

New weapons law for SBAs

By Sgt. Demetris Charalambous, SBA Police.

A new Ordinance controlling the ownership and use of weapons has been enacted by the Administrator. It becomes law in the SBAs on 1st January 2010 and applies throughout the Areas. The SBA legal system and SBA law are separate from those of the Republic of Cyprus and the United Kingdom. The new Firearms and Other Weapons Ordinance 2009 is based on similar legislation enacted by the Republic of Cyprus.

The Ordinance will require the holder of certain types of weapon to have a licence for that weapon and to have it registered with the SBA police. As an alternative, the weapon can be licensed and registered in the Republic.

In addition to shotguns and airguns (which must already be licensed and registered under current legislation), the following articles will need to be registered from 1st January 2010:

- “collectable guns” such as deactivated firearms;
- humane killers for animals;
- paintball guns;
- sports pistols (starting pistols);
- signal guns;
- other guns which fire projectiles;
- crossbows; and
- other types of bow where the “draw weight” is 15kg or more.

Licences for shotguns and airguns issued under the current legislation (the Firearms Ordinance 1974) will continue to be valid.

Certain types of weapon, such as pistols, revolvers and automatic weapons are already prohibited in the SBAs and these weapons continue to be banned. Also banned is the possession of other types of weapon such as tasers and pepper sprays.

A person visiting the areas temporarily (usually up to about 6 months) may use a “Category D” firearm (broadly speaking a shotgun) if that person holds a European Firearms Pass covering that firearm. The firearm will still need to be registered with the SBA Police.

The Ordinance also increases the penalties (which include imprisonment and heavy fines) for unlawful possession of firearms and other weapons. The penalties are identical to those in the Republic.

Enquiries about the new Ordinance can be made to Sgt. Demetris Charalambous of the SBA Police on 25963297. The Ordinance can be accessed on the SBAA website at: <http://www.sba.mod.uk/> by going to “Legal”, then “Legislation” and “SBA Legislation Index”.