



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

ABN: 29 409 225 509

Ballistics Unit
SCIENTIFIC SECTION
FORENSIC SERVICES GROUP

4th Floor QPS Headquarters, 200 Roma St, Brisbane. Q. 4000
 GPO Box 1440, Brisbane. Q. 4001

Telephone: (07) 3364 6061 Fax: (07) 3364 6083

PFS-ADMIN-29
07/13

Our Ref.: FR

Your Ref.: QP

23 April 2018

TO: INSPECTOR, WEAPONS LICENSING BRANCH

**FROM: Senior Sergeant
BALLISTICS UNIT**

SUBJECT: CLASSIFICATION OF WEDGETAIL WT-15 PISTOL VARIANT.

1. A recent report from Senior Sergeant Cavanagh (attached) is requesting a categorisation of a firearm known as a Wedgetail WT-15 -223 Rem 9-inch pistol variant. This firearm is a member of group of firearms produced by Wedgetail Industries that appear to be based around an AR-15 type weapon. The AR-15 family is the commercial equivalent of an M16 rifle. ('M16-AR15: assembly, history, ballistics and reloading data for the U.S. Service rifle and commercial model, NRA publication 1987) This distinction is somewhat relevant as will be discussed later.
2. The item of particular interest within the group of Wedgetail firearms is that labelled WT-15-223 Rem 9-inch pistol variant. This variant does not have any technical information about it, apart from the calibre (223 Rem) and the barrel length (9 inches). The image of the variant also appears to be that of a weapon less than 750 mm in length, with a cylindrical buffer piece behind the action. The variant does not appear on the Wedgetail Industries website (Accessed 13:30 23/04/2018)
3. The length of the item is of specific interest in respect to Category H in that a firearm less than 750 mm in length is regarded as falling within Category H, however this does not apply to Category C, D or R weapons. Although not inspected, the image and information is that this variant is less than 750 mm in length so if regarded as a pistol (or what is described as a pistol variant) then could be regarded as a Category H firearm.
4. Perhaps of more importance is that fact that this variant is based upon a Cat D weapon, that is, a self-loading centre fire rifle, as indicated by the word 'variant'. Given that it is explicitly stated within the wording of the Category H section of the *Weapons Categories Regulations 1997*, section 7 (3) that it does not apply to category C, D or R weapons. This is usually applied by Ballistics Officers to firearms that have been shortened/sawn off but were of a category C, D or R type. This is the first instance that a request has been made to consider whether a firearm designed and manufactured as a self-loading rifle could be regarded as a category D even though under 750 mm in length.

5. To consider this question certainly from general appearance the variant appears to be identical to the all major features of the other two firearms within the family. The only major difference between the three is the barrel length, with the variant having a shorter barrel than the WT-15 10.3 inch SBR. This firearm (WT-15 SBR) is 750 mm in length in its extended form so it can be assumed that the pistol variant is less than 750 mm. The whole operating system and design however is of a self-loading centre fire rifle, and the whole idea of this action is to work in conjunction with the type of calibre (223 Rem).
6. The variant falls into both section 5 (1) (a) or (b) when considered the appearance and action is of a self-loading centre fire rifle that has as its direct origin the M16 as the military rifle upon which it is based. The extension to the rear of pistol grip on the variant is the buffer assembly, which is usual housed within the buttstock of a normal AR-15 rifle.
7. It appears (from the images at least) that the only difference between the pistol variant and a normal AR-15 is a shortened barrel and a lack of a stock. Every other aspect of the variant is of a self-loading centre fire rifle, a Category D weapon, so from a judicial view point the placement of this variant within Category D appears to be justified.
8. While technically it is less than 750 mm length (Cat H), practically it is a Cat D from design and appearance, hence the Section 7 (3) cuts in and the item therefore is a Cat D.



Alan Piper
Senior Sergeant
Ballistics Unit

Queensland Police Service
RTI & P Release