



Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into the Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026

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From:
To: [LA Committee - Legal](#)
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Dear Standing Committee on Legal Affairs,

Please accept my submission in regard to the Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026.

I would like my name and contact information to be withheld, as I believe making public knowledge of who owns firearms, and where they live, contradicts basic common sense and safety.

I have deep concern about this bill and claims made by the ACT Government MLAs in relation to it.

Firstly, I and every other firearm owner I have spoken to actually encourage stronger background checking before issuing a firearms license. That should have already been happening, in my opinion. This is however the only piece of this bill to be introduced that would have had any impact on what happened at Bondi in December 2025, the event being opportunistically used to push these changes.

I am one of the people who will be impacted by this bill, and I have to ask, why? Why are sport shooters and hunters in the ACT being punished for the acts of a terrorist? I and every licensed gun owner in the ACT have done nothing wrong, but are being collectively punished due to the actions of a terrorist and the failings of the NSW Police Firearms Registry and Federal intelligence agencies. Firearms owners are some of the most heavily scrutinised and regulated people in the country as it is. We need to be of good character, have a clean criminal record, not be the subject of any type of apprehended violence order, not associate with criminals and be of sound mind. This is all re-checked every time we renew our license. The vast majority of us are no danger to anybody. People who go to the trouble of obtaining and holding a firearms license are not the people that present a community safety risk. This has all been brought about by a one bad apple in a million event. The man had somebody on an ASIO watchlist living in his home and should never have been issued a firearms license. It is simply wrong to punish all gun owners because existing laws were not enforced. The existing "*Firearms Act 1996*" has served the ACT well for the last 30 years. We don't have a gun violence problem in the ACT. We have very few gun violence incidents when compared with other jurisdictions. This isn't a problem the ACT needs to deal with. What is being proposed by this bill certainly would not have prevented the Bondi incident.

I own more than 10 firearms as a competitive target shooter. I compete at a national level in several disciplines, and different classes within those disciplines. Each of those requires a firearm tailored to the discipline to be competitive. I also hunt for both conservation and food. The proposed legislation means I will have to drop out of some forms of competitive shooting, when most of the rifles I use for it can't even accept a magazine and are bolt action, single shot rifles that must have each round loaded individually by hand. I ask, how does limiting the number of these types of firearms a license holder can own improve community safety? They are next to useless for anything but competing in specific disciplines.

The explanatory statement of the bill says that this bill promotes "The right to life". This claim is absolutely nonsensical, and a weak attempt to not only have a list of human rights it restricts. How does my ownership of more than an arbitrary number of firearms infringe on any persons right to life, at all? The explanatory statement then goes on to claim that the "right to life" is promoted "By imposing numerical caps on the number of firearms an individual can possess or use, the Bill reduces the proliferation of firearms in the community and lowers the risk that firearms are stolen or misused by dangerous individuals". So now we are blaming victims of theft? Do we also prevent people walking in secluded places in case they are mugged? Blame short skirts for sexual assault? This is absolutely absurd and offensive rationale for what amounts to collective punishment.

While on the subject of human rights, this legislation also appears to fall foul of international human rights, namely in regard to collective punishment. Collective punishment is the illegal practice of penalizing a group, community, or family for actions committed by individuals associated with them. It violates the principle of individual responsibility, often targeting innocent people. It is illegal under international law. This bill is a clear case of collective punishment of firearms owners for the acts of 2 terrorists. So make that 4 human rights restricted, and a dishonest explanation of one promoted.

I have received emails from both the Chief Minister and the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services stating that the bill reflects the approach taken in Western Australia, and that "Western Australia undertook an extensive process of stakeholder engagement over a number of years when introducing ownership limits". This is a demonstrable lie. There was also absolutely no meaningful engagement with relevant stakeholders. In fact, the primary stakeholders have repeatedly stated that [no good faith engagement was made with them](#). The legislation in Western Australia was cooked up by a State Government, Police Commissioner and Firearms Registrar who appear to hate guns and gun owners, with input only from gun control activists with a wild imagination who had watched one too many "John Wick" movies. We also have the [ACT Chief Police Officer in this ABC News article](#) claiming that this is based on "extensive research" by Western Australia. Surely he can provide this "research"? Or do we have another demonstrable lie? This is NOT evidence based policy. There has been no research, and no stakeholder engagement. The only reputable research done on firearms ownership and community safety has been by Dr Samara McPhedran of Griffith University and the University of Queensland. She has

written [multiple papers](#) on the subject of firearms ownership and community safety. Real research with real statistics. These make recommendations that directly oppose the legislation changes in the ACT and NSW in the last couple of months by Labor governments.

The emails from both the Chief Minister and the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services also both repeatedly point out that NSW has also introduced these changes, as if that is justification to make the same changes in the ACT. I unfortunately have to ask, would the ACT jump off of a bridge if NSW did it too? It is exceedingly disappointing to have to ask our leaders the same question you ask of a primary school kid making excuses for poor choices, but here we are.

The proposed legislation is continually said to be in the interest of "community safety", but I am unsure how preventing people of good character and standing from having more than an arbitrary number of firearms does that at all. They have not made the community unsafe in the couple of decades I have held a firearms license. If you can trust me with one, you can trust me with a hundred. I can only use one at a time regardless of how many I have locked in a safe at home.

What is being proposed is unfair, unjust, and does not increase community safety one bit. I had honestly expected a lot more from the ACT Labor government than the same kneejerk, opportunistic, "seen to be doing something" legislation that was forced through the NSW Parliament. The firearms laws in the ACT are already quite rigorous and have served the territory well for 30 years. If you need to update them to catch up with technology around 3D printing, that is all well and good and understandable. Arbitrary caps on ownership, and any other restrictions that don't focus on **who** is able to own guns do not make the community safer. It will also not lead to "More uniform National firearms laws", as several states (QLD, NT and TAS) have already rejected participating in this collective punishment of good people. Victoria is at least holding an inquiry before changing laws without evidence the changes will achieve anything, and South Australia have not stated any intent to change laws. This will only cost ACT ratepayers money to achieve nothing, and put us out of step with more states than it will align us with.

The inclusion of a prohibition on "belt fed weapons" displays the level of absurdity of the bill, and the complete lack of understanding of the people who have put it together. The only belt fed weapons that exist on the market are fully automatic machine guns, which have been effectively banned in Australia since the 1930s via heavy restriction, and that ban was made formal and explicit in 1996. They are already illegal.

I also note that there is nothing in the bill about paying people fair market value for firearms in the event of a buyback. It would be absolutely unconscionable to effectively confiscate items from people who have committed no crime, and not offer fair reimbursement. It would be no better than extortion and theft.

Regards,

