

**2023 No. 77**

**ARMS AND AMMUNITION**

**The Firearms (Amendment) Rules 2023**

*Made* - - - - 26th January 2023

*Laid before Parliament* 27th January 2023

*Coming into force* - - 27th July 2023

The Secretary of State makes the following Rules in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 27A(2) and 53 of the Firearms Act 1968(a).

In accordance with section 27A(3) of that Act, the Secretary of State has consulted such persons likely to be affected by the Rules as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

**Citation, commencement and extent**

**1.**—(1) These Rules may be cited as the Firearms (Amendment) Rules 2023 and come into force on 27th July 2023.

(2) These Rules extend to England and Wales and Scotland.

**Amendment to rule 3 of the Firearms Rules 1998**

**2.** In rule 3 of the Firearms Rules 1998(b) (firearm certificates), after paragraph (4)(iv)(a) insert—

“(aa) where the firearm to which the certificate relates is a rifle from which a shot, bullet or other missile, with kinetic energy of more than 13,600 joules at the muzzle of the weapon, can be discharged, the firearm is securely stored for the purposes of paragraph (a) above only if it is stored in accordance with at least one or more of the Level 3 security measures described in the Firearms Security Handbook 2020(c), published by the Home Office and updated on 20th January 2021, or measures that are at least as secure as Level 3 measures;”.

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(a) 1968 c. 27. Section 27A was inserted by section 61(1) and (2) of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 (c. 17). Section 53 was amended by section 61(3) of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019. There are other amendments to the Firearms Act 1968 which are not relevant to these Rules.

(b) S.I. 1998/1941; relevant amending instruments are S.I. 2013/1945, 2013/2970, 2014/1239, 2017/1281, 2018/1042, 2019/1419 and 2021/464. There are other amendments to S.I. 1998/1941 which are not relevant to these Rules.

(c) The Firearms Security Handbook 2020 (“the Handbook”) is published by the Home Office and was developed by the Firearms and Explosives Licensing Working Group, the National Police Chiefs Council in England, Wales and Scotland and the British Shooting Sports Council. The Handbook was published on 1 October 2019 and last updated on the 20th January 2021. Part 2 of the Handbook addresses secure storage, with paragraphs 2.23 and 2.24, in particular, setting out Level 3 measures. An electronic copy of the Handbook may be accessed via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/firearms-security-handbook/firearms-security-handbook-2020-accessible>. A hard copy of the Handbook may be obtained from the Firearms Policy Unit, Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

26th January 2023

*Chris Philp*  
Minister of State  
Home Office

## **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Rules)*

These Rules make amendments to the Firearms Rules 1998 (S.I. 1998/1941) (“the 1998 Rules”).

Rule 2 amends rule 3 of the 1998 Rules to require, as a condition of a firearm certificate, that high muzzle energy rifles are stored in accordance with at least one of the ‘Level 3’ security measures identified in the Firearms Security Handbook 2020, published by the Home Office and updated on 20th January 2021, or equivalent measures. “High muzzle energy rifles” are rifles from which a shot, bullet or other missile, with kinetic energy of more than 13,600 joules at the muzzle of the weapon, can be discharged.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private, voluntary or public sectors is foreseen.

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