
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2004 No. 702

The Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004

PART VII

ENFORCEMENT AND OFFENCES

Offences with firearms

Possession with intent

58.—(1) A person who has in his possession any firearm or ammunition with intent—

- (a) by that means to endanger life or cause serious damage to property; or
- (b) to enable any other person by that means to endanger life or cause serious damage to property,

shall be guilty of an offence whether any injury to person or any damage to property has been caused or not.

(2) A person who has in his possession any firearm or imitation firearm with intent—

- (a) by that means to cause; or
- (b) to enable another person by that means to cause,

any person to believe that unlawful violence will be used against him or another person, shall be guilty of an offence.

Use of firearm to resist arrest

59.—(1) A person who makes any use whatsoever of a firearm or imitation firearm with intent to resist or prevent the lawful arrest or detention of himself or any other person shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) A person who at the time of his committing, or of his being arrested for, an offence specified in Schedule 4 has in his possession a firearm or imitation firearm, shall be guilty of an offence under this paragraph unless he shows that he had it in his possession for a lawful purpose.

(3) For the purposes of this Article, the definition of “firearm” in Article 2(2) shall apply as if paragraphs (b) and (c) were omitted.

Carrying firearm with criminal intent

60.—(1) A person who has with him a firearm or imitation firearm with intent—

- (a) to commit an indictable offence; or
- (b) to resist arrest or to prevent the arrest of another,

in either case while he has the firearm or imitation firearm with him, shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) In proceedings for an offence under this Article proof that the accused had a firearm or imitation firearm with him and intended to commit an indictable offence or to resist or prevent arrest is evidence that he intended to have it with him while doing so.

(3) In this Article “indictable offence” means an offence which, if committed by an adult, is triable on indictment (whether or not it is also triable by a court of summary jurisdiction) except an offence otherwise triable only by a court of summary jurisdiction which under Article 29 of the [Magistrates' Courts \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1981 \(NI 26\)](#) or any other statutory provision, is required to be tried on indictment at the instance of the accused or the prosecution.

Carrying or discharging firearm in a public place

61.—(1) A person who has with him in a public place a loaded shotgun or loaded air gun or any other firearm (whether loaded or not) together with ammunition suitable for use in that firearm, shall be guilty of an offence unless he shows that he had lawful authority or reasonable excuse for doing so.

(2) A person who discharges any firearm on any public road, or within 18 metres of the centre of any public road, or in any church, churchyard or burial ground shall be guilty of an offence unless he shows that he had lawful authority or reasonable excuse for doing so.

Trespassing with firearm

62.—(1) A person who enters or is in any building or part of a building as a trespasser while he has a firearm or imitation firearm with him shall be guilty of an offence unless he shows that he had lawful authority or reasonable excuse for doing so.

(2) A person who enters or is on any land as a trespasser while he has a firearm or imitation firearm with him shall be guilty of an offence unless he shows that he had lawful authority or reasonable excuse for doing so.

Prohibition of possession, etc. of firearm by certain persons

63.—(1) Subject to paragraph (7), a person who has been sentenced to—

- (a) imprisonment; or
- (b) detention in a young offenders centre,

shall not at any time purchase, acquire or have in his possession a firearm or ammunition unless the term of imprisonment or detention to which he was sentenced was less than three years.

(2) Subject to paragraph (7), a person who has been sentenced to—

- (a) imprisonment for a term of three months or more but less than three years; or
- (b) detention in a young offenders centre or a juvenile justice centre for such a term,

shall not at any time before the expiration of the period of eight years from the date of his conviction, purchase, acquire or have in his possession a firearm or ammunition.

(3) Subject to paragraph (7), while a person is prohibited by section 21 of the Firearms Act 1968 in Great Britain from having a firearm or ammunition in his possession, he shall also be prohibited from purchasing, acquiring or having in his possession a firearm or ammunition in Northern Ireland.

(4) Subject to paragraph (7), a person who has been sentenced to detention during the pleasure of the Secretary of State under Article 45(1) of the [Criminal Justice \(Children\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1998 \(NI 9\)](#) shall not purchase, acquire or have in his possession a firearm or ammunition.

(5) A person shall not, while he is subject to—

- (a) a recognizance to keep the peace or to be of good behaviour, a condition of which is that he shall not possess, use or carry a firearm;

(b) a probation order containing a requirement that he shall not possess, use or carry a firearm, or

(c) a licence under Article 46 of the Criminal Justice (Children) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998,

purchase, acquire or have in his possession a firearm or ammunition.

(6) A person who contravenes any of the foregoing provisions of this Article shall be guilty of an offence.

(7) A person prohibited under paragraph (1), (2), (3) or (4) from purchasing, acquiring or having in his possession a firearm or ammunition may apply to the Secretary of State to remove the prohibition, and, if the application is granted, the prohibition shall not then apply to that person.

(8) A person who sells or transfers a firearm or ammunition to, or repairs, tests or proves a firearm or ammunition for, a person whom he knows or has reasonable ground for believing to be prohibited by this Article from purchasing, acquiring or having in his possession a firearm or ammunition, shall be guilty of an offence.

(9) In this Article “sentenced” means sentenced in any part of the United Kingdom.

Possession of firearm or ammunition in suspicious circumstances

64.—(1) A person who has in his possession any firearm or ammunition in suspicious circumstances shall be guilty of an offence unless he shows that he had it in his possession for a lawful purpose.

(2) In paragraph (1) “suspicious circumstances” means circumstances such as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion that the person does not have the firearm or the ammunition in his possession for a lawful purpose.

(3) This Article is without prejudice to any other provision of this Order.

Possession of loaded firearm while drunk or under influence of drugs

65. A person who has in his possession any loaded firearm while drunk or under the influence of drugs shall be guilty of an offence.

Supplying firearm or ammunition to person who is drunk, etc.

66. A person who sells or transfers any firearm or ammunition to, or repairs, proves or tests any firearm or ammunition for, a person whom he knows or has reasonable cause for believing to be drunk, under the influence of drugs, or suffering from mental disorder, shall be guilty of an offence.

Conversion of weapons

67.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), a person who shortens the barrel of a shotgun to a length less than 60.96 centimetres shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) It shall not be an offence under paragraph (1) for the holder of a firearms dealer’s certificate to shorten the barrel of a shotgun for the sole purpose of replacing a defective part of the barrel so as to produce a barrel of not less than 60.96 centimetres in length.

(3) A person, other than the holder of a firearms dealer’s certificate, who converts into a firearm anything which, though having the appearance of being a firearm, is so constructed as to be incapable of discharging any missile through its barrel, shall be guilty of an offence.

(4) A person who commits an offence under Article 3 by having in his possession, or purchasing or acquiring—

- (a) a shotgun which has been shortened contrary to paragraph (1); or
- (b) a firearm which has been converted as mentioned in paragraph (3) (whether by the holder of a firearms dealer's certificate or not),

without holding a firearm certificate authorising him to have it in his possession, or to purchase or acquire it, shall be treated for the purposes of the provisions of this Order relating to the punishment of offences as committing that offence in an aggravated form.

Defences

68. In proceedings for an offence under Article 59(2), 61, 62 or 64, if a person adduces evidence which is sufficient to raise an issue with respect to a matter which he is required to show under any of those Articles, he shall be treated as having shown that matter unless the prosecution proves the contrary beyond reasonable doubt.