



Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform

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Submission to the Inquiry into the *Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill* 2026

Introduction

I am a licensed firearms owner in the ACT, operating across multiple lawful roles including as a sports shooter, pest control operator, Authorised Firearms Instructor, collector, and as a licensed firearms dealer. I make this submission to outline the personal and professional impacts of the proposed reforms and to raise concerns regarding proportionality, consistency and the treatment of individuals who have been repeatedly assessed as suitable under the current regulatory framework.

I wish to state clearly that the actions that led to this Bill are detestable and have no place in our community. They are not reflective of the conduct, values or standards upheld by licensed firearms owners, instructors or industry participants. However, policy responses must remain individually targeted and evidence-based, rather than broadly applied to those who have demonstrated compliance and responsibility.

Demonstrated Suitability Across Multiple Roles

I have been assessed by ACT Policing as a suitable person across several capacities:

- As a firearms licence holders,
- Through the approval of multiple Permits to Acquire (PTA),
- As a licensed firearms dealer,
- As an AFP authorised firearms instructor,
- As an approved Prohibited Weapons Permit holder for suppressors,
- As an individual authorised to conduct a pest control business, including in public environments.

Each of these roles involves a high degree of scrutiny, oversight and accountability. In particular:

- As a firearms dealer, I am entrusted with the lawful supply and handling of firearms within a tightly regulated system,
- As a pest control operator, I have been authorised to undertake activities that directly engage with public safety considerations and in high value places,

- As an instructor, I am responsible for supporting new shooters and reinforcing safe handling practices.

These approvals reflect a consistent finding by the regulator that I am competent, responsible and suitable to undertake these activities.

Impact of Firearms Caps on Business and Livelihood

The introduction of caps on firearm ownership will have a direct and significant impact on ability to operate my pest control business.

Pest control work requires access to different firearms suited to specific tasks, environments and safety considerations. Limiting the number of firearms I can lawfully possess creates a situation where I will be forced to choose between:

- Maintaining the tools necessary to operate my business effectively and safely, and
- Retaining firearms used for recreational and sporting purposes.

This is not a theoretical concern, it is a practical constraint that affects my ability to carry out work that already been assessed and approved by the regulator.

The proposed framework effectively forces a choice between livelihood and recreation, despite both being recognised as legitimate and lawful activities. This raises concerns around work rights, proportionality and economic impact, particularly where there is no evidence that individuals in my position present a heightened risk.

Impact on Instruction and Training Activities

As a firearms instructor, I play an active role in supporting new and developing shooters, including introducing them to safe handling practices, legal responsibilities and appropriate use of different firearms.

The ability to access and utilise a range of firearms is an important part of effective instruction. I understand that the Bill proposes not to include firearms that I am a registered user of where the registered owner is a composite entity, however the impacts of firearms caps will still force a reduction in my contribution to supporting firearms training.

This is as a result of needing to choose between sports and recreational shooting and business activities.

For other people in similar situations to me, it will also have the same impact, particularly where they are involved in multiple recognised shooting disciplines and they are being forced to choose between which they continue in.

This creates a perverse outcome where reforms may reduce trainer engagement with formal training pathways, despite these being critical to maintaining a strong culture of safety.

Impact on Dealer Operations and Industry Confidence

As a licensed firearm dealer, I operate within one of the most heavily regulated parts of the firearms framework. I have been vetted and approved to undertake this role and regularly engage with, and support, the ACT Firearms Registry in ensuring compliance and accountability across the system.

Despite this, the proposed reforms appear to treat individuals in my overall position, both in a personal and business capacity, as presenting as increased risk to public safety, without any change in conduct or evidence to support that shift in assessment.

While I understand that the Bill does not limit the number of firearms a firearms dealer can possess, the Bill will limit demand for the services of firearms dealers and severely restrict trade.

The proposed amendments risk undermining confidence in a system where individuals are approved to operate at a high level of responsibility yet are simultaneously subject to increasingly restrictive assumptions about risk.

Inconsistency in Risk Assessment

A particularly concerning aspect of the proposed reforms is the inconsistency in how risk is assessed and applied.

In my pest control role, I have been:

- Approved by the Registry to undertake firearms activities in public places, and
- Trusted to operate in environments that require a high level of judgment, safety awareness and accountability.

Despite this, the proposed framework suggests that I, and other firearms licence holders, cannot be trusted to own more than a prescribed number of firearms.

This raises a fundamental question of proportionality and logic.

If an individual is trusted to safely use firearms in public and operational contexts, on what basis are they considered a risk in relation to the number of firearms they own within a controlled, compliant storage environment?

This inconsistency undermines confidence in the policy rationale and suggest a move away from individualised, evidence-based assessment toward arbitrary limits.

Impact on Shared Ownership and Household Compliance

In addition to my individual roles, my household operates within the law through shared storage and access arrangements.

The proposed changes will require us to either:

- Purchase additional firearms and storage infrastructure to remain compliant, or
- Reduce our lawful holdings.

Both options impose unnecessary financial and practical burdens without a clear public safety benefit, and disproportionately affect households that are already compliant.

Presumption of Risk

The cumulative effect of the proposed measures is that individual's such as myself, who have been repeatedly assessed, approved and entrusted across multiple roles, are not being treated as an inherent risk to public safety.

This is difficult to reconcile with my regulatory history, my professional responsibilities and my demonstrated compliance and conduct.

It also contributes to stigma and reputational harm, particularly for those working within the firearms industry or providing services that support public safety outcomes.

Conclusion

I respectfully submit that the proposed reforms will have significant, disproportionate and unintended impacts, including:

- Forcing a choice between business operations and recreational participation,
- Undermining the delivery of training and instruction to new shooters,
- Creating inconsistencies in how risk is assessed and managed,
- Imposing restrictions on individual's who have already been extensively vetted and approved,
- Affecting livelihoods and industry participation without clear evidence of benefit.

I urge the Committee to ensure that any reforms remain proportionate, evidence-based and targeted, and that they do not inadvertently restrict the activities of individuals who contribute positively to safety, training and compliance with the ACT firearms framework.