



# 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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I write to express concerns regarding the proposed firearms legislation and to recommend a more evidence-based approach that focuses on measurable public safety outcomes rather than arbitrary restrictions on law-abiding firearms owners.

### **Focus on criminal misuse rather than lawful ownership**

Legislation should prioritise preventing criminals and potential terrorists from obtaining firearms licences and weapons. Stronger background checks, improved monitoring of high-risk individuals, and intelligence-led enforcement would directly address genuine risks to community safety. Restricting categories or types of firearms commonly owned by licensed individuals does not clearly demonstrate measurable benefits in reducing criminal misuse.

### **Lack of evidence supporting firearm number limits**

The proposed limits on the number of firearms an individual may own appear arbitrary and are not supported by clear evidence demonstrating improved public safety outcomes. No justification has been presented showing that licensed individuals who lawfully own multiple firearms present a greater risk to the community.

Such limits also create economic impacts for individuals and businesses, and risk distorting the lawful market without clear safety benefit.

### **Restrictions on straight-pull firearms**

The proposed changes affecting straight-pull firearms require further technical review. Many straight-pull rifles are low-powered rimfire firearms, including older or antique designs commonly used for small game hunting and pest control. Some feature factory-produced tubular magazines with capacities of 11 or 12 rounds, reflecting historical design rather than increased lethality.

It would be appropriate for independent technical experts to demonstrate the functional differences between straight-pull and bolt-action rifles, and to assess whether any meaningful increase in risk exists. These platforms should also be compared to already highly restricted semi-automatic and automatic firearms to provide an evidence-based justification for any proposed regulatory changes.

### **Magazine size restrictions and rimfire rifles**

Particular attention should be given to proposed magazine capacity limits, especially for rimfire firearms. Rimfire rifles typically have significantly lower power and limited effective lethality compared with centre-fire rifles and have historically not been associated with criminal misuse in Australia.

Many rimfire firearms — particularly older or traditional designs — include higher-capacity tubular magazines as part of their original factory configuration for small game hunting and pest control. Restrictions on these systems risk capturing low-risk firearms without clear evidence of increased public safety benefit. Any regulatory changes should clearly demonstrate that restrictions on rimfire magazine capacity will meaningfully reduce

risk.

### **Compensation and economic impacts**

The proposal raises concerns regarding compensation for licensed individuals and firearms retailers affected by reclassification or ownership limits. Where government policy requires surrender of lawfully acquired property, fair market compensation should be guaranteed.

The concept of a “voluntary buyback” is difficult to characterise as voluntary where the government maintains records of registered firearms. Market conditions also show that uncertainty surrounding proposed limits has already depressed used firearm values due to increased supply and concern about reduced compensation.

### **Independent and evidence-based policy development**

The ACT has the opportunity to develop policy tailored to its own community, evidence base, and public safety needs. Legislators should ensure that any reforms are guided by local evidence, expert consultation, and demonstrable outcomes.

As a progressive principle, good public policy should be thoughtful, proportionate, and grounded in evidence rather than adopted by default. The ACT should avoid replicating measures from New South Wales solely due to geographic proximity, and instead pursue balanced, evidence-based solutions that genuinely enhance community safety while respecting lawful ownership.

### **Conclusion**

I encourage the Committee to prioritise targeted measures that prevent criminal access to firearms, ensure policy decisions are supported by clear evidence of improved public safety, and provide fair and transparent compensation arrangements where lawful property is affected.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Mr Tristan Kennedy