

Police Scotland's Air Weapons Surrender Campaign hailed a success



Chief Constable Phil Gormley has hailed Police Scotland's Air Weapons Surrender Campaign a resounding success, as he revealed 11,569 weapons were handed in to police stations across the country during the three week initiative.

Revealing the figure to Cabinet Secretary for Justice Michael Matheson today (Tuesday June 21 2016) he also announced an additional 1,000 weapons had been handed in since the campaign drew to a close on June 12th.

Reflecting on the surrendered weapons, prior to being taken away for secure disposal, Mr Gormley thanked everyone who has given up weapons they no longer wish to keep or licence and announced police stations would still be able to receive weapons up until the end of the year.

He said: "This is a fantastic response. Every weapon handed in had the potential to cause serious harm within our communities if misused, and to have more than 11,000 fewer weapons in existence has made Scotland a safer place.

"I am pleased to say our officers are still able to accept unwanted air weapons, and would ask those responsible members of the public who no longer wish to keep a weapon, or to apply for a licence, to do so, preferably in daylight hours, covered and in a way which does not alarm other people.

"All of these guns, and an assortment of other harmful weapons including crossbows, shotguns, rifles and several pistols dating back to World War 2, will now be taken away and

destroyed to ensure they are off our streets forever.”

Cabinet Secretary for Justice Michael Matheson said: “It is extremely encouraging that more than 11,000 unwanted air weapons have been handed in by people who do not plan to have a licence when the new law comes in to force at the end of the year.

“The new licensing regime is not a ban on air weapons but a means of ensuring people can use air weapons in a regulated way without compromising public safety.

“We believe this legislation strikes the right balance between protecting communities and allowing legitimate shooting in a safe environment to continue.

“I would encourage anybody with an air weapon to stay on the right side of the law by applying when applications on 1st July. For anybody who plans not to have a licence, Police Scotland will support them to hand in their weapon safely.”

Anyone wishing to retain an air weapon after December 31st 2016 is required to apply for a licence, or face prosecution with penalties of a fine or up to two years imprisonment.