



# Submission cover sheet

## Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform

Submission number: 035

Submitter: Simon Miller

Date authorised for publication: 11 March 2026

**Submission to the ACT legislative assembly regarding the proposed Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026**

Members of the Legislative Assembly, thank you for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the proposed changes to ACT firearms laws.

My name is Simon Miller, I am 55 years of age and I have lived in the ACT since 1994, when I moved here from Victoria. Aside from a break during my employment with Victoria Police and the start of my AFP career I have lived in the ACT for the rest of that time until the present.

I am a former Police Officer, having joined Victoria Police in 2001 and transferred to the AFP in 2006. I returned to the ACT in 2008 with the AFP and from that point served across the organisation in a variety of policing roles, including in the ACT Firearms Registry. I am married and have raised two children to adulthood, through the ACT school system.

I am a licensed shooter who undertakes sporting shooting disciplines in rifle and black powder and undertakes vertebrate pest control and hunting activities. Own a number of firearms for these purposes.

I wish to address the changes proposed in the Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill and will do so individually for ease of comprehension.

1. Changes to the number of firearms an individual may possess:
  - a. Many firearms users engage in different disciplines and firearms related activities for which different types and calibres of firearms are appropriate. If I may use an analogy it is like a tradesperson using different tools for different tasks. One would not use a hammer for a task that required a screwdriver. Ethical hunting requires the uses of firearm calibres sufficient for the ethical harvesting of the game or pest being targeted. A cartridge suitable for taking small game such as rabbits would be inadequate and unethical to use on larger animals such as pigs, goats or other pest species, likewise calibres suitable for those species would be unethical to use on even larger species such as deer or other large vertebrate pests.
  - b. Pure sporting shooters, those who compete in target shooting competitions likewise use different equipment for different disciplines. Short range rimfire firearms used for one discipline are inadequate for long range shooting.
  - c. Placing an arbitrary limit on the number of firearms able to be owned by a lawful shooter is a restriction that has no benefit as regards public safety. Lawful shooters store their firearms and ammunition according to the law and are already subject to comprehensive firearms laws that require them

to obtain specific storage equipment and to consent to random checks and regulatory activity. Lawful firearm owners do not object to these measures as they provide security to society by restricting illegal access to firearms. The number of firearms is immaterial if these requirements are adhered to.

2. Changes to the firearms that may be possessed and used under category A,B, C and D licences, including restrictions on magazine capacity and action mechanisms authorised under each licence category.
  - a. I understand that this amendment stems completely from the type of firearms used by the offenders at Bondi in the horrific terrorist attack in December of last year. The use of a straight pull rifle and lever release shotguns has been 'latched onto' by the media and some government figures in such a way as to prevent these firearms as being more effective or dangerous than other types of firearms.
  - b. I would respectfully submit that it is not the action of any type of manually actioned firearm, these being bolt, lever, straight pull, pump or lever release action that make them more or less dangerous. It is rather the level of training of the shooter and whether or not that shooter should have had access to firearms in the first place. A trained person with a firearm is far more dangerous than an untrained person with the same firearm, whatever the type of firearm.
  - c. Restricting the types available to licensed, lawful shooters does nothing to prevent these firearms falling into the hands of criminals, who in a vast majority of cases are not interested in acquiring manually actioned firearms by choice, preferring to target semi-automatic or even automatic firearms which are already heavily restricted across Australia being largely confined to category D licence holders.
  - d. I would urge the Assembly to consider instead an amendment to firearms offence penalties for the unlawful possession of any firearms with matching increases in penalties for those offences and the introduction of more serious aggravating circumstances for using firearms in the commission of an offence. This would place the onus on those who are breaking the law with firearms and not unduly and unfairly impact those who uphold the law and act within its restrictions as law abiding citizens.
3. Introducing a prohibition on belt-fed firearms
  - a. I respectfully submit that this measure is a result of a mistake of fact on the part of law makers in NSW. Belt fed firearms are completely illegal in Australia to the best of my knowledge and have been in my living memory. Instead I believe that the misinterpretation of media reporting led to someone believing the Bondi beach firearm was a 'belt fed' shotgun, a

firearm that doesn't in fact exist, which was then placed in the NSW Legislation without consultation with firearms experts.

4. Creating a new offence for the possession of digital blueprints for the computer-aided manufacture of firearms and firearm parts.
  - a. I support this measure completely. Licensed firearms owners will purchase such accessories and fitting as may be legal for their firearms from licensed firearms dealers or from online for those items that it is legal to do so. The only people seeking to manufacture firearms through these sorts of blueprints are criminals and should face the full weight of the law.
5. I would in conclusion respectfully make a series of submissions for your consideration.
  - a. Consider the funding of extra members in ACT Policing to enforce and administer firearms laws in the ACT. Extra staff for the ACT firearms registry will allow for greater coverage and more frequent regulatory activity. Lawful firearms owners would welcome this measure as an indication that they are not to be unfairly targeted for the illegal actions of a relatively small number of criminals.
  - b. Do not change the classifications of firearms from their current ones, instead place greater emphasis on intelligence sharing and regulatory action by Police towards those firearms owners or persons identified to be of concern by national and state authorities and take actions to prevent their acquisition of firearms licences or illegal firearms.
  - c. Increase the penalties for illegal firearm possession, use and other activity such as sales or manufacture. Heavy fines, jail sentences and firearms prohibition orders will go further towards protecting the safety of the citizens of the ACT than passing laws that only effect those firearms owners who are already complying with the law.
  - d. I would finally urge the members of the Assembly to please consider this subject objectively and not through the lens of personal political belief. While I understand that some members are personally opposed to firearms, firearms sports and related activities I contend that, in the name of objective fairness to all voters with the ACT that they make every effort to consider the fairness of imposing harsher laws on those who are already complying with existing laws in every way.

Thank you for your time.

Simon Miller