

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

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Submission to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee

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

Submitted by:

Shooters Union Australia Limited

Submission relating to:

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

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This submission is made on behalf of Shooters Union Australia and its members. It reflects the organisation's views at the time of submission, based on the information available and the consultation timeframe provided.

Submission to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee

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Executive Summary

Shooters Union Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission in relation to the *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026* (the Bill).

Shooters Union Australia strongly supports measures that genuinely prevent firearms misuse by terrorists, organised criminals and other high-risk individuals. We acknowledge that many elements of the Bill - including increased penalties for trafficking, the new reckless discharge offence, strengthened storage standards, and enhanced enforcement tools - are clearly directed at criminal behaviour rather than compliant licence holders.

In that respect, the Bill represents a more targeted approach than some recent firearms reforms in other jurisdictions.

This submission focuses primarily on the amendments to the *Weapons Act 1990* and associated regulatory changes. We do not seek to comment in detail on the hate speech provisions except where they intersect with firearms regulation.

While broadly supportive of the Bill's stated objectives, Shooters Union Australia submits that several provisions would benefit from refinement to ensure they remain proportionate, administratively workable, and properly targeted at genuine risk.

In particular, Shooters Union Australia recommends:

1. Refining the proposed citizenship requirement so that it applies primarily to temporary residents, while preserving eligibility for Australian citizens, permanent residents and New Zealand citizens who otherwise meet fit and proper requirements.
2. Ensuring that citizenship amendments do not fragment genuine reason licence codes or separate RE1 and SC1 licence codes for Category A and B licensees.
3. Amending the “fit and proper person” provisions to replace “must consider” with “may consider” in relation to spent convictions and withdrawn or non-recorded matters, preserving police discretion while respecting judicial determinations.
4. Narrowing the blueprint material offence to include an explicit intent requirement, ensuring it targets unlawful manufacture rather than inadvertent or academic access to digital material.
5. Rationalising storage requirements by removing bolt removal or action-breaking obligations where firearms are secured in compliant steel storage.
6. Publishing draft regulations and implementation guidance prior to commencement to ensure clarity and compliance certainty.

Shooters Union Australia remains committed to constructive engagement with the Queensland Government to ensure that firearms legislation effectively targets criminal misuse while preserving fairness and proportionality for lawful licence holders.

About Shooters Union Australia

Shooters Union Australia is a national representative organisation for licensed firearms owners. Our Queensland membership includes sporting shooters, recreational shooters, primary producers, collectors, firearms instructors, industry participants and security personnel.

Our members operate within one of the most highly regulated civilian firearms frameworks in the world. They are subject to:

- Background checks
- Fit and proper person assessments
- Secure storage requirements
- Ongoing compliance obligations
- Revocation and suspension powers
- Firearm Prohibition Orders (where applicable)

Shooters Union Australia has extensive experience engaging with firearms legislation and regulatory reform at both state and federal levels. Our submissions are informed by legal review, practical operational knowledge, and direct feedback from licence holders affected by proposed reforms.

We support evidence-based policy that enhances public safety while ensuring that lawful firearms owners are not unjustly penalised for the actions of criminals.

Scope of This Submission

This submission focuses primarily on the *Weapons Act 1990* amendments contained within the Bill.

Shooters Union Australia acknowledges and supports measures directed at:

- Trafficking and organised criminal misuse
- Reckless discharge offences
- Illegal manufacture of firearms
- Strengthening minimum secure storage standards
- Targeting high-risk individuals through Firearm Prohibition Orders

Our submission is directed at refining specific provisions to ensure they remain proportionate, workable and consistent with established principles of administrative law.

Analytical Framework

In assessing the proposed amendments to the *Weapons Act 1990*, Shooters Union Australia has considered:

- Whether the measure is directed at high-risk individuals rather than compliant licence holders;
- Whether it is proportionate to the identified risk;

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- Whether it preserves the integrity of the genuine reason framework under the Act;
- Whether it respects judicial determinations and principles of procedural fairness;
- Whether it is administratively workable and capable of consistent implementation; and
- Whether it avoids unintended consequences for lawful sporting, recreational and occupational activities.

The recommendations that follow are framed within that analytical approach.

1. Citizenship Requirement – Section 10 Amendments

The Bill proposes to amend section 10 of the *Weapons Act 1990* to require that an applicant for a Queensland weapons licence be an Australian citizen, subject to limited exemptions.

Shooters Union Australia understands the intent of strengthening eligibility requirements. However, the current drafting risks disproportionate exclusion of permanent residents and New Zealand citizens who are long-standing members of the Queensland community and who are already subject to comprehensive suitability assessments.

1.1 Permanent Residents and New Zealand Citizens

Permanent residents and New Zealand citizens frequently:

- Reside in Queensland permanently
- Pay taxes
- Operate businesses and primary production enterprises
- Participate in sporting and community activities
- Serve in emergency services or defence roles

They are already subject to:

- Full criminal history checks
- Intelligence assessments
- Fit and proper person determinations
- Immediate suspension and revocation powers
- Firearm Prohibition Orders where applicable

If an individual is assessed as a fit and proper person under these mechanisms, citizenship status alone does not meaningfully correlate to risk.

A more proportionate approach would be to apply citizenship restrictions primarily to temporary visa holders, while preserving eligibility for:

- Australian citizens
- Permanent residents

- New Zealand citizens residing in Queensland

This approach aligns with community expectations and targets short-term or transient residency risk without arbitrarily excluding long-term residents who meet all other statutory requirements.

As an alternative, should the Government consider it necessary to retain broader restrictions on temporary visa holders, consideration could be given to exempting individuals who have resided lawfully in Australia for an extended period - for example, five years or more. Long-term residents are subject to the same background checks and suitability assessments as citizens and are demonstrably integrated within the community. A defined residency threshold would provide an objective and administratively workable safeguard while avoiding the unintended exclusion of established, compliant participants in the regulated framework.

1.2 Integrity of Genuine Reason Licence Codes (RE1 and SC1)

Shooters Union Australia has recently engaged extensively with the Queensland Government and Weapons Licensing Group regarding the correct interpretation of genuine reason licence codes for Category A and B licences.

It has been clarified that:

- Where a licensee establishes a genuine reason such as sports or target shooting, complementary codes (including recreational shooting) may be issued due to the practical overlap of responsible firearms use.

The proposed citizenship amendment creates a significant risk of fragmenting these licence codes.

Under the current drafting, a permanent resident might:

- Qualify for sports or target shooting under an exemption;
- Be prevented from holding a recreational (RE1) or collector licence;
- Despite being assessed as fit and proper and trusted to possess firearms.

This would result in greater complexity and will undermine the principle that had underpinned the operation of the Weapons Act since 1990 that the two genuine reasons are operationally bundled. If an individual is trusted to possess firearms for organised sporting purposes, there is no principled basis to conclude that they cannot responsibly use those same firearms recreationally or maintain a collector licence.

Fragmentation of genuine reason codes would:

- Undermine the integrity of the Act's framework;
- Reverse recent clarification of legislative intent;
- Create administrative inconsistency and confusion.

Recommendation 1

Amend section 10 so that citizenship restrictions apply primarily to temporary visa holders, while preserving eligibility for Australian citizens, permanent residents and New Zealand citizens who otherwise meet all fit and proper requirements.

Recommendation 2

Ensure that the amendments do not result in fragmentation of genuine reason licence codes or separation of RE1 and SC1 licence codes for Category A and B licence holders who are otherwise assessed as fit and proper persons.

2. Fit and Proper Person Amendments – Sections 10B, 10C and Related Provisions

The Bill proposes amendments requiring authorised officers to consider, in every case, a person's full criminal history including:

- Spent convictions;
- Convictions where no conviction was recorded;
- Convictions that have been quashed or set aside;
- Withdrawn, discharged or struck out charges; and
- Information about the circumstances of those matters.

The amendments replace what has functionally operated as a discretionary consideration with a mandatory requirement that authorised officers “must consider” these matters when determining whether a person is a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

Shooters Union Australia acknowledges that there may be rare cases in which historic or non-recorded matters are relevant to present-day risk. However, the mandatory structure of the amendment raises significant concerns regarding proportionality, administrative efficiency and respect for judicial determinations.

2.1 Respect for Judicial Determinations

Queensland courts are empowered to:

- Order that no conviction be recorded;
- Apply the *Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986*;
- Quash or set aside convictions;
- Dismiss, discharge or strike out charges.

These determinations are deliberate judicial decisions made after considering:

- The seriousness of the conduct;
- The offender's character;
- The public interest;
- The long-term consequences of recording a conviction.

By mandating that authorised officers must consider such matters in every case, the amendments risk:

- Re-litigating issues already resolved by the courts;

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- Undermining the purpose of non-recorded conviction regimes;
- Diminishing the practical effect of judicial discretion.

This submission does not suggest that historic matters should be ignored where genuinely relevant. However, there is a significant difference between:

- Permitting consideration where appropriate; and
- Mandating consideration in every case, regardless of age, context or judicial finding.

A licensing framework should not systematically devalue judicial determinations that certain matters did not warrant conviction or ongoing stigma.

2.2 Administrative Proportionality and Workability

Replacing discretionary consideration with mandatory consideration will:

- Require authorised officers to formally examine historic matters in every application and renewal;
- Increase administrative burden, including on administrative staff now designated as authorised officers;
- Require repeated reconsideration of matters previously assessed and accepted;
- Create potential delays in processing applications and renewals.

Many licence holders have held licences for extended periods without incident. Where a historic matter has already been assessed in a previous application and deemed not disqualifying, there is limited public interest in mandating full reconsideration at every renewal absent new information.

The current Bill also introduces mandatory disclosure requirements, requiring applicants to:

- Declare all spent, non-recorded or withdrawn matters;
- Provide details of circumstances;
- Supply additional information upon request.

Failure to provide this information may result in the application being treated as withdrawn.

While Weapons Licensing Group has historically sought similar information administratively, elevating this to a statutory obligation alters the legal consequences of omission and formalises the mandatory reconsideration regime.

2.3 A Proportionate Alternative

Shooters Union Australia submits that the objective of risk management can be achieved without rigid mandatory language.

Replacing “must consider” with “may consider” would preserve access to relevant criminal history information while allowing authorised officers to exercise appropriate discretion.

In expanding the matters capable of consideration, it is essential to distinguish between serious offending that genuinely indicates public safety risk and minor regulatory or technical breaches.

Industry experience demonstrates that charges under the *Weapons Act 1990* are, at times, laid in circumstances that are subsequently withdrawn, struck out, or result in no conviction being recorded. This is particularly evident in matters involving:

- Technical storage breaches in rural environments;
- Administrative or paperwork irregularities;
- Situations where there has been no criminal intent or public safety impact.

Courts have frequently exercised discretion not to record a conviction in such cases.

The legislation should not operate in a manner that allows isolated, technical or non-recorded matters to weigh disproportionately in determining suitability.

Where non-recorded, withdrawn or historical matters are considered, relevance, seriousness and recency should be central. Isolated incidents, particularly those occurring many years prior and not followed by further offending, should not be determinative of ongoing suitability.

Failure to provide this clarity risks inconsistent decision-making and increased appeals to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), further burdening both applicants and the regulatory system.

A discretionary framework allows authorised officers to focus on conduct that genuinely indicates risk, while avoiding unnecessary reassessment of minor or historic matters.

Recommendation 3

Amend sections 10B and 10C of the *Weapons Act 1990* to replace “must consider” with “may consider”, and clarify that isolated, minor or technical regulatory matters - particularly where no conviction was recorded or charges were withdrawn - are not determinative absent evidence of serious or repeated offending.

3. Blueprint Material – 3D Printed Firearms (Sections 67A and 67B)

3.1 Support for Targeting Unlawful Manufacture

Shooters Union Australia supports measures aimed at preventing the unlawful manufacture of firearms, including misuse of 3D printing and electronic milling technologies.

Unlicensed manufacture of firearms is already illegal. Strengthening enforcement against individuals who deliberately manufacture firearms outside the licensing framework is consistent with the stated objective of keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and terrorists.

However, the blueprint material offence as currently drafted is broader than necessary to achieve that objective.

3.2 Breadth of the Definition

The Bill defines “blueprint material” broadly to include:

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- Technical drawings;
- Plans, instructions or templates;
- Software or code;
- Copies or photographs of such material;
- Distribution by communication, transmission or making available for access.

While the provision states that a person does not possess blueprint material merely because they are able to access it on the internet, downloading or saving such material may constitute possession.

In practical terms:

- Material of this nature is legally published in other jurisdictions;
- It is widely accessible online;
- It may be encountered by individuals conducting general research into engineering or firearm mechanics.

As drafted, an individual who downloads material out of curiosity, academic interest or inadvertent browsing may technically fall within the scope of a serious indictable offence carrying a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment.

This extends beyond the Bill's stated purpose of targeting criminals and terrorists.

3.3 Absence of an Intent Requirement

The offence does not require proof that the person:

- Intended to manufacture a firearm unlawfully; or
- Intended that the material be used for unlawful manufacture.

Instead, the legislation relies on defences, placing an evidential burden on the accused.

Given the breadth of the definition, the absence of an explicit intent element increases the risk of unintended capture of benign conduct.

Criminal offences should be clearly linked to culpable intent, particularly where maximum penalties are substantial.

3.4 Alignment with Stated Objective

The Bill's stated objective is to prevent the unlawful manufacture of firearms and to ensure that criminals and terrorists do not exploit emerging technologies.

Shooters Union Australia supports that objective.

However, the definition of blueprint material and the structure of the offence must clearly distinguish between unlawful conduct and legitimate industry activity conducted under licence.

Licensed manufacturers, armourers and dealers routinely access and use technical drawings, schematics, CAD files and digital design material in the course of lawful operations. Modern industry practice increasingly involves:

- Digital storage of technical material;
- Collaborative research and development processes;
- Independent design work undertaken by employees;
- Remote access to electronic files as part of ordinary employment arrangements.

The current examples of “lawful purpose” focus on blueprint material being distributed by a licence holder to an employee. In practice, employees of licensed businesses may independently access, develop or review technical material in the course of assigned duties, including research and development activities.

It is essential that the offence does not inadvertently capture employees acting within the scope of their employment, including where technical material is accessed or developed for legitimate licensed manufacturing, repair or design purposes.

Clarification within the legislation or explanatory material should make clear that:

- Licensed manufacturers, armourers and dealers; and
- Their employees acting within the scope of their employment, whether on-site or remotely,

may lawfully possess, access and use blueprint material for legitimate industry purposes.

Ensuring this distinction is explicit will maintain the Bill’s focus on unlawful manufacture while avoiding unintended consequences for compliant businesses operating within the regulated framework.

Recommendation 4

Amend section 67A, or clarify within accompanying explanatory material, that licensed manufacturers, armourers and dealers - and their employees acting within the scope of their employment, including for research, development and technical design activities - may lawfully possess, access and use blueprint material for legitimate industry purposes.

4. Secure Storage Reforms

4.1 Support for Steel-Only Storage

The Bill proposes amendments to the *Weapons Regulation 2016* requiring that Category A, B, C, E and M weapons be stored exclusively in solid steel containers, removing the previous allowance for certain solid timber containers.

Shooters Union Australia supports this reform.

Modern steel storage units provide a more consistent, objectively verifiable and tamper-resistant standard than solid timber alternatives. This amendment represents a practical and reasonable elevation of minimum secure storage standards.

4.2 Opportunity for Rationalisation of Related Requirements

The elevation of the minimum storage standard presents an appropriate opportunity to review associated mechanical storage requirements.

Under current arrangements, licence holders are often required to:

- Remove the bolt from a firearm; or
- Break the action of a firearm;

even where the firearm is stored within a compliant locked steel container.

These additional requirements originated in a regulatory environment where secure storage standards were less uniform. Where firearms are now required to be stored exclusively in compliant solid steel containers meeting prescribed security standards, the additional requirement to remove bolts or break actions does not materially enhance security.

Instead, these requirements may:

- Increase handling of firearms during storage and retrieval;
- Introduce avoidable wear through repeated removal and refitting of components;
- Create risk of incorrect component interchange where similar parts exist;
- Increase compliance complexity without a corresponding public safety benefit.

Where secure steel storage is mandated, the core objective of preventing unauthorised access is already achieved.

Rationalising mechanical storage requirements in this context would reduce unnecessary handling, simplify compliance and align the legislation with modern secure storage standards.

Recommendation 5

Amend the *Weapons Regulation 2016* to remove the requirement to remove bolts or break the action of firearms when those firearms are stored in compliant solid steel containers meeting prescribed security standards.

5. Other Weapons Act Amendments

5.1 Increased Penalties for Trafficking and Serious Offences

The Bill increases maximum penalties for a range of serious offences including:

- Unlawful trafficking;
- Unlawful supply;
- Possession offences;
- Shortening or modifying firearms;
- Altering identification marks.

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Shooters Union Australia supports stronger penalties directed at organised criminal activity, deliberate unlawful supply and conduct clearly associated with criminal misuse.

However, care must be taken to ensure that increased maximum penalties for possession offences are proportionately applied and directed toward deliberate criminal conduct.

Possession offences can arise in a variety of contexts, including:

- Licensed individuals who inadvertently retain an unregistered firearm;
- Historical firearms discovered in rural environments;
- Administrative or technical irregularities where the individual is otherwise authorised to possess that category of firearm.

In such circumstances, the conduct does not reflect the type of organised or malicious activity that heightened penalties are designed to deter.

It is important that increased maximum penalties for possession are clearly directed at circumstances involving criminal intent, organised activity or conduct demonstrating genuine public safety risk, rather than technical or inadvertent non-compliance.

Ensuring proportionality in the application of possession penalties will maintain the Bill's focus on criminal misuse while avoiding unintended consequences for otherwise compliant individuals.

5.2 Reckless Discharge of a Weapon

The Bill introduces a new offence prohibiting the reckless discharge of a weapon towards a building or vehicle, with significant maximum penalties and aggravated circumstances.

Shooters Union Australia supports strong measures addressing reckless firearm misuse.

Reckless behaviour that endangers public safety is not conduct that lawful firearms owners seek to defend. The introduction of a specific offence directed at such conduct is consistent with community safety objectives.

5.3 Firearm Prohibition Orders (FPOs)

The Bill makes extensive amendments to the Firearm Prohibition Order framework, including:

- Vesting sole authority in the Commissioner to issue FPOs;
- Extending FPO duration (10 years for adults, 5 years for children);
- Removing the court's power to make FPOs;
- Adjusting review and service provisions;
- Expanding search powers;
- Removing annual review requirements for children.

Shooters Union Australia has consistently expressed concern regarding the breadth of Firearm Prohibition Order powers and the potential for executive overreach where robust safeguards are not maintained. While targeted measures directed at clearly identified high-risk individuals may serve a legitimate purpose, such powers must be applied narrowly and with appropriate review mechanisms to prevent misuse.

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Shooters Union Australia has historically advocated for stronger mechanisms to prevent high-risk individuals from accessing firearms. The FPO regime is broadly consistent with that objective.

We note that:

- Review through the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) remains available;
- Transitional provisions preserve existing decisions;
- The reforms appear designed to strengthen enforcement against high-risk individuals.

Shooters Union Australia does not seek to mount a broad objection to the FPO reforms. Our primary focus remains ensuring that measures directed at high-risk individuals do not inadvertently affect compliant licence holders.

6. Implementation, Transitional Arrangements and Regulatory Transparency

6.1 Regulatory Detail

Several provisions in the Bill rely on regulation-making powers, including in relation to:

- Citizenship exemptions;
- Revocation processes;
- Storage standards;
- Operational implementation details.

In some instances, draft regulatory wording has not been presented alongside the primary legislation.

Effective compliance requires clarity.

Licence holders, dealers and industry participants must be able to understand:

- What documentary proof is required;
- How transitional arrangements will operate;
- When new requirements commence;
- Whether existing licences will be affected.

6.2 Transitional Arrangements

Particular attention should be given to:

- Existing non-citizen licence holders;
- Long-standing permanent residents;
- Individuals holding multiple genuine reason licence codes;
- Avoiding retrospective disruption of settled arrangements.

Clear transitional provisions will reduce confusion and minimise administrative burden.

6.3 Compliance Guidance

To ensure smooth implementation, Shooters Union Australia recommends:

- Publication of draft regulations prior to commencement;
- Clear public guidance from Weapons Licensing Group;
- Reasonable implementation timeframes;
- Consultation with stakeholder groups where operational impact is significant.

Recommendation 6

Publish draft regulations and implementation guidance prior to commencement of the amendments, and provide clear transitional arrangements to ensure compliance certainty and administrative consistency.

Conclusion

Shooters Union Australia supports the Government’s objective of keeping firearms out of the hands of terrorists, organised criminals and other high-risk individuals.

We acknowledge that many elements of this Bill are clearly directed at criminal misuse rather than lawful firearms ownership. Increased penalties for trafficking, the reckless discharge offence, strengthened storage standards and enhanced enforcement tools reflect a focus on criminal behaviour.

Our submission is directed at ensuring that specific amendments remain proportionate, workable and aligned with established principles of fairness and legislative integrity.

The refinements proposed in this submission do not weaken the Bill’s objectives. Rather, they strengthen its coherence and ensure that it remains focused on genuine risk while preserving fairness for compliant licence holders.

Shooters Union Australia remains committed to constructive engagement with the Queensland Government and the Committee.

Consolidated Recommendations

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| Recommendation 1 | Amend section 10 so that citizenship restrictions apply primarily to temporary visa holders, while preserving eligibility for Australian citizens, permanent residents and New Zealand citizens who otherwise meet fit and proper requirements. |
| Recommendation 2 | Ensure that the amendments do not result in fragmentation of genuine reason licence codes or separation of RE1 and SC1 licence codes for Category A and B licence holders who are otherwise assessed as fit and proper persons. |
| Recommendation 3 | Amend sections 10B and 10C of the <i>Weapons Act 1990</i> to replace “must consider” with “may consider”, and clarify that isolated, minor or technical regulatory matters - particularly where no conviction was recorded or charges were withdrawn - are not determinative absent evidence of serious or repeated offending. |
| Recommendation 4 | Amend section 67A, or clarify within accompanying explanatory material, that licensed manufacturers, armourers and dealers - and their employees acting within the scope of their employment, including for research, development and technical design activities - may lawfully possess, access and use blueprint material for legitimate industry purposes. |
| Recommendation 5 | Amend the <i>Weapons Regulation 2016</i> to remove the requirement to remove bolts or break the action of firearms when those firearms are stored in compliant solid steel containers meeting prescribed security standards. |
| Recommendation 6 | Publish draft regulations and implementation guidance prior to commencement and provide clear transitional arrangements. |