

Information on Importation of Firearms into South Africa

Section 73 of the South African Firearms Control Act , 2000 (Act No 60/2000) determine that no person may import into or take in-transit through South Africa any firearms or ammunition without a temporary import or in-transit permit issued in terms of the said Act.

Firearm entering South Africa not for the purpose of licencing in South Africa can be divided in the following categories:

Firearms entering South Africa for a period not exceeding six (6) months for the purpose of hunting, sport, self-defence, repair, law enforcement, exhibition where after it will return to country of origin, wherefor a temporary import permit may be issued.

Firearms entering South Africa to be transported over SA ground to another country in Africa for personal use wherefor a in-transit permit may be issued.

Firearms entering South Africa for a period not exceeding six (6) months for the purpose of hunting, sport, self-defence, repair, law enforcement or exhibition and then taken to another country other than the country of origin wherefor an temporary import permit and additional export permit may be issued.

How to obtain a temporary import, in-transit or export permit

An application by a person that is a non SA citizen and not the holder of a permanent residence permit for a temporary, in-transit or export import permit in respect of a firearm or ammunition not licenced under the Firearms Control Act, 2000 (Act No 60 of 2000), must in terms of the Act, submitted on a SAPS 520 "Application for a multiple import or export permit / temporary import or export permit / permanent import or export permit / in-transit permit for personal use" form either to the Central Firearms Control Register, Pretoria, South Africa , directly or to the Designated Firearms Officer at the place designated as a port of entry in terms of the Immigration Act 2002 (Act No 13 of 2002) where the applicant will enter into the Republic of South Africa.

The application form submitted must be an original completed and signed document.

Supporting documents to accompany the application:

The following supplementary documentation must accompany the application :

A certified copy of Passport documents.

A certified copy of a licence, permit, authorization or any other documentary proof confirming the lawful possession of the firearm.

A written mandate (appointment letter) as proof if a person was nominated to apply on behalf of the applicant. (Mandate received must be an original document signed by the importer where after the appointed can apply on behalf of the importer).

A written authorization which permits export from country of origin. (If not supplied by country of origin - written confirmation is required).

If applying at the port of entry - airline ticket to be produced.

With regard to in-transit and export permits an import permit from the recipient country. (If not supplied by country- writes confirmation is required)

Documentary proof with regard to the purpose of the visit issued by any one of the following persons or institutions, in South Africa confirming that, to the best of their knowledge and belief, the applicant will be using the firearm for the purpose set out in the application:

A professional hunter, or the hunting outfitter licensed to conduct business in hunting, who will provide hunting to the foreign visitor.

The accredited hunting association or sport-shooting organisation that is hosting the event or sport-shooting competition that the applicant will participate in,

An person or organisation hosting a public event or historical re-enactment or display that requires the foreign visitor's participation and use of the specific firearm.

Issuing of a permit

An application submitted directly to the Central Firearms Control Register must be lodged at least 21 days in advance to enable the South African Police Service sufficient time to process the application and to submit the permit to the applicant to an address outside the borders of the Republic of South Africa or the nominated person.

The importer must be in possession of the original import permit when importing the firearms or ammunition.

The permit in respect of an application submitted to the Designated Firearms Officer (Police official) at the port of entry will be issued by the specific Designated Firearms Officer who received the application.

A temporary import permit will only be issued at the port of entry to the following persons
To a foreign visitor for the purpose of hunting.

To a foreign visitor to display the firearm and ammunition at a trade show or collections show or to display firearms and ammunition at a sports or hunting trade show.

To an official of a foreign government or a distinguished foreign visitor so designated by the SA Department of Foreign Affairs.

To a foreign law enforcement officer entering the Republic of South Africa on an officially approved policing assignment. To a foreign visitor to participate in a competitive sports shooting event, organised by recognised business, hunting, sport-shooting or collectors organisation.

If the applicant is twenty one (21) years of age and older.

If the rifles is not semi-automatic or fully automatic of action or hand carbines.

For only one(1) firearm per caliber.

Not more than two hundred (200) rounds of ammunition capable to be fired by the firearm imported.

For any other reasons the application must be submitted to the Central Firearms Control Register, Private Bag X 811, Pretoria, South Africa, 0001.

Issuing of an temporary import permit by the Central Firearms Control Register
The Central Firearms Control Register may issue an temporary import permit where the applicant can demonstrate:

The lawful possession of the firearm.

Knowledge of the safe handling and use of the firearm in question through possession of a licence for the firearm or through past experience, and

Knowledge of the SA laws relating to firearms, including the principles relating to the use, safe storage and handling of firearms and where applicable their public display.

A need to possess the firearm

That the applicant can not reasonably satisfy that need by means other than the possession of the firearm and that he / she is at least 21 years old provided that the Registrar may, within his / her discretion and in good cause shown, exempt an applicant from this

Period of validity

The temporary import and/or export permit will not be issued for a period longer than six (6) months.

Cost involved

The application for an temporary import permit as well as an in-transit permit will be processed without any cost.

Conditions to be imposed on a temporary import permit

The requirements of the act regarding the carrying, safe custody, transport and display of the firearms and ammunition must be complied with.

The firearm may only be used for the purpose set out in the permit.

No person who holds a temporary import permit is not allowed to transfer the firearm to another person in South Africa without prior written permission having been obtained from the Registrar.

Whenever the holder of the temporary import permit leaves the Republic of South Africa, the firearm in respect of which the permit was issued must accompany the holder of the permit.

Conditions to be imposed on a in-transit permit

The Registrar may for security reasons require that the holder of an in-transit permit make use of a transporter to transport the firearm and ammunition.

The firearms and ammunition must be under the direct supervision of the importer or stored in a safe in accordance of the requirements of the Act.

The firearms may not be used in South Africa.

Firearms without identification numbers

A firearm which does not have a manufacturers serial number stamped on it or which has a manufacturers serial number stamped on it that duplicates with any firearm that appears on the Registrar database, will be allocated with a unique firearm identification number and such number must be affixed to the firearm as determined by the Registrar.

An application for more than one firearm of the same calibre

The Registrar may in good cause shown, issue a permit in respect of more than one firearm per calibre to a person who will be using the firearms for the under mentioned purpose:

To a foreign visitor for the purpose of hunting

To a foreign visitor to display the firearm and ammunition at a trade show or collectors show or to display firearms or ammunition at a sport of hunting trade show.

To a foreign visitor to participate in a competitive sport shooting event organised by recognised business, hunting, sport-shooting or collectors organisation.

Extension of the permit

An application for extension, renewal or replacement of a permit must be submitted to the Central Firearms Control Register before the expiry date lapses, otherwise a new application will be required.

Limits on number of ammunition

The holder of an import permit may not possess more than 200 cartridges for each firearm mentioned on the import permit unless approved by the Central Firearms Control Register.

The import on Semi-automatic and automatic rifles or hand Carbines
All applications for the import of semi-automatic or automatic rifles or hand carbines must be submitted to the Central Firearms Control Register for consideration.

Contact Details for Central Firearms Control Register:

The Head
Central Firearms Register
Private Bag X 811
Pretoria
South Africa
0001

Facsimile: +27 012 3536041

E-Mail: cfr.imports@saps.org.za