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**DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER
VISIBLE POLICING
HEAD OFFICE**


All Provincial Commissioners
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

**COMPETENCY CERTIFICATE ISSUED IN TERMS OF SECTION 6 OF THE FIREARMS
CONTROL ACT, 2000 (ACT NO 60 OF 2000): COMPETENCY CERTIFICATE (CARD)
TO A COMPETENCY CERTIFICATE (PAPER)**

1. Section 6(1) of the Act stipulates that the Registrar may issue any competency certificate, licence, permit or authorisation contemplated in this Act. Consequently and at the instance of a relevant application, a person may be issued with a competency certificate to possess a firearm, to possess a muzzle-loading firearm, to possess a firearm as a private collector, to trade in firearms, to manufacture firearms or to carry on business as a gunsmith.
2. The Central Firearms Register have been issuing competency certificates in the form of a card. However, during 2010 a huge backlog of competency applications was experienced whereby a decision was taken that an A4 size paper competency certificate will be issued. In subsequent years a decision was once again taken to reissue competency certificates in card design.
3. It should be borne in mind that the aforesaid decision was taken to stabilise the situation where unprecedented number of applications were received. The COVID-19 pandemic with associated eventualities affected the processing of all types of applications with the results of insurmountable number of complaints from members of the public, including the Portfolio Committee on Police (PCoP). This situation requires extraordinary measures in order to normalise the processes involved.
4. The process of applications for a competency certificate involves the scanning and purification (density and contrast) of fingerprints, photos and signatures which is then followed by uploading of these three attributes to the Enhanced Firearms Register System (EFRS). It requires an unusually lengthy time to conclude this process, resulting in a logjam. However a paper competency certificate does not require a detailed process as stated above and will certainly expedite the finalisation of all types of applications.

COMPETENCY CERTIFICATE ISSUED IN TERMS OF SECTION 6 OF THE FIREARMS CONTROL ACT, 2000 (ACT NO 60 OF 2000): COMPETENCY CERTIFICATE (PAPER) FROM A COMPETENCY CERTIFICATE (CARD)

5. Having had regard to the aforesaid, a decision has been taken that an A4 size paper competency certificate will be issued from 1 November 2020 for all types of applications.
6. Competency certificates will henceforth be retrieved from the system only at the offices of the Designated Firearm Officer (DFO) where the application was made. An official date stamp of the respective office must be placed thereon to authenticate the document prior to issuing same to the applicant.
7. All such certificates shall bear the electronic signature of the Head: Central Firearms Register. DFO's are under no circumstance permitted to sign any competency certificate issued in terms of this Act and any such conduct/ misconduct will be dealt with in terms of all applicable laws.
8. Applicants must be informed accordingly of this development during the tendering of their applications.
9. This dispensation excludes firearm licences which will still be issued in a card design.
10. The contents of this directive must be brought to the attention of all Station Commanders for compliance.
11. Your assistance in this regard will be highly appreciated.

 **MAJOR GENERAL
S. PIENAAR**
LIEUTENANT GENERAL
DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER: VISIBLE POLICING
MD-SEMPE (SOEG)

Date: 2020-10-13