

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

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DON'T CHANGE THE LAWS!

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this submission regarding the state of firearm regulations in Queensland and Australia more broadly. My position is that Australia's current gun laws are more than adequate, and that ongoing issues involving firearm-related harm arise not from insufficient legislative restriction but from failures in identifying, assessing, and managing the individuals who gain access to firearms.

The evidence is unequivocal:

Australia's gun laws are among the most effective in the world, and

They have drastically reduced mass shootings for decades, demonstrating their adequacy and effectiveness. [\[jamanetwork.com\]](http://jamanetwork.com), [\[gunsafetya...nce.org.au\]](http://gunsafetya...nce.org.au)

Future efforts to reduce gun violence should therefore focus on improving systems that determine who may access firearms, rather than altering the laws themselves. By strengthening risk-assessment and monitoring processes, Queensland can continue to ensure public safety while maintaining a fair and effective regulatory environment.

Impact of the 1996 National Firearms Agreement

Following the 1996 Port Arthur tragedy, Australia implemented sweeping reforms through the National Firearms Agreement (NFA). These reforms included bans on semiautomatic long arms, strengthened licensing requirements, and a nationwide buyback program.

Multiple independent analyses demonstrate that these measures produced one of the most dramatic reductions in mass firearm violence ever documented:

A major JAMA study found that while 13 fatal mass shootings occurred between 1979 and 1996, none occurred from 1997 to May 2016 after the NFA was implemented. [\[jamanetwork.com\]](http://jamanetwork.com)

The Australian Gun Safety Alliance similarly reports that no mass shootings occurred in the 22 years following the reforms, until a domestic murder-suicide in 2018. [\[gunsafetya...nce.org.au\]](http://gunsafetya...nce.org.au)

These findings clearly show that Australia's legislative framework has been effective in reducing the most severe forms of gun violence.

Australia's Global Standing in Preventing Mass Shootings

The international evidence base consistently recognises Australia as having one of the lowest rates of mass shootings worldwide, a position widely attributed to the strength of the 1996 reforms. Research and media analysis highlight that public exposure to rapid-fire weapons—common in mass shootings elsewhere—was dramatically reduced by the NFA. [\[snexplores.org\]](http://snexplores.org)

Furthermore, subsequent incidents involving multiple victims since 2014, although tragic, remain rare, isolated, and fundamentally different in nature from pre-1996 mass shootings. These incidents largely reflect domestic violence, mental-health crises, or extremist ideology, rather than any systemic failure of firearms legislation. [\[apnews.com\]](http://apnews.com)

The True Problem: Who Gains Access to Firearms

Given the demonstrated success of the legislative framework, it is essential to recognise that the issue is not the adequacy of the laws but their application—specifically, the screening and monitoring of firearm owners.

Evidence from post-2014 incidents indicates that perpetrators often possessed firearms legally but were experiencing significant personal, psychological, or ideological instability. Improving the following would therefore yield more meaningful safety outcomes than tightening possession laws further:

Enhanced background checks, with stronger integration of mental-health, domestic-violence, and criminal-history data.

More stringent periodic licence reviews, ensuring ongoing suitability of existing licensees.

Better inter-agency communication between law enforcement, healthcare professionals, and regulatory bodies.

Improved community reporting mechanisms, allowing early intervention when a firearm owner exhibits warning behaviours.

These improvements would target the small number of individuals who pose an actual risk, rather than imposing additional restrictions on the overwhelming majority of responsible firearm owners.