



# Submission cover sheet

## Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform

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# A.C.T. PISTOL ASSOCIATION

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Legislative Assembly's Legal Affairs Committee for Inquiry

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3 March 2026

## **Inquiry into Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026**

### **ACT PISTOL ASSOCIATION SUBMISSION**

I am writing on behalf of the ACT Pistol Association (ACTPA) due to our serious concerns of the impact that aspects of the proposed Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026 will have on the member clubs of the ACTPA and licensed shooters in the ACT.

Changes to ACT Firearms legislation for residents in the ACT who hold firearms licences is not going to change the tragic outcome of what occurred at Bondi on 14 December 2025. Changes in people's behaviour and non-acceptance of bad behaviour will go some way to make the community a safer place.

#### **New Section 54A Authority conferred by licence—limitation on number of firearms possessed or used by licensees**

We are seriously concerned that the proposal to limit the number of licensed firearms individual license holders in the ACT may hold will inhibit the ability and opportunities of our competition shooting athletes to reach the level of competition they aim for nationally and at international level.

Many Australians engaged in the sport of shooting entered the sport for recreation, interaction with other members of the community, and enjoyment at club level. Others in the sport are excelling in the competition aspect. As a Shooting Association in the ACT, we are very concerned that the proposed changes to Firearms Legislation and Regulations, in particular the limit on the number of firearms individual licence holders can possess, will impact the high level of success that Australia has the potential to continue to have in winning medals at Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games, World Championships, and World Cups.

ACT shooting athletes have for many years performed very well at National Championships level as have our Australian shooting athletes in the many different shooting disciplines who have performed extremely well for decades on the world stage. We are fortunate to have several current World Champions amongst our members nationwide today. We would not want to see this jeopardised by a

decrease in our athlete talent pool as a result of disheartened/disadvantaged athletes because they cannot possess the number of firearms they require to be competitive in the events they shoot. To be at the elite level of competition shooting and/or on the development pathway to elite, it is common for athletes to have two identical firearms for each match they shoot, the second being a back-up should their firearm malfunction while in competition. This applies to all our able body and para-athletes in all disciplines. Obviously the depth of need for the number of firearms an individual requires, not only for national and international competition but also for the many different disciplines and matches that are shot at Club level is not sufficiently known or understood by those drafting the proposed Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026 in reducing the number of firearms licenced to an individual. It is not just the athlete at international level who needs more than ten (10) firearms to be adequately equipped to be competitive, it is also those athletes who are on the development pathway training and competing in domestic and national competitions. We should not miss the pool of shooters who will become the elite athletes of the future, where the talent is at its' formative stage. It is at these early stages in the clubs at the local community level where members are exposed to the different events and are learning the different techniques that require the use of different firearms for different matches. If athletes at all these levels are denied access to the appropriate equipment, then we will not have future champions coming through the Clubs in State/Territories and indeed Australia. Licenced shooters at local Club level are equally interested in and enjoy shooting the different events and do need the necessary firearms for all these events.

The other aspect of the proposed limit on firearms that has been overlooked is that while minors (under 18 years of age) with Firearms Permits can shoot/compete, they cannot possess a firearm. Hence the parent/guardian who licenses the firearms for the minor to use will very quickly reach the imposed ten (10) limit. This is an enormous barrier to the entry of new and emerging young talent to the sport. A very shortsighted and (hopefully) unintended consequence that needs to be corrected now before the Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026 is passed.

The proposed Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026 appears in Section 52A (1) to have overlooked the need for the inclusion of Club Armourers licence holders in the no limitation on the number of firearms they may possess provision, in order for Club Armourers to be able to continue to execute firearms transfer transactions between club members as required by current firearms legislation. Is this going to be rectified?

#### **User Registration – Refusal. New section 171 (1) (c)**

This is of huge concern for ACTPA and our member clubs who have ACT Firearms Registry approved Club Instructors who undertake the necessary instruction of new shooters during their six month "Probation Period" instruction prior to application for Category H (Pistol) Licence using club pistols registered on the Club Composite Entity licences. It would make sense to not include a firearm on an individual's licence as a "Registered User" in the count of the maximum number of firearms allowed for these ACT Firearms Registry approved Club Instructors. This needs to be corrected now before the ACT Legislative Assembly considers passing the Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026.

It is a widely accepted fact that laws that are rushed and not developed through consultation with people with knowledge and experience in the relevant field, are poor laws and not as effective as they should be.

I urge you to reconsider the limiting of the number of licensed firearms for individual license holders and the other points made in this submission and recognise the negative impact this Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026 will have on our shooting sports in the ACT and indeed Australia wide. It is not good for a legitimate sport that wins gold medals for Australia at Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games, World Championships and World Cups in all competition shooting disciplines, a sport that is already well regulated by relevant authorities, to now be more heavily restricted with the limiting of the sporting equipment essential for its' members to compete.

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ACT Pistol Association