

CORONAVIRUS — FIREARMS LICENSING

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

I refer to firearms licence applications that were lodged prior to the closure of gun shops state of emergency directive. The Western Australia Police Force is now declining applications that are not subject to exemptions under the closure of gun shops directive and is only partially refunding the application fee.

- (1) Why did firearms licence applications need to be declined rather than the process suspended until the state of emergency directive could be lifted and the application process recommenced?
- (2) Will the minister consider waiving application fees for applicants resubmitting applications that were declined under the state of emergency directive; and, if not, why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1)–(2) The Western Australia Police Force advises that firearms applications are being assessed in accordance with legislation relating to a person's genuine need and genuine reason and the State Emergency Coordinator's directive "Closure of Gun Shops (No 2)". Applications that have been declined have been assessed by police as not meeting the genuine need or genuine reason requirement. All applications are assessed in accordance with the current circumstances, including the state of emergency directions, and not on a future point in time. Applications that meet the requirements of paragraph (4)(a) to (d) of the directive are being assessed accordingly. Police have written to firearms dealers about the current application process so that the dealers who are the first point of contact for an applicant can advise applicants on the application process. If an application is declined, the police component of a firearm application fee is fully refunded. Australia Post fees associated with firearms applications are retained by Australia Post.