



Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform

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Submitted by:

Kym Adams

A concerned ACT resident, mother, spouse, rural land manager and licensed shooter

Introduction

I write this submission not as a policy expert or legal professional, but as someone directly affected by the proposed changes—

- a mother of a junior shooter,
- the wife of a professional shooter engaged in government-contracted pest mitigation,
- a rural land manager with pest control responsibilities, and
- a licensed shooter.

Firearms are not an abstract policy issue in my household—they are part of our daily lives, our responsibilities, our sport, and in my husband’s case, his profession.

I support sensible, evidence-based measures that improve public safety. However, I am deeply concerned that key aspects of the proposed Bill are not grounded in evidence, are disproportionate, and risk undermining both safety outcomes and community trust.

A Family Perspective on Safety and Responsibility

As a parent, my priority is safety—both for my child and for the broader community.

My child participates in shooting sports in a highly structured and supervised environment.

These activities:

- reinforce discipline, accountability, and safety awareness,
- provide a positive and controlled pathway into sport, and
- are supported by strict regulatory oversight and club-based supervision.

The proposed reforms risk undermining these pathways by creating barriers that may reduce participation, weaken structured engagement, and inadvertently push individuals away from safe, regulated environments.

Professional Reality vs Legislative Assumptions

My husband is a professional shooter contracted to undertake pest mitigation, including in:

- open public spaces,
- restricted areas,
- environmentally sensitive locations, and
- government-controlled sites.

This creates a fundamental contradiction within the proposed reforms:

On one hand, the legislation proposes strict limits on the number of firearms a licensed individual can possess.

On the other hand, the same individuals are entrusted by government to operate firearms in complex, high-responsibility environments.

This inconsistency raises an important question:

If these individuals are trusted to safely operate firearms in public and sensitive environments, why are they not trusted to possess the tools required for their profession or sport?

Concerns with Arbitrary Ownership Caps

The proposed numeric caps are particularly concerning.

The current system already requires:

- a genuine reason,
- a genuine need, and
- individual suitability assessments for every firearm.

Replacing this with an arbitrary numerical limit shifts away from a risk-based framework to a one-size-fits-all restriction.

There is no transparent evidence linking the number of lawfully owned firearms to increased public safety risk.

The proposed caps may increase the number of licensed owners and total firearms, rather than reduce them.

From a practical perspective, different shooting disciplines require different equipment.

Competitive shooters often require multiple firearms for legitimate sporting purposes, just as professionals require specific tools for specific tasks.

Impact on Families, Sport, and Community

The shooting community is not just individuals—it is families, volunteers, and structured organisations.

The proposed changes risk:

- reducing junior participation pathways,
- placing strain on volunteer-run clubs,
- undermining community-led safety culture, and
- limiting access to national and international competition opportunities.

For families like mine, this is not theoretical—it directly affects how we engage in sport, how we support our children, and how we contribute to the community.

Misalignment with Actual Risk

The Bill appears to place increased regulatory burden on:

- licensed, compliant firearm owners,

while not sufficiently addressing:

- illicit firearms,
- theft and diversion, and
- unlawful manufacture.

From a safety perspective, this is deeply concerning.

As a parent, I want to see resources directed where they will have the greatest impact—towards genuine risks—not towards those already demonstrating compliance and responsibility.

Human Rights and Fairness

There is also a broader concern regarding proportionality and fairness.

The proposed reforms:

- may retrospectively affect lawfully acquired property,
- risk creating unequal treatment among compliant licence holders, and
- lack a clearly articulated evidence-based justification.

As a member of the community, I expect that any restrictions placed on law-abiding citizens are:

- justified,
 - proportionate, and
 - supported by clear evidence.
- A Better Path Forward

From both a family and community perspective, I strongly support an alternative approach focused on:

- Maintaining the current risk-based licensing system
- Investing in the ACT Firearms Registry and compliance capability
- Strengthening education and safe storage programs
- Targeting illicit firearms and criminal activity
- Engaging in meaningful conversations with stakeholders before legislative change

These measures align with improving safety outcomes without undermining responsible participation or community trust.

Conclusion

As **a mother**, I want my child to grow up in a safe community and not have to forfeit her sport as we will be unable to maintain her firearms, and meet our professional obligations and personally participate in our chosen sport.

As **the wife of a professional shooter**, I want laws that reflect the realities of responsible firearm use.

As **a rural land manager**, I want to be able to meet my responsibilities without having to sacrifice my chosen sport to fall within the proposed limits,

As **a competitive shooter**, I want a system that supports legitimate sport and participation.

The current proposal does not strike that balance.

I urge the Committee to reconsider elements of the Bill that are not evidence-based or proportionate, and to pursue reforms that genuinely enhance public safety while preserving the integrity of lawful, responsible firearm ownership in the ACT.