

Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026

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Queensland Police Union of Employees

217 North Quay, Brisbane, Qld 4000. Telephone (07) 3259 1900

ABN 75 781 631 327



Email: president@qpu.asn.au

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Mr Martin Hunt MP
Member for Nicklin
Chair
Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee
JICSC@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Hunt

Inquiry into the *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026 (the Bill)*

The Queensland Police Union (QPU) represents over 13,000 members, the majority of whom are on the front line providing policing and emergency responses for the Queensland community. Whilst the QPU is dedicated to obtaining the best industrial outcomes and entitlements for its membership, it is also committed to contributing to the law and order debate to obtain realistic and workable solutions to combat crime and protect our community.

The QPU will always support initiatives to improve police and public safety. There is no place for antisemitism nor any other form of religious or racial hatred in our society. The tougher penalties contained in the Bill designed to keep guns out of the hands of terrorists and criminals are also welcomed as is the expansion of the Police Commissioner's power to issue Firearm Prohibition Orders (FPOs).

However, tougher penalties are just one of the policy levers available to Government to keep guns out of the hands of terrorists and criminals. Having declined the invitation to join the Australian Government's gun buy-back scheme, the Crisafulli Government's legislative response must be accompanied by other practical measures curtailing opportunities for terrorists and criminals to access guns in the first place. Publicising the permanent firearms amnesty that has been operating in Queensland for several years has been a missed opportunity. Consideration of offering public rewards for information leading to the recovery of illicit firearms is another.

The greatest threat to public safety lies with criminals and terrorists who gain access to guns through illicit markets. For this reason, the QPU calls for much stronger investment by the Crisafulli Government in firearms investigation and compliance activities by the Queensland Police Service (QPS) through its Weapons Licensing Registry and specialist investigation units.

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission has estimated there are more than 260,000 illicit firearms in circulation. According to the QPS, the rate of firearms reported stolen has increased by at least 21% within the last decade, with over 779 firearms reported stolen in 2023. Firearms can enter the illicit through theft from weapons dealers and licence holders, illegal manufacture, illegal importation, or diversion from the grey market that is, firearms once legally owned (mainly long-arms) but becoming illicit when they were not registered or surrendered as required by the 1996 gun reforms.

Owing to a lack of capacity, the number of audits conducted by the QPS of firearms licensees to check on such things as safe storage is less than 10% per annum. It is currently legal in Queensland to store up to 30 category A, B, C E & M weapons in a timber storage container. The QPU commends the Government on the long overdue amendment to address this risk by requiring steel containers as is contained in clauses 114 and 115 of the Bill.

In August 2024, the QPS set up an Illicit Firearms Working Group to look at the issue of theft and recovery of illicit firearms in Queensland. The operational activities of the Working Group are supported by specialist units such as the Firearms and Cannabis Team within the Service's Crime and Intelligence Command. However, Queenslanders should be alarmed by the lack of resources the QPS is allocating to this important work in spite of the Crisafulli Government's endeavour to restore safety where they live.

Similarly, QPS budgetary measures have resulted in the discontinuation of allowances and the scaling back of shifts for specialist police in Weapons Licensing, reducing their availability to respond to frontline enquiries to Monday to Friday only.

While the QPU applauds National Cabinet's acceleration of the National Firearms Register (NFR) after the tragic events of 14 December 2025 at Bondi, QPS progress to replace its aging Weapons Licensing Management System in readiness to join the NFR is sadly lagging, further undermining public safety.

The QPU makes the following further observations about various elements of the Bill.

Increases to maximum penalties (Explanatory Notes, pages 4 & 5).

The QPU supports increased maximum penalties for stealing a firearm or ammunition and certain offences in the *Weapons Act 1990*. Notably however, the minimum penalties for *Possession of Weapons*, *Unlawful supply of weapon*, and *Unlawful trafficking in weapons* are untouched.

The QPU recommends the proposed amendment to section 398 'Stealing' of the Criminal Code be reinforced by amending section 433 'Receiving tainted property' of the Code to include a minimum penalty of one year imprisonment if the property is a firearm or ammunition. This would send a clear signal and deterrent warning to those operating in, or contemplating entering, the illicit firearms market.

Overwhelmingly, the vast majority of finalised adult appearances in Queensland Courts, **where prohibited and regulated weapons and explosives offences were the most serious offence**, are dealt with in the Magistrates Court (Table 7, Justice report, Queensland, 2023-24, Queensland Government Statisticians Office).

The above referenced Justice report further reveals (at Table 20) convicted adult appearances in the Magistrates Court are highly unlikely to result in imprisonment.

Convicted adult appearances by most serious offence, by most serious penalty, Magistrates Court, 2023–24

Prohibited and regulated weapons and explosives offences

Most serious penalty	Number	Percentage
Fine	1,533	56.0%
Probation	419	15.3%
Nominal penalty (b)	239	8.7%
Good behaviour order	184	6.7%
Imprisonment (a)	171	6.2%
Wholly suspended sentence	115	4.2%
Community service	73	2.7%
Intensive correction	2	0.1%
Compensation/ Restitution	1	<0.1%
Total	2,737	100.0%

(a) Includes partially suspended sentence, as a period of imprisonment is required to be served prior to suspension of the remainder.

(b) Includes convicted not further punished.

The above revelations support the QPU position that strong legislation and stiff penalties alone are insufficient to deter terrorists and criminals and keep guns out of their hands.

Unlawful possession and distribution of blueprint material for manufacture of 3D printed firearms (Explanatory Notes, page 6).

The QPU supports new offence provision 67A but recommends it be broadened to capture any privately made firearm regardless of the potential method of manufacture. Additionally, the QPU recommends defining the term ‘manufacture’ in section 69 of the *Weapons Act* to include preparatory acts associated with privately made firearms. This would allow law enforcement agencies to act on incomplete or non-functioning privately made firearms and preparatory actions, such as assembling parts or possessing tools and materials.

Mandating Citizenship for firearms ownership (Explanatory Notes, page 6).

The QPU acknowledges Queensland alignment with the agreement at National Cabinet on this issue. It is noted non-citizens will be permitted to hold a licence for the genuine reasons of sports or target shooting, or for occupation requirements and the citizenship test applies prospectively.

The QPU argues there is no logical reason to exclude permanent residents from the licensing system. The Explanatory Notes assert the citizenship requirement will *simplify and enhance the process of conducting background checks*. However, permanent residents have already completed rigorous character and criminal history checks, including adherence to an Australian values statements, the provision of biometric identifiers, the provision of police certificates from every country in which they previously resided, as well as health checks. The rigours associated with the process to gain permanent residency take at least 18 months and often longer.

If enacted this provision will deliver a perverse outcome whereby Queensland Police Officers and Australian Defence Force personnel, who are permanent residents but not citizens, can carry a firearm in the course of their duties to protect and defend their communities but are excluded from holding a firearms licence for recreational shooting.

Although the citizenship test does not retrospectively affect existing licence holders it will apply to licence renewals. For existing licence holders who are non-citizens, this means recreational shooting and collecting will no longer be a genuine reason for possessing a firearm. This presents the risk of an adverse backlash against already overwhelmed and under resourced Weapons Licensing staff.

The QPU is also concerned the citizenship test unnecessarily restricts entry to the licensing system and may result in unintended consequences whereby otherwise law abiding people risk keeping or acquiring firearms outside of the legal framework leading to the potential expansion of the grey market.

Firearm Prohibition Orders

FPOs promise to be the single most effective measure in this Bill to keep guns out of the hands of terrorists and criminals. Allowing the Police Commissioner to issue all FPOs aligns Queensland with other interstate jurisdictions ensuring we are no longer a safe haven for the worst of the worst. This amendment streamlines an onerous process designed by the previous Government that failed to deliver a single FPO since commencement of the laws in August 2025.

Yet the Government has displayed restraint where there is still opportunity to press further. For example, it is open to the Government to also mandate automatic FPOs upon sentencing for a specified range of serious offences. Additionally, the Government is not establishing a public FPO register.

Nevertheless, the proposed amendment sends the strongest possible signal of the strength of the Crisafulli Government's conviction to keep the Queensland community safe and drive down crime.

Alternative ways of achieving policy objectives (Explanatory Notes, page 9)

The QPU is not persuaded legislative reform is the only means of delivering the Government objective to keep guns out of the hand of terrorists and criminal. The QPU has suggested other complementary options in this submission, including:

- publicising the permanent firearms amnesty in Queensland;
- offering public rewards for information leading to the recovery of illicit firearms;
- improving *Weapons Act* compliance activities, including expediting the replacement of the QPS Weapons Licensing Management System; and
- boosting the resources of specialist police investigative capabilities such as the Firearms and Cannabis Team in support of the Illicit Firearms Working Group.

Estimated cost for government implementation (Explanatory Notes, page 9)

The QPU holds significant concerns about the Government's stated position that *any financial impacts are to be met from existing resources* in so far as the implementation responsibilities relate to the QPS.

The Bill places an onus on Queensland Police to:

- enforce several new offences;
- administer added firearms licensing complexity;
- respond to raised public expectations about the issuing of FPOs; and
- expand the scope, and therefore number, of controlled operations.

The Bill places extra burdens on Queensland Police without any consideration for the required additional training in an already oversubscribed training calendar, or consideration of the resourcing needed to meet the additional demands and expectations created.

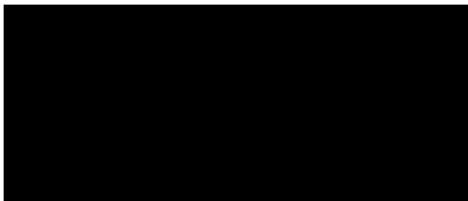
Among the suite of the new imposts on Queensland Police, a minor concession is the ability to serve official warnings for consorting and police banning notices electronically. The new power vested in the Commissioner to make FPOs delivers an efficiency but also lifts public expectations about their use and raises an additional policing demand without additional resources.

The QPU acknowledges the Government's efforts to identify opportunities to optimise police time spent protecting the community, including streamlining domestic and family violence processes. However, the cumulative impact over time of new and expanded criminal offences and police powers have not historically been matched with the discrete resourcing needed to support implementation. Rather, it is assumed increases in police numbers delivered through government election commitments are sufficient to keep pace with growing demand. The Commissioner's recent 100 Day Review of the QPS shines a light on the shortcomings of this set and forget approach to police resourcing. Emphasis therefore needs to be given to applying an efficiency lens across new legislative proposals and Institutional Impact Statements accompanying Cabinet submissions must be prepared with greater rigour.

On balance the QPU supports the approach taken by the Government in the Bill and looks forward to working with the Police Minister and QPS to ensure the resultant imposts on QPU members are satisfactorily managed.

I trust this submission assists the Committee with its Inquiry into the Bill. I am available on (Telephone) 3259 1900 or via email (president@qpu.asn.au) should you have any questions.

Yours sincerely



Shane Prior
General President
QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION