



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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**HAWAII FIREARM PERMITS AT RECORD HIGH LEVEL IN 2013**

HONOLULU – The Department of the Attorney General released its annual report detailing statewide and county firearm registration statistics for calendar year 2013.

A record total of 22,765 personal/private firearm permit applications were processed statewide during 2013, marking a 4.6% increase over the 21,864 applications processed in 2012. Of the applications processed in 2013, 94.6% were approved and resulted in issued permits; 4.3% were approved but subsequently voided after the applicants failed to return for their permits within the specified time period; and 1.0% were denied due to one or more disqualifying factors.

The 21,544 permits issued statewide in 2013 cover a total of 60,757 firearms registered in the State, a major, 20.6% increase from the previous record of 50,394 firearms registered in 2012. Just over half (30,802, or 50.7%) of the firearms registered during 2013 were imported from out-of-state, with the remainder (29,955, or 49.3%) accounted for by transfers of firearms that were previously registered in Hawaii.

Firearm registration activity increased in 2013, continuing a pattern that has been recorded over the course of the 14 years for which these data have been compiled and reported. From 2000 through 2013, the number of statewide permit applications processed increased 350.8%, the number of firearms registered increased 446.2%, and the number of firearms imported increased 426.1%.

While there has been an increase in firearm registration activity in Hawaii since 2000, the number of firearm-related violent crimes and the proportion of violent crimes involving firearms relative to other weapon types remained low and stable through 2007 and subsequently decreased.

It is a misdemeanor in the State of Hawaii to provide falsified information on firearm permit applications, unless the falsified information pertains to criminal or mental health histories, in which case it is a felony offense (Hawaii Revised

Statutes section 134-17). In 2013, falsified criminal or mental health information or both were provided in 75.4% (175) of the 232 denial cases; falsified information pertaining to anything other than criminal or mental health histories was provided in 0.4% (1) of the cases; and no falsified information was provided in 24.1% (56) of the cases. The report also provides both categorized and itemized reasons for the denials.

The full report can be downloaded from the Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division web site at <http://ag.hawaii.gov/cpja/rs>.

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# Firearm Registrations in Hawaii, 2013

Department of the Attorney General • Crime Prevention & Justice Assistance Division • [ag.hawaii.gov/cpja](http://ag.hawaii.gov/cpja)

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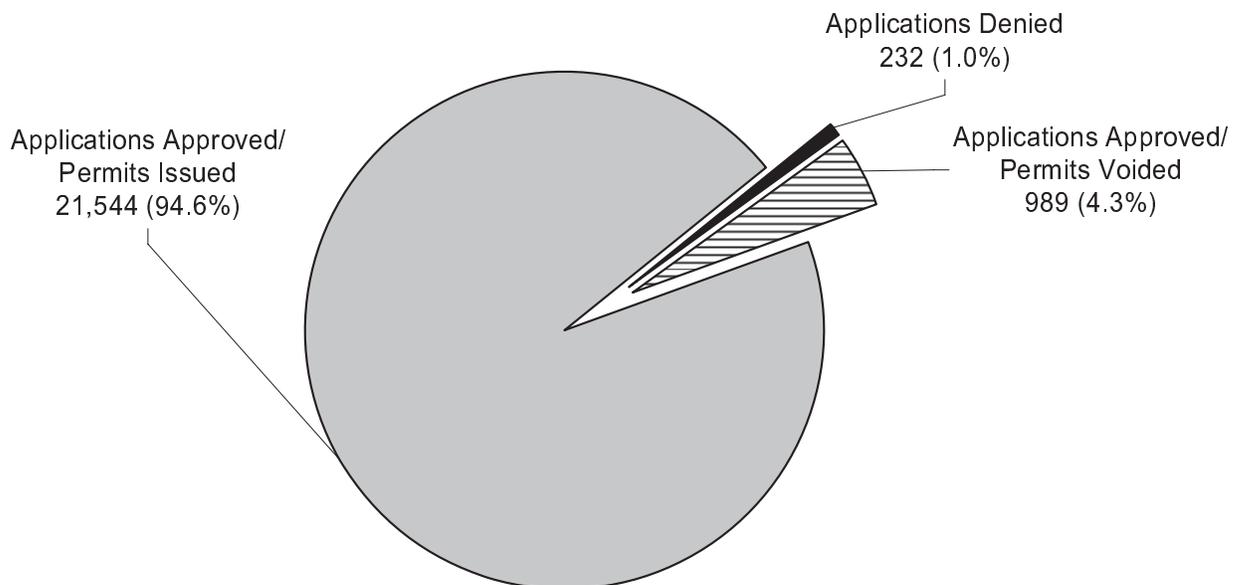
Hawaii Revised Statutes section 134-14 requires the county police departments to provide to the Department of the Attorney General a monthly report of firearm registration activity. The data from these reports were compiled in order to provide the statistics presented herein for Calendar Year 2013. This is the fourteenth annual publication of *Firearm Registrations in Hawaii*. Given very large increases in statewide registration activity during the past several years, a variety of new figures and analyses were added to the report, starting with last year's edition (see pages 5-8).

## Permit Applications Processed, Issued, Voided, and Denied

A record high total of 22,765 personal/private firearm permit applications were processed statewide during 2013, marking a 4.6% increase from the previous record high of 21,864 applications processed in 2012. Of the applications processed in 2013, 94.6% were approved and resulted in issued permits; 4.3% were approved but subsequently voided after the applicants failed to return for their permits within the specified time period; and 1.0% were denied due to one or more disqualifying factors. Figure 1 reveals additional information. Denials are described in greater detail throughout this report.

**Figure 1: Firearm Permit Application Outcomes,  
State of Hawaii, 2013**

(N = 22,765 Total Applications Processed)



## Registrations and Importations

The 21,544 permits issued statewide in 2013 cover a record high total of 60,757 firearms registered, marking a major, 20.6% increase from the previous record high of 50,394 firearms registered in 2012. Just over half (30,802, or 50.7%) of the firearms registered during 2013 were imported from out-of-state, with the remainder (29,955, or 49.3%) accounted for by transfers of firearms that were previously registered in Hawaii. Although there is no way to track the number of firearms that permanently leave the state, independent estimates made during the late-1990s by the Department of the Attorney General and the City & County of Honolulu Police Department placed the total number of privately owned firearms in Hawaii at roughly one million. A total of 180,764 firearms were registered (some more than once) from 2000 through 2012.

## Permits and Registrations, by Firearm Type

In the State of Hawaii, annual permits are issued in order to acquire an unlimited number of longarms (rifles and shotguns), while single-use permits are issued to acquire specific handguns. By firearm type, 52.5% (11,314) of the 21,544 total permits issued during 2013 were to acquire longarms, while 47.5% (10,230) were handgun permits. The tally of handgun permits is perennially confounded, however, as some of the county police departments issue a single permit listing all handguns that will be acquired simultaneously from the same source (i.e., one permit per transaction, per Hawaii Revised Statutes section 134-2(e)), while the other departments issue one permit per handgun even if they are acquired in the same transaction.

Longarms accounted for 62.1% (37,728) of all firearms registered in 2013 (60,757). Broken out further, rifles and shotguns comprised 49.9% (30,329) and 12.2% (7,399) of total registrations, respectively. The remaining 37.9% (23,029) of registered firearms were handguns.

## County Comparisons and Registration Trends

Table 1 shows the distribution of firearm registration activity during 2013 across the four counties and for the State of Hawaii overall.

**Table 1: Firearm Registration Activity, State of Hawaii and Counties, 2013**

	C&C of Honolulu	Hawaii County	Maui County	Kauai County	State Total
Applications Processed	12,903	5,355	2,794	1,713	<b>22,765</b>
Applications Approved/ Permits Issued	12,144	5,212	2,631	1,557	<b>21,544</b>
Applications Approved/ Permits Voided	709	41	107	132	<b>989</b>
Applications Denied	50	102	56	24	<b>232</b>
Denial Rate	0.4%	1.9%	2.0%	1.4%	<b>1.0%</b>
Firearms Registered	35,081	14,458	7,567	3,651	<b>60,757</b>
Firearms Imported	18,729	7,036	3,357	1,680	<b>30,802</b>

As compared to Hawaii's resident population distribution, firearm registration activity occurred disproportionately across the four counties during 2013 (see Figure 2). (If the counties' registration activity occurred in equal proportion to their respective population sizes, then the three bars depicted for each county in Figure 2 would be of equal height and value.)

Based on its population size, 19% fewer permit applications were processed in the City & County of Honolulu during 2013 than would be expected, and 69% fewer denials were reported. Hawaii County recorded 71% more processed applications and 214% more denials than expected. Maui County processed 9% more applications and denied 118% more applications than anticipated. Kauai County processed 60% more applications and denied 100% more applications than expected.

**Figure 2: County Distribution of Permit Applications Processed and Rejected (2013) versus Resident Population Distribution (2012)**

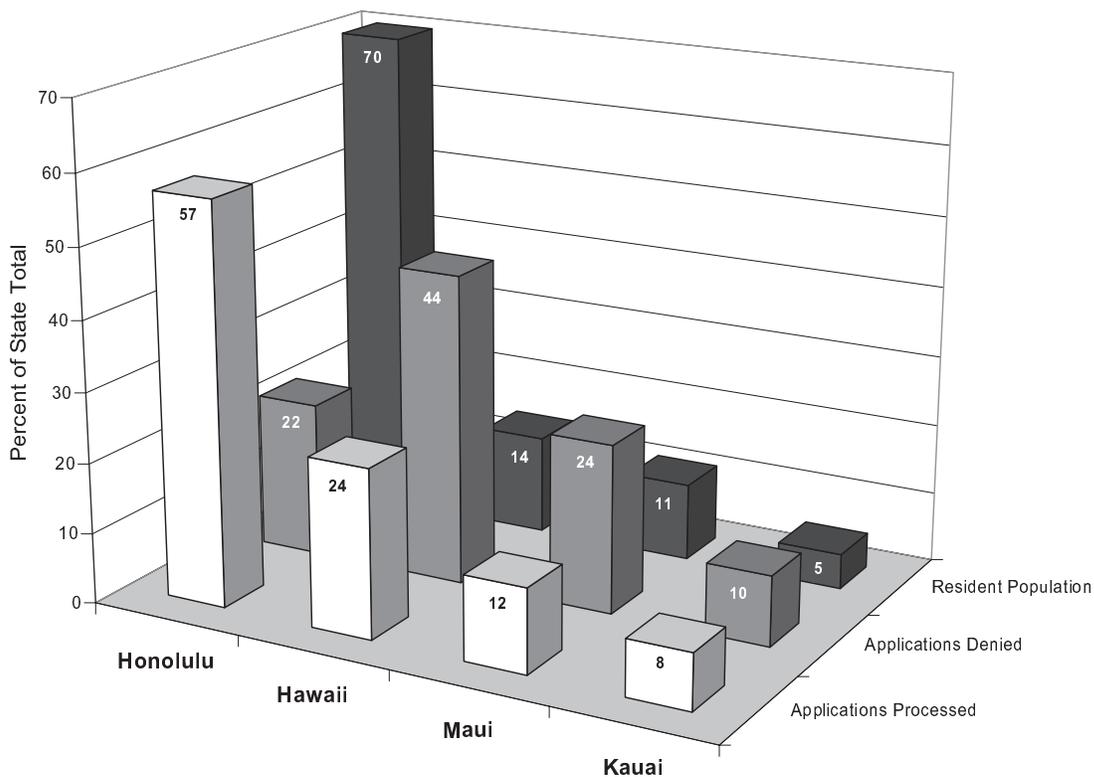
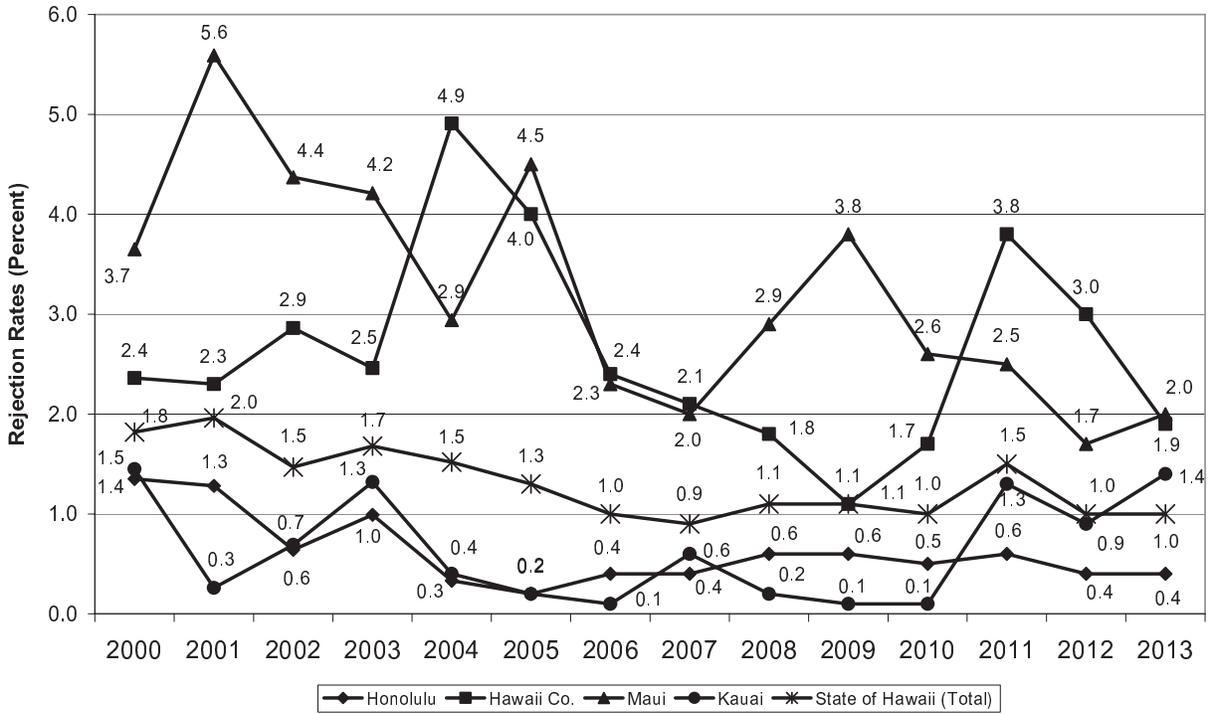


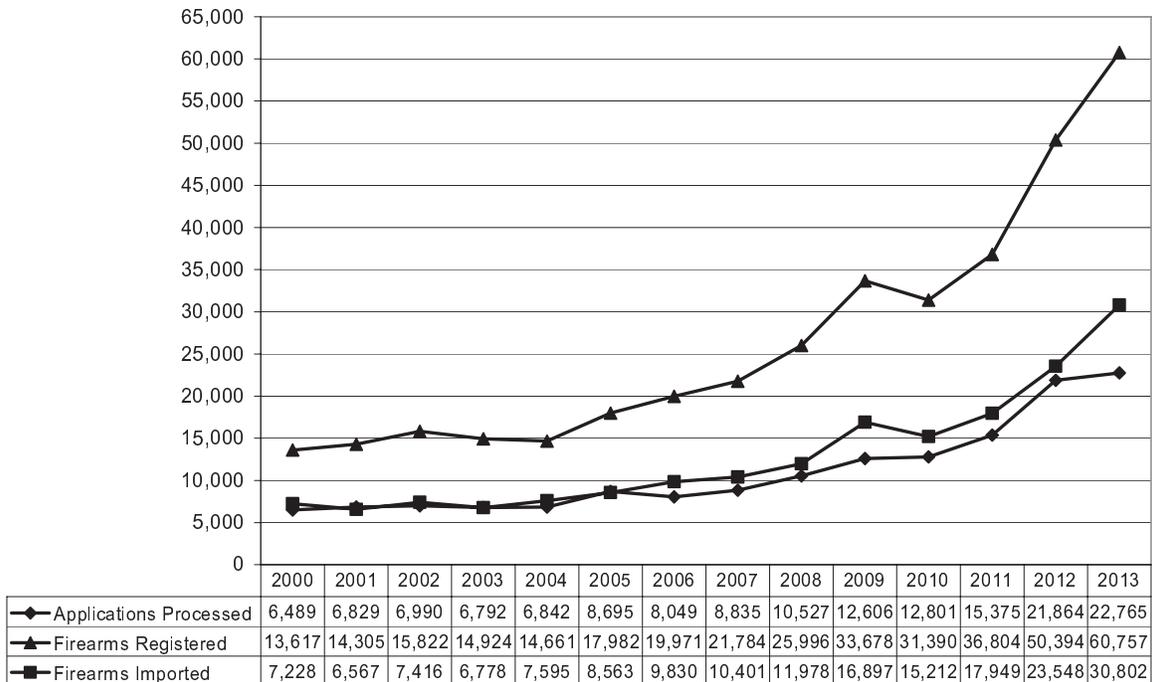
Figure 3 (next page) presents historical data on denial rates for the State of Hawaii and each of its four counties. Notable are the comparatively high denial rates reported by Hawaii County and Maui County throughout the entire 2000-2013 time period.

**Figure 3: Firearm Permit Application Denial Rates, State of Hawaii and Counties, 2000-2013**



Firearm registration activity increased dramatically over the course of the 14 years for which these data have been systematically compiled and reported (see Figure 4). From 2000 through 2013, the number of statewide permit applications processed annually climbed 350.8%, the number of firearms registered soared 446.2%, and the number of firearms imported surged 426.1%.

**Figure 4: Firearm Registration Trends, State of Hawaii, 2000-2013**



**Figure 5: Firearm Registration Trends,  
City & County of Honolulu, 2000-2013**

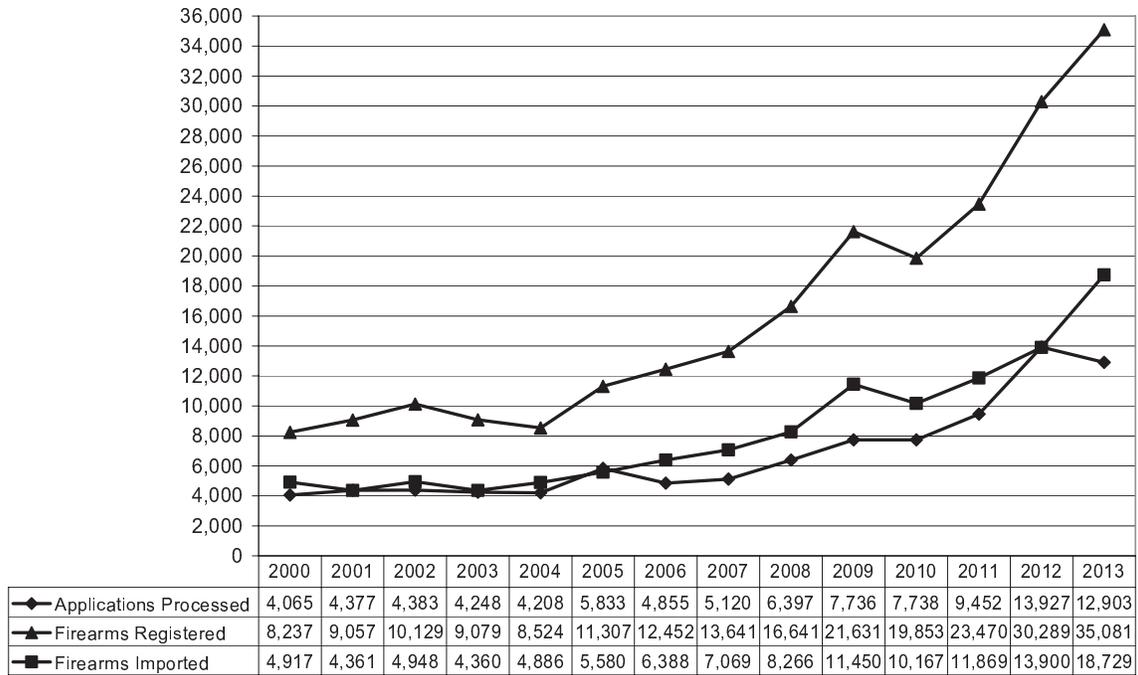
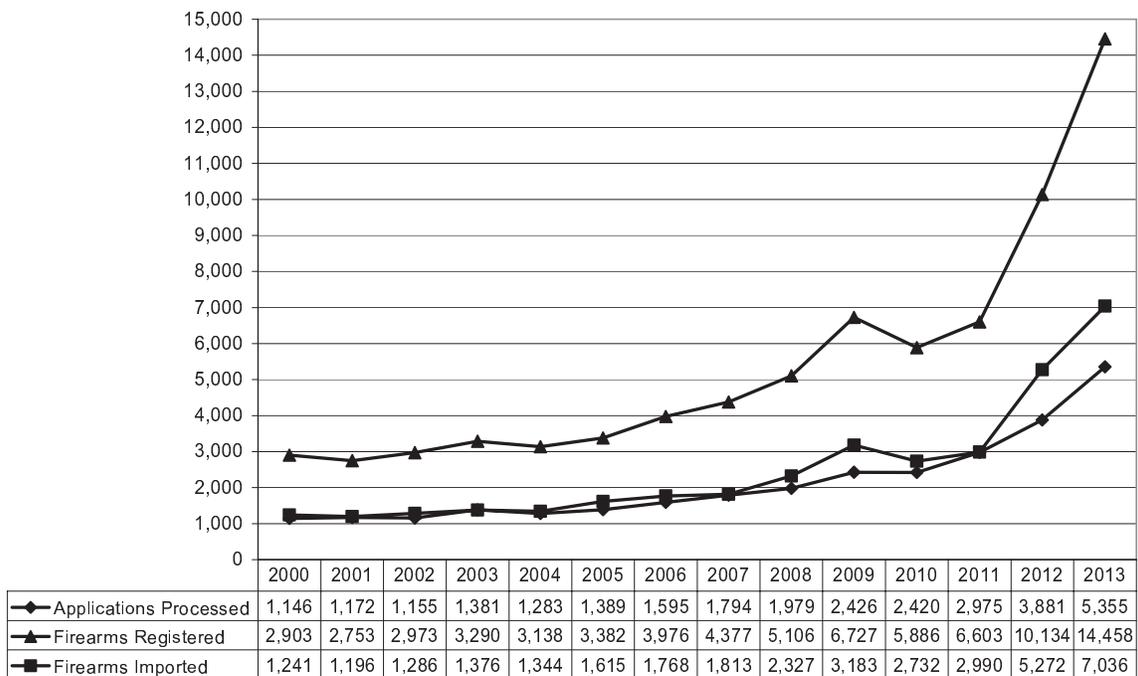


Figure 5 shows that, between 2000 and 2013 in the City & County of Honolulu, the annual tally of permits processed increased 317.4%, the number of firearms registered rose 425.9%, and the number of firearms imported climbed 380.9%.

**Figure 6: Firearm Registration Trends,  
Hawaii County, 2000-2013**



As shown in Figure 6, the number of permits processed annually in Hawaii County from 2000 through 2013 surged 467.3%, the number of firearms registered soared 498.0%, and the number of firearms imported skyrocketed 567.0%.

**Figure 7: Firearm Registration Trends,  
Maui County, 2000-2013**

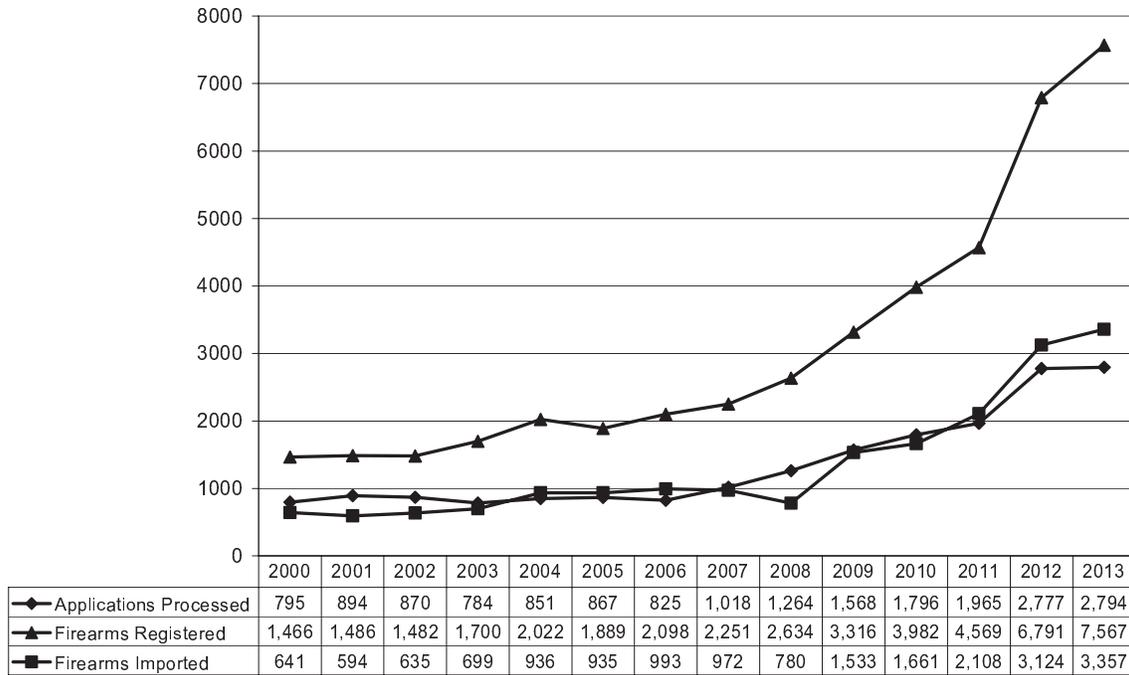
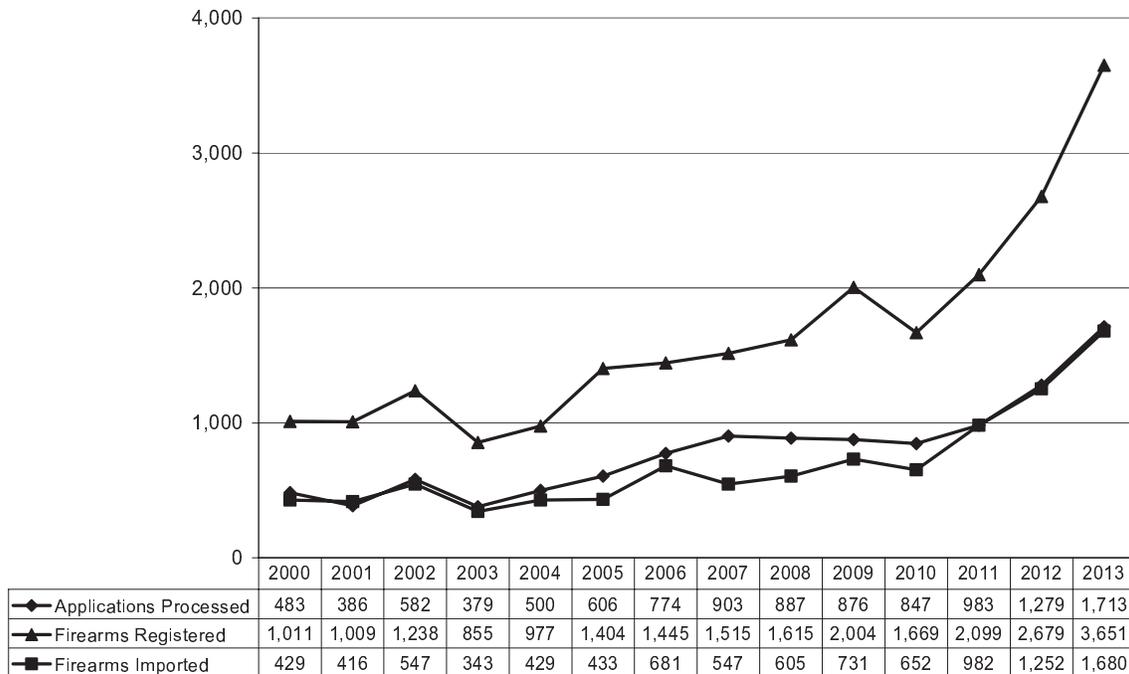


Figure 7 reveals that, between 2000 and 2013 in Maui County, the number of permits processed annually increased 351.4%, the number of firearms registered soared 516.2%, and the tally of firearms imported surged 487.4%.

**Figure 8: Firearm Registration Trends,  
Kauai County, 2000-2013**



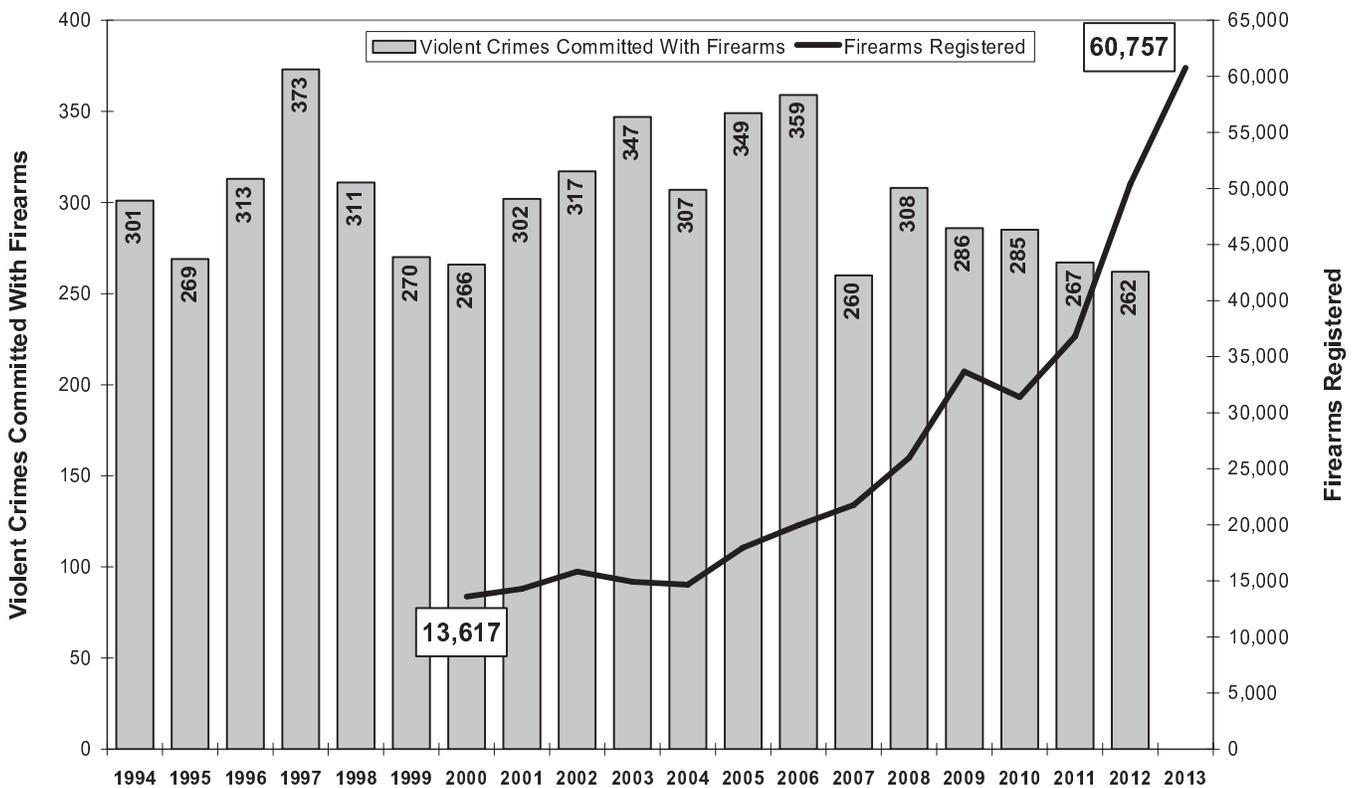
As shown in Figure 8, the number of permits processed annually in Kauai County from 2000 through 2013 increased 354.7%, the number of firearms registered rose 361.1%, and the number of firearms imported climbed 391.6%.

## Firearm Registration Trends and Firearm-Related Violent Crime Trends

Given the tremendous increases in statewide firearm registration activity throughout the 2000-2013 period, and in particular the major increases reported for the post-2008 period, it is understandable that some readers might at first glance be alarmed, fearing that these increases have necessarily resulted in commensurate increases in firearm-related violent crime trends. However, as shown in the following figures, such has not been the case. Figure 9 (below) overlays the trend for firearm registrations atop the trend data for firearm-related violent crimes reported to the State's Uniform Crime Reporting Program (which is also directed by this Department). This analysis reveals that, while firearm registration activity has increased dramatically, the trend for firearm-related violent crimes has remained fairly stable within a narrow range, and decreased substantially during the same period (2008-2012\*) in which registration activity increased the most sharply.

**Figure 9: Violent Crimes Committed With Firearms and Firearms Registered, State of Hawaii, 1994-2013\***

Source: Hawaii Department of the Attorney General



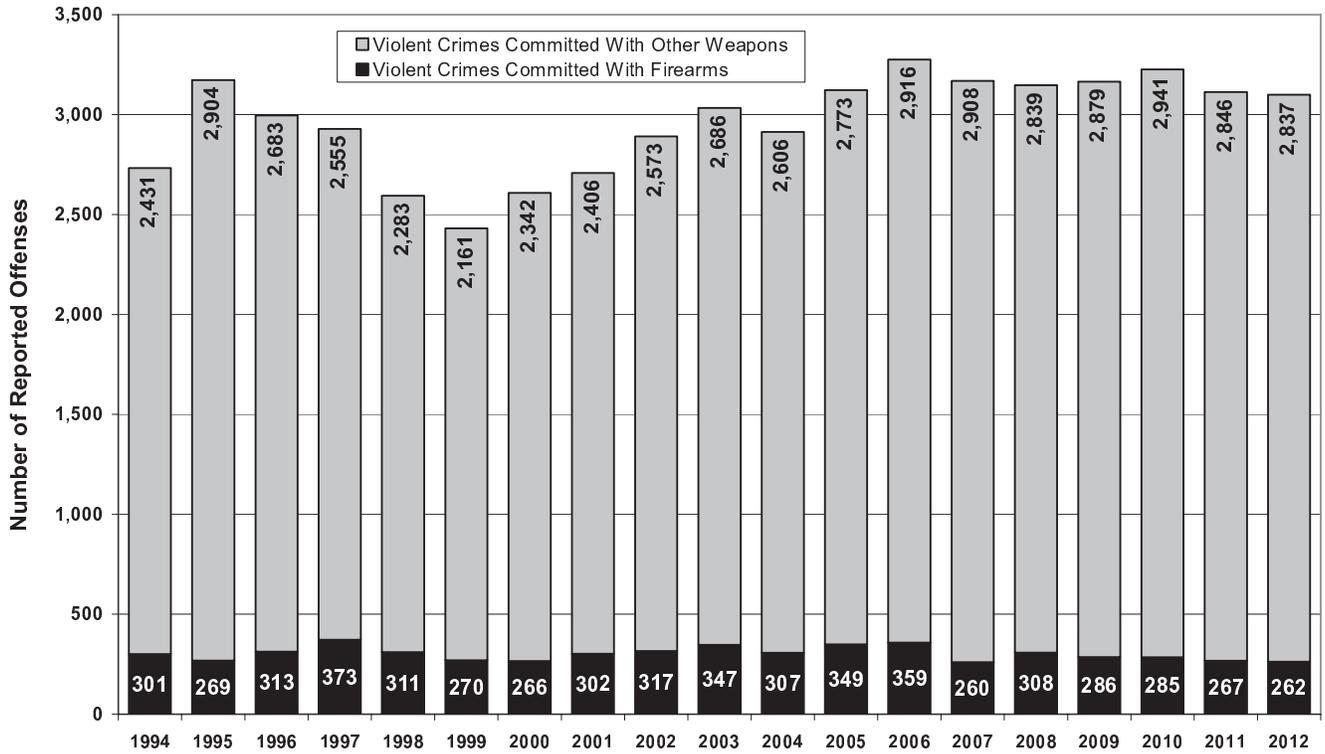
**\* Notes:**

- Per Uniform Crime Reporting Program definition, violent crimes include murders, aggravated assaults, and robberies. Weapon data are not reported for the remaining violent crime category, forcible rape.
- CY 1994 was the first year that statewide crime weapon data were readily available in electronic format.
- Crime data for CY 2013 were not yet available at the time of this report's completion.
- Hawaii's firearm registration statistics reporting program was initiated in CY 2000.

Figures 10 and 11 (next page) demonstrate that, relative to other weapon types, the low prevalence of firearm use during the commission of violent crimes in Hawaii has remained stable for at least the past 18 years in Hawaii, with evidence of becoming even less prevalent since 2007.

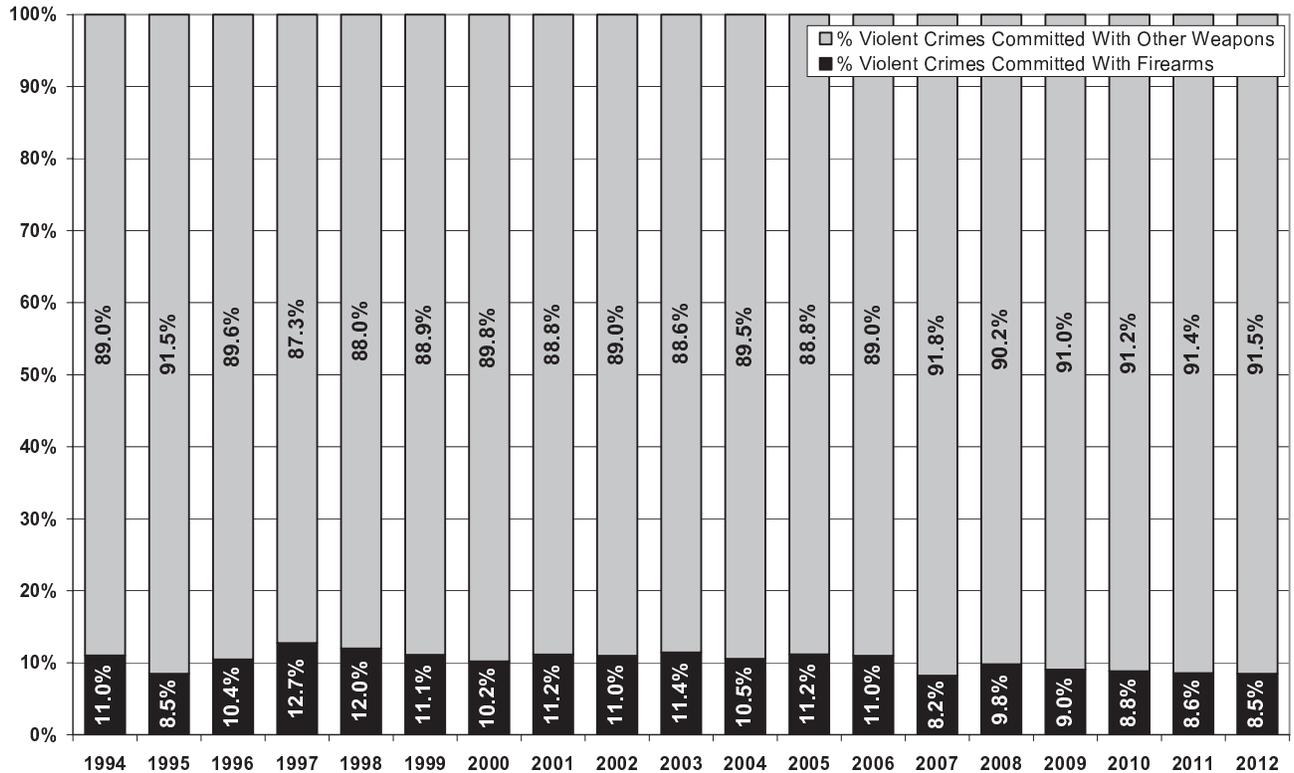
**Figure 10: Violent Crimes Committed With Firearms and Other Weapons, State of Hawaii, 1994-2012**

Source: Hawaii Department of the Attorney General



**Figure 11: Proportions of Violent Crimes Committed With Firearms and Other Weapons, State of Hawaii, 1994-2012**

Source: Hawaii Department of the Attorney General



## Permit Application Denials

As noted earlier, 1.0% (232) of all permit applications in Hawaii during 2013 were denied for cause. Hawaii's 2013 denial rate is 44.5% (0.8 percentage points) below the 1.8% rate reported for all state and local agencies conducting background checks for firearm permits and transfers in 2010 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013; the most current national data as of March 2014).

The vast majority of denials in Hawaii during 2013 were for longarm (190, or 81.9%) rather than handgun (42, or 18.1%) permit applications. Following a trend since this annual report was first published, longarm permit applications in 2013 were denied at a rate that is several times greater than the denial rate for handgun permit applications (1.6% for longarm permit applications versus 0.4% for handgun permit applications).

Over half (130, or 56.0%) of the denials in 2013 were due to applicants' prior criminal convictions, while 11.2% (26) were due to pending charges. The remaining 32.8% (76) of denials in 2013 were not based on the criminal histories of the applicants.

It is a misdemeanor in the State of Hawaii to provide falsified information on firearm permit applications, unless the falsified information pertains to criminal or mental health histories, in which case it is a felony offense (Hawaii Revised Statutes section 134-17). In 2013, falsified criminal or mental health information or both were provided in 75.4% (175) of the 232 denial cases; falsified information pertaining to anything other than criminal or mental health histories was provided in 0.4% (1) of the cases; and no falsified information was provided in 24.1% (56) of the cases.

Table 2 presents broad categorical data on the reasons for denied permit applications.

**Table 2: Reasons for Denied Firearm Permit Applications, State of Hawaii, 2013**

	#	%*
"Other" Offense	111	47.8
Mental Health Issues/Treatment**	50	21.6
Domestic Violence Offense	37	15.9
Drug Offense	33	14.2
Restraining/Protective Order	9	3.9
Disqualifying Juvenile Offense	5	2.2
Other (e.g., non-U.S. citizen)	4	1.7

\* Figures do not total 100% due to multiple denial reasons for some applicants.

\*\* Denials for mental health issues or treatment can be satisfactorily resolved with a verified doctor's note stating that the applicant is no longer adversely affected. While an original denial cannot be appealed or overturned, a new application may be submitted and the appropriate permit will be issued. It is unknown how many applicants who are initially denied for mental health reasons successfully reapply for permits.

Table 3 (next page) provides a breakdown of information entered into a description field for each denial.

**Table 3: Descriptions of Firearm Permit Application Denials,  
State of Hawaii, 2013**

[N = 232 Denials]	#	%*
abuse of family/household member	23	9.9
abuse of family/household member + mental health treatment	2	0.9
abuse of family/household member + weapons offense	1	0.4
answered "yes" to three mental health questions	1	0.4
assault	41	17.7
assault + abuse of family/household member	2	0.9
assault + abuse of family/household member + substance abuse treatment	1	0.4
assault + drug offense	2	0.9
assault + harassment	1	0.4
assault + motor vehicle theft	1	0.4
assault + resisting arrest	1	0.4
assault + substance abuse treatment	1	0.4
burglary	6	2.6
coercion + weapons offense	1	0.4
criminal property damage	1	0.4
custodial interference	1	0.4
disorderly conduct	9	3.9
disqualifying juvenile offense(s)	3	1.3
disturbing the peace	1	0.4
drug offense	22	9.5
drug offense + felony offense (unspecified)	1	0.4
gambling offense	1	0.4
harassment	9	3.9
kidnapping + abuse of family/household member + mental health treatment	1	0.4
medical clearance needed	6	2.6
medical marijuana patient	4	1.7
mental health treatment + substance abuse treatment	1	0.4
mental health issue (unspecified)	1	0.4
mental health treatment	22	9.5
misdemeanor crime of violence (unspecified; mainland)	1	0.4
misdemeanor offense (unspecified; mainland)	1	0.4
motor vehicle theft	1	0.4
negligent homicides (2)	1	0.4
no response from California re disposition of drug case	1	0.4
no response from California re disposition of robbery case	1	0.4
no response from California re disposition of spousal abuse case	1	0.4
no response from California re disposition of theft case	1	0.4
no response from Illinois re disposition of assault case	1	0.4
no response from Maryland re disposition of drug case	1	0.4
no response from Vermont re disposition of assault case	1	0.4
no response from Washington re disposition of theft case	2	0.9
refused to submit medical waiver form	1	0.4
resisting arrest	3	1.3
restraining order	8	3.4
restraining order + mental health treatment	1	0.4
robbery	1	0.4
sexual assault	2	0.9
substance abuse treatment	10	4.3
substance abuse treatment as a juvenile	2	0.9
terroristic threatening	3	1.3
terroristic threatening + mental health treatment	1	0.4
theft	11	4.7
theft + mental health treatment	1	0.4
warrant(s)	3	1.3
warrant(s) + substance abuse treatment	1	0.4
weapons offense	2	0.9

\* Due to rounding, figures may not total 100%.

## Licenses to Carry Firearms

Hawaii's county police departments also process license applications for the open and/or concealed carry of firearms in public. Statewide in 2013, 205 employees of private security firms were issued carry licenses, and two were denied. Seven private citizens applied for a concealed carry license in the City & County of Honolulu; all were denied by the chief of police. One private citizen applied in Kauai County and was approved by the chief.

## Confiscations

During 2013, the Maui Police Department's firearm registration section confiscated two legally prohibited firearms; both were handguns with defaced serial numbers.

## Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with input and assistance from the county police departments' firearm registration personnel: **Debra Agena**, Records Clerk, Maui County Police Department; **Emily Fabro**, Firearms Clerk (January-February), and **Jeaneth Panoy**, Records Clerk (February-December), Kauai County Police Department; the Firearm Registration Section, in particular **Suzy Yamasaki**, Records Clerk, City & County of Honolulu Police Department; and **Arlene Young**, Records Clerk, Hawaii County Police Department. As the volume of registration activity documented in this report demonstrates, these dedicated professionals work hard to serve their communities.

## Reference

Bureau of Justice Statistics (February 2013). *Background checks for firearms transfers, 2010*. <<http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/bcft10st.pdf>>. U.S. Department of Justice: Office of Justice Programs.

*This report is available in PDF format from the Crime  
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