

Question on Notice
No. 577
Asked on 6 August 2014

MR KATTER asked the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services (MR DEMPSEY)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise the annual average time taken to process applications for (a) a weapons license and (b) a license to acquire, over the past three years and the respective volume of applications?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

This Government is committed to revitalising our frontline policing services and reducing red tape to ensure Queensland is the safest place to live, work and raise a family.

(a) The annual average time taken to process applications for a weapons licence and Permits to Acquire (PTA) has decreased from 15 weeks in 2011 under the former Labor Government to 12 weeks in 2014 in spite of an increase of applications received.

(b) The volume of applications is contained in the following table:

Application type		2011	2012	2013	2014 (1 January to 30 June)
New Weapons Licence	Received	10,219	11,536	15,029	7,511
	Completed	7,712	8,528	18,178	8,913
Permits to Acquire	Received	29,558	35,106	46,693	23,250
	Completed	30,974	37,307	46,740	23,271
Notes: Completed numbers exceeding received numbers represents a reduction in the backlog of applications for that period. Applications completed in a year may have been received in the previous year.					

Efficiencies to the time taken to process applications and PTAs have been achieved despite an increase in the number of licence applications received.

In November 2012, the Weapons Licensing Management System was enhanced to enable applications for new weapons licences, and Permits to Acquire, to be submitted and paid for online.

Over 82,000 online applications were received from 15 November 2012 to 30 June 2014. Applications can now be processed more efficiently due to the online system as staff do not have to manually enter the applicant's information onto the system.

In an effort to reduce application processing times, the QPS has:

- employed additional staff
- reviewed internal forms and processes
- engaged a business analyst to review business processes

- triaged applications early to ensure that applicants whose applications may be incomplete are contacted as soon as possible to supply additional information required
- implemented a number of red tape reduction initiatives (both legislative and policy based)
- Conducted State-wide education and engagement workshops with clubs, dealers and trainers to assist applicants with their applications.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the introduction of these strategies led to a 110 per cent increase in output during 2013. It is important to bear in mind that these improved results have been achieved despite a 35 to 40 per cent increase overall in applications since the introduction of the online service, and a 36 per cent increase in new licence applications in the past 18 months.

Since 2012, this Government has consulted and listened to recreational shooters and primary producers by convening a Ministerial Weapons Advisory Panel, introducing an online applications system and passing amendments to reduce the regulatory burden through the *Weapons and other Legislation Amendment Act 2012*.

The QPS Weapons Licensing Section is constantly looking at ways to further improve their service across the board and streamline their processes. In addition, QPS Weapons Licensing is working with the Ministerial Weapons Advisory Panel to scope further enhancements of the Weapons Licensing Management System, including further online functionality.

The above initiatives are all part of this Government delivering on its strong plan to reduce red tape for legitimate weapons owners across Queensland.