

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

Earl I. Anzai, Attorney General
Thomas R. Keller, First Deputy

Lari Koga, Administrator
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Firearm Registrations in Hawaii, 2000

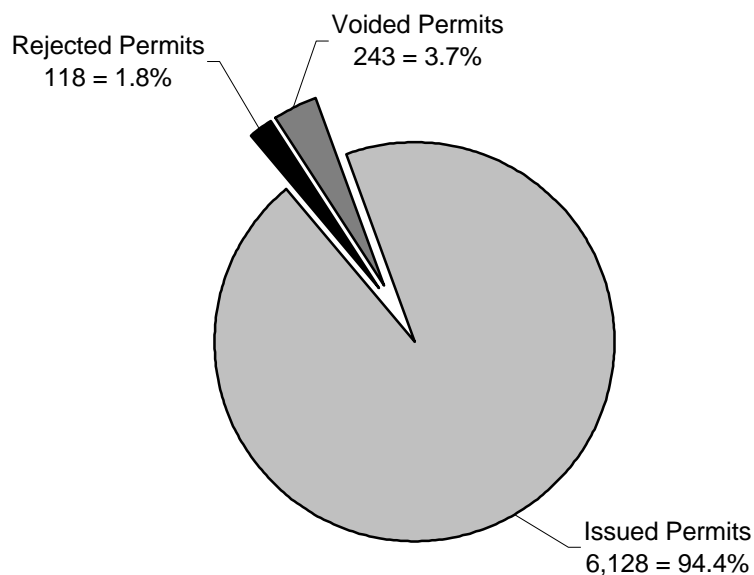
*Prepared by
Paul Perrone, Chief of Research & Statistics*

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 issued and revoked firearms permits. These data were compiled and analyzed to provide the comprehensive statistics herein reported for Calendar Year 2000. It is intended that annual reports will be published from this point forward.

Permits Processed, Issued, Voided, and Rejected

A total of 6,489 personal/private firearms permit applications were processed during 2000. Of these, 94.4% (6,128) resulted in issued permits; 3.7% (243) were approved but subsequently voided after the applicant failed to pick them up within a specified period; and 1.8% (118) were rejected for cause (rejections are described in greater detail elsewhere in this report).

**Figure 1: Firearm Permits Issued, Voided, and Rejected
State of Hawaii, 2000**



Firearms Registered and Imported

The 6,128 permits issued in 2000 cover a total of 13,617 registered firearms. More than half (53.0%, or 7,228) 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).

Longarm and Handgun Permits and Registrations

In Hawaii, annual permits are issued in order to acquire an unlimited number of longarms (rifles or shotguns) during the year, while individual permits are issued to acquire specific handguns (each identified by make, model, serial number, caliber, and barrel length prior to the issuance of a permit to acquire). By firearm type, over half (53.7%, or 3,296) of the total permits issued during 2000 were annual longarm permits, and 46.2% (2,832) were permits to acquire one or more specific handguns. Multiple handgun purchase scenarios confound this issue, however, as the City & County of Honolulu Police Department and Maui County Police Department issue only one permit listing several handguns that will be purchased simultaneously from the same source, while the Hawaii County Police Department and Kauai County Police Department issue one permit per handgun regardless of the situation.

A considerably greater share of longarm permits (2.6% of all processed permits, or 93) than handgun permits (0.8%, or 25) were rejected for cause.

Longarms accounted for 60.3% (8,210) of all firearms registered in 2000. Broken out further, rifles and shotguns comprised 44.3% (6,027) and 16.0% (2,183) of total registrations, respectively. The remainder of registered firearms (39.7%, or 5,407) were handguns.

County Comparison

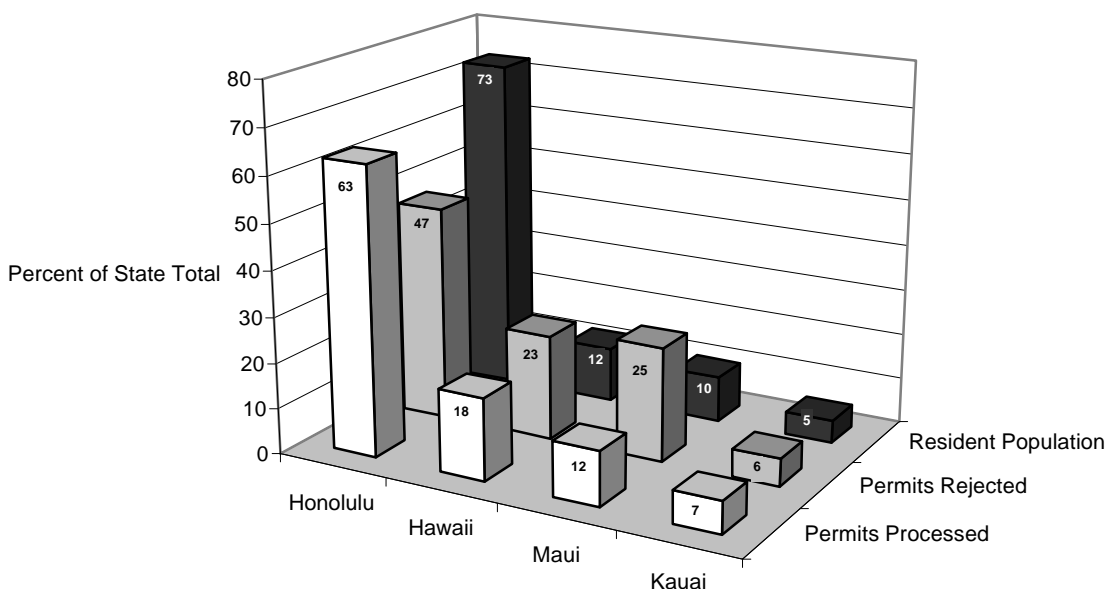
Table 1 shows the distribution of firearms registration activity across the four counties and for the State of Hawaii.

Table 1: Firearm Registration Data by County, State of Hawaii, 2000

	C&C Honolulu	Hawaii County	Maui County	Kauai County	State Total
Permits Processed	4,065	1,146	795	483	6,489
Permits Issued	3,811	1,082	759	476	6,128
Permits Voided	199	37	7	0	243
Permits Rejected	55	27	29	7	118
Rejection Rate	1.35%	2.36%	3.65%	1.45%	1.82%
Registered Firearms	8,237	2,903	1,466	1,011	13,617
Imported Firearms	4,917	1,241	641	429	7,228

As compared to Hawaii's resident population distribution, firearms permit applications were processed and rejected disproportionately across the four counties in 2000 (Figure 2). Considerably fewer permits were processed in the City & County of Honolulu than would be expected based on its population size, and proportionately even fewer permits were rejected. Hawaii County recorded a 50% larger-than-expected share of processed permits and a proportion of rejections that is nearly double the anticipated figure. Interestingly, permits were processed in Maui County in close proportion to its population size, while the proportion of rejections was 2.5 times larger than expected. Permits were processed and rejected in Kauai County in roughly equal proportion to the population size.

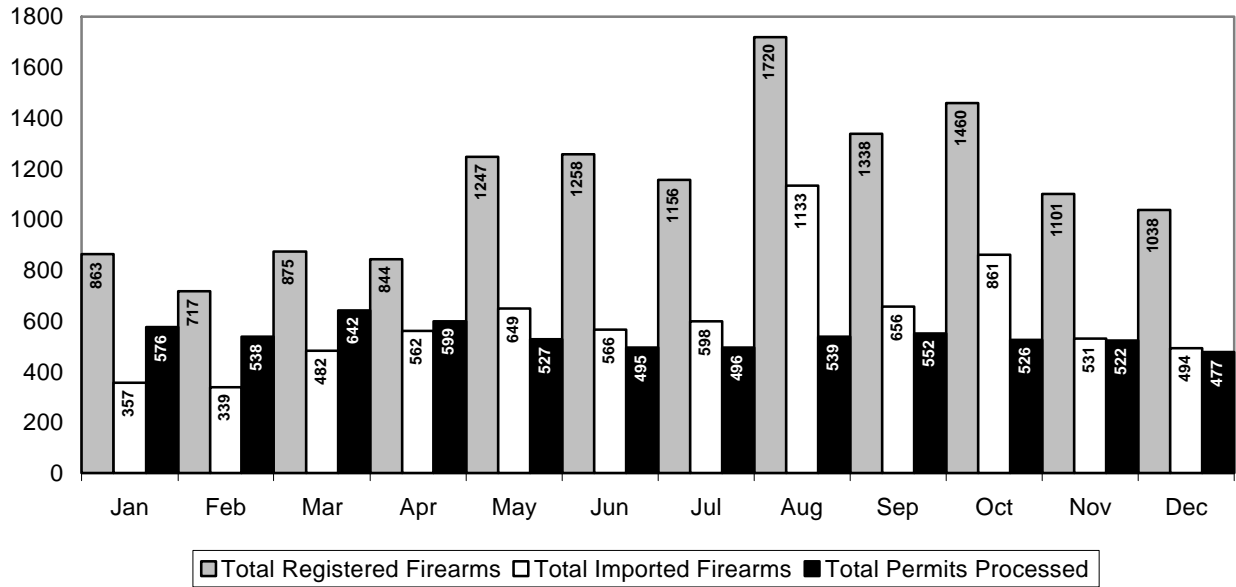
Figure 2: County Distributions of Firearm Permits Issued and Rejected and Resident Population, 2000



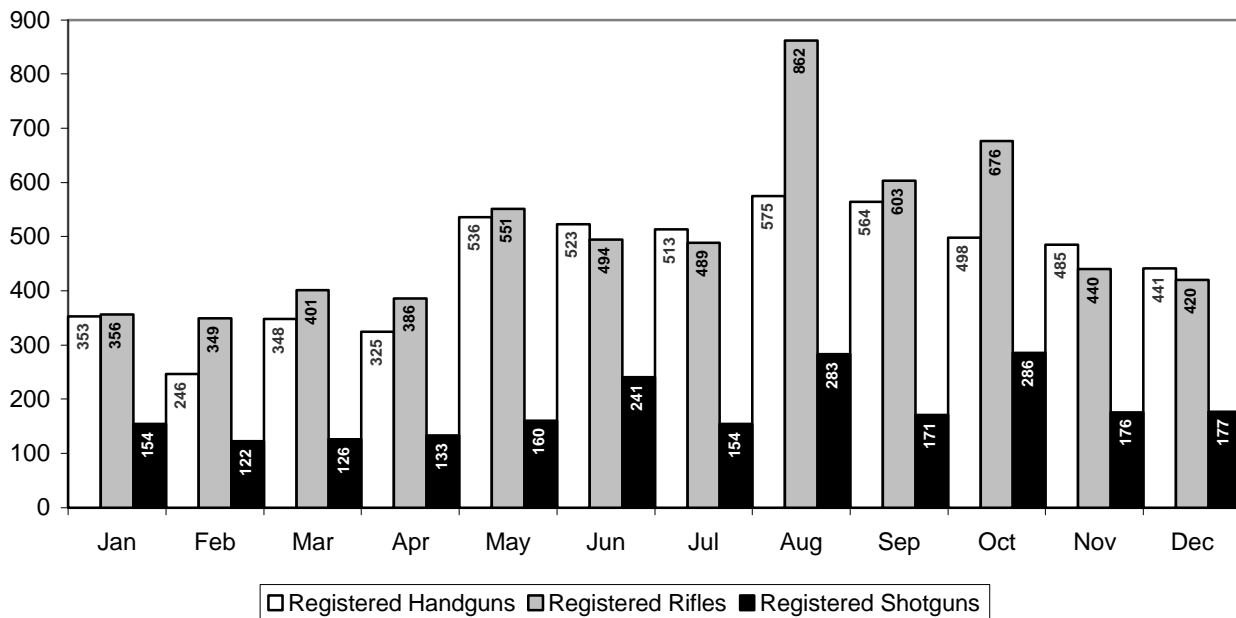
Monthly Variations

Figure 3 shows the monthly distribution of statewide firearm registrations, importations, and processed permits. Figure 4 shows a similar distribution by registered firearm type. The increase in registrations and importations during the fall and early winter months might be attributable to hunters preparing for Hawaii's popular deer and bird seasons, although a similar increase is not apparent prior to the equally popular mufon sheep season in the spring. A November, 1999 revision of hunting regulations to include the use of handguns may also have contributed to the increase in registration activity. Too, the autumn increase could simply have been a matter of dealers stocking up for the holiday season, while the lower numbers in the early part of the year were the result of a post-holiday lull.

**Figure 3: Registered and Imported Firearms and Processed Permits
State of Hawaii, 2000**



**Figure 4: Registered Firearms by Type
State of Hawaii, 2000**



Confiscation of Prohibited Firearms

Seven prohibited firearms were confiscated by registration personnel during 2000. These included three “assault pistols” (as defined by state law); two shotguns below the legal length limit; a post-ban “assault rifle” with pre-ban features (as per federal law outlawing certain cosmetic features on semiautomatic firearms made after 1994); and a firearm that was confiscated but subsequently returned after its pre-ban status was determined.

Carry Permits

The county police departments also conduct background checks and process applications for permits to carry firearms in public. During 2000, 190 employees of private security firms were approved for carry permits and four (2.1%) were denied for cause. One private citizen also applied for a carry permit and was denied.

Rejections

As noted earlier, 1.8% (118) of all permit applications were rejected for cause, mostly based on the results of background checks conducted during a 14-day waiting period. Hawaii’s rejection rate compares favorably with the 3.0% figure reported for all state and local agencies using the FBI’s National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) in 1999 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000).

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

Table 2: Reasons for Rejecting Firearm Permit Applications, State of Hawaii, 2000

	Frequency	Percent of Total Rejections
Mental Incompetence/Treatment	42	35.6
Domestic Violence Offense	14	11.9
Treatment for Alcohol Addiction	8	6.8
Drug Offense	5	4.2
Temporary Restraining Order	2	1.7
Juvenile Offense	2	1.7
Other Crime	29	24.6
Other	16	13.6

It should be noted that most rejections for mental health issues and drug/alcohol treatment histories can be resolved with a doctor’s note stating that the applicant is no longer adversely affected. While the original rejection will not be overturned *per se*, a new application can be submitted and the appropriate permit will be issued.

Table 3: Descriptions of Firearm Permit Application Rejections, State of Hawaii, 2000

	Frequency	Percent of Total Rejections
"insane suspect" case open (?)	1	0.8
[no description]	4	3.4
abuse of household member	10	8.5
abuse of household member + assault	1	0.8
alcohol abuse + suicidal ideations	1	0.8
alcohol abuse treatment	8	6.8
assault	8	6.8
assault + insane	1	0.8
battery (mainland)	1	0.8
bipolar disorder	2	1.7
burglary	3	2.5
burglary (as juvenile)	1	0.8
crime (California)	1	0.8
criminal property damage	1	0.8
dementia	1	0.8
depression	2	1.7
depression + anxiety	1	0.8
depression + suicidal	2	1.7
disqualifying juvenile record per 134-7(d)	1	0.8
distribution of LSD	1	0.8
doctor's note needed	3	2.5
doctor's recommendation	6	5.1
domestic violence	1	0.8
drug felony (California)	1	0.8
drug paraphenalia felony	1	0.8
DUI's (4)	1	0.8
DUI + outstanding warrant	1	0.8
dysthymic (?)	1	0.8
felony	2	1.7
felony (California)	1	0.8
fight/noise/offensive word (?)	1	0.8
fugitive from Colorado - extradited	1	0.8
grand jury indictment	1	0.8
harassment (NY, 1971)	1	0.8
Kaiser Permanente recommendation	2	1.7
kidnapping + assault	1	0.8
mental health treatment	8	6.8
non-U.S. citizen	4	3.4
outstanding warrant(s)	4	3.4
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	3	2.5
propensity for violence (?)	1	0.8
psych eval needed	2	1.7
refused to disclose address	1	0.8
schizophrenic	1	0.8
sex assaults (2)	1	0.8
stress (?)	1	0.8
substance abuse treatment	1	0.8
suicide attempt	7	5.9
suspect in pending assault case	1	0.8
terroristic threatening	3	2.5
TRO	2	1.7
violent crime (California)	2	1.7

Table 3 (previous page) provides a breakdown of data entered in the “description” field for each rejection. These data have been edited slightly so as to add consistency to the open text entered by registration personnel. Items followed by a question mark denote a verbatim entry for which the exact meaning is unclear.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with the input and assistance of the county police departments’ firearms registration personnel: **Patricia Tabajunda**, Records Clerk, Hawaii County Police Department; **Sergeant Crizalmer Caraang** and the Firearms Unit personnel, in particular **Nora Yap**, Firearms Records Clerk, City & County of Honolulu Police Department; **Emily Fabro**, Firearms Clerk, Kauai County Police Department; and **Debra Agena**, Records Clerk, Maui 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.

Special thanks are due **Lieutenant Edwin Tanaka**, Hawaii County Police Department, for providing valuable feedback on the first draft of this report.

Reference

Bureau of Justice Statistics (June, 2000). *Background checks for firearms transfers, 1999*. Publication NCJ 180882. U.S. Department of Justice: Office of Justice Programs.

This report can be downloaded from the
Crime Prevention & Justice Assistance Division
web site:
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Crime Prevention & Justice Assistance Division
Department of the Attorney General
235 S. Beretania Street, Suite 401
Honolulu, HI 96813