

HOME OFFICE RECLASSIFICATION OF THE OLYMPIC .380 BBM REVOLVER

What is the Olympic .380 BBM?

The Olympic .380 BBM revolver is commonly known as a 'blank firer'. These revolvers are commonly used for the purposes of race starting (starting pistols), dog training and also in the film and TV industry as well as in theatres.



In the past the BBM could be purchased through Registered Firearms Dealers (RFD's) and other outlets such as hobbyist stores and model shops and required no license. However they have recently been identified as being 'readily convertible', which means they can be converted to be a lethally barreled weapon.

Is the Olympic .380 BBM known by any other name?

Yes. The Olympic .380 BBM is also known by the following names:

- *Bruni Olympic Revolver - Blank Firer*
- *Olympic 9mm*
- *Olympic .380*
- *Olympic .38*

Does this information extend to the Olympic .22 (6mm) blank firing starting pistol?

No. Although looking very similar, only the Olympic .380 BBM has been identified as being of concern at this time.

What has changed about the Olympic 380 BBM?

Following an independent test carried out by the Forensic Science Service (FSS) in February 2010, a Senior Forensic Scientist within the FSS has identified the revolver as being 'readily convertible' under the provisions of the Firearms Act 1982. The Firearms Act 1982 classifies weapons as 'readily convertible' thus making them subject to Section 1 of the Firearms Act 1982, Section 1 of the Firearms Act 1968 and Section 5 of the 1968 Act. This makes them illegal to possess, supply or transfer within the UK.

How has the problem with the Olympic .380 BBM been identified?

Over the past 12 months there has been clear evidence that the Olympic .380 BBM blank firing revolver is being subjected to illegal conversion to make it capable of firing live or improvised ammunition. There is a real threat of their use in criminal activity.

What does the Police Services in the UK intend to do about the Olympic .380 BBM?

The status of the Olympic .380 BBM has changed, which means it now falls under current legislation. It is the intention of the Police service to remove from public ownership the Olympic .380 BBM, whether in its unconverted or converted form.

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How will the Olympic .380 BBM be removed from public use?

A programme of activity is being set up to focus on stemming the supply of Olympic .380 BBM Blank Firing Revolvers to the UK. This involves:

- **Stopping the importation of the Olympic .380 BBM.** As of 24 March 2010 importation of these revolvers into the UK has ceased.
- **Holding a targeted amnesty.** A specifically targeted amnesty is being held for owners to hand in their Olympic .380 BBM's converted or unconverted. Our major aim is the recovery of as many of these revolvers as possible.

When will the amnesty run?

The amnesty will start on 15 April 2010 and run until 4 June 2010. A public announcement was made on 15 April 2010.

How will the amnesty work?

All 43 police forces in England and Wales have been notified of the amnesty and clear instruction has been given that this is only for Olympic .380 BBM revolvers which are either converted or unconverted. During this period owners are encouraged to hand in these revolvers at police station front counters up until midnight on 4 June 2010.

Why is an amnesty needed?

Previously the Olympic .380 BBM did not require a licence to own therefore the number of people who do own this type of revolver are unknown. By holding a targeted amnesty we can encourage those members of the public who use this gun legitimately to hand it in and not face prosecution. The amnesty will:

- Reduce the number of Olympic .380 BBM's in circulation
- Reduce the number of converted Olympic .380 BBM's in circulation by encouraging those who have previously been in illegal possession of these items to surrender them.
- Reinforce the message that unlawful possession and use of firearms and imitation firearms is not acceptable and will lead to a criminal prosecution.

Will there be a buy-back scheme?

A decision has been made that a buy-back scheme will not be offered to anyone that is in possession of an Olympic .380 BBM revolver.

What is the penalty for possession of an Olympic .380 BBM, outside of the amnesty period?

The gun now falls under the classification of a prohibited weapon within the provisions of Section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968, to which there is a five year mandatory prison sentence.



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Can a person handing in an Olympic .380 BBM still be prosecuted if it turns out the item has been used in a crime?

Yes. The Amnesty extends to the possession of the firearm and does not create immunity to prosecution for other offences.

In Conclusion: -

"We are acting today to deal with the threat posed by criminal use of this firearm to communities in the UK. Our action means that any individual in possession of an unconverted or converted Olympic .380 BBM should hand it in now or at their earliest opportunity. This targeted amnesty offers a route to dispose of these firearms before 4 June 2010, without facing prosecution for possession."

"A significant number of converted Olympic .380 BBM's have been recovered by the police having been used in criminal activity. It is essential that the police work together with the public to tackle this threat."

*PC Alan Cousins
MPS Film Unit*