



Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform

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Submitter: Name Withheld

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Submission to the Committee of the Inquiry of the Firearms (Public Safety)

Amendment Bill 2026

Dear Standing Committee on Legal Affairs,

Please accept my submission regarding the Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026.

I would like my name and contact information to be withheld, as I believe making public the names of who owns firearms, their value and where they live detract from public safety rather than enhancing it.

In preparation for the writing of this submission I have read many of the submissions lodged so far. Several provide compelling reasons for the ACT Government to focus on other aspects of the misuse of firearms rather than caps and restrictions unsupported by evidence. I trust that these submissions will have full consideration by the committee and if refuted, I trust the committee will detail its reasons.

In this submission I will focus on my personal experience. I hope to demonstrate how someone who shoots multiple disciplines and hunts can exceed the proposed cap. Unique to the ACT is that there are two clay target clubs offering different competitions at different times, allowing shotgun shooters a lot of scope to shoot in different disciplines including Down The Line Trap, Universal Trench, ISSF Trench, 5 Stand/Compak, Simulated Field, American Skeet and ISSF Skeet. We also enjoy close access to clay target clubs based in Boorowa, Cooma, Goulburn and Yass. With rifle competitions there are a diverse range of competition types that require different rifles of varying calibres, some with scopes and some without. These rifle competitions are held at times that only occasionally overlap with clay target competitions presenting a wide range of competitions for shooters.

I started shooting following my forced retirement in early 2018 due to work stress and health matters. I had become a recluse and was suffering from social isolation. I had intense counselling and have been treated by a psychiatrist, whom I continue to see at least 4 monthly. In late 2021 two friends managed to get me to come with them to a clay target event. I was permitted (under supervision by an authorised trainer) to have a go. I have been an avid shooter and club volunteer ever since. Being an active shooter has provided an enormous boost to my overall well-being.

Being an active shooter is a major aspect of who I am now. I don't expect other people to understand my interest and sport but surely it can be accepted.

Lack of Evidence behind the proposed amendment.

Evidence relating to the Bondi tragedy has thus far indicated that there were failures in the nation's intelligence system and failings in the NSW Firearms Registry. The NSW authorities had the ability to cancel the perpetrator's firearm licence and thus remove all firearms from their control. If he had only acquired two firearms the tragedy still could have happened, he should not have been allowed to have a licence at all, let alone acquire a firearm. Only strong background checks and efficient regulation would have averted this tragedy and the other tragedies involving police deaths. I humbly suggest that these are the areas that should be the focus of government.

The proposed limits are simply a repeat of those introduced in Western Australia. There was no evidence behind that legislation. It was justified as an expected increase in public safety, no evidence of such has ever been made public so it is reasonable to assume that it does not exist. Other submissions delve into the lack of evidence and background in detail.

I note that some submissions quote US statistics. These are largely irrelevant to the Australian setting. The US does not have the licensing conditions of Australia. Why can't these submissions refer to Australian research, is it because it doesn't suit? Other submissions show how gun ownership and crime are falling not increasing.

Why does anyone have so many guns?

The current legislation already has a cap on firearms – it is zero. A licensed person can only acquire a firearm based on genuine need and each acquisition must go through the registry approval process. Firearms ownership is not a right, and the number of permitted firearms is not unlimited. It is limited by the approval process. The national registry is a vital tool that must be funded and implemented. It will allow the registry to quickly see the types of firearms a person has and investigate or seek more detail if there are apparent overlaps.

While I currently own 5 firearms this is a function of my development as a new competition shooter. So far, my firearms represent a \$50,000 investment. I expect to acquire 2-3 more shotguns and several rifles. Most shooters generally stick to one or two disciplines probably because of time and financial constraints.

I will take you through the different firearms I own and intend to acquire to demonstrate that caps will only serve to limit my sporting interests. The threat I pose won't change at all.

Firearm 1

Initially I bought one shotgun and used it as an allrounder for various clay target disciplines. This gun has adjustable stock height and cast, and an adjustable rib. Shooting the different disciplines required adjusting the gun to suit the different targets. It is now my backup gun if I have a failure during a competition and it is also my interim skeet gun but is too heavy.



All-rounder: swappable chokes, adjustable monte carlo stock and adjustable rib. A heavy gun

Firearm 2

As I improved, I purchased a shotgun specifically designed for the Trench trap discipline. My gun has a highly customisable TSK stock (see #4) and a high rib.



Universal Trap, high and adjustable rib and swappable chokes, this one has a monte carlo adjustable stock. The heaviest and usually the longest gun for momentum swing through the fast targets.

Firearm 3

I then purchased another shotgun for simulated field shooting, again highly customised TSK stock, lighter weight and a flat rib.



Sporting with TSK competition stock and variable chokes

Gun 4 and 5

I own a basic .22LR and a .17HMR for small pest control and target competition in the 50 to 100m range.



Typical rimfire (Cat A) e.g. .22 and .17HMR, centrefire (Cat B) have the same form

Gun 6, 7 and maybe 8

I am about to buy a specific rifle for target competition in the 50-100m category. I expect to expand into 200 to 500m in due course. The calibre is dictated by both the range and competition rules. I expect to have a high quality rimfire for the 50-100m and 1 or 2 centrefires of different calibres for the longer-range events. All these rifles would have scopes. These rifles are only suitable for target shooting and would be of no use in hunting or criminal activity. There are also competitions for open sight rifles, a serious shooter would not use the same rifles due to the elaborate process to unmount/mount and calibrate a scope.



Specialised rimfire and centrefire for precision target competitions

Gun 8 and 9

I would like to purchase dedicated shotguns for each of skeet (a short lightweight gun with a flat rib) and possibly for DTL (like the trench gun but shorter, lighter with a medium rib height) clay target disciplines. In DTL the gun is mounted on the shoulder in the firing position before the target is released. In skeet the gun is held lower and is raised after the target is released.



Skeet: This has a fairly standard stock though many will change to another type, fixed chokes, split barrels, lightest gun for quick movement



Down the Line: Note that the top of the stock on the skeet is lower than the DTL. Most shooters will opt for a Monte Carlo stock (Gun 1). Has fixed chokes.

Gun 10 to ?

Although I have my R licence my health has kept me away from pest eradication activity. Now post-surgery I plan to become more active during winter and especially at night in both forests and assisting rural landholders. I will probably look to two Cat B centrefire rifles, a 308 for large animals e.g. deer and a 243 for mid-size i.e. goats. My existing 22 and 17 will be for smaller pests i.e. cats, rabbits, foxes. I will need to duplicate at least two of these calibres with night vision scopes.

It is important that the committee understands that not using the appropriate calibre can cause undue suffering for the animal (too small calibre meaning an injured rather than dead animal). This is part of the responsibilities of hunting and part of hunting licence conditions.

I am also planning on duck and pheasant hunting next year and will buy a cheaper field shotgun.

My uncle has informed me that upon his passing he will leave to me the family collection which comprises an 1900 era shotgun, a couple of WW1/2 era rifles an 1894 Winchester and a black powder rifle. These are family heirlooms and are in working order.

I understand why some people say "oh why does someone have more than 10 guns" well now you know why. Will all my intended purchases happen, maybe not. What extra risk would I pose to the community if they did? And don't forget, I must apply for and have every acquisition approved by the registry.

Caps and reclassification

1. Criminals, terrorists and other bad actors don't care about the rules. They will break the law and find a way to get firearms to use as weapons. Intelligence and enforcement need the focus of government rather than making themselves and others who are ignorant of firearms feel good. That good feeling will only last until someone breaks the law again. Five weapons are more than a killer needs.
2. Approved storage is a form of self-regulating cap. Only a true enthusiast will make the effort to comply with the storage requirements for 10 or more firearms.

3. If and only if, there is evidence supporting the introduction of a cap it should apply to those types of firearms that have the most risk. Such an approach would recategorise lever/button shotguns to Category B and move competition rifles (as per gun 6 and 7 above) to Category A. Then the cap could simply apply to Category B. A higher cap would still need to apply for competition shooters who use standard form centrefire rifles or button/lever shotguns in competition.
4. If reclassifying competition rifles is not possible the registry should have the authority to exclude such a firearm from an individual's cap.
5. Gun clubs must be exempted from caps. Clubs have guns available for corporate events, new shooters events etc. Clubs need to be directly consulted as I don't know the quantities involved, though I am sure that it is more than 10.
6. Historic firearms such as I describe above would need to be exempt from the cap. The existing Category C which applies to "bona fide collectors" may not apply to persons such as myself who are active shooters and are the custodians of working family history.
7. The reclassification of straight pull rifles is unsupported by evidence. A person who has a bit of practice can shoot at a high rate of fire irrespective of the bolt action. I proved this myself with my two rifles. With my rifles I could shoot 10 rounds in a 10cm cluster at 50m in less than 15 seconds, admittedly that was with low power rimfire rifles. Training at Hythe School of Musketry for British Army riflemen required 15 hits on a 12-inch target at 300 yards in one minute. This was with 303 and as it had a 10-shot magazine needed to be reloaded. Once in action this rate of fire was usually increased. The record for this "Mad Minute" is 38 hits in one minute. Note that this is hits on a 12-inch target at 300 yards using open sights. The rate of fire will be higher and accuracy at 100m will be much greater. Reclassification of straight pull rifles will not improve safety.
8. If there are to be caps, I suggest that magazine quantities are more important than the number of centrefire rifles. A perpetrator with 5 magazines for a centrefire rifle is dangerous for a longer time than having just 1 magazine. Rimfire rifles don't present the same threat to life, and such a restriction is not required. This could be implemented by having Centrefire magazines a Category B item. With the digital registry police should be able to at least monitor who has what capacity.

9. While I don't disagree with reclassification of button\lever shotguns, my observations at competitions suggest the risk of these firearms pose is quite low. Many only hold 1 extra shell. However, they jam and are a bit cumbersome to load. A standard shotgun is far more reliable and quicker. Magazine capacity and/or reloading speed should perhaps be the basis for reclassification. There are a lot of these shotguns and I suggest the cost of buying them back is not a good use of money. Getting the registry systems going and resourcing may be a better use of funds.

From what I can tell of the shooting tragedies of the last few years the failing has been that the "wrong" people" have been approved for licences and have had acquisitions approved. Gun enthusiasts don't really feature in these events. It seems that untreated mental health issues and extremism whether it be political, religious based or so-called sovereign citizens are the common themes.

Please ensure you act on relevant (not the US) evidence and not the fears of the ignorant, or the knee-jerk reactions of others.

Is that too much to expect?

Thank you for this opportunity.