



Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform

Submission number: 032

Submitter: Name Withheld

Date authorised for publication: 11 March 2026

Submission to the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs inquiring into the Firearms (public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026.

Thankyou for the opportunity to provide this submission to the Committee.

In this submission I will outline the impact of limiting the number of firearms that I can possess under the *Firearms (public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026* (the Bill) will have on me as a licenced sporting shooter and hunter and alternative measures to achieve the stated policy outcome.

I am a member of three ACT sporting shooting clubs and an active participant in club and national competitions in both pistol and rifle disciplines. I am also a hunter and undertake pest animal control for land-owners and in State Forests in surrounding NSW – holding an NSW R licence.

I currently possess more than 10 firearms on my licence. I currently have 5 rifles that are used for taking different kinds of game and pest animals, 5 competition rifles and six pistols used in two separate pistol shooting clubs and for providing instruction as a registry endorsed ACT firearms instructor. To acquire each of these firearms I was required to provide the ACT Firearms registry with a genuine reason and in the case of each pistol an additional letter of support from my club stating that the firearm was required for that discipline and match.

I have been a completion pistol shooter for over 40 years. During this time I have expanded the number of shooting competition disciplines that I participate in and accordingly the types and number of matches I compete in. The number of firearms on my licence has increased as well as the different disciplines and matches can require different firearms. While the legal minimum number of competition matches I must attend each year is eight, I will shoot well over 50 competition matches yearly.

I currently shoot in three different pistol disciplines. These include three different police or service based matches that require three different firearms as well shooting in the International Practical Shooting Confederation and Field Pistol disciplines.

I also remain interested in participating in new shooting disciplines in the future. However, the Bill will limit my ability to participate in new shooting disciplines by limiting the overall number of firearms that I can possess on my licence. In perusing a new shooting discipline, I would be forced to give up an existing discipline where a different firearm was required to one that I already possess on my licence or I would be required to give up an entire shooting activity such as hunting.

In addition to competitive shooting, I have permission to remove pest animal such as pigs, deer, rabbits and foxes from a number of NSW rural properties, as well as holding an NSW Restricted Game License for hunting in State

Forests. Each of my five rifles is used for a different sized pest animal to ensure a humane and safe dispatch. This ranges from air rifles and .22 rimfire rifles for rabbits and foxes, through to large calibre rifles for larger pest species such as feral pigs and large deer becoming endemic in surrounding NSW. However, the arbitrary firearm number limit imposed by the Bill will likely require me to make a choice between perusing hunting and pest animal control or expanding the number of competition shooting disciplines I participate in. The effect of the current uncertainty regarding proposed firearms law changes has delayed any future firearms purchases until such time as I can understand how future firearms regulations will impact me and what shooting activities I can actually participate in.

I enjoy all aspect of my sport from competition shooting to hunting. The Bill not only limits the number of firearms on my licence, but has a practical effect of limiting the types of shooting competitions I can participate in and will limit my ability to hunt or undertake animal pest control. The explanatory memorandum considers limiting the number of firearms to be an acceptable trade off for improved community safety. However, the explanatory memorandum to the Bill does not acknowledge the real world impact on licensed shooters such as myself which is to limit the type and number of activities a sporting shooter can participate in now and in the future.

The explanatory memorandum to the Bill sets out reasoning for limiting the number of firearms on the basis of reducing risk to the community from stolen firearms being used by criminals. The explanatory memorandum does not set out whether any policy alternatives were considered apart from the measure to limit the number of firearms an individual licence can hold.

The explanatory memorandum does not look at the efficacy of existing controls in the Firearms Act nor does it identify deficiencies in areas such as secure storage or compliance. In my opinion there are already effective measures in place for the secure storage of firearms and there are alternative measures available to policy makers, such as increased storage measures, to the Bills' use of arbitrary firearm number limits. In my own case, my firearms are stored in one of the largest, and most secure safes that meet the higher standard required for pistol storage – up to Category D rifles (which I do not possess). My safe also exceed the minimum anchoring requirements presenting a criminal with the problem of which safe to attempt illicit entry and in doing so having to use such force as to cause the building structural damage. I have a total of 12 security cameras that monitor, record and alert me to any movement on or near my premises. Many of my club members would tell you a similar story of how their storage already exceeds the minimums specified by law.

Other non legislative measures could also be considered to ensure the improved security of firearms stored in the ACT. These could include a regular regime of compliance inspection by ACT Police. Such a regime is already in place in NSW but is not in place in the ACT. There is currently no safe storage inspection in the ACT before a firearm license holder obtains their first firearm permit. There is also no regular inspection as is the case with

the yearly secure storage inspection by NSW Police. I believe this lack of regular storage inspection in the ACT is due to police funding and resource constraints. Unfortunately, this means that ACT Police and policy makers have a limited view of actual storage practices in the ACT and whether individual firearms owners are already undertaking additional good practice measures in addition to the current minimum storage requirements specified in the Firearms Act. Having a good evidence base is a key prerequisite to making good public policy. This leads me to believe that the lack of what are already common practices in states such as NSW has led to obvious policy alternatives not being considered by ACT policy makers and points to deficiencies in regulatory practice rather than deficiencies in the underpinning legislation and regulations.

The explanatory memorandum does not set out whether alternative measures were considered to reduce the risk to the community of firearms stolen from licensed ACT firearms owners. My firearms are expensive and while they are insured my secure storage already exceeds the minimum required under the Firearms Act. I estimate that I have spent in the vicinity of \$80,000 on my firearms, storage and reloading capabilities. When regularly travelling interstate with my firearms this includes meeting the composite higher of the standards required from the ACT, NSW or Victoria legislation. In my experience the cost of meeting a higher standard is not large when compared to the value of my firearms and the reduction in community risk that enhanced security practice brings. The addition of cost effective motion detecting cameras both inside and outside my place of storage provide me with additional peace of mind to deter and detect an attempted burglary. In my view there are many other policy and non-policy measures that could be adopted that would not infringe on my ability to pursue my chosen sport and shooting activities. While some of these alternative measures may impose additional costs on licence holders, they would all have a greater effect to harden, detect and deter the theft of securely stored firearms from the ACT than the arbitrary firearm numbers being proposed in the Bill.

In my view imposing additional storage and regular inspection measures on lawful firearms holders would have a demonstrated effect of reducing the loss of registered firearms to the illicit market and would provide greater efficacy and less impact on licence holders than the arbitrary firearm number limits proposed in the Bill.

I would ask that you keep my personal information confidential for the following reasons:

- I would be prepared to participate in any hearing process by the Committee, on the proviso that my personal information was kept confidential, to avoid any security risks associated with my personal information being my public.

Yours sincerely;

4 March 2026