



National Policing Firearms and Explosives Licensing Working Group (FELWG)

Notes of Meeting

Tuesday 17th October 2023

Teams / In person

10:15 hrs – 13:30 hrs (FELWG)

Present in person:

Adrian Davis, Warwickshire Police (Chair)

S40(2),, Warwickshire Police
S40(2),, West Mercia Police
S40(2),, Derbyshire Police
S40(2),, Staffordshire and West Midlands Police
S40(2),, - Nottinghamshire
S40(2),, Derbyshire
S40(2),, Northampton Police (East Midlands)

Present on Teams:

S40(2),, Home Office
S40(2),, Home Office
S40(2),, Home Office
S40(2),, Home Office
S40(2),, Home Office
S40(2),, Home Office
S40(2),, CTPHQ
S40(2),, Police Scotland
S40(2),, Essex Police
S40(2),, Merseyside Police
S40(2),, Merseyside Police
S40(2),, Northumbria Police
S40(2),, Durham Constabulary
S40(2),, Surrey and Sussex Police
S40(2),, Surrey and Sussex Police
S40(2),, Lancashire Police
S40(2),, South Wales Police
S40(2),, South Wales Police
S40(2),, West Yorkshire Police

S40(2),, North Wales Police
 S40(2),, College of Policing
 S40(2),, Met Police
 S40(2),, Dorset Police
 S40(2),, City of London Police
 S40(2),, Gwent Police
 S40(2),, Gwent Police
 S40(2),, Avon and Somerset Police
 S40(2),, Cleveland Police
 S40(2),, Wiltshire Police
 S40(2),, Wiltshire Police
 S40(2),, Wiltshire Police
 S40(2),, Humberside Police
 S40(2),, Humberside Police
 S40(2),, Humberside Police
 S40(2),, Norfolk and Suffolk Police
 S40(2),, Hampshire Police
 S40(2),, Home Office
 S40(2),, Bedfordshire Police
 S40(2),, North Yorkshire Police
 S40(2),, Greater Manchester Police
 S40(2),, South Yorkshire Police
 S40(2),, West Mercia Police
 S40(2),, West Mercia Police
 S40(2),, Devon & Cornwall Police and Dorset Alliance
 S40(2),, Cambridgeshire Police
 S40(2),, Thames Valley Police
 S40(2),, Surrey Police
 S40(2),, Kent

Apologies:

S40(2),, Leicestershire Police
 S40(2),, Gloucestershire Constabulary
 S40(2)/S23(1)
 S40(2),, Cumbria Police
 S40(2),, West Mercia Police
 S40(2),, Home Office
 S40(2),, Home Office
 S40(2),, Home Office
 S40(2),, CTPHQ
 Steve Duncan, Police Scotland
 S40(2),, PSNI

2	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies Adrian Davis welcomed all to the meeting. He said that introductions were not going to be made as he can now see who has joined the meeting. He also highlighted that people from the midland forces were present in the room and the plan is to move FELWG to various parts of the UK. Apologies as noted above. This meeting will feed into the Strategic Board, chaired by **S40(2)**,, on 23rd November 2023.
3	Declaration of Any Other Business Adrian Davis informed that he had **S40(2)**,, and **S40(2)**,, any other business. RFD based in Hampshire – **S40(2)**,,.

4	Master Actions Tracker Document and previous Minutes The minutes from the meeting held on 11th July 2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Updates were given on the ongoing actions and the action tracker updated – see action tracker.
5	Home Office Drugs and Firearms Licensing Unit **S40(2)**, updated: General Update Shooting Club Working Group: • Several attendees from this group have joined the meeting. This is to discuss a better way of working with regards to the shooting clubs that fall under the Home Office authority. Another meeting is due to take place on 5th December 2023 and if anyone wants an invite to let **S40(2)** know. Looking at 2 main risks of administration of the club and physical firearms. Conversations are around how the police and the Home Office can satisfy themselves in order to issue the Home Office shooting club approval and the FAC. • One thing that keeps reoccurring is the challenge where a secretary and club fall under different forces. Payments to Police • Leaflet has been sent around previously and happy to recirculate. Presented and spoke about the leaflet. • Most times it's a case of a missing link in the process due to a third party in there with SSCL – purchase order. • Gave assurance that they want to work with us and don't want to slow the process. • Some outstanding cases and want to clear those. **S40(2)**, put a question in the group chat in relation to a purchase number and outstanding invoices. **S40(2)**, asked her to email the police payments email address and to copy him in. Question raised by **S40(2)**, - Surrey / Sussex Deputy Licensing Manager <i>Consistency of checks from club disclosure of current members. Please see below e mail from AI for basic facts</i> **e-mail to follow – have requested retrieval of embedded document which will be saved as: 059 2024 NPCC Response Attachment 05 A FELWG Minutes 171023 redacted** **S40(2)**, raised the matter detailed in the attached email. There are 3 options. Views were given by the group: - **S40(2)**, - uses the terminology that's in the Home Office guidance when informing clubs and it's down to the club to go to the individual to find out why the force isn't happy. - Disclosure issue. Is a difficult one to standardise but a generic form of words would be beneficial. - **S40(2)**, – the ones she gets where she thinks they are not suitable, she contacts the secretary and tells them that it's unlikely at this time that the person will be granted a firearms certificate. - **S40(2)**, said that she would welcome standardisation. She highlighted that we are all probably doing different vetting as well and need standardisation as well of what vetting looks like. - **S40(2)**, – agreed that we need a form of words.

	- **S40(2)**, – point 3 (this person is prohibited) said that the person is either refused or revoked because we should notify the clubs when we refuse or revoke a certificate. **S40(2)**, agreed that we should add refused or revoked to point 3. **S40(2)**, raised checks on PND around club checks where the secretary might reside in a different area. Several forces said that they use PND. **S40(2)**, said that option 3 would be far more comprehensive and suggested that we charge for it which could be a flat rate for club membership checks and would require a national decision. Adrian Davis asked **S40(2)**, to lead on this with Licensing Managers to come up with a more standardised approach which can then be shared with Debbie Tedds and taken to the Home Office Board at the end of November. **S40(2)**, highlighted that there is a discrepancy within the clubs in Dorset on the information that they provide and was looking at trying to get this standardised. Question raised by **S40(2)**, – Derbyshire Licensing Manager <i>Can we discuss as to why HO approval is always out of sync with Club certificate renewal time. This means we have to visit the Secretary twice to complete the paperwork and submit it separately. Why cannot Club Renewal and Home Office Approval be done at the same time and be more efficient?</i> **S40(2)**, raised the above matter. **S40(2)**, informed that he raised this a couple of weeks ago with the policy team and was looking at why and if it could be changed. The reason they don't sync is because the validities are different. **S40(2)**, said that the periods that are granted is actually prescribed by legislation and bound by what the provision states. Primary legislation doesn't come along very often and the matter will have to be parked until such time as an opportunity presents itself.
6	**S23(1)**
7	College of Policing APP – now published August 2023 Update on National Training for FEOs **S40(2)**, updated: • Funding – doing some work with the Home Office to access some start up funding and will use that to recruit 4 posts into the College. Longer term will need to find sustainable funding hopefully through licensing fees etc. The recruitment process has already commenced and have been interviewing for a Police Standards Manager around firearms licensing. Adverts are out for a Quality Assurance Manager and 2 x SMEs. Need these roles in relation to the training design component for the FEO course, start work on a delivery strategy, need to create a validation process for units (likely to incorporate self assessment with an in person or peer visit) and develop a national approach to CPD.

	• Training – course designers have developed an initial proposal for a FEO course – 1 week course with an assessment component with a large focus around the suitability assessment. The plan is also to have a standardised pre learn and CPD. Initial testing has been carried out with SMEs but some disagreement around whether we were giving enough coverage to some of the learning outcomes within the face to face part of the course. The designer is working closely with some individuals to see if we can revisit both the core structure as an initial outline and/or the length and the methods that could be used to test or make sure that people meet the learning outcome. Still looking at Spring to get things completed. Adrian Davis gave some context that the course is far from sorted. He asked where the posts are being advertised and **S40(2)**, informed that he had just added them to the MS Teams chat. **S40(2)**, said that he needs to budget for these courses in the next financial year and asked if there was an estimate ballpark figure so it could be written into the potential spend. **S40(2)**, suggested to pull some estimates together of what a 1 week in person or 2 weeks course looks like from different areas. He said that he hopes that the licensing fee increase could help with covering some of the cost of training but will not help in the initial phase as it will take a while. Action 01/171023: **S40(2)**, to provide Adrian Davis with some estimates around the costings of the FEO training who will then circulate wider. **S40(2)**, asked **S40(2)**, if they've taken into consideration the fact that all forces FEO role profiles are different and therefore there may be some learning objectives or presentations within the course that an FEO doesn't do and might have to learn to pass the course/correct assessment. **S40(2)**, informed that there is a national role profile for FEOs but needs updating. He said that the most important thing is the learning outcomes when it comes to course design and would need that role profile to align with the learning outcomes, APP, statutory guidance etc. **S40(2)**, added the link on the MS Teams chat for the profile. It was agreed that Adrian Davis liaises with **S40(2)**, outside the meeting to ensure that the role profile is sent out and the new team look at it as part of their terms of reference. **S40(2)**, queried whether the CoP will have to reaccredit the existing FEOs and the new FEOs will have to go on the course. **S40(2)**, gave some examples that highlighted the variables. **S40(2)**, said that she would describe the course as being based around suitability but not going to teach someone how to be a FEO. Adrian Davis highlighted that the course is far from design and that these are initial conversations around what a course would look like. **S40(2)**, referred to the training that is already available and asked if it was going to be fundamentally different. **S40(2)**, said that the method of delivery and method of assessment would be different and there could be components of those courses which could potentially link into some of the learning outcomes. CoP can't quality assure third party external products.
8	Home Office Updates • Fees Update **S40(2)**, updated: • Been a lot of activity in the Home Office – the proposals have had to have lots of clearances and approvals at various stages. • Hoping to get the consultation paper out during Autumn and then bring in the new fees following that. This means that the new fees will move into next year. **S40(2)**, asked what mechanisms were going to be put in place to ensure that the fees go into the licensing process as the shooting community will want to see this and want to see an improved service. **S40(2)**, said that this has been discussed and acutely aware of and

want to get as many levers in place to ensure that the money is directed to where we want it to be. There isn't a mechanical way to do this but will be looking at PCCs/Chiefs to apply some pressure to make sure this is what happens, but not sure how this is going to work and will be setting some thoughts within the consultation paper. Adrian Davis highlighted that Debbie Tedds is very vocal in relation to this.

Brent Davison asked how much notice will be given to Licensing Managers/Professionals? He stated that the delay for Devon and Cornwall is helpful as they will have dealt with all the temporary permits into renewals by the end of January and making good progress on backlogs. ****S40(2)****, said that the proposed fees will be set out in the consultation paper and assuming that goes through then the fees will go into a statutory instrument that has to go before Parliament. The statutory instrument must lay for 3 weeks before Parliament before it can come into effect.

Another question was raised around single online home as the payment methods will have to be changed online and this will need to be factored into a request for change process which could take some time and asked if early contact had been made with them. ****S40(2)****, informed that they are in contact with the people who do single online home but was grateful that this had been raised as he wasn't aware that there was an issue around leading times and said he would follow this up.

****S40(2)****, raised a question around the area of business we don't charge on/shouldn't be charging on and asked if there is any work being done in the Home Office around this and areas that we should be charging on. ****S40(2)****, said that he and Adrian Davis will be working on this issue as we go forward but is separate to the fees review at the moment because it's going to need legislation in order to allow us to charge a fee for anything else. Adrian Davis highlighted that this will also include payment on application as opposed to payment on grant.

****S40(2)****, asked to be notified of any changes that will be necessary to NFLMS to reset the default fees.

- **Public Consultation on Firearms Licensing**

****S40(2)****, updated:

- Consultation closed and a good response rate.
- Majority of response from the shooting community.
- Ministers are considering the views received from the consultation and will then publish a Government response shortly.

Adrian Davis asked if Licensing Managers will see something ahead of the publication.

****S40(2)****, said no as it's a parliamentary paper but will share the link as soon as it's published.

- **Firearms Act 2023 – Royal Assessment re miniature rifle range and ammunition components**

****S40(2)****, / ****S40(2)****, updated:

- Firearms Act received Royal Assent recently.
- The next step is to make a Commencement Order for both provisions. Hope to do in one but there's likely to be 2 separate starting dates.
- The one for ammunition we think can be implemented quickly after the SI is made subject to any views.
- Miniature rifle ranges – added complication as the operators in the future will need to have a firearms certificate otherwise they will be in a legal possession of the firearms. The timing for this needs to be finalised. Have been speaking to shooting organisations to inform that the legislation is coming in. Can assist with comms around this. Draft

	conditions and guidance have been sent to Adrian Davis for comment. Adrian Davis said that he will share this with some colleagues. Adrian Davis raised that if we asked forces to prioritise rifle clubs what would the appetite be. **S40(2)**, said that it would be difficult for South Wales due to the backlog of grants. Adrian Davis said that he will wait to see what comes back from the data capture. • Question from **S40(2)** – Derbyshire Licensing Manager (& Chair) <i>Will there be clearer guidance when Stat Guidelines is refreshed re referees and to include a national pro forma that we can all use?</i> **S40(2)**, highlighted that referees was one of the issues looked at in the consultation and awaiting feedback from Ministers. The statutory guidance will be revised in line with the Government response. Question from Chair <i>Is there an update on the UK Athletics Starter Pistols paper submitted by the Met Police through FELWG to the Strategic Board in early 2023?</i> **S40(2)**, informed that the person who was taking this forward is now on maternity leave and that he thinks contact was made with the **S23(1)**. Action 02/171023: **S40(2)**, to get an update on the UK Athletics Starter pistols and report back to Adrian Davis so a proper response can go back to the Athletics Association.
9	GP Referrals, Digital Markers & General Medical Concerns • General Update from Home Office Team **S40(2)**, updated: • Number of questions asked about the medical checks system in the consultation – hoping that the Government response will be coming out soon but need to wait for this. If it's decided that there are going to be policy changes in relation to the medical checks process then will be looking at how to deliver those. If there are changes which are to be decided in terms of what's in the statutory guidance will then revise the statutory guidance and send the draft to Adrian Davis and police forces for comments. • Digital marker – in operation across England but not Scotland and Wales. Have asked for monitoring data from NHS England to get a better sense of GP participation – how many GPs are flagging on their systems, how many GPs are referring cases to the police, last meeting reference was made to some forces finding that the Practice Manager was sending in the information rather than the GP. • Continuing to discuss all the issues with medical representatives including BMA. The BMA guidance at present is clear that it's the GP that provides the return. • Marker being put on at application stage and then at the renewal and complications around that – there are a few GP medical issues on the agenda and there are a few that will need to take away and discuss in more detail at a dedicated meeting. GPs putting the marker on the system – not heard back from the medical bodies that there's confusion on how they are using that. • Licence holders who are deceased – got a request in with DWP to be included in the “tell us once” service. Response still awaited. A long term possible solution might be to make a change to the digital marker. Devon & Cornwall Police <i>Update re Death Marker to be applied to Digital Marker – raised at Strategic Board</i> Adrian Davis highlighted that the death marker was discussed at the Strategic Board where it was reported that there could be some real flaws by using the DWP system. He highlighted that in some cases GPs aren't told straight away that someone is deceased but would get through to them eventually and this is just safeguarding against that issue.

****S40(2)** - Durham Police**

Question raised re Local LMC agreement dissolve by LMC without consultation.

Chair raising

- *Missing information from third party medical providers – recent examples highlighted from the Met Police & Dyfed-Powys*
- *Trading names of third-party medical providers*
- *Contact from third party medical providers to FELWG*
- *Stat Guidance – How far should licensing teams look back as form birth is not always easy to achieve?*
- *GPs – Impact of digitizing records, how long until we have access to these?*

Third party medical providers – Adrian Davis referred to the email that ****S40(2)****, sent in relation to a third party provider that offered information that was significantly different to the GP. The trading name used by the third party provider was a different company and gone into liquidation, a new company has now bought that trading name as part of their third party service and has got complicated. The point that is being raised is that there should be far more legitimacy in transparency in relation to their party providers so Licensing Managers and the licence holder applicant can see who is providing their medical report should there be an issue.

Adrian Davis informed ****S40(2)****, that he has had a brief conversation with Nick Hunt who is broadly supportive to change the statutory medical form that if it's coming from third party providers then there is some real clear documentation as part of that report as to who is offering that report.

Adrian Davis said that he would forward the case to ****S40(2)****, and ****S40(2)****, and copy Licensing Managers in so they can see the issue being raised.

Action 03/171023: Adrian Davis to forward the case around third party medical providers to **S40(2)****, ****S40(2)****, and Licensing Managers.**

Adrian Davis informed that he has had a few emails in the last week from different third party companies and has reached out to Home Office colleagues to ask to pull a meeting together with some of the third party providers and some Licensing Managers will also be asked to join. Some of the third party providers are asking for some guidance and want to raise some concerns themselves.

****S40(2)****, queried how long records last and that she uses the records for 5/10 years and there are instructions on the first medicals received. She asked whether people are accepting from the third party companies or expecting it to be confirmed from the GPs. Adrian Davis referred to the bullet point around how far licensing teams should be going back. Got forms from birth and we can't achieve that, there are some forces that have been told by GPs that paper records have been digitised and they can't be accessed and were working through a case by case basis. He said that we would benefit from some additional support or tolerance from the guidance as to how far licensing teams should be looking back in relation to the medical information that's coming through, whether that's grant or renewal.

****S40(2)****, highlighted that they've found with GPs and third parties is when you look at the previous GP report that it lists several conditions then on the current one it says there isn't anything. When they've gone back they've relooked at the paperwork they've realised they've just relied on the certificate holder and not actually looked at the records when answering the questions.

****S40(2)****, stated that GPs are just looking at the actual conditions on the proforma and not informing of other conditions that are quite risky, i.e terminal illness for instance and asked if

	this has been addressed. Adrian Davis said that this comes under any of the other conditions. Adrian Davis said that he needed to move on from this discussion and asked the group to put a message in the MS Teams chat and he would link in with **S40(2)**, around this so the conversation can be extended. **S40(2)**, – West Mercia Police <i>Submitted a question to FELWG in September 2023 relating to the requirement of RFD medical certificates on every occasion. Replies from other licensing teams?</i> RFDs – Adrian Davis said it's feasible if the timing and people choose to be an RFD and rescind their private licence at some point during that 5 years they can apply for RFD and not have their medical. Adrian Davis said that this matter will be looked at again when the statutory guidelines are refreshed. Forces are doing different things and nobody is arguably wrong and comes down to the word "may" in the statutory guidance. There was a discussion around this and **S40(2)**, confirmed that there is no issue if someone had a personal certificate and cancelled as they've still got the opportunity as an RFD to go to the GP.
10	Explosives Licensing **S40(2)**, updated: • HSE consultation on fees – disappointing response (received 1 response and another force copied Fiona Smith into their response and sent to the HSE as well). Don't know how many forces responded direct to HSE. The HSE are trying to make the fees a lot simpler. There is no timeline but is in the consultation period. • Last FELWG asked people not to add any UN numbers to NFLMS because the numbers are very few and far between new ones. Two forces have added further numbers which don't need to be on the NFLMS list. A request has been made that the list is a constrained list and will have to go through the NFLMS request for change as this is the only way to stop numbers being added. • Retiring in December. • Explosives courses will be carried over to next year – 2 courses already which are fully booked, there is a waiting list and trying to put in a third course for August/September. • Responded to the question that was put in the MS Teams chat. The HSE decide that there is no requirement for a photo to be placed on a certificate. Can issue an explosive certificate for a company but you cannot put more than one person's photo on – you can't nominate one person. The firearms and shotgun certificates are the only ones that have photos. **S40(2)**, thanked ab for all her help over the years and wished her good luck on her retirement. Adrian Davis also thanked **S40(2)**, for her 31 years with firearms licensing and wished her a happy retirement. Adrian Davis said he could do with some support around firearms licensing and if anybody wishes to assist then to let him know. Some people have already contacted **S40(2)**, and doing some work with her and **S40(2)**, who leads the training.
11	Other Matters of Significant Vulnerability or Concern **S40(2)**, updated on the misuse of weapons statistics: • Email sent to 46 forces and 26 responded, which is much better than last time. Contact will be made with the forces who didn't respond as the data is really important. • 17 forces notified their misuse information. • 9 forces notified that no misuse has taken place within their force. • 29 misuse incidents so far in 2023 (January – 16th October) which is a decrease of 29% to 2022 as the total was 41 at this point in the year. The 29 consist of: ○ 21 – suicide with a gun. ○ 1 – other misuse (explosives and security). ○ 4 – suicide other (hanging).

	○ 2 – firearms discharges. ○ 1 - murder suicide. Medical Breakdown: ○ 16 – unknown medical issues. ○ 2 – terminal. ○ 5 – relevant medical condition declared. ○ 6 – other (2 financial, 1 domestic, 1 criminal investigation, 2 were blank but noted as 1 arrest and 1 firearm discharged). Occupation Breakdown: ○ 14 – retired. ○ 1 – accountant. ○ 1 – unemployed. ○ 2 – company directors. ○ 3 – gamekeepers/groundsman. ○ 1 – HGV driver. ○ 4 – building industry. ○ 1 – not applicable as it was a firearms discharged ○ 1 – inspector. A question was asked as to whether this was a police inspector but Zoe Powderly didn't know whether it was. • 21 notified suicides with guns (was 20 last year – increase of 5%). ○ 13 – unknown medical issues. ○ 2 – terminal illness declarations.. ○ 4 – medical declarations. ○ 2 – other (noted as financial and domestic). Adrian Davis referred to the comment in the MS Teams chat from Brent Davison. Adrian Davis informed that forces will be spoken with who don't buy into this. He stated that the data is used and he used it last week when he spoke at a mental health conference and Debbie Tedds has also used it for some presentations. Adrian Davis said that he would like to send the data to shooting groups and organisations but can't at the moment if we've only got over 50% of forces providing the information.
12	HMIC • Proposed thematic inspection for 2024 • Independent consultants approaching forces to review licensing teams Adrian Davis reported that there will be a HMIC Thematic Inspection next year for around 8 – 12 forces. There is no timeline at present and will be a variety of forces. **S40(2)**, asked if it would be a standalone inspection and Adrian Davis said that he doesn't have the details as to what it will look like. **S40(2)**, informed that **S43(2)** have offered to do an audit on forces for a cost. As part of that audit, they say the 4 key areas that HMIC would focus on is governance, risk management, training and public engagement. He said that he wasn't sure where they got that information from but asked if this is what will be covered. Adrian Davis stated that HMIC will have a set of terms of reference in relation to the inspection but **S43(2)** are not part of any discussion and their thoughts are down to themselves and not part of the HMIC inspection. Adrian Davis said that there are no terms of reference set at present but will probably cover force performance, delays, grant processes, application of the APP and statutory guidelines. **S40(2)**, referred to the **S43(2)**, and said it would be nice to have NPCC circulation to Chief Constables as the offer is going direct to them and reads as though they are aware of

	what the HMIC inspection is. **S43(2)**. Adrian Davis said that Debbie Tedds is cited on **S43(1)**, as she received the offer but is keen for forces to hold fire and wait for the national training to come out because with that will come accreditation. Adrian Davis said that he would take this back though to get a defined view on **S40(2)**. He stated that **S40(2)**, and other external training/advisory are not part of the conversations that have taken place with HMIC. Action 04/171023: Adrian Davis to get a defined position on Mowbray consultation.
13	Intelligence / PND • First upload of NFLMS data onto PND expected December 2023 • PND onto NFLMS update There is a project to use data from NFLMS which will appear onto PND and it looks like the first data dump will be December 2023. At the last meeting Adrian Davis asked a question around appetite of information from PND dropping onto NFLMS, which was an overwhelming yes. Adrian Davis recently attended a CGI meeting and they are just working out how much this is going to cost. The pilot project in Northamptonshire was seen as a big success. This work is starting to progress and jointly owned by Debbie Tedds and **S40(2)**, to establish where funding will come from for the information to come into the system.
14	Firearms Licensing Teams – Performance & Data Request • October 2023 Data – pending analysis • Coroner PFD Reviews Adrian Davis thanked those who had sent through the data but asked those who hadn't yet submitted it to send it through. He stated that the question around average delays is useful as the Home Office and Debbie Tedds are keen to see that so we can understand the position and links in with fees, APP and training. Temporary permits are coming down and is good to see but it's likely that grant delays will be the one that has focus going forward. PFDs – Adrian Davis thanked the forces for sending this through and said that he is populating the information into a document. He highlighted that it doesn't look like there are many cases where decisions have been significantly changed. The data isn't yet shared with shooting groups and organisations.
15	Strategic Demand Assessment Update • Discuss draft SDA The proposed SDA was presented which is aligned to the APP and HMIC 4 point recommendation within the force management statements. **S40(2)**, asked if feedback could be sent via email, which was agreed. She said that they don't have variations for shotgun certificates and only have them for firearms and with the variations are we talking about one for ones, increase or both and the same with transfer applications. Adrian Davis said that if he has missed something then send it through on email. He highlighted that this is the opportunity for us to design our own form. He said that transfer is in or out and what he is trying to tease out from forces is what do you think is coming your way in the next 12 months without going into too much detail. **S40(2)**, asked for clarification on what was meant by assessment of mid term licence holder suitability as a lot of information can be got from NFLMS but some we can't. Adrian Davis said that he was trying to differentiate that if someone is a new grant application that

can't be revoked but refused and is trying to tease out the work that forces have with a licence holder who's got their licence and a suitability issue comes to light midway through and showing that statistic then it's an ongoing suitability assessment but if picking up a suitability issue through renewal or grant, it should be able to hit the boxes earlier. Adrian Davis said that he has put 3 boxes in and the reason there is other action is that would cover voluntary surrender and a subsequent return and haven't gone into the detail as it's not necessary.

****S40(2)****, informed that Warwickshire have created a spreadsheet for the midterm ones.

****S40(2)****, said that you have got to bear in mind the fees increase will affect it hugely. She referred to the note from ****S40(2)****, around FEOs do spend a lot of time doing mid term suitability and it's not always the case that you need to take the firearms off them while you're doing that. It might be that the GP has contacted and said the certificate holder has been to see me and they have depression/anxiety and I thought I'd let you know so we send the FEO out to get an assessment but don't log those and create a spreadsheet to get that data and they deal with it and is just part of business. Adrian Davis said that this sounds like you would not want to see it on the form and ****S40(2)****, said no as she would find that time consuming.

****S40(2)****, said that it's top heavy in terms of the data capture and highlighted that cancellations is missing.

****S40(2)****, said that 70/75% of his work is renewals and that's the only thing that he could reliably forecast and would have to guess grants, variations, transfers or how many people are going to come to the attention of the police. Adrian Davis highlighted that the information would be available from the previous year that will allow an indication. ****S40(2)****, said that we've also got to key an eye on what's coming in the next 3/4 years as well. Expired licences and temporary licences are the 2 key things in terms of are you performing.

****S40(2)****, said that the suitabilities are very relevant with regards to the amount of demand. He raised peaks and troughs as they're in the middle of that at present and next year will not really show the peak demand so it's relevant to look not only next year but the year after in terms of whether there is sufficient staff.

****S40(2)****, raised demand and the areas that probably aren't captured around variations, gun transfers and change of addresses which have a massive impact on their ability. Have mapped out forward planning expiries.

Brent Davison highlighted that if you look back long enough you can get a pretty good feel of level of parameters either side of what the demand is going to be. The data and the way they've recorded has been a key part of how they've got the right resourcing. He stated that when the fees increase does come in that there will be an expectation of a better service. Brent Davison's stance is that suitability should stay.

****S40(2)****, stated that we need to accept there is going to be a broad blend of data that's going to be asked for and will have to provide information around suitability.

****S40(2)****, said that the biggest risk is where people are currently in possession of guns and will spend a lot more time when there's concerns raised, assess and suitability mid-term. He said that he has done around 300 reviews this year that have come to him for a decision including mid-term suitabilities. He highlighted that a lot of work is done by the enquiry team and if not demonstrating this then people will question the backlog. ****S40(2)****, said that his backlog on suitability assessments is 300. He stated that more guns are being seized than before.

Adrian Davis will get the comments from the MS Teams chat and asked if there were any strong views then to drop him an email and then will amend the form. He highlighted that this is a January/February request so there is still several weeks before it goes to Debbie Tedds and performance analysts.

16	Social Media Update **S31(1)**
17	Practitioner update from FELWG Members to include: **S40(2)**, on behalf of **S40(2)**, – Leicestershire <i>Please read the below e mail re use of Dart Guns, which forms part of 12.44 Home Office Guide to Firearms Licensing Law... and consider the 3 x questions raised? This is likely to go to Strategic Board following FELWG discussion</i> **e-mail to follow – have requested retrieval of embedded document which will be saved as: 059 2024 NPCC Response Attachment 05 B FELWG Minutes 171023 redacted** <i>Are there other forces that have issued a certificate in these circumstances? Is tranquilizing in these circumstances 'treatment'? Is this supported by FELWG?</i> **S40(2)**, raised the above on behalf of **S40(2)**, . **S40(2)**, reported that they've got **S31(1)** on their area and a number of people are conditioned and have got their vet researchers on site. Devon and Cornwall have also got the zoos and is that treatment of animals. **S40(2)**, said they've got about 2/3 which are issued for a couple of animal parks. She said it might be worth checking the policy in terms of your firearms officers. She informed that they don't use any call out or certificate holders as it's West Yorkshire's Police policy and only AFOs that will attend and they take the risk and not the certificate holder. With the increased risk of dangerous dogs, she stated that it might be worth going to that department and ask what the policy is and ask if they would be willing to allow certificate holders on a call out. **S40(2)**, said that every force should have the DLOs (Dog Legislation Officers) and that they've got a number of officers trained in darting equipment as a last resort and also got the electronic shields, poles and that there are various methods for trying to capture the dog but if not sufficient for capturing a dangerously dog out of control then the deployment of armed officers is necessary. **S40(2)**, stated that she agrees with this approach and doesn't think that it's something that firearms licensing should retain and try and resolve with either the dog section or firearms section. **S40(2)**, reported that there was an incident in Norfolk yesterday where there was a XL Bully that was out of control and all the options were explored and because of the nature of the dog and circumstances the firearms officers destroyed it. He said that it's down to the circumstances and the individual at the end of the day. It was agreed that this is not for FELWG and that DLOs should be spoken with in the first instance. **S40(2)**, reported that their dog unit went to them as they were getting tranquillizers and made it clear that this is nothing to do with firearms licensing. **S40(2)**, – Leicestershire **S40(2)**, recently asked a local air gun dealer to provide a local presentation for his team and thought this might be useful for wider dissemination. **S43(2)**,

The presentation was attached for information.

****S40(2)** – Gwent**

Project Titanium re DA questionnaire and proposed future presentation on Tuesday 7th November 2023 10am-12pm to FELWG members.

****S40(2)****, reported on Project Titanium:

- When she first joined firearms licensing she picked up that we weren't being proactive around domestic abuse and firearms licensing and that there is a connection.
- Worked with ****S40(2)****, who has done a lot of work with the Home Office and Government around firearms legislation ****S40(2)****.
- Also got on board ****S40(2)**** from the Met and ****S40(2)**** from Bedfordshire tri force so an input will be given on more information around Project Titanium – why we did what we did, what it's about, what currently doing in forces, the success so far and hopefully get some more forces on board to that this forward and be proactive in the domestic abuse category and safeguarding.

Adrian Davis informed that he was going to put a MS Teams meeting together for all Licensing Managers and who they deemed fit to be part of the presentation. The date arranged is 7th November, 10:00 – 12:00. He asked ****S40(2)****, to forward the contact details of the ladies that are part of the presentation so they can be included in the invite.

****S40(2)** – Gwent**

****S40(2)****,

****S40(2)****, raised the above case as it impacts on all forces. She said how can we have a revoked person going around competing in competitions.

****S40(2)****,

Action 05/171023: **S40(2)****, to keep the group apprised of the legal advice around removal of the RFD.**

****S40(2)****, stated what the definition of a firearms dealer was – someone who repairs, manufacturers, transfers or test fires and asked how ****S40(2)****, ****S40(2)****, said that he says he is test firing and evaluating those firearms on behalf of the dealership. ****S40(2)****, highlighted that it specifically says testing so you don't test within a competition.

****S40(2)** – Dorset (and raised by BASC / other Licensing Managers)**

Are land checks always required? Some forces complete these and some do not. What are the views from others, and should we now have a national review on this?

Adrian Davis said that this would not be discussed as it will be picked up at BASC.

****S40(2)** – Met Police**

Brief overview of the Judicial Review Met Police Vs Kingston upon Thames Crown Court re Closed Material Procedure.

The judicial review has been circulated to Licensing Managers and was added to the agenda as a reminder.

****S40(2)****, stated that if you are faced with the situation that involves some sensitive intelligence or confidential intelligence that presents some kind of risk to somebody to think hard about what you are going to disclose and when and seek legal advice at the earliest opportunity. He said that he was surprised how much time they spend on focusing on what

	was disclosed, when and the rationale for it. **S40(2)**, said that if anybody gets one and needs some help then to contact him.
18	Update / Questions / Concerns from Shooting Groups & Organisations: Adrian Davis reported that he still gets informed that people don't want shooting groups and organisations as part of FELWG, which is fine. He highlighted that he and others engage at most of their meetings. Adrian Davis reported on the BASC event at their HQ a few weeks back: • Attendance from the Met, Surrey, Sussex and North Wales. • Productive meeting and a change of mindset. • **S40(2)**, spent a lot of time talking around suitability assessments around domestic abuse. • Spoke about some heavily redacted suitability assessments where we'd made an effort to give licences to people and to take them away. • Data protection letter which they use and has been sent to Warwickshire's legal services around exchanging information where BASC want to get involved. • Raised issues around clearing land for different types of rifles and land checks. Some forces do land checks and some don't. Will arrange a meeting together inviting licence holders, BASC, few shooting groups and organisations to ask the question and review whether land checks are necessary, should we continue to do it, should we not, should there be more tolerance. **S40(2)**, concern is that for example you give 100 acre clearance for a particular calibre and clear the land for a particular shooter, that land is cleared and anybody with a closed condition can then go and shoot on that land because it has been cleared unless we start conditioning the land and actual name the specific part of land. He stated that it gives us little value and that we should not continue doing them. **S40(2)**, said that they have 3 counties and assist and that the FEOs will go out with the consumer who has got authority for the land and get their experience. **S40(2)**, said that this is a waste of time and they haven't done it for the last couple of years. He highlighted that there is no training whatsoever that supports somebody doing a land check. Adrian Davis sated that this is not for us to decide and would take an action to discuss this in more detail. Action 06/171023: Clearances of land - Adrian Davis to have further conversations in relation to this. • Data performance was raised by BASC and BSSC and acknowledged that the temporary permit solution is coming down. Made the point that there's going to be a rise in fees and that should mean a good quality service and people should be able to get their licenses within a reasonable period of time. • Challenged **S40(2)**, on the unprofessional comments which have been unhelpful and he accepted that it shouldn't have happened. BSSC update • Issues in licensing delays and very similar to BASC. • Supportive of the APP. • Shooting groups and organisations are aware that national training for FEOs is coming online next year. Some offer of support to see if they can help in anyway especially around CPD and therefore should link in with those groups. **S40(2)**.

	S40(2), Independent writer for **S40(2)**, interviewed Debbie Tedds in relation to her take on firearms licensing. The article is proportionate. **S40(2)**, also spent time with the Warwickshire team. Mr **S40(2)**, – National Association of Re-enactment Societies **S40(2)**, **S40(2)**, reported that he had a meeting with **S40(2)**, but it's difficult as we are constrained and said that he would ask for police views as to whether anything needed changing or to go in the guidance. Adrian Davis asked the group to look at the attached paper and provide feedback. Action 07/171023: All Licensing Managers to review the document from **S40(2)**, and provide feedback to Adrian Davis.
19	Shooting Events **S40(2)**, reported on the shooting events: Firearms Licensing Managers Invitation to the British Shooting Show 23rd and 24th February 2024, NEC Birmingham Invite for the police to attend and an area will be set up. Tables, chairs, electrical supplies and internet will be provided free of charge. Anyone wishing to attend is to notify **S40(2)/S31(1)**
20	Any Other Business DVLA Database – **S40(2)**, (Adrian Davis reported on this) Statutory guidelines will talk about traffic offences and checking people in relation to suitability. What the DVLA guidelines will say is that there's certain criteria that you can check the DVLA database for in relation to driving licence matters and the other criteria is around curb crawling and checking up on the financial position of people. The guidelines are outdated. The point that Brent Davidson was raising is that this is another source of information that Licensing Managers or intel researchers may wish to use to check on people to assess licensing suitability yet the DVLA criteria is you shouldn't be using that for firearms licensing purposes. Adrian Davis said that this matter will be taken to the Strategic Board and Home Office colleagues to see if the guidelines can be amended to allow firearms licensing departments to be able to access DVLA to look at issues which could affect suitability. Adrian Davis reported on an email received from **S40(2)**, (Kent Licensing Manager) who has had a request from a **S40(2)**, Legislation has been looked at with RFD and is only permitted if the parts are for commercial use and he wants to use it for his own use and appears he can do so without it being proofed. Some members of the board said that it's ok. **S40(2)**, said that it only needs to be proofed if he is going to sell it and they have done this in the past. **S40(2)**, said that they've done the same with suppressors and doesn't need to be proofed until they sell it. Adrian Davis thanked everyone for their attendance. He reminded the group to send data reports and PFD reports.
21	Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 23rd January 2024 (blended Teams and location to be decided). Adrian Davis said that he would like to attend another force area for the next meeting if somebody wants to invite him. Further Meetings Tuesday 16th April 2024 – to be decided

