



Firearms Act 1968

1968 CHAPTER 27

PART IV

MISCELLANEOUS AND GENERAL

57 Interpretation

- (1) In this Act, the expression " firearm " means a lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged and includes—
 - (a) any prohibited weapon, whether it is such a lethal weapon as aforesaid or not; and
 - (b) any component part of such a lethal or prohibited weapon; and
 - (c) any accessory to any such weapon designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by firing the weapon;and so much of section 1 of this Act as excludes any description of firearm from the category of firearms to which that section applies shall be construed as also excluding component parts of, and accessories to, firearms of that description.
- (2) In this Act, the expression " ammunition " means ammunition for any firearm and includes grenades, bombs and other like missiles, whether capable of use with a firearm or not, and also includes prohibited ammunition.
- (3) For purposes of sections 45, 46, 50, 51(4) and 52 of this Act, the offences under this Act relating specifically to air weapons are those under sections 22(4), 22(5), 23(1) and 24(4).
- (4) In this Act—
 - " acquire " means hire, accept as a gift or borrow and " acquisition " shall be construed accordingly ;
 - " air weapon " has the meaning assigned to it by section 1(3)(b) of this Act;
 - " area " means a police area ;

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

" certificate " (except in a context relating to the registration of firearms dealers) and " certificate under this Act " mean a firearm certificate or a shot gun certificate and—

(a) " firearm certificate " means a certificate granted by a chief officer of police under this Act in respect of any firearm or ammunition to which section 1 of this Act applies and includes a certificate granted in Northern Ireland under section 1 of the Firearms Act 1920 or under an enactment of the Parliament of Northern Ireland amending or substituted for that section; and

(b) " shot gun certificate " means a certificate granted by a chief officer of police under this Act and authorising a person to possess shot guns ;

" firearms dealer " means a person who, by way of trade or business, manufactures, sells, transfers, repairs, tests or proves firearms or ammunition to which section 1 of this Act applies, or shot guns ;

" imitation firearm " means any thing which has the appearance of being a firearm (other than such a weapon as is mentioned in section 5(1)(b) of this Act) whether or not it is capable of discharging any shot, bullet or other missile;

" indictable offence " has the same meaning as in the Magistrates' Courts Act 1952, except that it does not include an offence which is triable on indictment only after one or more previous summary convictions thereof;

" premises " includes any land ;

" prescribed " means prescribed by rules made by the Secretary of State under section 53 of this Act;

" prohibited weapon " and " prohibited ammunition " have the meanings assigned to them by section 5(2) of this Act;

" public place " includes any highway and any other premises or place to which at the material time the public have or are permitted to have access, whether on payment or otherwise;

" registered ", in relation to a firearms dealer, means registered either—

(a) in Great Britain, under section 33 of this Act, or

(b) in Northern Ireland, under section 8 of the Firearms Act 1920 or any enactment of the Parliament of Northern Ireland amending or substituted for that section,

and references to " the register ", " registration " and a " certificate of registration " shall be construed accordingly, except in section 40 ;

" shot gun " has the meaning assigned to it by section 1(3) (a) of this Act and, in sections 3(1) and 45(2) of this Act and in the definition of " firearms dealer ", includes any component part of a shot gun and any accessory to a shot gun designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by firing the gun ;

" slaughtering instrument " means a firearm which is specially designed or adapted for the instantaneous slaughter of animals or for the instantaneous stunning of animals with a view to slaughtering them ; and

" transfer " includes let on hire, give, lend and part with possession, and " transferee " and " transferor " shall be construed accordingly.

(5) The definitions in subsections (1) to (3) above apply to the provisions of this Act except where the context otherwise requires.

(6) For purposes of this Act—

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

- (a) the length of the barrel of a firearm shall be measured from the muzzle to the point at which the charge is exploded on firing; and
- (b) a shot gun or an air weapon shall be deemed to be loaded if there is ammunition in the chamber or barrel or in any magazine or other device which is in such a position that the ammunition can be fed into the chamber or barrel by the manual or automatic operation of some part of the gun or weapon.