilling its mandate to control guns and gun ownership in South Africa by not keeping accurate gun-related records.

Figure 16: Contradictory figures from the SAPS on the number of private firearm owners in South Africa 2010/11 – 2015/16



Safe small arms stockpile management is described as “a litmus test of a Government’s ability to function as a guarantor of peace, security and development for its citizens” (UN, 2008). By failing to implement and uphold the five steps of stockpile management, the South African government has failed the country.

³¹ Figures in Figure 16 have been sourced as follows:
2010/11: 1,845,032: Mthethwa, 2011; 1,069,077: Cele, 2018b.
2014: 1,753,839: Wits School of Governance, 2015; 1,425,822: Cele, 2018b.
2015/16: 1,749,034: Phiyega, 2015; 1,586,279: Cele, 2018b.



Appendix 4: Amnesties in South Africa

Amnesties have the potential to be an important 'collection' mechanism, which is integral to effective weapon and ammunition stockpile management (see Appendix 3: Stockpile management for the five key steps of stockpile management).

Their retrieval ability has been recognised by South Africa's government, which sees amnesties as having two broad aims (SAPS 2004-2005 Annual Report):

- Recover unlicensed guns, so that people in possession of previously-legal guns and/or ammunition can hand these in for destruction without fearing prosecution; and
- Encourage the voluntary handing in of licensed guns for destruction by legal owners.

Three national gun amnesties have been held in South Africa. The first, which took place months after South Africa's first democratic elections on 27 April 1994, was a 24-hour gun hand-in on 16 December 1994 as part of efforts to create a safer, more secure democratic South Africa (Kirsten, 2008). This initial amnesty was followed by two further amnesties under section 139 of the FCA, which gives the Minister of Police the power to declare a firearms amnesty.

The second, a six-month amnesty in 2005, coincided with the full promulgation of the FCA, and was held to both recover previously-legal guns and to "assist persons who are in the legal possession of firearms to hand them in to the SAPS so that these persons can comply with the requirements of the Firearms control legislation in respect of the number of firearms that must be licensed" (SAPS 2004-2005 Annual Report, p. 39).

The third, a four-month amnesty, was held in early 2010 as part of South Africa's preparations to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

The figures below summarise the impact of these amnesties, showing that over 120,000 firearms and 1.8 million rounds of ammunition were recovered.

Year	Firearms		Ammunition rounds	
	Legally held	Previously-legal	Legally held	Previously-legal
16 December 1994 (24 hours) ³²	900 firearms		7,000 rounds	
1 January to 30 June 2005 (6 months) ³³	45,727	33,246	821,527	608,794
11 January to 11 April 2010 (4 months) ³⁴	30,442	11,887	321,155	129,234
Total	122,202		1,887,710	

³² Kirsten, 2008.

³³ Kirsten, 2007.

³⁴ SAPS 2009-2010 Annual Report.

Appendix 5: Encouraging voluntary surrender of licensed guns

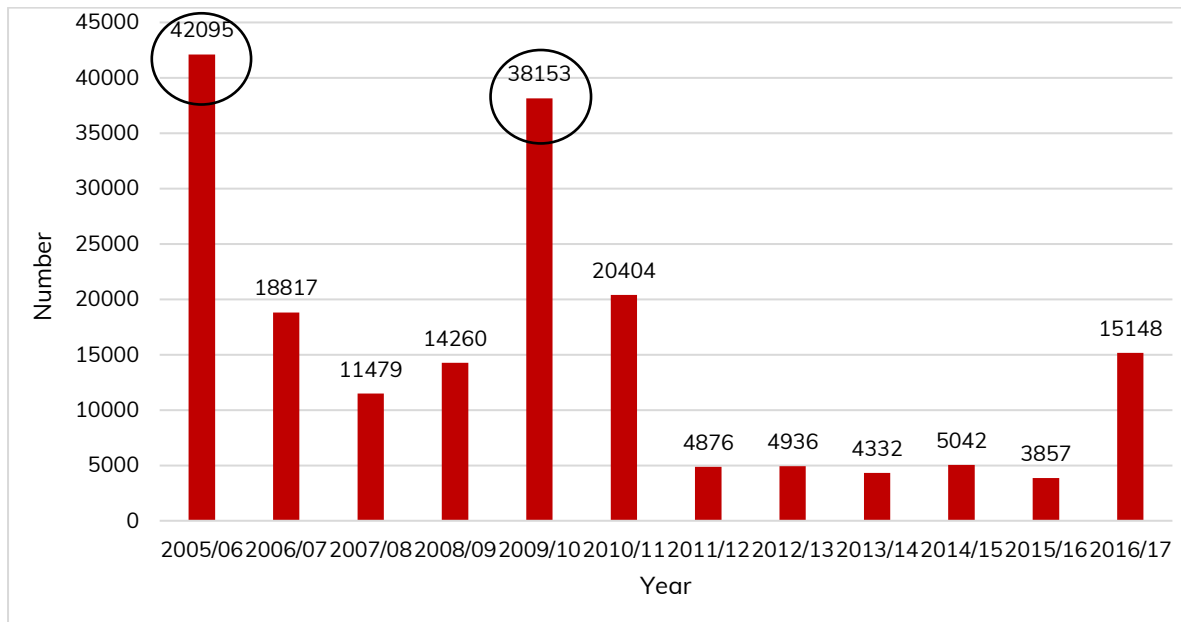
The day after the public hearings on the Firearms Control Bill closed, the SAPS reported to Parliament on “current initiatives” to reduce and eradicate the illegal pool and criminal use of guns, describing these as “a pre-support phase of the actual implementation phases...These initiatives will contribute significantly to the effectiveness and smooth running of the implementation of the Bill” (SAPS, 2000).

A key component was encouraging the voluntary hand in of legally owned firearms. According to the SAPS, “In support of the intention of the Bill to reduce the proliferation of firearms, voluntary hand in of these firearms should be encouraged. A national instruction has been formulated in terms of procedure to be followed where owners wish to hand in firearms at police stations. An awareness and education campaign will support this instruction both internally and externally” (SAPS, 2000).

As shown in Figure 17, which summarises available data on the voluntary surrender of firearms from 2005/06 to 2016/17:

- A total of 183,399 guns were voluntarily surrendered in this time, an average of 15,200 a year.
- Two-thirds of legal guns were voluntarily surrendered for destruction in the five years between 2005/06 and 2009/10, when 124,804 (68%) of the 183,399 guns surrendered were handed in to the SAPS.
- Specific state interventions and operations had a visible impact on the number of firearms that were voluntarily surrendered, with 2004/05 and 2009/10 showing significant spikes in the number of guns voluntarily handed in as national firearm amnesties were held in both these years (see Appendix 4: Amnesties in South Africa).
- 2016/17 saw a spike in the voluntary surrender of guns, which can be attributed to the police standardising the process of gun licence renewals (see Appendix 10).

Figure 17: Number of firearms voluntarily surrendered to the SAPS 2005/06 – 2016/17





Appendix 6: Pillar 2 of the Firearms Strategy: Capacity Building

In August 2000, the SAPS reported that additional budget had been allocated to staff and equipment for “the establishment of sustained adequate capacity in the SAPS to ensure effective implementation” of the Firearms Control Bill:³⁵

Staff

An additional R73 million (R72,897,000) was earmarked for human resources in the next two financial years (March 2001 to February 2003) to appoint staff including at police stations, the CFR and Criminal Record Centre:

- DFOs were appointed at station level (see Box 5 on page 60 for additional information on DFOs).
- Recognising that the CFR would “play a pivotal role in the implementation” of the Firearms Control Bill, the SAPS reported that the CFR would recruit 135 members during the financial year (March 2000 – February 2001). On 6 March 2001 the SAPS reported that 127 members had been enlisted at the CFR, resulting in a 35% increase in personnel (SAPS, 2001).
- 50 posts were earmarked to be filled at the Criminal Record Centre during the 2001 financial year to ensure that all fingerprints related to firearm applications “receive prompt attention,” thereby contributing to “the effective implementation of the Bill.” On 6 March 2001, the SAPS confirmed that these 50 posts had been filled (SAPS, 2001).

The SAPS also reported on other staff appointments in the 2001 financial year, including 15 experts at the Forensic Laboratory to assist investigating officers, 14 members at the Border Police unit to support the 20 border posts handling most firearm imports and exports, and 15 members at Serious and Violent Crime Units to investigate illegal firearms (SAPS, 2001).

Equipment

An additional R62 million (R62,103,000) was allocated between March 2001 and February 2003 to provide logistical and IT hardware to police stations, the CFR, Border Police Units and Illegal Firearms Investigation Units in support of the Bill’s implementation. Equipment provided for included “logistics items” such as vehicles, metal detectors, etching equipment, x-ray scanners, fax machines and computers. As of August 2000, “40 computer stations have already been delivered to the CFR” while “computer equipment will be installed at 55 police stations in the next few months.”

In 2002/03 the SAPS reported that 365 police stations, the CFR, Border Police Units, Serious and Violent Crime Units and provincial and area offices had received human and physical resources (including logistical items) “for the purpose of implementing the new firearms control legislation” (SAPS 2002-2003 Annual Report, p. 19).

³⁵ Unless otherwise noted, information is from SAPS, 2000.



Box 5: Designated Firearms Officers (DFOs)³⁶

Under the FCA, specially trained SAPS' members called Designated Firearms Officers or DFOs (which also refers to Designated Firearms Officials) are primarily responsible for implementing the Act's provisions. Prior to the full implementation of the FCA in 2004, two DFO models were piloted:

- In August 2000 the SAPS reported to Parliament that an Enabled Police Station (EPS) model was being piloted in the Western Cape from September 2000 until 31 March 2001 "to identify good practices and to avoid future dysfunction in implementation in the other provinces" (SAPS, 2000).
- A second option, a Firearm Registration Centre (FRC) model was implemented in Gauteng province, which was chosen because "35% of legal firearm owners reside in that province, and also because of its geographical size, population density, rate of economic growth and high volume of firearm-related crime." The first FRC was opened in Pretoria North on 26 April 2002, to serve nine police stations in the region (SAPA, 2002). SAPS reported that 22 FRCs would be implemented in Gauteng by the end of that year, when a "proper evaluation" of the model would be conducted before national implementation" (SAPS, 2002).

In the end, the EPS model was chosen and rolled out nationally, including in Gauteng. Three months before the FCA was fully implemented on 1 July 2004, 640 DFOs had been trained (SAPS 2003-2004 Annual Report). Between 2004/05 and 2014/15, a total of 3,441 DFOs were trained (Phiyega, 2015). DFO training covers firearms control legislation; the enhanced firearms register system; evidence management and IBIS testing.

While reports and research indicate that the DFO model has experienced problems due to resource shortages – where a lack of personnel, equipment such as vehicles to conduct visits, time and capacity all impact on government's ability to implement the FCA (Bopape, 2008; PCOP, 2014), the concept of specially trained police officials responsible for firearms control at station level has been retained in various amendments to the FCA. The most recent draft amendment proposed additional subsections detailing the roles and responsibilities of DFOs in recognition that specifically trained officers at station level are a critical part of an effective firearms control management system (CSPS, 2015).

³⁶ Unless otherwise noted, information is from Phiyega, 2015.



Appendix 7: Overhauling the CFR's Firearms Record System

It is globally recognised that accurate record-keeping is a cornerstone of effective firearms control. Record-keeping involves the collection and maintenance of information in order to “facilitate the identification of any weapon, its legal status and the location of its storage, at a given stage of its life” (OSCE, 2003, p. 8). Records are generally kept across the life cycle 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. Accurate record-keeping is also a key element in developing appropriate and effective strategies to reduce gun violence.

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

- Establish and maintain the CFR;
- Monitor the implementation of the FCA; and
- Appoint police officials as DFOs.

In August 2000 (four years before the FCA was fully implemented), the 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, source: SAPS, 2000). The R8 million study, which had begun in May 2000, was aimed at designing a “detailed integrated firearm control business-, information- and technology infrastructure” system to replace the current Firearms Register System.

Six months later, in March 2001, the SAPS reported progress on the BPR study (SAPS, 2001):

- Modelling the current situation (the “as is” model) was finalised and quick fixes or “issues which could be translated into Immediate Business Benefits” had been documented and distributed for implementation.
- Modelling the “to be” business processes, information systems, technology and infrastructure architecture was expected to be finalised at the end of August 2001, when the design and development phase of the “New Firearm Control System” would begin.

In 2002, the SAPS reported that an “Interim Firearm Control System” had been implemented to bridge the transition between the “current system” (which met the requirements of the 1969 Arms and Ammunition Act) and the new system required to meet the requirements of the FCA (SAPS, 2002). According to the SAPS, “an adaptive maintenance programme will have to be completed to give effect to new functions,” identifying these as including competency certification, accreditation, firearm imports and exports, applications for new licences, re-licensing, temporary authorisations, permits, payments and seized/surrendered/destroyed firearms, so that each DFO, Enabled Police Station and Firearms Registration Centre can “process the applications via computer by the end of April 2003” (SAPS, 2002).

Members of Parliament were given a demonstration of the system, including its functionality and the detail recorded. Regarding the setting up of the New Firearm Control System, the SAPS reported that the BPR study had been finalised and that a call for tenders would be published in October 2002 with a six-week deadline, followed by a six-week evaluation period, whereupon the tender would be allocated. Concerning implementation deadlines, the SAPS reported that, should it “buy a system which is already in place, it could be implemented soon ... But if it needs to be built, it would then be very difficult to fix a date by which it could be fully implemented. The aim here is to Keep Things Straight and Simple (KISS) so that the system is accessible at a grassroots level” (SAPS, 2002).



The SAPS reported in 2003/04 that “the business process re-engineering of the Firearm Control System, which supports the implementation of the Firearms Control Regulations, 2004 and subsequent processes and procedures, has been finalized” (SAPS 2003-2004 Annual Report, p. 13). However, no evidence to substantiate this claim was provided.

On 30 September 2004 Marlene Meyer, Assistant Commissioner, SAPS Head: Information and Systems Management, signed a contract with an external service provider, Waymark Infotech, for “the supply of a Firearm Control System” (Waymark Infotech, 2004). In its 2003 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 (Knoetze, 2014b). That Meyer was given the mandate to enter into this contract despite being married at this time to Director Willie Meyer, the head of SAPS’ Information Systems Management and chair of the SAPS Steering Committee: Firearm Control Project, has been raised as “problematic” and “unusual” by the media (Thamm, 2019).

While 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” (Waymark Infotech, n.d), the reality is that the system does not, and has never, worked (Knoetze, 2014b):

- 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.

In 2010 SAPS began a “turnaround strategy” at the CFR (see Inappropriate target-setting on page 38). In 2012 SAPS suspended dealings with Waymark, and launched an internal investigation into the contract (Knoetze, 2014a; Knoetze, 2014b). In January 2013, the Auditor-General noted that Waymark had failed to produce any results almost six years after the original end date; this meant the contract amounted to fruitless and wasteful expenditure (Ndifuna Ukwazi, 2018).

In 2014 and 2015 the following actions were undertaken:

- The SAPS cancelled its contract with Waymark on 14 September 2014 (SAPS, 2016). In response, Waymark instituted court proceedings to claim “outstanding funds” (Knoetze, 2014a) It is unclear what the status of these proceedings is.
- The internal investigation started by the SAPS in 2012 grew into a criminal investigation overseen by the Hawks (the SAPS’ Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, source: Knoetze, 2014a). Subsequent media reports indicate that a range of investigations into SAPS-related tender fraud, including SAPS’ contract with Waymark are still underway, forming part of broader investigations into the awarding of evergreen contracts worth billions of rand to sole suppliers by SITA over at least a decade (Thamm, 2019). One of these is Forensic Data Analysis, which was awarded a contract in 2016 to manage the SAPS’ Firearm Permit System, previously managed by Waymark (Thamm, 2018).
- In June 2015, the SAPS reported that a Memorandum of Understanding was entered into with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) under which “a bilateral and technical committee” was established to address “all issues relating to the evaluation and assessment of the (firearms) system, (including) assessing the level to which the contractor had implemented under the contractual obligations. This process was continuing, with meetings every second week of the month” (SAPS, 2015). A few months after entering into this agreement with the CSIR, the SAPS reported that the FRS (Firearms Register System), with all its functions, was migrated to the EFRS (Enhanced Firearms Register System) to “enhance production” (SAPS 2015-2016 Annual



Report, p. 111). However, the process, which was undertaken on 1 August 2015, was complicated because, “although members were familiar with the functions, the codes for these functions were altered, resulting in difficulty in adjusting to the effected changes.” It would thus seem that the EFRS system was still not functional.

Auditing the percentage of firearm-related applications the SAPS claims to have finalised in 2016/17, the Auditor-General noted that "the department did not have an adequate performance management system to maintain records to enable reliable reporting on achievement targets" (SAPS 2016-2017 Annual Report, p. 325).

As of 2019, it appears nothing has changed, which means that two systems – one manual, the other electronic – are still running in parallel, creating loopholes and facilitating fraud and corruption in the issuing of gun-related applications, permits, licences and authorisations.



Appendix 8: Deceased estate firearms

Sections 147 and 148 of the FCA deal with firearms in a deceased's estate, stating that if the heir:

- Wishes to keep the inherited firearm/s, they must apply for an appropriate licence, permit or authorisation.
- Does not want to keep the firearm/s, it must be deactivated or disposed of by, for example, surrendering it to the SAPS to be destroyed.

Moreover, while prior to 1994 there was no obligation on executors to report firearms in their safekeeping to the state (Oosthuizen, 2000), the FCA requires that the "court, bailiff, executor, administrator, trustee, curator or liquidator of the estate" compile an inventory of all the firearms, ammunition and firearm parts within the estate and submit this within 14 days to the Central Firearms Registry.³⁷

With approximately 190,000 firearms licensed in the name of deceased owners in circulation in South Africa in August 2000 (SAPS, 2000), and recognising that "persons in possession of these firearms are afraid to produce them for fear of prosecution," the SAPS reported in 2001 that it had launched an awareness campaign "internally as well as externally to ensure that these firearms are officially licenced (sic), or alternatively, destroyed before the actual implementation of the Bill and Regulations" (Bothma, 2001).

While the SAPS ran various communication and awareness campaigns, particularly in the early 2000s, (see Appendix 9: Communication is key), these tailed off later that decade. As such it is not surprising that almost ten years later, in November 2009, the number of inherited but unlicensed firearms had increased, with SAPS reporting approximately 200,000 people being in possession of firearms that had been inherited and not relicensed (Bothma, 2009).

Amnesties are viewed by the state as an effective way to recover inherited firearms; the Director of the CFR described amnesties as a way for the state to, "open a door for...people who had failed to register inherited firearms, in order that the South African Police Service (SAPS) could regain control over the situation. These individuals could still apply for a licence, after handing in the firearms, if they wished to keep them" (Bothma, 2009).

A study examining the impact of the 2005 amnesty found that the most common reason cited for handing in a gun (42%) was that it was part of a deceased estate (Kirsten, 2007).

Despite holding two amnesties – in 2005 and 2010 (see Appendix 4) – the challenge for government to comprehensively deal with inherited firearms has remained since 2000. In mid-2017, government noted its intention to hold a six-month amnesty from November that year, which would "focus on persons...who inherited firearms and/or ammunition and failed to comply with the provisions of the Firearms Controls (sic) Act" (SANews, 2017).

However, the 2017 amnesty, which was further considered in July 2018, in order to "reduce the circulation of illegally possessed firearms which, will in turn result in the reduction of contact crimes," (Beukman, 2018b) was not held. The barrier is a North Gauteng High Court interim interdict that has stopped the SAPS from acting against gun owners that have failed to renew their licences as required under the FCA (Prinsloo, 2018). While the Minister of Police has lodged an appeal against this ruling,

³⁷ FCA Regulations, 2004. Section 103: Disposal of firearms in insolvent or deceased estate.



until this is finalised, heirs who have not complied with FCA provisions aimed at ensuring that gun owners understand the legal requirements of gun ownership, including how to securely store and when to use a gun, remain in possession of inherited firearms.



Appendix 9: Communication is key

In 2000 the SAPS recognised that communication is a key component of effective firearms control, identifying communication and awareness raising as one of five pillars of its Firearms Strategy (SAPS, 2000). In 2001 the SAPS reported that a “comprehensive communication plan was drawn up to deal with...effective communication of the Firearms Control Bill internally and externally in the SAPS” and that a series of articles had been written and published in various newspapers (SAPS, 2001).

Not only would this communication focus on raising awareness of the Bill and Regulations, it would “motivate the community to reduce firearm related violence and to become responsible firearm owners over the next three years” (SAPS, 2001). Moreover, issues such as the “voluntary handing in of firearms, destruction of firearms and the successes regarding the investigation and the confiscation of firearms will also be addressed through communication” (SAPS, 2001).

After the FCA was officially launched by Police Minister Charles Nqakula on 21 June 2004 at both the Waterfront and Khayelitsha in the Western Cape, “Minister’s Imbizos” were held across the country to raise awareness of the law (SAPS, 2005). These were an opportunity for members of the public, including gun owners, to engage face-to-face with officials to clarify enforcement issues.

From 2004 to 2010, the SAPS used a range of media to raise public awareness of gun-related issues. Pamphlets, brochures, posters, banners, promotional items, adverts and interviews on radio and television, in-store announcements (at Checkers, Pick ‘n Pay, Score and Shoprite stores nationally) billboards at taxi ranks and train stations and print media advertorials in national and community newspapers were used. The aim was to educate the public about the firearm licence renewal process, the procedure to voluntarily surrender legally owned firearms, the process for dealing with inherited firearms, as well as the 2005 and 2010 national firearm amnesties (SAPS Annual Reports from 2004-2005 to date).

For any law to achieve its objectives, it needs to be enforced. The two bookends for effective enforcement are implementation by authorities on one side and compliance by citizens on the other. While target-setting, under-resourcing, poor-planning as well as fraud, corruption and theft by the state have all undermined effective implementation of the FCA (particularly since 2010), gun owners too have not complied with the law.³⁸ Non-compliance dates to before the FCA was enacted. In 1999 a SAPS-led audit to assess compliance with the Arms and Ammunition Act (1969) – which required firearm owners to notify the CFR of address changes as well as firearm loss or theft – found that up to 70% of the addresses listed on the CFR were out of date or false, and that many firearm owners who had lost their guns or had them stolen did not report this (Hansmann, 2000).

In 2016, the SAPS was “prompted” to issue a directive to standardise the processing of gun licence renewals by police stations as individuals and businesses were not applying to renew their licences – see Appendix 10 (SAPS 2015-2016 Annual Report, p. 111). Figures from the SAPS reveal an overall compliance rate of 67% with section 24 of the FCA: Of the 191,488 firearm licences liable for renewal in the SAPS’ 2015/16 financial year, 128,419 applications were received (SAPS 2015-2016 Annual Report, p. 110).

³⁸ The issue of implementation and compliance of the FCA is scheduled to be heard by the North Gauteng High Court on 5 August 2019 in response to the South African Arms and Ammunition Dealers Association lodging a notice of motion against the Minister of Police, the National Police Commissioner, the Appeal Board and the President on 15 June 2018. The motion aims to order the respondents to comply with their requirements under the FCA.



According to the SAPS, while SMS notifications were sent to inform gun owners “that an application to renew a licence must be submitted...(c)hallenges are still experienced with SMS notifications as some licence holders do not inform the SAPS in writing of a change in their cell phone number and as a result, the SMS notification does not reach the licence holder” (SAPS 2015-2016 Annual Report, p. 111). Section 26 of the FCA requires that firearm owners inform the CFR of “any change with regard to any information which was submitted in respect of the application for the issue of that licence, permit or authorisation;” the relevant form (SAPS 521(c) ‘Notification of change in circumstances’ includes space to update contact details.



Appendix 10: Gun violence denialists attack and undermine gun control, including evidence it has saved lives

Despite overwhelming evidence and global recognition that gun control saves lives (Anglemyer, 2014; Matzopoulos, 2018; Santaella-Tenorio, 2016; van Kesteren, 2014; WHO, 2014), the gun lobby in South Africa has consistently denied that gun violence can be reduced through stronger gun control and has repeatedly blocked attempts to regulate guns and gun ownership in South Africa through legal challenges and in the media.

Legal challenges

In June 2004 various gun lobby organisations approached the high court with an urgent application to stop government from enacting the FCA. Judge Ben du Plessis, describing the application as ill-advised and having no merit, dismissed it with costs (SAPA, 2004).

In addition to approaching the courts to stop the enactment of the FCA before its full implementation, three further legal challenges directly impact the current implementation of and compliance with the FCA:

1. In mid-2009, as the transitional provisions of the FCA (which stipulate the procedure and timelines under which gun owners with Arms and Ammunition Act (1969) 'green' licences were to renew these under the stricter provisions of the FCA) were ending, the SA Hunters and Game Conservation Association challenged these provisions. On 26 June 2009, Judge Bill Prinsloo granted an interim court order in the North Gauteng High Court to the Association under which 'green' licences remain valid pending the final outcome of the Association's application to have certain sections of the FCA declared unconstitutional (Prinsloo, 2009). The interim order (under which more than one million firearm owners have not yet re-applied for licences under the FCA) has still not been set down for a hearing as the Minister of Police has not filed an answering affidavit, thereby preventing full implementation of the FCA.
2. In 2016, the SA Hunters and Game Conservation Association challenged sections 24 and 28 of the FCA, which require gun owners to renew their gun licences on a regular basis. The Association's application was lodged after the police issued a directive to standardise the renewal process, which had been unevenly enforced and complied with around the country (Phahlane, 2016). According to the SAPS, the directive was "prompted... by individuals and businesses not applying to renew their licences" (SAPS 2015-2016 Annual Report, p. 111). Figures reveal an overall compliance rate of 67% with section 24 of the FCA (of the 191,488 firearm licences liable for renewal in the SAPS' 2015/16 financial year, 128,419 applications were received, source: SAPS 2015-2016 Annual Report, p. 110). When the North Gauteng High Court questioned the constitutionality of these sections (Tolmay, 2017), the Minister of Police's appeal was heard in the Constitutional Court, which unanimously ruled on 7 June 2018 that sections 24 and 28, under which gun owners must renew their firearm licences on a regular basis or forfeit guns for which licences have expired to the state, are constitutional (Froneman, 2018). In making its judgment, the ConCourt ruled that gun ownership is not a fundamental right under the Bill of Rights, rather it is a privilege regulated by the FCA. Under the Act:
 - No person may possess a gun without a valid licence;
 - A firearm licence is valid for a limited period of time; and
 - Unless a gun owner has renewed their gun licence before expiry, they have committed a criminal offence and are subject to penalties, including a fine or imprisonment.



3. In response to the ConCourt ruling, Gun Owners SA lodged an urgent appeal in the North Gauteng High Court to stop the police fully implementing sections 24 and 28. In direct contradiction of a ruling made by the highest court in South Africa, Judge Bill Prinsloo (the same judge who ruled in 2009) granted an interim interdict halting any action by the police until the case has been heard as part of the normal court's roll (Prinsloo, 2018). The Minister of Police has lodged an appeal.

Media

When peer reviewed articles attributing the decline in gun violence rates from 2000 to the FCA were published in international journals, gun violence denialists sought to discredit these by claiming that the Act was only implemented in 2004; as such lives saved from gun violence could not be attributed to the strengthening of the law.

Such claims are without any basis. As shown in the section entitled Phased Implementation on page 28 above, the FCA was being implemented well before 2004 through the SAPS' five-pillar Firearms Strategy. The gun lobby itself has confirmed this, being on record accusing government of implementing the FCA before 2004. For instance in September 2003, an attorney who regularly represents gun owners and gun owning organisations complained that "since April his clients have noted a significant drop in the amount (sic) of firearm licences being approved...April was the month during which the police introduced a new system of assessing applicants for firearm licences" (Ellis, 2003a).



Appendix 11: Summary of high profile gun-related fraud and corruption cases

<p>Police station (includes Designated Firearms Officers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guns handed in during 2010 amnesty found in arms cache In 2014 police recovered an arms cache that included R1, R4, R5 and AK-47 rifles and approximately 300 handguns in a raid on a Johannesburg home. Court proceedings revealed that some of the guns in the cache had been handed in to the police for destruction during the 2010 national firearms amnesty before being stolen and sold to criminals, allegedly by corrupt police officials (Hosken, 2014). • Designated Firearms Officer sentenced to 13 years for fraud and corruption Lawrence Mamogobo, based at Pretoria Central police station, was sentenced to 13 years in mid-2015 after being convicted on 30 counts of corruption involving fraudulently selling falsified firearms training certificates, competency certificates and licences. He was one of 20 people that included two brigadiers, two colonels and 12 clerks who were suspended by SAPS management when allegations of corruption in the issuing of firearms licences at the CFR first emerged in 2013 (ANA, 2015). • 33 guns ‘disappear’ from two Western Cape police stations Fifteen 9mm firearms were reported missing from the Mitchells Plain police station on 25 August 2017, five days later, 18 firearms were unaccounted for in the Bellville South police station – Bellville South is known as a stronghold of the Sexy Boys gang (De Villiers, 2017). • Senior police officer sells guns in police stores to gang leaders The most high profile and documented case of fraud and corruption involves Christiaan Prinsloo, a senior police officer who is serving 18 years for stealing and selling 2,000+ guns in police stores to gang leaders on the Cape Flats (see Box 4: The Prinsloo Case on page 40 for detailed information).
<p>Central Firearms Registry (CFR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFR’s most senior police officer fired for fraud and corruption Brigadier Mangwani, Section Head of the CFR was suspended with immediate effect and later dismissed for bribery and corruption related to firearms licensing (Serrao, 2014). • CFR police officers arrested for selling fraudulent licences to gang leaders Three CFR officers were charged with issuing fraudulent gun licences, including to 28s gang kingpin Ralph Stanfield, his wife and sister. While charges against the three were dropped in October 2016, they have since been reinstated (Dolley, 2018).
<p>Accredited firearms training institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police close illegal KZN training academy A 2015 joint SAPS operation swooped on a Richards Bay firearms training academy which had been running illegally since 2009, making all firearms certificates issued by the academy invalid (Savides, 2015). • Journalist buys fake gun proficiency certificate The secretary of the South African Professional Firearm Trainers Council (which, on 6 March 2015, was appointed by the SAPS as the national body responsible for ensuring the quality of firearms proficiency certification) was caught on camera selling a proficiency certificate to a journalist without her having received any training (SABC, 2016).
<p>Accredited firearms dealers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawks investigate one of South Africa’s biggest gun dealers In 2013 Dave Sheer Guns was identified by the Hawks as being at the centre of a large-scale corruption racket involving bribery and creating fraudulent permits to export weapons and ammunition to conflict countries including Sudan and Syria. An employee claimed that she paid bribes to police officers and lied to clients as



	<p>part of her job as a sales manager (Serrao, 2013a; Serrao, 2013b). To date, there have been no arrests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gun dealer accused of helping to sell stolen guns to gang leaders Alan Raves, a Vereeniging-based gun dealer, is currently standing trial as an accomplice to Christiaan Prinsloo, the ex-police colonel sentenced to 18 years for selling guns earmarked for destruction in police stores to gang leaders in the Western Cape (Dolley, 2017).• Unlicensed guns recovered from gun dealer 323 unlicensed guns were recovered from a firearms dealership in Pretoria during a raid by the Hawks national bureau for illegal firearms control and priority violent crime. Moreover, while the dealership had various firearms registered in its name on the enhanced firearms registration system these could not be accounted for (Kgosana, 2018).
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