



## **SAGA Press Release - 31 May 2024**

**Rebuttal – ‘Does the Party you may vote for have a plan to deal with illegal guns used in crime’** by A. Kirsten, GFSA, in the Daily Maverick, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024

### **Lies, Damn Lies & Gun Free South Africa**

Yet again we have another irrational, illogical article full of assumptions, innuendoes, half-truths and blatant nonsense or, in the words of Jonathan Deal at Safe Citizen – ‘hogwash’

In an apparent break in precedent, GFSA now starts to make reference to ILLEGAL GUNS. Are they now feeling the pressure and backlash of the gun-owning community and general public who clearly understand the problem? Don't be fooled by GFSA reference to illegal guns, as GFSA play an emotive game: they see **ALL** guns as an issue and will not stop in their effort to disarm law-abiding citizens and trample on your rights to self-defence and self-determination. As a gun community our collective push back has to be firm, unapologetic and unrelenting!

Once again GFSA goes on to state a debunked and unsupported statistic alleging that ‘*the latest available information shows that most crime guns were once legal*’ and ‘*The most common and biggest source of crime guns is the loss and theft of licenced guns.*’. This is complete nonsense; we and others have challenged and refuted this with supporting statistics and data.

In a Parliamentary Q&A session as recently as January 2024 it was stated that between 2019 and 2023 the SANDF had 42 firearms stolen, 33 of them full auto rifles along with more than 3,000 rounds of ammunition. With the exception of only 5 defence force members successfully charged, no other meaningful sanctions were applied. In SAPS case, they had 1,725 firearms go missing between April 2021 and July 2023. While over the past 5 years 3405 official police firearms went missing. Between 2005 and 2017 SAPS had reportedly lost 26,025 firearms, meaning that approximately 10% of all SAPS issued firearms were reported as lost or stolen over the past two decades! In addition, 9.5 million rounds of ammunition has also gone missing since 2016. Is it therefore not abundantly clear where the bulk of illegally held firearms stem from?

SAPS own reports indicate that on average over the past 10 years, 66% of stolen civilian firearms were recovered versus the astonishingly low 7% for stolen police-issued firearms. Per the latest SAPS data, 8,241 civilian firearms were reported lost or stolen during the 2022/2023 period with 4,616 recovered - a 56% recovery rate.

So, by mathematical deduction rather than assumption, 44% (2022/23) of the stolen guns remain to be recovered versus far more unrecovered police/military firearms. That said, the recovery statistics ignore the overwhelming evidence that most illegal firearms, and certainly the huge stockpile in criminal hands, were obtained via State conduits and/or across our porous borders.

Note also that 7,653 firearms (annexure) were stolen, so those civilians are actually the victims of crime. It is completely illogical and unacceptable by any measure to blame the law-abiding citizen for being a victim!

In the 2024 SAGA Gun Gauge poll prior to the elections, all major political parties were approached seeking clarity on their position regarding firearm ownership and self-defence. Parties that responded positively stating their position included ACDP, OHM, Freedom Front+, DA and the IFP. The deafening silence from the ANC, Action SA, EFF, Al Jama-ah, GOOD, BOSSA, Rise Mzansi, PAC and MK was palpable.

While SAGA cannot and does not endorse any political party, all those that did respond clearly stated their support for firearm ownership and the citizens right to self-defence, within the framework of existing laws. As Jonathan Deal of Safe Citizen stated, any political party that seeks to disarm legal firearm owners in this country, especially with our pandemic crime levels, will be on a hiding to nothing.

In this context the GFSA stated solution is to reduce gun availability via legislation. Even though, as Safe Citizen suggests, the illegal gun market is outside of and despite any legislation. Seriously, does GFSA honestly assume that more legislation will convince the criminal element to do the right thing; relinquish a life of crime and hand in their illegal weapons? This reasoning is both irrational and arrogantly stupid.

GFSA arguments are akin to addressing drownings by outlawing water and prohibiting any form of swimming by legislative decree. To suggest firearms alone are the problem is wrong, patently idiotic and short sighted. There are many highly credible international studies proving legal firearm ownership is a significant and meaningful determinant in preventing and arresting crime. A firearm remains a tool, it does not kill, hurt or maim - only a person with nefarious intent can use it for that.

**As disciplined and law-abiding citizens let's stand together and push back hard against this irrational disarming agenda** and heed the critical call to action from our friends at Safe Citizen; to spread the word far and wide and not permit this cancerous gun free ideology to take hold anywhere!

Shaun Lyle  
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**Annexures:**

1. Sample ranking of registered firearms per 100 people

As reported in our previous rebuttal, SAGA 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024 to a GFSA statement - by international standards our legal gun holding in South Africa is NOT high. On an international ranking (Wikipedia 2017) of registered firearms by the correct statistical benchmark of firearms per 100 people - South Africa sits at 89<sup>th</sup> position on the list with only 9.7 guns per 100 people. South Africa ranks behind countries such as; Venezuela 35<sup>th</sup> , Australia 51<sup>st</sup> Afghanistan 63<sup>rd</sup> , Ukraine 86<sup>th</sup> and Denmark 87<sup>th</sup>

2. Firearms circulated as stolen/lost and recovered

Firearms circulated as ~~stolen~~/lost and recovered

Province	Firearms reported stolen or lost, during 2022/23			Firearms recovered							Total recovered Total
				Firearms reported stolen or lost, prior to 1 April 2022			Firearms reported stolen or lost during 2022/23			Firearms recovered with/without serial numbers Stolen	
	Lost	Stolen	Total	Lost	Stolen	Total	Lost	Stolen	Total		
Eastern Cape	55	714	<b>769</b>	3	77	<b>80</b>	6	58	<b>64</b>	491	<b>635</b>
Free State	29	320	<b>349</b>	1	22	<b>23</b>	3	29	<b>32</b>	109	<b>164</b>
Gauteng	113	2 419	<b>2 532</b>	9	93	<b>102</b>	8	95	<b>103</b>	589	<b>794</b>
KwaZulu-Natal	115	1 944	<b>2 059</b>	3	98	<b>101</b>	9	124	<b>133</b>	491	<b>725</b>
Limpopo	14	641	<b>655</b>	1	35	<b>36</b>	4	37	<b>41</b>	84	<b>161</b>
Mpumalanga	20	519	<b>539</b>	1	26	<b>27</b>	4	41	<b>45</b>	281	<b>353</b>
North West	39	411	<b>450</b>	2	32	<b>34</b>	6	30	<b>36</b>	111	<b>181</b>
Northern Cape	16	64	<b>80</b>	0	3	<b>3</b>	2	5	<b>7</b>	17	<b>27</b>
Western Cape	187	621	<b>808</b>	6	147	<b>153</b>	7	77	<b>84</b>	1 339	<b>1 576</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>7 653</b>	<b>8 241</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>3 512</b>	<b>4 616</b>