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This publication is no longer current and is not being updated.







Firearms Control at the Point of Entry into the UK from within the European Union

Objective

To increase the knowledge of ferry staff and ferry operators in relationship to the controls on the importation of firearms into the UK. Information in this document is accurate at the time of writing – however it is not definitive and should be used with that in mind.

Summary of entry restrictions and authorities required

- All firearms, firearms components or ammunition for firearms have to be controlled at the point
 of entry into the UK. Some are completely banned (or prohibited) and others may be brought
 into the UK if the traveller has obtained the relevant licence or permit.
- A permit authorising a person to carry a firearm in the EU does not provide a right to carry a firearm in the UK. A licence issued by a UK authority must be obtained.
- Section 1 and Section 2 firearms may be imported with the correct paperwork. Some examples of documents required can be found in Annex A or on the internet.
- Section 5 firearms are in general terms prohibited to import and authority to possess in the UK
 is not normally issued to private individuals. It will therefore be very unusual for a traveller to
 be authorised and have the correct paperwork.
- Travellers arriving in the UK from an EU country holding the correct documents are not required to declare the firearms to Border Force. However, they must produce the documents when requested by a Border Force or UK Police officer.
- Only original copies are acceptable not photocopies.
- Wherever possible, firearms should be separated from travellers on ferries and secured away and only returned on arrival.
- Border Force request that all importations of firearms are reported on the manifest or to a Border Force Officer.

Documentation required by travellers bringing firearms into the UK from within the EU

Firearms entering the UK from other EU Member States will usually require the goods to be accompanied by a Transfer Licence or European Firearms Pass, both of which would be issued in the country of dispatch. However, **note that these documents do not permit the holder to possess the firearm in the UK**.



Any traveller bringing a firearm into the UK must hold the relevant authority to possess the weapon on a UK Firearms Certificate, UK Shot Gun Certificate, British Visitor's Permit issued by a UK Police force, section 5 authority issued by the Home Office or a Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) Import Licence.

This list is not definitive and any person considering importing a firearm or requesting issue of any of the above documents should be referred to BIS, the Home Office or Police as appropriate.

Further import licensing information can be found in Annex B.

Types of firearms subject to control

A firearm is a lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or missile can be discharged and includes:

- prohibited weapons;
- component parts of a lethal or prohibited weapon; and
- accessories designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by firing the weapon.

The Firearms Act 1968 (as amended) categorises firearms into three sections: Sections 1, 2 and 5

Section 1 of the Firearms Act covers:

- bolt, lever, Winchester and Martini single action rifles;
- self loading rifles chambered for .22 rim-fire cartridges;
- pump-action or semi-automatic shot guns with a barrel length of not less than 24 inches (60 cms) and a magazine capacity of more than two rounds;
- guns designed to be loaded at the muzzle end of the barrel or chamber with a loose charge and a separate ball or other missile (e.g. reproduction black powder muskets, pistols and revolvers);
- air and compressed carbon dioxide (CO2) powered rifles designed to be fired from the shoulder with a kinetic energy of more than 12 foot pounds (16.3 joules); and flares incorporating a barrel, other than pen launchers.

Section 2 of the Firearms Act covers:

- double and single barrelled shot guns fitted with a barrel not less than 24 inches (60 cms); and
- semi-automatic or pump action shotguns with a magazine capacity of no more than two cartridges.



Section 5 of the Firearms Act covers:

- most hand guns (but not those loaded at the muzzle end of the barrel or chamber);
- air and carbon dioxide (CO2) powered hand guns which on discharge from the muzzle have a kinetic energy in excess of 6 foot pounds (8.15 joules);
- stun-guns (electric shock weapons);
- self-defence sprays;
- pump-action or semi-automatic shotguns with a barrel length of less than 24 inches (61 cms) or, excluding any detachable, folding, retractable or other moveable butt-stock, is less than 40 inches (102 cms) in length overall;
- assault rifles;
- sub-machine guns;
- machine guns;
- · ammunition designed to explode or expand on impact; and
- rocket launchers and mortars.

Blank firing or replica firearms

 Blank firing or replica firearms that can be converted to fire bullets are also banned but in certain cases may be brought into the UK if the traveller has obtained the relevant licence or permit.

Realistic imitation firearms

 Realistic imitation firearms can only be imported for an authorised purpose or function such as participating at an historical re-enactment.

Offensive weapons

• The following are examples of items that are banned in the UK under the Criminal Justice Act 1988 (as amended): flick and gravity knives, butterfly knives, push daggers, belt-buckle knives, death stars, swordsticks, stealth (non-metallic) knives, knives disguised as everyday objects, knuckledusters, blowpipes, truncheons, and some martial arts equipment.

ANNEX A Examples of firearms documentation

ANNEX B Further Information



ANNEX A Examples of firearms documentation

Visitor's Shotgun Permit



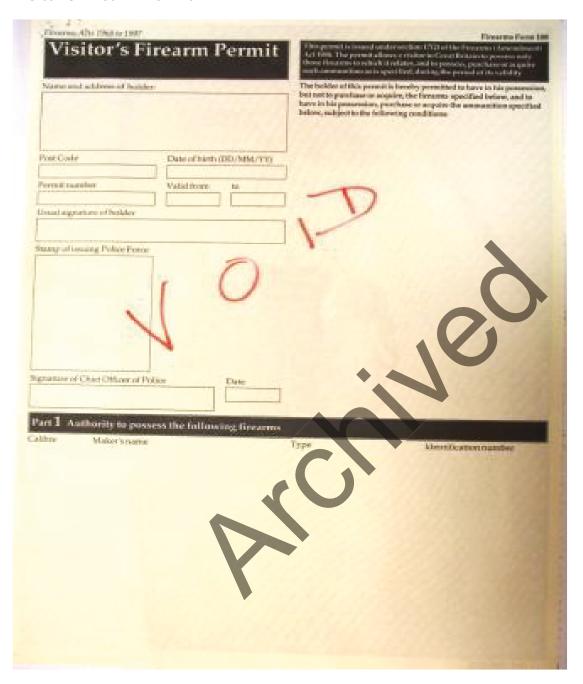


European Firearms Pass



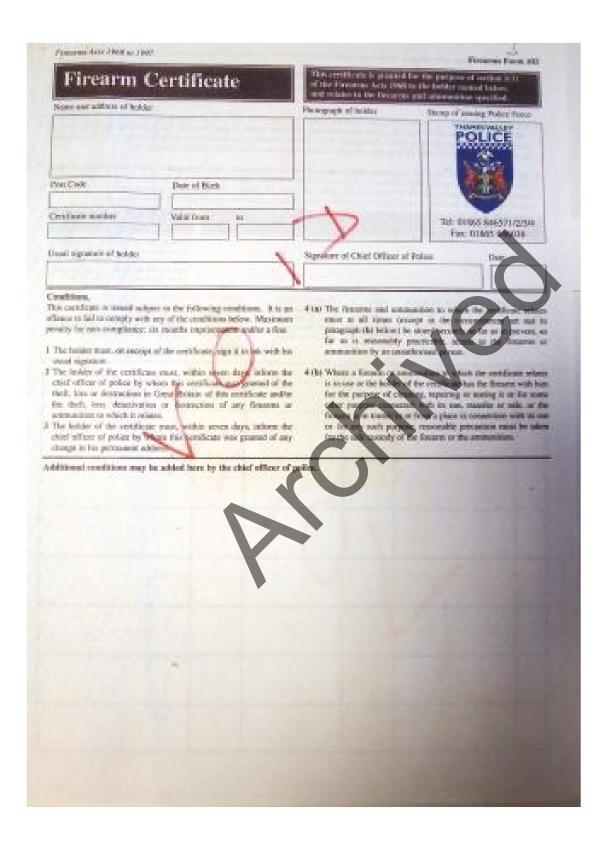


Visitor's Firearm Permit





Firearm Certificate





ANNEX B Further Information

Public Notices for importers

Detailed information on licensing arrangements for imports of firearms and ammunition is here under Notices to Importers:

https://www.gov.uk/import-controls

Notice 2864:

Notice-to-importers-2864-import-licensing

For further firearms advice visit the Home Office firearms website at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/firearms