



Terms of Reference

Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reforms

Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026

Firearms (Firearm Prohibition Orders) Amendment Bill 2026

Petition E-PET-002-26 Firearms Reform – Evidence Based Police and Proper Consultation

Standing Order 174 (amended 6 March 2008, 29 November 2018, 30 March 2021, and 31 August 2023), provides that:

'174. Upon a Bill being presented to the Assembly, the bill stands referred to the relevant Assembly standing or select committee for consideration, and:

- (a) if the subject matter of the bill makes it unclear which committee it should be referred to, the Speaker will determine the appropriate committee;
- (b) the committee must advise the Speaker of its decision to inquire into the bill within three weeks of its presentation, or one week after the relevant scrutiny report is tabled, whichever is later;
- (c) the Speaker must arrange for all Members to be notified; and
- (d) the committee must complete its report within three months of the bill's presentation, with the exception of the last sitting period of the year where the committee must report within four months of the bill's presentation.

The Committee's terms of reference are to consider the following:

The [Firearms \(Public Safety\) Amendment Bill 2026](#) was presented in the Assembly on 4 February 2026 and referred to the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs. At its meeting on 11 February 2026, the Committee resolved to undertake an inquiry into the Bill and the amendments which the Bill proposes.

The [Firearms \(Firearm Prohibition Orders\) Amendment Bill 2026](#) was presented in the Assembly on 24 February 2026 and referred to the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs. At its meeting on 4 March 2026, the Committee resolved to inquire into the Bill and the amendments which the Bill proposes as part of a combined inquiry into both bills.

Petition E-PET-002-26 [Firearms Reform – Evidence Based Police and Proper Consultation](#) was presented to the Assembly on 26 March 2026 with 1108 signatures and referred to the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs. At its meeting on 1 April 2026, the Committee resolved to extend this inquiry to consider the issues raised in the petition.

The terms of the petition are as follows:

Reason for this Petition

To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory we, the undersigned residents of the Australian Capital Territory, draw the attention of the Legislative Assembly to the following: That:

1. The regulation of firearms is a serious matter of public safety, requiring careful, evidence based and proportionate policymaking.
2. The ACT already operates under one of the most comprehensive firearms regulatory frameworks in Australia, including strict licensing, registration, storage, training and compliance requirements.
3. Several other jurisdictions have introduced rapid legislative changes that do not adequately consider the circumstances leading up to the recent terror attack, the unique environment of the ACT, or the need for proper consultation.
4. The ACT Government is currently undertaking a reform project for the ACT Firearms Registry and had commenced consultation on potential changes prior to the attack.
5. Responsible law making requires that any proposed reforms be informed by: a. reliable evidence of actual issues or gaps; b. operational experience from agencies responsible for administering the system; c. expert advice from those directly affected; and d. genuine consultation with impacted stakeholders.
6. Lawful firearms owners in the ACT include primary producers, pest controllers, sporting shooters, conservation workers, hunters, rural landholders, security organisations and government agencies, all of whom rely on firearms for legitimate and lawful purposes.
7. Effective public safety policy must focus on criminal misuse, trafficking and illegal possession of firearms, rather than imposing unnecessary regulatory burdens on licensed, compliant firearm owners.
8. Effective and fair regulation requires that licensed firearm owners are not subjected to measures that imply criminality or extremism, particularly when they have demonstrated ongoing compliance with stringent ACT requirements.

Requested Actions

Therefore, we respect that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to:

1. Defer the introduction of any major firearms legislative reforms until the findings of the current Australian and Victorian Government investigations have been completed, released and properly assessed;
2. Commit to an evidence-based policy process, ensuring that any proposed changes are: a. justified by data; b. supported by expert analysis; and c. demonstrably linked to improved public safety outcomes;
3. Undertake genuine, fair and reasonable consultation with affected stakeholders, including: a. licensed firearm owners; b. firearms dealers and retailers; c. primary producers and land managers; d. pest control operators; e. sporting organisations; f. conservation bodies; g. government agencies and security organisations that hold licences; and h. rural landholders;
4. Ensure that any reform measures are proportionate, fair and targeted, with a clear focus on criminal misuse and illegal firearms rather than lawful, compliant ownership; and
5. Publish a Regulatory Impact Statement outlining the economic, social, operational and compliance impacts of any proposed reforms.