

Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024

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From: [REDACTED]
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To whom it may concern. My name is Jacob Landesmann of

I am aware that submissions have closed, but I am sending this anyway in the hopes that it might still be read. Unfortunately due to short amount of time given and working full time, I was not able to complete my submission in a timely manner. Having read through the proposed 2024 safety bill and finding the majority of this bill to be good and a necessary step towards reducing youth crime and other criminal activity, there are some sections which have left me feeling deeply concerned.

On the topic of Firearms Prohibition Orders-

S141E (4) states that someone is consider an associate of a recognised offender if that person

(a) has a romantic or familial relationship with the offender; or (b) associates with the offender in a way that involves seeking out or accepting the offender's company, whether the association happens in person or in another way, including, for example, electronically.

I feel a great deal of concern for how this section has been worded, as it appears very broad/open to interpretation and could potentially serve as a 'Trojan Horse' for law abiding firearms license holders.

I completely understand that the intent of FPOs is to help stop real criminals from having access to guns, but I feel that criminals will do what they do regardless of legislation, and that this legislation change in its current wording would more so have a damaging effect on law abiding license holders who happen to have any type of connection to someone with some type of criminal history, however minor it may be, which may have nothing to do with the firearms licence holder.

Some examples- a response firearms licence holder could receive an FPO if they are found to have an 'association' with someone who has an FPO against them who is friend on Facebook or happens to be in a group chat among other people, a work colleague either in a work place or for example is contracted out to a site with the license holder where regular communication is required before/during/after work hours, a member of a Martial arts club to which both people attend/train together, a distant family member who they occasionally see at gatherings or a parent/sibling who occasionally visits, an ex-partner of the license holder to whom they have children with and have to maintain communication/share the responsibilities, a personal trainer at a gym that the

licence holder sees for PT sessions, someone the licence holder has met or is speaking to on a dating or friendship seeking site, or even just a contact who received a minor criminal charge and has not informed anyone they know about it, or in some cases the charge turns out to be false and was evidently squashed. I will even go so far as to point out that if someone had a grudge against a firearms licence holder, they could send them anonymous messages from a temporary number or a hacked social media account- for example- detailing made-up criminal plans involving the license holder, just to intentionally get them in trouble.

Another concerning interpretation of this section is that a licensed firearms owner could find themselves potentially subject to an FPO because someone “felt threatened” on social media by the licensed shooters’ hunting pictures (showing them with a rifle) on social media or didn’t like a satirical or sarcastic comment and interpreted it as a threat, or even took a joke comment about (for example) robbing a bank to pay bills seriously.

S141(2)(d) says that when considering a FPO, they can also take into account “the individual’s behaviour, particularly violent or aggressive behaviour or behaviour involving the use of a weapon”. There are countless ways this could be used against a firearms owner, especially one who disagrees with popular opinions on any one of a number of subjects. An example of this is a neighbour of a license holder could make a complaint to police after seeing them loading/unloading cased firearms into their vehicle for transport and then stubbing their toe and cussing/slamming the boot of the car down as a response to the pain, which the neighbour found 'threatening', resulting in the license holder having an FPO put on them.

With how the legislation currently reads, I feel that a response law abiding firearms license holder who has done nothing wrong could potentially have theirs revoked and be given an FPO for any of the above situations which seems very unjust and unreasonable. I believe that an individuals status of being 'fit and proper' should be based on their own actions and not the actions of another person. I feel that this legislation must be re-written and elaborated on to effectively target and punish firearm-related/serious criminal activity and not potentially punish innocent license holders for simply being 'guilty by association' without any evidence of direct/intentional involvement in criminal activity.

I also feel that this legislation could benefit from the inclusion of a warning system to give license holders the opportunity to cease contact/cut ties with anyone they may be connected to who is found to be guilty of serious criminal activity and poses a genuine safety risk by being connected to someone is a licensed firearms owner, and/or to allow time to investigate whether there is any criminal connection/or knowledge of criminal activity involving the license holder.

I genuinely believe this legislation is coming from the best intentions to increase safety- which is something I strongly agree with, but currently it seems too broad and must be restructured to outline clear and narrowed-down legislation in detail.

My other areas of concern are the same ones as detailed by Shooters Union Australia in their submission. I am genuinely worried about how many innocent firearms licence holders this bill might effect. It could leave farmers/land owners unable to maintain their land/livestock, people who work in the firearms industry to lose their jobs, people who have spent thousands upon thousands on the hobby of target/competition shooting or collecting, and so on.

I respectfully urge you to please reconsider the current bill proposal and have these sections amended as to not unintentionally put the innocent in harms way.

I want to thank you for allowing the opportunity to lodge this submission, and for taking the time to read and consider my concerns, although I missed the time window given to submit.

Kind regards

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