

Criminal Justice Data Brief

Department of the Attorney General $\frac{3}{4}$ Crime Prevention & Justice Assistance Division $\frac{3}{4}$ cpja.ag.state.hi.us

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February, 2002

Firearm Registrations in Hawaii, 2001

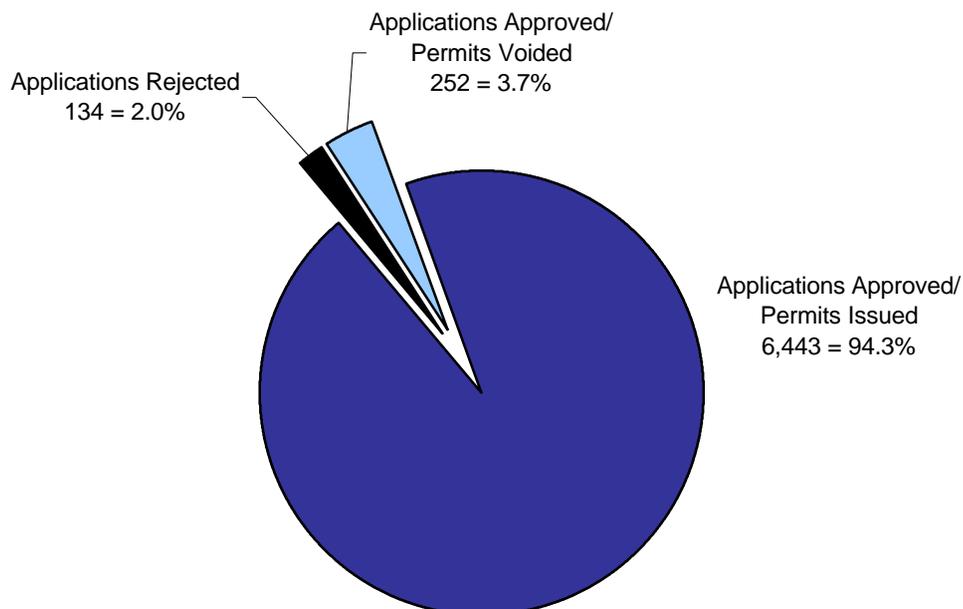
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Hawaii Revised Statutes section 134-14 requires the county police departments to provide to the state Department of the Attorney General a monthly report of firearm registration activity. These data were compiled in order to provide the comprehensive statistics reported herein for Calendar Year 2001. This is the second annual publication of this report.

Permit Applications Processed, Issued, Voided, and Rejected

A total of 6,829 personal/private firearm permit applications were processed statewide during 2001, marking a 5.2% increase from the 6,489 applications processed in 2000. Of the applications processed in 2001, 94.3% (6,443) were approved and resulted in issued permits; 3.7% (252) were approved but subsequently voided after the applicants failed to return for their permits within a specified time period; and 2.0% (134) were rejected due to one or more disqualifying factors (rejections are described in greater detail beginning on page 5). These proportions are essentially unchanged from the figures reported for 2000.

**Figure 1: Firearm Permit Application Outcomes,
State of Hawaii, 2001**



Registrations and Importations

The 6,443 permits issued in 2001 cover a total of 14,305 firearms registered. Roughly half (45.9%, or 6,567) of these firearms were imported from out of state, with the remainder accounted for by in-state transfers. Firearms may be imported to Hawaii by federally licensed dealers and collectors, state residents returning from travel, individuals who have relocated to Hawaii, or those who visit Hawaii for certain purposes (e.g., hunting, competition, filmmaking).

Permits and Registrations by Firearm Type

In Hawaii, annual permits are issued in order to acquire an unlimited number of longarms (rifles or shotguns), while one-time permits are issued to acquire specific handguns. By firearm type, over half (56.2%, or 3,622) of the total permits issued during 2001 were annual longarm permits, while 43.8% (2,821) were permits to acquire one or more specific handguns. The tally of handgun permits is confounded, however, as the City & County of Honolulu Police Department and Maui County Police Department issue a single permit listing all handguns that will be acquired simultaneously from the same source (i.e., in a single transaction), while the Hawaii County Police Department and Kauai County Police Department issue one permit per handgun regardless of the situation.

Almost five times as many longarm permit applications (111, or 1.6% of all processed applications) than handgun permit applications (23, or 0.3%) were rejected for cause.

Longarms accounted for 58.4% (8,353) of all firearms registered in 2001. Broken out further, rifles and shotguns comprised 42.5% (6,077) and 15.9% (2,276) of total registrations, respectively; the remaining 39.7% (5,952) of registered firearms were handguns.

County Comparison

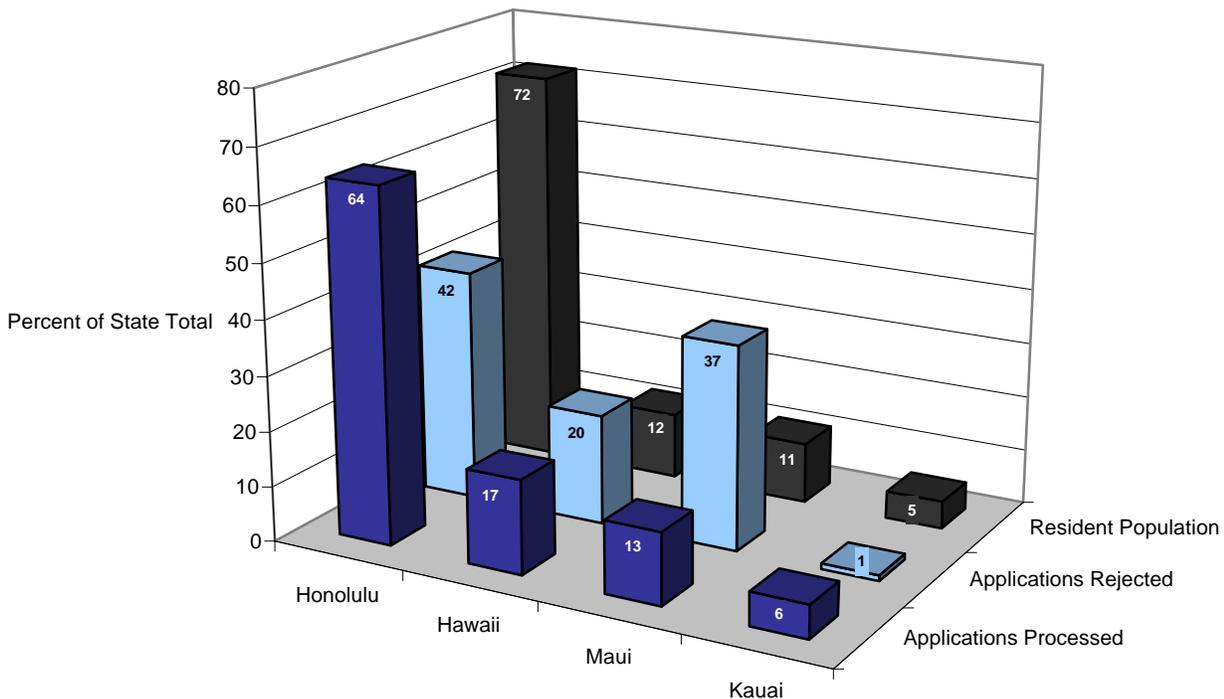
Table 1 shows the distribution of firearm registration activity during 2001 across the four counties and for the State of Hawaii.

Table 1: Firearm Registration Activity by County, State of Hawaii, 2001

	C&C Honolulu	Hawaii County	Maui County	Kauai County	State Total
Applications Processed	4,377	1,172	894	386	6,829
Applications Approved/ Permits Issued	4,149	1,108	801	385	6,443
Applications Approved/ Permits Voided	172	37	43	0	252
Applications Rejected	56	27	50	1	134
Rejection Rate	1.3%	2.3%	5.6%	0.3%	2.0%
Firearms Registered	9,057	2,753	1,486	1,009	14,305
Firearms Imported	4,361	1,196	594	416	6,567

As compared to Hawaii’s resident population distribution, firearm registration activity occurred disproportionately across the four counties during 2001 (Figure 2). Considerably fewer permit applications were processed in the City & County of Honolulu than would be expected based on its population size, and proportionately far fewer applications were rejected. Hawaii County recorded an almost 50% larger-than-expected share of processed applications and an even greater portion of rejections. Maui County’s proportion of rejections was 336% the size of its share of the state population. Applications were processed in Kauai County in roughly equal proportion to its population size, although fewer rejections than expected were recorded.

Figure 2: County Distribution of Permit Applications Processed and Rejected (2001) versus Resident Population Distribution (2000)



Monthly Variations

Figure 3 (next page) shows the monthly distribution of statewide firearm registrations, importations, and processed permit applications for Calendar Year 2001. Figure 4 shows a similar distribution by firearm type. The increase in firearm registration activity during the October-December period could be attributable to citizens’ concerns for self-protection following the September 11 terrorist attacks against the United States. However, an even larger autumn increase in registration activity was observed for the August-October 2000 period, making it difficult to ascribe such increases to any single factor.

Figure 3: Firearms Registered and Imported and Permit Applications Processed, State of Hawaii, 2001

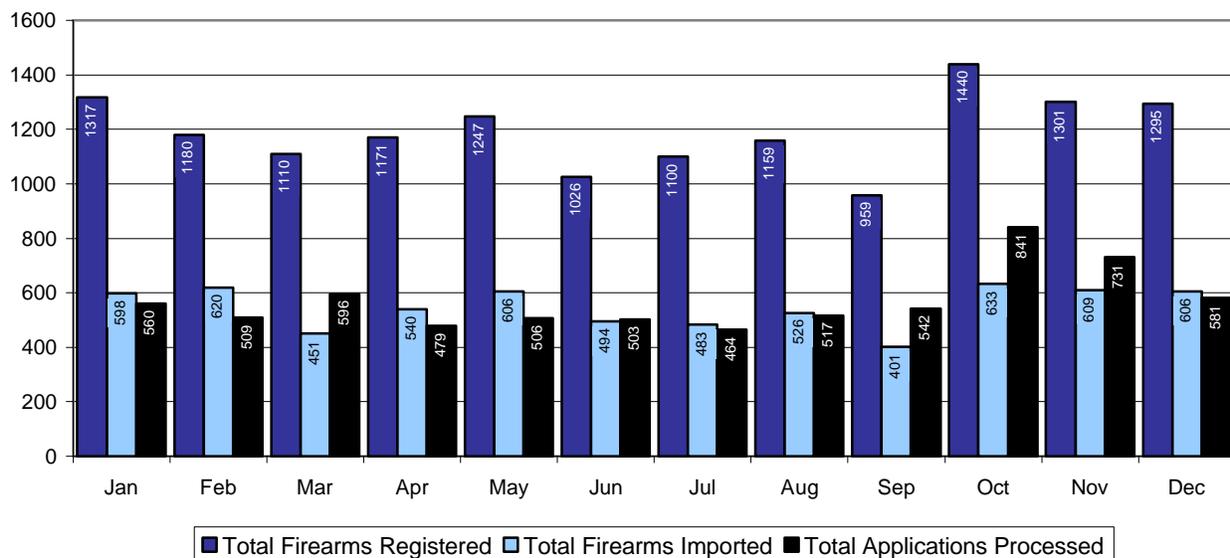
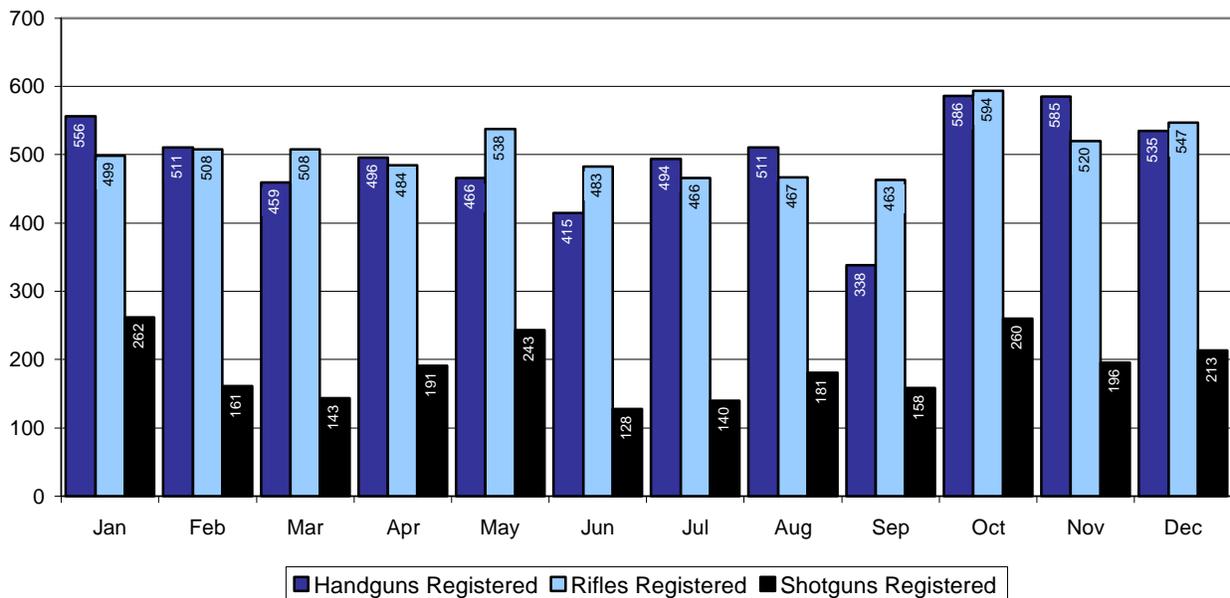


Figure 4: Firearms Registered by Type, State of Hawaii, 2001



Rejections

As noted earlier, 2.0% (134) of all permit applications in Hawaii during 2001 were rejected for cause. Hawaii's rejection rate compares favorably with the 2.5% figure reported for all state and local agencies conducting background checks for firearm permits and transfers in 2000 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001). The Hawaii statistic is particularly noteworthy when taking into consideration the state's comparatively exhaustive background check procedures and extensive list of disqualifying factors.

Table 2 presents broadly categorized data on the reasons for rejected permit applications.

Table 2: Reasons for Rejecting Firearm Permit Applications, State of Hawaii, 2001

	Frequency	Percent of Total Rejections
Mental Health Issues/Treatment	65	48.5
Other Crime	39	29.1
Domestic Violence	13	9.7
Drug Offense	9	6.7
Disqualifying Juvenile Record	5	3.7
Temporary Restraining Order	4	3.0
Other (e.g., non-U.S. citizen)	4	3.0

Total rejections = 134; multiple reasons for rejections yield a total of 139 in this table.

Of the 134 total rejections, 37.3% (50) were due to prior criminal convictions, while 6.7% (9) arose from current indictments or otherwise pending cases. The majority (56.0%, or 75) of rejections were not based on the criminal history of the applicants.

It should be noted that rejections for mental health issues (including drug/alcohol treatment), which comprise about half of all rejections, can be favorably resolved with a doctor's note stating that the applicant is no longer adversely affected. While an original rejection cannot be overturned *per se*, a new application can be submitted and the appropriate permit will be issued. It is unknown how many applicants who are rejected for mental health reasons successfully reapply for permits.

It is a misdemeanor in Hawaii to provide false information on firearm permit applications, unless the falsified information pertains to criminal or mental health histories, in which case it is a felony offense (HRS §134-17). The number of applicants who provide false information and the outcome of these situations is currently not tracked, and recommended for future inclusion in the state data collection system.

Table 3 (next page) provides a breakdown of data entered into a description field for each rejection. These data have been edited slightly so as to add consistency to the open text entered by registration personnel.

**Table 3: Descriptions of Firearm Permit Application Rejections,
State of Hawaii, 2001**

	Frequency	Percent of Total Rejections
[no description]	1	.7
2 pending felonies + pending abuse + mental health treatment	1	.7
acquitted for crime by reason of insanity	1	.7
alcohol dependency	1	.7
alzheimer's/dementia	1	.7
anxiety disorder	1	.7
assault	9	6.7
assault + doctor's recommendation	1	.7
burglary	4	3.0
carnal knowledge of a child	2	1.5
DANC plea to assault 3 charge	1	.7
depression, stress, and suicidal	1	.7
disorderly conduct	2	1.5
disqualifying juvenile record	3	2.2
disqualifying juvenile record (drug paraphernalia)	1	.7
disqualifying juvenile record + mental health counseling	1	.7
doctor's note needed	2	1.5
doctor's recommendation	10	7.5
domestic violence / abuse of family or household member	6	4.5
drug dependency	1	.7
drug felony	2	1.5
drug/alcohol counseling + mood swings	2	1.5
DUI/treatment	19	14.2
DUI/treatment + 2 bench warrants	1	.7
DUI/treatment + domestic violence	1	.7
false imprisonment	1	.7
federal offenses	1	1
felony conviction (unspecified)	1	.7
felony terroristic threatening	1	.7
felony UCPV	1	.7
firearms offense	1	.7
firearms offense arrest	2	1.5
harassment	4	3.0
mental health assessment as provision of a trespass conviction	1	.7
mental health treatment	12	9.0
mental health treatment + detox facility	1	.7
mental problem	2	1.5
misdemeanor assault in California	2	1.5
not a U.S. citizen	4	3.0
paranoid delusions	1	.7
provided false mental health info + "hearing voices"	1	.7
selective services act	1	.7
sexual assault	2	1.5
sexual assault + burglary	1	.7
temporary restraining order	4	3.0
terroristic threatening indictment	1	.7
theft	4	3.0
treatment for alcohol abuse	3	2.2
treatment for alcohol and drug abuse	1	.7
treatment for drug abuse	2	1.5
wanted in Arizona for 3 counts of trafficking stolen property	1	.7
warrant	1	.7
warrant in Alaska for failure to appear in court for property damage	1	.7
warrant in Arizona for failure to appear in court for an assault charge	1	.7

Confiscations

Two firearms were confiscated by registration personnel during 2001. These included a shotgun below the legal barrel length, and an imported handgun that had been reported stolen in California.

Licenses to Carry

The county police departments also process license applications for the open and/or concealed carry of firearms in public. During 2001, 242 employees of security firms were issued carry licenses and 14 were rejected for cause. Ten private citizens also applied for a carry license; at the discretion of the respective county police chiefs, two applicants were approved and eight were denied.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with the input and assistance of the county police departments' firearms registration personnel: **Debra Agena**, Records Clerk, Maui County Police Department; **Sergeant Crizalmer Caraang** and the Firearms Registration Section, City & County of Honolulu Police Department; **Sharen Chaves**, Records Clerk, Hawaii County Police Department; and **Emily Fabro**, Firearms Clerk, Kauai County Police Department. As the volume of registration activity documented in this report demonstrates, these dedicated professionals work hard to serve the citizens of Hawaii.

Reference

Bureau of Justice Statistics (July, 2001). *Background checks for firearms transfers, 2000*. Publication NCJ 187985. U.S. Department of Justice: Office of Justice Programs.

Note: Due to rounding, percentages do not total 100.0 in all cases.

This report can be downloaded in PDF format from the
Crime Prevention & Justice Assistance Division web site:
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