



Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform

Submission number: 064

Submitter: Name Withheld

Date authorised for publication: 13 April 2026

SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO FIREARMS (PUBLIC SAFETY) AMENDMENT BILL 2026 AND FIREARMS (FIREARM PROHIBITION ORDERS) AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Introduction

1. Like every Australian I was sickened to watch the tragic and senseless attack at Bondi. I am fully supportive of well-considered, evidence-based solutions to reduce the risk of that happening again. That said, I do not think that the firearm law reforms being proposed will improve public safety, moreover, they will negatively impact law abiding shooters in the community.
2. My submission will provide comment on the planned changes and will propose an alternative solution that may better improve public safety. For context, I speak from the perspective of a target shooter only – although I have hunted, I no longer do so.

Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026

Limits to the number of firearms that may be owned

3. I do not understand how limiting the number of firearms a licenced person may own will reduce risk. If someone want to do harm to others then any number of firearms is too many, and history shows us that even if no firearms are available then they will use other means such as knives or even cars to achieve their aim.
4. I am a keen member of a target shooting club that participates in the SSAA Combined Services Discipline. The Discipline uses a range of firearms – service pistols, service training rifles, historic military rifles, and long-range tactical rifles. There are multiple classes within each of those. Firearms cannot generally be used in multiple classes within the same event – in some cases the rules specifically disallow this, but firearms are often suited to one match but not another. Our nationally approved discipline rules allow spare firearm in case of a mechanical failure – this is especially applicable when one has travelled across the country to compete at National level (for example this year we are competing in Western Australia).
5. Our club has developed a guide to the number of firearms needed to shoot matches at club, state, and national level. Obviously not all are required by all members – the member’s level of participation dictates how many they require. To shoot all available club matches a member could need nineteen firearms, assuming that they wish to select the most competitive firearm for each match. To participate in all offered matches at the National competition you need twelve firearms (not including spares). The MFC Operations Manual provides more details on requirements should you need it – it is available online at www.actmfc.com/_files/ugd/e9bc87_9e746cca057647fb973a4979bd288c07.pdf.

6. Put simply, the proposed ten firearm limit will not even allow legitimate target shooters to compete in all events at the National competition. Given that competitions are rostered in a different state in Australia each year, it is desirable that competitors can maximise their participation to justify the time and expense of travel.
7. Many people participate in more than just one Discipline, so they may require even more firearms as often a firearm that is good for one match will not work for another type of shooting.
8. Finally, if any adult shooter is to train juniors in the safe handling of firearms, then very often a different firearm is required due to the different physical capabilities of a junior shooter. Because juniors are prohibited from owning firearms, their firearms also must fit within the parent's cap.
9. Although the Registrar may approve a greater number of firearms for an individual under the planned legislation, that places a burden on both the Registrar and the legitimate shooters to write, review and approve properly justified requests.

Changes to Firearm Categories

10. I understand the intent on the ban of rapid reloading firearms.
11. In terms of the Combined Services Discipline, there are a few historic straight pull rifles that will be removed from law abiding shooters under a blanket recategorization. These rifles are useful for some competitions. In a similar fashion, there are fifteen shot magazine .22LR calibre rifles that are perfectly suited to Combined Services matches – one of which involves firing fifteen rounds at the target within 4 minutes. This could negatively impact some competitors to a small degree.
12. Perhaps the legislation might be amended to allow firearms manufactured prior to 1946 to be exempt. Otherwise, I am ambivalent with respect to this proposed change.

Prohibition on belt-fed firearms

13. I one hundred percent support prohibiting belt fed firearms (e.g. machine guns), even though I do not understand how this is linked to the Bondi massacre – there were no belt fed firearms of any type used.

Introduce an offence to possess digital blueprints for the computer-aided manufacture of firearms and firearm parts.

14. I agree with this change given the specific application to defined firearm parts.

In Summary

15. Because limits to the number of firearms owned negatively impacts many law-abiding firearm users, yet does not improve public safety, I cannot support the passage of the Bill in its current state.
16. If the numbers limits were removed and categorisation changes amended to allow sporting shooters continued access to those firearms, then I would support the Bill.

Proposed Alternative Solution

17. Reducing the risk of unsuitable, or criminal, people from having access to firearms can be done in a simpler manner than the complex and divisive controls being proposed. There are two key things that are key:
 - a. Better background checking for lawful firearm owners. Increasing the level and frequency of background checking will reduce the number of unsuitable persons who legally own firearms, as was the case in the Bondi massacre. This is already proposed by the Federal Government, with ASIO to help with background checks. These checks should be re-done periodically to ensure that people's circumstances do not change over time. The checks process should ideally be managed in much the same manner as an Australian Government security clearance.
 - b. Increased storage governance. Assuming that checking backgrounds limits firearm ownership to those people with a genuine reason, criminals will need to steal or illegally import firearms. The Federal Government is already aiming to better prevent illegal importation. This leaves theft of legally owned firearms. I will ignore dealers, police, and military storage in this submission. If we ensure that home storage requirements are appropriate to mitigate risk, and regularly check that those requirements are met, then logically there will be fewer illegal firearms on the street. It is sensible to make storage requirements proportional to the consequence of compromise - the more firearms held at an address, the higher the security arrangements needed.

Firearms (Firearm Prohibition Orders) Amendment Bill 2026

18. I agree with this change as it brings us in line with the other states. I support the passage of the Bill in its current form.

Conclusion

19. I strongly believe that if we reduce the risk of unsuitable people having access to firearms through improved background checking and better governed firearm security, then the numbers limits and re-classification measures proposed in the Bill would be unnecessary. This approach would improve public safety without negatively impacting shooting sports in the ACT.

20. I am happy to talk to the committee if they desire clarification of anything in my submission, but I do not request to speak at the Inquiry.

Very respectfully,