

CORONAVIRUS — FIREARMS LICENSING

327. Hon RICK MAZZA to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

I refer to recent correspondence I received from firearms dealers, alleging that the Western Australia Police Force licensing service will cancel firearm licence applications in its system and issue partial refunds to applicants. Firearm licence applicants are now calling firearm dealers and asking for refunds on firearms they are no longer able to access, further impacting dealers who are already devastated by the closure of their businesses.

- (1) Can the minister advise what will happen with current firearm licence applications in the system?
- (2) Will full refunds of firearm licence application fees be provided for applications affected by the state of emergency directive; and, if not, why not?
- (3) If yes to (2), how will this process be administered; and, if no to (2), why not?
- (4) If firearm licence applications are to be cancelled and refunds given, when was this decision made and how was the information communicated to applicants and the industry?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Police.

- (1) Firearms applications continue to be processed. Each application is assessed on its merits and the legislation, including the requirement for genuine reason and need. Recent applications have also been assessed taking into account the current directions made pursuant to the state of emergency in Western Australia and the legislative requirements.
- (2) The police component of the firearm application fees is refunded if an application is declined. When an application is declined, the refund process is undertaken automatically. Australia Post's fees associated with firearms applications are retained by Australia Post and is a fee for the service it provides.
- (3) Refunds are administered at licensed firearms services and are generated automatically when an application is declined.
- (4) Firearms applications are processed in accordance with licensing services for firearms procedures. Each application is assessed on its merits and the legislative requirements, including the applicant establishing a genuine reason or genuine need. Recent applications have been assessed on the basis of the current directions and the legislative requirements. If an application is declined, automated advice is sent to each applicant. The WA Police Force has sent correspondence to firearms dealers without the application process, so the dealers who are the first point of contact for an applicant are able to advise applicants on the application process.