

Devon & Cornwall Police Firearms & Explosives Licensing Unit

Strategic Demand Assessment 2024

The Firearms Licensing Authorised Professional Practise (APP) will confirm that Chief Constables should develop a Strategic Demand Assessment (SDA). This ensures their force has the appropriate capacity and capability to meet firearms licensing-related demand.

The SDA should be undertaken against the underpinning aims and objectives:

- Prevent foreseeable or avoidable harm
- Manage risk and act decisively if risk is identified
- Be proportionate and timely
- Provide a fair, rigorous, transparent and consistent service to the public

The SDA should include:

Identifying the demand for firearms licensing capacity and capability. This would include business as usual (for example, applications), anticipated renewals and ongoing suitability assessments for all certificate holders.

- identifying the way this demand will be effectively managed, including the people, places, equipment and training required
- identifying and assessing the risks to capability and capacity
- outlining the plans to manage those risks

The SDA should be reviewed annually. The review should include input from the firearms licensing department. There may also be a need for support from other parts of the organisation (for example, performance analysts).

The Chief Constable should approve the SDA, or sign-off should be delegated by them to a senior member of staff such as the strategic lead for firearms licensing.

Results of the SDA should be forwarded to the NPCC lead for Firearms Licensing. This enables the national policing lead to assess the level of national demand and capacity, as well as having oversight of challenges in the system. The portfolio and supporting working group (FELWG) can advise and facilitate discussion and action for forces who identify problems because of the SDA.

Forces should demonstrate trustworthiness by being open and honest, such as making documents such as the strategic demand assessment publicly available.

2023 - Firearms Licensing Demand

2023	Received	Granted	Refused	Ongoing
Shotgun certificates				
New Grant Applications	898	518	155	225
Renewal Applications	3112	2831	153	128
Transfer Applications	221 – out 264 - in			
Firearm certificates				
New Grant Applications	443	250	60	133
Renewal Applications	1404	1280	58	66
Variation Applications	642	600	3	39
Transfer Applications	60 - out 85 - in			
Registered firearms dealers				
New Grant Applications	6	4	0	2
Renewal Applications	8	8	0	0
Yearly Checks (number carried out)	127			
Club Applications				
New Club Applications	11	9	0	2
Club Renewals	2	2	0	0
Other Application or Demand				
Sec 11(6) Applications (Clay Shoots)	30	30	0	0
Visitor Permits	276	266	0	10
Explosives - Grant	26	21	0	5
Explosives - Renewal	53	52	0	1

Assessment of Suitability – Current Firearms Licence Holders

The SDA is a new data request for the NPCC Firearms Licensing Portfolio and is therefore acknowledged that some forces may not be able to provide this data for 2023. If an unresolved 2023 assessment of suitability goes into 2024 then please record this onto the next SDA.

Assessment of suitability because of police incident or intervention or medical concern: we do not have this detail but are building it in for 2024 figures.

Referencing the statistical information above and your quarterly data performance submissions, Firearms Licensing Managers are encouraged to reflect on 2023, which should include:

- **The average time in months to manage grant and renewal applications, commenting on the differences between those that have been more straight forward as opposed to complex suitability concerns.**
- **Any challenges or successes you have had in managing demand in 2023.**

From the DCP FMRR – June 2024 assurance statement:

The FELU improvement strategy and investment has had considerable success, reducing TPs and renewals to business as usual levels. We are still experiencing backlog for grants however the plans that have been put in place have a high degree of confidence in terms of reaching desired positive outcomes by the timeline set.

This means that by December 24 we should have minimal legacy cases being actively managed as case reviews and all other legacy work resolved so all cases are being managed with 112 days and the majority within 56 days.

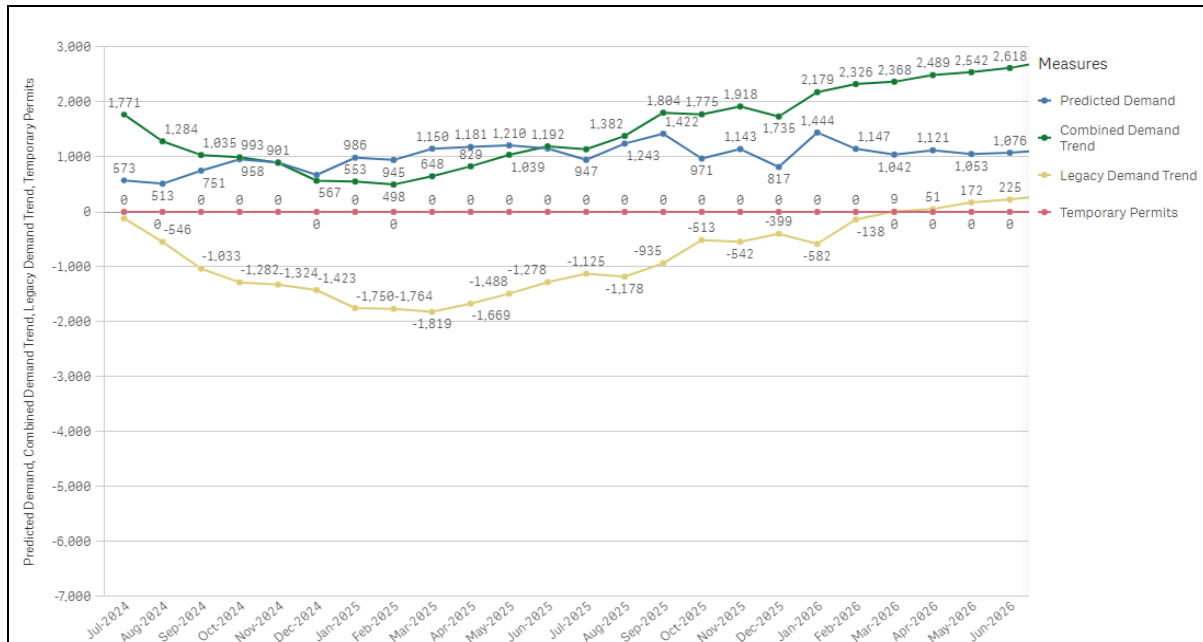
Already in 2024 we have successfully de-aligned from Dorset Police and have implemented a new operating model with an increase in staffing informed by extensive performance and analysis work. We no longer have temporary permits, have only 70 legacy renewals and the legacy grants reducing all the time – currently under 700 where they were around 2500 just 3 months ago.

Our work in reducing legacy workload has enabled us to build plans to draw in wider organisational support from Ops colleagues to ensure any future bulges in demand can be managed by “off the shelf” operations with ops resources secured through tactical tasking and co-ordination group.

Future Demand and Plans

Considering the medium term (1 – 4 Years), what changes to demand do you expect to see in your force area?

Please tell us about both changes in volume and complexity:



The extensive work carried out in around legacy demand has involved higher levels than normal of refusal and revocation which in return has rationalised future demand. We understand 25-27 inclusive are peak years of demand and we are currently processing around 1000 applications a month. We should be able to continue this, and this will mean we meet the demand within the 56/112 day parameters.

Firearms Licensing Manager to outline how they will effectively manage future demand, which should include:

1. Staff performance and wellbeing
2. Location, equipment and training
3. Identification and assessment of risks to capability and capacity
4. Outlining the plans to manage those risks and how these will be monitored

We have a clear strategic plan and performance management processes in place as well as a quality assurance (QA) strategy. We also have a wellbeing strategy and performance and wellbeing feature heavily in our 6 monthly CPD days.

Staff have been recruited and housed in suitable locations to meet demand. The gold group set up after the Keyham shootings was the catalyst for energy in this area. We have full training plans and will actively link into the national training programme supplementing this with local CPD.

We maintain a risk register that is reviewed at monthly FELU SLT and at FELU Performance Risk and Transformation group (PRT) that is chaired by ACC Ops monthly. The risk register feeds directly into the force PMMR which is reviewed 6 monthly. We also maintain near miss and learning sites to promote learning and feed into national data returns.

[NOTE: Risk register has been removed / redacted from this public version]

Please consider and estimate the extent of future demand that you expect to be met having made the changes described above. It is requested that you confirm any demand that you expect to be unmet and what the consequences of not achieving this are likely to be (i.e. how you may manage risks such as these).

We have recently introduced a pilot prosecutions team that is further improving our efficiency and effectiveness. These pilot resources will need to be secured to ensure continuing good performance. A business case is being submitted to secure these 2 police officers. Additionally, we have had performance and analysis resources allocated to ensure full migration of all legacy systems to Niche for efficiency and to ensure we meet data requirements.

Chief Constable or Strategic Lead for Firearms Licensing Team

Name: Supt Brent Davison (for ACC Matt LONGMAN)

Date: 18 July 2024