

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

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The Hon David Crisafulli MP
Premier of Queensland

The Hon Dan Purdie MP
Minister for Police and Emergency Services of Queensland

Mr Martin Hunt MP
Chair
JICS Committee
Parliament of Queensland

Dear Premier, Minister and Mr Hunt,

The events at Bondi in December – and the painful public conversation that has followed – have reopened wounds that my family and I have carried for nearly thirty years. The trauma felt by victim families, survivors, witnesses, first responders and the entire Bondi community is profound, and it will not fade. It echoes the anguish still felt by thousands whose lives were shattered at Port Arthur decades ago.

In these past weeks, I have found myself reflecting again on the legacy of Port Arthur and the strength that bipartisan leadership once showed in creating gun laws that made Australia safer. That progress was hard-won, and it should never be taken for granted.

The Foundation we built in memory of my beautiful girls has worked tirelessly to protect children and communities. Yet the issue I wish we never had to confront again is gun violence. And still, here we are – forced to revisit the same painful truths because our current laws no longer reflect the level of protection Queenslanders deserve.

I am grateful that our leaders came together for National Cabinet following Bondi. I was also relieved to hear that National Cabinet had agreed to strengthen gun laws. Most jurisdictions have, or are, implementing the changes that will prevent the types, and numbers of firearms used in Bondi to be available to most firearm users.

But I am extremely disappointed at the Queensland Government response that ignores any attempt to restrict firearms in Queensland. Only increasing penalties is the epitome of locking the gate after the horse has bolted.

The Queensland community deserves better and their public safety should be paramount to the demands of firearm users and their lobby.

The Alannah & Madeline Foundation, along with our allies in the Australian Gun Safety Alliance, has made this submission to the Committee. I endorse it with all my heart. It reflects not only expert advice, but the voices of those who continue to live with the consequences of inaction.

Premier, this moment demands leadership. It demands urgency. It demands the strength to put community safety above all else. I urge you: please rise to this challenge. Strengthen our gun laws. Protect Queensland families from the harm that I know only too well.

Sincerely yours,



Walter Mikac AM
Founder
Alannah & Madeline Foundation



Queensland Parliament

Justice, Integrity and Community Safety
Committee

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

Submission from
The Alannah & Madeline Foundation
&
The Australian Gun Safety Alliance

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Executive summary

The Queensland *Weapons Act 1990* has a clear principle that ***weapon possession and use is subordinate to the need to ensure public and individual safety***. It goes on to say that *public and individual safety is improved by imposing strict controls on the possession of weapons and requiring the safe and secure storage encourage of weapons*. It has one other object which is to ***prevent the misuse of weapons***.

Queensland is also a signatory to the National Firearms Agreement that states clearly that ***firearm use and possession in Australia is a privilege conditional upon public safety***.

In the announcements made by the Premier on the 9th and 10th of February, and the introduction of this Bill it is nearly impossible to find anything that prevents the misuse of weapons. The Bill rightly increases penalties for firearm misuse, but the [literature tells us that increases in already lengthy prison sentences have modest deterrent or incapacitation effects at best](#). Furthermore, the Bill ignores the principle that the use and possession of weapons is subordinate to the need for public safety.

Should the passage of the Bill proceed, Queensland would have the weakest gun laws in Australia.

The Premier attended a National Cabinet meeting the day after the Bondi tragedy, where recent incidents in Wiembilla, Victoria and Tasmania were also part of the broader national context.

The communiqué from that meeting noted that First Ministers had agreed to strengthen gun laws. It listed a range of options including

- Accelerating work on standing up the National Firearms Register.
- Allowing for additional use of criminal intelligence to underpin firearms licencing that can be used in administrative licencing regimes.
- Limiting the number of firearms to be held by any one individual.
- Limiting open-ended firearms licencing and the types of guns that are legal, including modifications; and
- A condition of a firearm license is holding Australian citizenship.

We are deeply dismayed that this Bill ignores the options agreed by National Cabinet. It ignores the prioritisation of public and individual safety and the prevention of the misuse of weapons – the basic principles for weapons use and possession in Queensland.

It would be utterly unacceptable if these things were to be neglected in favour of the demands of the firearm industry.

Ninety-five of Queenslanders do not own a firearm, but any one of them could become a victim of firearm violence. Therefore, it is vital that the voices of all Queenslanders are heard on this matter, and not only those with an interest in the ownership or sale of weapons. While we were granted a short meeting with the Minister in January, as far as we can ascertain no other voices for public safety were engaged.

Our submission is based on a public health framework of harm reduction. It is based on the unimpeachable fact that firearms are harmful, and that increased firearm prevalence invariably leads to increased harm. Simply put, reducing the number of firearms in the community directly limits the means by which an individual may cause injury or death, to themselves and to others. It limits the diversion to the grey market by theft. It reduces the compliance load on Queensland police.

Our submission calls upon the government to ignore the firearm industry and reinstate the crucial recommendations from National Cabinet to limit the number of firearms to be held by any one individual. The proposed maximum number of 5 firearms per person (with appropriate exemptions for primary producers and sporting shooters) seems eminently reasonable especially in light of the fact that the average Queensland firearm licence holder has 4.9 firearms.

The submission also calls for the restriction on the type of firearms that were used so devastatingly at Bondi. Firearm categories were established 30 years ago, specifically to circumvent the prohibition of semi-automatic and automatic firearms. Today in Queensland the type of firearms used in Bondi are marketed as rapid fire quick action rifles and shotguns. These are relatively easy to acquire in Queensland with a Category A or B licence.

It is deeply concerning to us that the Bill before the Committee restricts neither the ability of individuals to acquire those types of firearms used at Bondi or the numbers they may acquire. Again, the Committee must consider how is this consistent with the legislative need to put public and individual safety ahead of the use and possession of weapons as required under the *Weapons Act 1990*.

The Bill also ignores the Commonwealth's offer to improve background checking by access to the AusCheck system and intelligence and information sharing opportunities with Commonwealth bodies such as ASIO and ACIC. Failure to connect effectively with our national intelligence agencies would surely leave Queensland more vulnerable to future threats to public safety and security.

More than a quarter of firearms in Australia are owned in Queensland, meaning decisions, or non-decisions, made by the Queensland Government will have an exceptionally strong impact. If the Queensland Government were to fail to take up the directions for reform embodied in the National Cabinet agreement, this would represent a potentially catastrophic missed opportunity.

It is highly likely that around 72% of firearms in Australia will be more tightly regulated following the National Cabinet agreement. Queensland will be the outlier that chooses not to restrict 26% of all firearms in Australia.

Our submission provides further insights into other means of reducing harm in the community such as prohibiting unlicensed shooting and resolving the quite remarkable situation in Queensland where an 11-year-old can legally use a firearm but not a Facebook account.

We have also addressed the government's rejection of the State Coroner's recommendation to implement mandatory mental health checks for firearm owners. As 85% of firearm deaths in Australia occur as a result of intentional self-harm, we submit it is vital to pay proper attention to mental health in this area. The reform proposed by the State Coroner would likely prove a lifesaving one.

Finally, we have called on the government to ban political donations from the firearm industry and related bodies, in the interests of public trust and integrity.

We thank the Committee for their time.

We hope the Committee are under no misunderstanding whatsoever, that the passage of this Bill will ensure, beyond any doubt, that Queensland will have the weakest gun laws in Australia.

It will be this Committee and this governments responsibility that in Queensland, no longer is the use and possession of weapons conditional upon public safety. It is only conditional upon the demands of the firearm industry.

Recommendations

1. That the Queensland Government introduces a numerical cap on the number of firearms that licensed firearm owner can own in line with the National Cabinet reforms.
2. That the Queensland Government restricts assisted repeating action and straight-pull repeating action (or their technical equivalent) to Category C or D licenses only.
3. That the Queensland Government participates in the Commonwealth gun buyback in order to provide appropriate compensation to legal firearm owners.
4. That the Queensland Government amends this Bill to include access to the Commonwealth's AusCheck system and enable information and intelligence sharing with ASIO and ACIC.
5. That the Queensland Government undertakes a meaningful review in order to identify the most appropriate ways of introducing mandatory mental health checks for the public safety and for the safety of firearm owners.
6. That the Queensland Government follows a similar path to New South Wales by removing the ability for an unlicensed individual to use firearms for any purpose at a gun club or shooting range until they have been assessed by the Firearm Registry. This may require enhanced digitalisation.

7. That the Queensland Government prevent children under 18 legally using firearms or attending shooting ranges.
8. That Queensland Police audit the Authority to Hunt system, consults with Western Australia and New South Wales regarding their data, and implements a revised system that provides strong regulation, validation and oversight of Authorities to Hunt.
9. That the Queensland Government prohibits political donations from the firearm industry or related parties.
10. That the Queensland Government reconstitute the Ministers Firearm Advisory Forum.

The Alannah & Madeline Foundation

The safety of children and young people is why we are here. Our child-rights framework informs everything we do.

It drives our mission to see all jurisdictions compliant with the Australian National Firearms Agreement through the Australian Gun Safety Alliance (AGSA).

It sees us advocate for the rights of children and young people to be upheld online and offline, including by governments and digital platforms, and for optimal safety standards to be built into all digital spaces and devices.

And it means advocating for children to be formally recognised as victims of crime.

We believe the needs of children should always be part of government policy and that all government decision-making should consider the best interests of the child, first and always.

We believe that the voices of children and young people should be actively sought out and prioritised whenever decisions are being made that affect them. It is their right. And our ongoing mission to make it happen.

A letter of support from our Founder, Walter Mikac AM, is included with this submission. Walter has experienced firearm violence at its worst and has been a passionate advocate for firearm safety since supporting Prime Minister Howard with the gun reforms in 1996.

The Australian Gun Safety Alliance

The Australian Gun Safety Alliance (AGSA) is a broad coalition of voices representing the interests of the community in ensuring that we maintain vigilance on issues of gun safety.

AGSA members are from the public health, medical, hospital, first responder, union, and children's services sectors along with faith organisations and those involved with preventing family violence. All members are shown on the [AGSA website](#).

AGSA is not politically aligned and receives no corporate or individual donations. It is funded by modest philanthropic donations and in-kind services by members.

AGSA understands that the majority of gun owners in Australia are law abiding, responsible people who are not criminals. However, we believe that all governments must do everything in their power to avoid a slide towards an American culture of gun entitlement. They should also uphold their public commitment to the National Firearms Agreement. Finally, governments have a responsibility to all their constituents when it comes to the management of firearms - not just those with a self-interest in the firearm industry.

We are strong advocates for the preamble of the National Firearms Agreement which states clearly that the use and possession of a firearm is a privilege and that the overriding need to ensure public safety should dictate the regulation of firearms.

The convenience or commercial interests of firearm owners, manufacturers, importers and retailers should never take precedent over community safety.

Many of the AGSA members are making their own submissions to the Committee where time and capacity permits.

Current legislative framework

At this time of reform, it is incumbent upon us all, including governments, to consider the first principle of firearm use and possession in Australia that is universally accepted. Our [National Firearms Agreement](#), to which Queensland agreed 2017, has a very clear preamble that establishes the principle that **firearm use and possession in Australia is a privilege conditional upon public safety**.

The current Queensland [Weapons Act 1990](#) clearly states that it has the following principles and objectives:

- (1) The principles underlying this Act are as follows—
 - (a) **weapon possession and use are subordinate to the need to ensure public and individual safety.**
 - (b) public and individual safety is improved by imposing strict controls on the possession of weapons and requiring the safe and secure storage and carriage of weapons.
- (2) The object of this Act is to **prevent the misuse of weapons**.

Any new legislation should align with these strong principles and objects. Maximising the penalties for weapons misuse, however well-intentioned, is no substitute for preventing such misuse in the first place. At times like these, the Foundation draws on the strength of political leaders who acted following the Port Arthur tragedy.

...there come occasions for any Government to take decisions which can only be effectively implemented in the interests of the overall national good.

If they involve some disproportionate inconvenience and some disproportionate deprivation for one section of the community, I'm sorry about that.

But there is no other way that we can achieve the objectives. And it is always, my friends, it is always the responsibility of a national Government to weigh up the gains and to set them against the losses.

And the gains to the Australian community of there being fewer weapons of great destruction in the community are, in my view and in the view of all governments throughout Australia very, very significant indeed and that is why we have taken the decision.

Prime Minister John Howard led those reforms with determination. One of his most memorable speeches was delivered before a disenchanted crowd in Sale, Queensland, when he stated:

PM John Howard - Gun Rally, Sale, Queensland 16 June 1996

Furthermore, the Foundation's Founder Walter Mikac AM [exchanged letters](#) with Prime Minister Howard following the Port Arthur tragedy. When uncertainty arose regarding the National Firearms Agreement, he sent a letter that was read to a meeting of First Ministers. In part it read:

I implore you to protect your families, friends & every Australian from this ever happening again. Be strong & act now.

Walter Mikac AM, 17 July 1996

The justification for change

It is an unimpeachable fact that firearms are harmful, and that increased firearm prevalence invariably leads to increased harm. Reducing the number of firearms in the community directly limits the means by which an individual may cause injury or death, to themselves and to others.

Should the Committee require empirical evidence linking firearm prevalence to harm, there exists an extensive body of research in the United States demonstrating this association.

The current firearm [death rate in the USA](#) is approximately 14 deaths per 100,000 people, whereas in Australia the [rate is slightly less](#) than 1.0 per 100,000 people. The [United States records nearly 47,000 firearm-related deaths per annum](#).

In the US, [states with the highest gun](#) death are typically those in the South or Mountain West, where gun laws are weaker and firearm ownership is higher. By contrast, gun death rates are significantly lower in the Northeast, where gun violence prevention laws are stronger. An editorial in the [British Medical Journal](#) summarised experiences across multiple states and confirmed that jurisdictions with tighter firearm regulation experience fewer firearm injuries and deaths. Similarly, a [National Bureau of Economic Research 2001 paper](#) found unequivocally that “fewer guns mean fewer gun homicides.”

[Gun-related suicides also represent the majority of firearms deaths in the United States](#). In 2023, 58% of all gun-related deaths (27,300) were suicides, compared with 38% (17,927) that were homicides. Tragically, for the [third consecutive year](#), firearms killed more children and teenagers, aged 1 to 17, than any other cause - including car crashes and cancer.

In addition to direct harm, another significant but less recognised risk is theft. Recent data from the [Australia Institute](#) indicates more than 9,000 firearms were stolen from 2020 to 2024 - or one every four hours. While data on the relationship between the number of firearms in the home and theft is limited, the incentive for criminal targeting is clear when multiple weapons are stored in a single premises. [Interviews with persons convicted](#) of serious gun-related crimes demonstrate that theft is routine practise for criminals – “*every farmer has a shotgun*”.

The relevant question, therefore, is not whether fewer firearms enhance safety - the evidence overwhelmingly affirms that. Rather, it is whether allowing individuals to possess 10, 20, 50, or an unrestricted number of firearms enhances public safety. There is no evidence to suggest that is a remote possibility.

More broadly, there is compelling evidence across multiple policy domains that reducing access to harmful products reduces harm. This foundational principle of public health - harm reduction - underpins effective regulation of alcohol, gambling, tobacco, illicit drugs, road safety measures and occupational health and safety. Fewer pokies reduce gambling harm; reduced access to cigarettes reduces smoking rates - analogous logic applies to firearms.

A recent example of a community-wide harm reduction policy is the Commonwealth’s legislation prohibiting social media accounts for children under 16. The Prime Minister stated, “*Our social media ban is about providing greater peace of mind for Australian parents*.”. In 2024, Premier Crisafulli [fully supported this preventative measure](#).

These examples reflect an understanding that effective public safety policy focuses on systems-level change and the wellbeing of the entire community. Such reforms cannot be constrained by the argument frequently advanced by lobbyists “*I am a law-abiding person, leave me alone and trust me to do the right thing*”. Public policy cannot rely on individual assurances, otherwise similar reasoning could be applied - illogically and dangerously - to road safety, tobacco control, drug regulation or gambling policy.

Although only 5-6% of Australians legally own firearms, the risks associated with firearms affect the entire population. This must remain central to the policy deliberation,

Finally, the firearm industry has been widely [recognised](#) as a Commercial Determinant of Health, akin to gambling and alcohol industries. Its influence on policymaking, research agendas and the public discourse can have harmful effects on population health. It is therefore essential that in identifying opportunities to strengthen Queensland’s firearms laws, harm-reduction principles prevail over commercial interests.

Relevant objectives of the Bill

It is not clear that any of the objectives listed in the explanatory notes of the Bill are consistent with the Principles or Objectives of the *Weapons Act 1990*.

They seem to be primarily related to penalties and new offences that are effectively reactions to criminal behaviour. They do not *prevent the misuse* of weapons which the Act sets out to do, but rather they penalise individuals once the misuse has occurred. Unfortunately, there is little evidence that the threat of stronger penalties prevents the misuse of weapons.

The Bill proposes to:

- introduce new offences within the Weapons Act prohibiting the possession and distribution of a blueprint material for the manufacture of a firearm on a 3D printer or electronic milling machine.
 - At the Foundation, we believe this would represent an important overdue change. Queensland is one of the last jurisdictions to prohibit the possession and distribution of 3D blueprints for the manufacturers of firearms.
- require that a Queensland weapons licence holder must, unless limited exceptions apply, be an Australian citizen.
 - We would query why this important measure is not an immediate requirement.
- broaden the scope of an individual's history that may be considered in firearms licensing decisions to include information about violent and weapons-related offences, irrespective of whether a conviction is spent or not recorded.
 - We support this measure but note that many Queenslanders would be surprised to find out it is not already in place.
- strengthen intelligence and information-sharing by formalising information sharing with the Australian Defence Force (ADF).
 - The Commonwealth has offered an increased intelligence sharing with agencies such as ASIO and ACIC. We submit that information would likely prove more relevant; it is unclear to us what information the ADF has that has a bearing on firearm licences.

National Firearm Reform

In the wake of the Bondi tragedy and following the recent shooting deaths of police members in Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania, National Cabinet met the day following the Bondi shooting and First Ministers agreed to strengthen gun laws across the nation.

All jurisdictions were asked to consider:

- Accelerating work on standing up the National Firearms Register.
- Allowing for additional use of criminal intelligence to underpin firearms licencing that can be used in administrative licencing regimes.
- Limiting the number of firearms to be held by any one individual.
- Limiting open-ended firearms licencing and the types of guns that are legal, including modifications; and
- A condition of a firearm license is holding Australian citizenship.

It was deeply concerning to us to see announcements made on the 9th and 10th of February that indicated the Queensland Premier intended to turn his back on National Cabinet and ignore nearly all of these recommendations.

Firearm owners

The Foundation has always proclaimed that most legal firearm owners are law abiding citizens. We have never called for the banning of guns and we have always communicated respectfully with everyone on this issue (although unfortunately we are not always treated respectfully in return).

We maintain it is reasonable, and indeed essential, to prioritise the public safety aspect of firearms ownership and use, and to give proper consideration to the interests of the 95% of the community who are not firearm owners. In fact, that is the legal framework in Queensland established by the *Weapons Act 1990*.

In Queensland the [average licence holder](#) has 4.9 firearms. There is no reason to believe that ownership patterns differ significantly from those in New South Wales, where [data](#) shows that at least 75 licensed firearm owners hold more than 100 registered firearms, with several individuals possessing nearly 300. (These people are not dealers or collectors.) The data also shows that nearly half of all registered firearms are stored in metropolitan cities or large regional towns.

Other data from [Victoria](#) showed that only 50% of registered hunters did so in 2024. Presumably the other 50% were registered firearm owners who chose not to use the firearms that they acquired after using the genuine reason of hunting.

Limiting the number of firearms per individual

The accumulation of firearms by individuals increases the risk of theft, diversion, and misuse. Ownership should be limited to the minimum number necessary for the licensed purpose. Western Australia, New South Wales and the ACT have all introduced a maximum number of firearms per licence, with an exemptions for primary producers and sporting shooters.

South Australia have expressed their support for the cap and Victoria and Tasmania are finalising their position.

These decisions will likely see around 72% of firearms in Australia be subject to new restrictions. It would be a serious missed opportunity if Queensland, which accounts for 26% of firearms in Australia, ignored National Cabinet and the [national sentiment for stronger firearm restrictions](#).

A range of public benefits arise from limiting the number of firearms that an individual may own. These include the following.

Reduced risk of theft and diversion

The more firearms stored in a single home, the greater the opportunity for theft, which is the [primary pathway](#) through which firearms enter the illicit market.

Recent [evidence indicates](#) that a firearm is stolen in Australia every four hours. The last analysis by the [Australian Institute of Criminology in 2018](#) found that most stolen firearms were Category A and B weapons; Category C and D firearms comprised less than one percent and Category H firearms between five and seven percent.

Nine in ten theft incidents were burglaries, with most theft locations described as secure. However, a fifth of residential and business thefts, and more than a third of thefts from vehicles, were enabled by unlocked access points.

A quarter of all stolen firearms were taken from non-compliant receptacles. Only 14% were recovered.

Reducing the overall number of firearms in the community inevitably reduces the pool available to the illicit market. It also lowers the likelihood that a single theft will result in multiple firearms being stolen and makes compliant and secure storage easier for legal owners.

Reduced lethal capacity in the community

Currently in Queensland, licensed firearm owners may possess an unlimited number of firearms, in effect enabling the creation of private arsenals.

The principle of harm reduction underpins our response to the Committee. Limits on the number of firearms reduces opportunities for misuse, including in situations involving assault, domestic violence, mental health crises or some other impulsive behaviours.

They also reduce opportunities for self-harm, which is still, by far the [greatest cause of firearm related deaths in men at around 88%](#). Of the intentional self-harm deaths by firearm, 71% are by longarms and 17% are by handguns.

By comparison, firearm related death by assault in men is 10%. However, firearm related death by assault in females is 64%.

Enables genuine purpose-based regulation

The Queensland firearm licence framework is intended to ensure that applicants have both a genuine reason and a genuine need for a firearm. However, the absence of limits has enabled some individuals to amass extensive collections with minimal regulatory intervention.

A numerical cap would better support both the Registry and firearm owners in applying the genuine purpose test consistently and rigorously.

Lower enforcement and regulatory burden

Large private collections create significant operational challenges for police and regulators, including:

- increased storage inspections
- more serial numbers and registrations to monitor
- greater complexity during compliance checks, licence reviews, and family-violence related interventions.

Capping firearm numbers would allow resources to be directed toward higher-risk cases rather than managing large, low-justification collections.

Supports consistency with harm-reduction principles

Government regulation of other potentially harmful products - such as alcohol, tobacco and gambling - follows a harm-reduction framework: reducing access reduces risk.

Applying the same principle to firearms acknowledges their unique lethality. Reducing the number of firearms aligns regulation with established public-health practices and reinforces Queensland's commitment to prevention-focused policy.

Increased public confidence in firearms regulation

Clear, reasonable limits on firearms ownership help the public understand:

- that firearms are regulated primarily for safety
- that unchecked accumulation is not permitted
- that authorities actively seek to prevent the formation of private stockpiles.

It must be emphasised that none of the recommendations in this section prevent legal firearm owners from pursuing their recreation activity, occupation or farming needs. These recommendations prioritise the public interest above the commercial interest of a single sector.

Impact of limiting the number of firearms

In addition to the extensive United States research demonstrating a clear and positive relationship between firearm prevalence and firearm-related injury and death, Western Australia is the only Australian jurisdiction with data indicating the impact of restricting firearm numbers.

Recently Western Australia [reported](#) that 83,764 firearms were surrendered through its buyback program, representing a 24% reduction in registered firearms over two years.

According to [Qld Weapons Licensing Branch](#) there were 1,159,498 registered weapons at 2/2/2026 . If Queensland were to achieve a reduction proportionate to Western Australia's, approximately 278,279 firearms would be removed - from predominately suburban areas. Importantly, this could be achieved without preventing any licensed individual from continuing to use firearms for legitimate purposes.

Recommendation: Queensland must introduce caps on the number of firearms that licensed firearm owner can own.

Restricting certain firearms

Queensland's firearms categories were developed nearly 30 years ago, prior to recent advances in firearms manufacture, modular design and emerging technologies.

The Foundation has long called on governments to address the proliferation of firearms designed specifically to circumvent Australia's restrictions on semi-automatic and automatic firearms.

While the technical description of firearms is not our area of expertise, we understand they are commonly referred to as button-release or lever-release, pump-action and straight-pull rifles and shotguns. In the recent [Combating Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism \(Firearms and Customs Laws\) Bill 2026](#) these firearms are classified as **assisted repeating action** and **straight pull repeating action** firearms.

We believe that it was weapons of this nature that were used in the Bondi shooting.

No reasonable person in Queensland would think that the possession of these firearms is subordinate to the need to ensure public safety. But that is the test that must apply according to the *Weapons Act 1990*.

Furthermore, no reasonable person in Queensland would think that the possession of as many of these firearms as someone wishes is in the interest of public safety.

Recommendation : Queensland must restrict assisted repeating action and straight-pull repeating action (or their technical equivalent) to Category C or D licenses only.

Commonwealth Gun Buy Back

If Queensland acts responsibly and in the interests of public safety, it must restrict the number of firearms available per licence and restrict the type of firearms that are available to Cat A&B licence holders.

Recommendation: Queensland participate in the Commonwealth gun buyback in order to provide appropriate compensation to legal firearm owners.

Intelligence sharing

The Commonwealth has announced the opportunity for jurisdictions to enhance background checks by using the [National AusCheck](#) system.

The Bill before this enquiry does not seem to make any mention of enabling this strengthening of background checks for firearm applicants.

Similarly, the Commonwealth has offered jurisdictions greater intelligence sharing and information sharing with Commonwealth body such as a ASIO and the ACIC.

This Bill does not appear to take up this significant opportunity, but it does mention formalising information sharing with the Australian Defence Force. It is not clear what information from the ADF would be helpful in strengthening background checks for firearm applicants and Queensland.

Recommendation: Queensland amend their Bill to include access to the Commonwealth's AusCheck system and enable information and intelligence sharing with ASIO and ACIC.

Physical and mental checks

Queensland State Coroner made a [clear recommendation](#) in the findings of his Inquest into the Wiembilla shootings. He said: *I recommend that the Queensland Government undertake a review to consider the feasibility of the introduction of mandatory mental health assessments for weapons licence applicants.*

We are deeply disappointed that the Queensland Government has not taken up this recommendation, instead introducing a limited mandatory reporting regime for a limited number of practitioners.

Latest figures show that 85% of all firearm deaths are intentional self-harm. For males, that figure is 88%. [Recent research](#) shows that the largest cohort of intentional self-harm by firearm is in males over 60 in rural and regional areas, presumably a high rate based on the prevalence and availability of firearms.

"Every Life: the Queensland Suicide Prevention Plan 2019-2029" [recognises](#) older men, men in primary industries, and men in rural and regional Queensland as cohorts whose higher than average risk of suicide must be addressed. One of the Plan's actions is to "identify new opportunities to reduce access to means".

Physical and mental well-being for all legal firearm owners is an important public health issue. It is inadequate to focus only on those at "high risk for committing violent gun crime".

It is unclear to us on what basis the Queensland Government has determined not to act on the specific recommendation from the State Coroner – a recommendation which, if implemented, would likely save lives.

Recommendation: Queensland Government undertake a meaningful review in order to identify the most appropriate ways of introducing mandatory mental health checks for the public safety and for the safety of firearm owners.

Unlicensed shooting

Unlicensed shooting is currently permitted in Queensland at gun clubs and shooting ranges. ["Come and Try"](#) events are widely promoted, including for [Bucks & Hens](#) events.

This practice circumvents the *Weapons Act 1990* requirement for a genuine reason and genuine need to possess and use a firearm. It undermines the principle - embedded in both Queensland law and the National Firearms Agreement - that firearm use and possession are privileges conditional on public safety.

In 2021 the NSW State Coroner, Magistrate Teresa O'Sullivan conducted a [comprehensive investigation](#) into the tragic deaths of Jack and Jennifer Edwards who were killed by their father John Edwards. The Coroner made several recommendations regarding the management of shooting ranges, and particularly unlicensed "try shooting" access.

Specifically,

Recommendation 20: That the New South Wales Government take steps to revoke the use of the P650 form (which currently allows an unlicensed person to undergo firearms training without involvement or vetting by the Firearms Registry), with the view to amending cl. 129 of the Firearms Regulation 2017 and implementing an alternative scheme which provides for adequate verification of information and oversight by the Firearms Registry.

While these are recommendations from an NSW Coroner, they are highly relevant to Queensland. Currently, all Queensland shooting clubs and ranges advertise and permit unlicensed firearm use, including by children.

Consequently:

- a. It is inconsistent with the purpose of the Firearm Act to ensure public safety, and there is no demonstrated public benefit to permit unlicensed firearm use.
- b. Screening of unlicensed individuals is entirely delegated to shooting clubs or ranges, which have a commercial interest in recruiting new members.
- c. Clubs have argued that unlicensed-use programs are essential for commercial viability. This conflict of interest between commercial interest and public safety is precisely why screening should not remain their responsibility.
- d. At [least eight deaths occurred at shooting ranges](#) between 2002-2021 in Australia, and no data exists on injuries or near misses.
- e. There is no transparency regarding how many individuals have been refused by shooting clubs or ranges due to concerning behaviour or potential risk.
- f. There is also no data on how many individuals who complete the self-assessment form have been rejected for a firearms licence.

- g. In 2018 an official from the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (SSAA) who was suspended after [raising safety concerns](#) at a Sydney firing range stated it is “only a matter of time” before another mass shooting. He reported aggressive behaviour at a “try shooting” event.
- h. In July 2023, a Perth man was [injured at a shooting range](#) in Sawyers Valley.
- i. In December 2021 two men [were taken to hospital](#) with gunshot wounds to their legs after what authorities believe was an accidental discharge at a shooting range.

These incidents reinforce our concern. We doubt that the *Weapons Act 1990* ever anticipated that any unlicensed person could walk into a shooting range or club for a buck's night event, complete a self-assessment and be permitted to use a firearm under the supervision of someone they have never met - someone, who in many cases, is a volunteer.

The New South Wales Government in its most recent gun-reform package, removed the ability for unlicensed individuals to engage in shooting activities on the basis of a self-declaration that they are a fit and proper person to use a firearm. The New South Wales Firearm Registry is now developing a digital system to “fast-track” pre-approval processes, which will require individuals to apply in advance and will remove the responsibility from shooting clubs for authorising unlicensed shooting.

While the overall risk may be low, we have demonstrated that the risk is nevertheless real. We also have no access to data regarding unreported injuries or near miss incidents, which further underscores the need for precautionary reform.

Recommendation: Queensland follows a similar path to New South Wales by removing the ability for an unlicensed individual to use firearms for any purpose at a gun club or shooting range until they have been assessed by the Firearm Registry. This may require enhanced digitalisation.

Children

All jurisdictions, including Queensland continue to contravene the National Firearms Agreement by allowing children under 18 to legally use firearms. This is fundamentally inconsistent with the stated objective of the *Weapons Act 1990* to ensure public safety.

The current Act provides no justification or explanation for permitting 11-year-old children in Queensland to lawfully use a firearm, nor how such permission could be considered consistent with the primary purpose of the legislation, which is to protect public safety.

While the firearm industry has advanced arguments that handling a firearm somehow equips children with otherwise unattainable life skills, no credible evidence base has been provided. It has also been claimed that farmers rely on children to euthanise stock - overlooking the explicit legal requirement that any such activity must occur under direct supervision of a licensed firearm owner, presumably one that could carry out whatever duty they were expecting their child to undertake.

For context, in Queensland an 11-year-old cannot legally drive a motor vehicle, even under supervision, and even a 15-year-old is prohibited from holding a Facebook account. It is therefore difficult to conceive how it could be in the public interest to allow children to legally use firearms.

Furthermore, the use of firearms by children in an organisational setting - such as a shooting range - would raise serious concerns under [Queensland Child Safe Standards](#), including *Standard 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed*.

In addition, there is another compelling public-health rationale for limiting children's access to firearms. Health departments across the country advise that children should not attend shooting ranges, which are well-established sources of lead contamination.

Investigations into [lead contamination](#) at shooting ranges concluded that “*It is the norm, rather than the exception, that shooting ranges are contaminated with lead.*”

The [Queensland Health Department](#) has a fact sheet specifically for “Lead exposure and firearms use” that recommends: “*Early life exposure to lead can adversely affect child development and the Department of Health*

strongly recommends young children or pregnant or breast-feeding women stay away from gun shooting activities, firearms and ammunition.” The Queensland government recommends that “*children do not attend shooting ranges*” yet shooting ranges and gun clubs continue to market their services to 11-year-olds.

The Western Australia [Health Department](#) advises that individuals who use firearms, handle ammunition or visit shooting ranges are at increased risk of lead exposure. It is recommended that children do not attend shooting ranges and firearm users take precautions to ensure their clothes and skin are free from any lead particles before hugging children or handling toys.

Similarly, the South Australia [Health Department](#) explicitly recommends “*Avoid taking young children to shooting ranges.*” An [international review](#) found “*Women and children are among recreational shooters at special risk*” and “*Thus firing ranges, regardless of type and user classification, currently constitute a significant and unmanaged public health problem.*”

Even the [Sporting Shooters Association of Australia](#) agrees that “*A variety of potential contamination risks exists at sports shooting ranges - the most concerning for human health and environment is lead from the spent projectiles.*”

Once again, public safety must guide firearm policy in Queensland, and the significant issue of lead contamination must be expressly considered.

Recommendation: Queensland should ban unlicensed shooting and prevent children under 18 legally using firearms or attending shooting ranges.

Audit Authority to Hunt

Most firearm license applicants identify their genuine reason for their firearm license by obtaining an “Authority to Hunt” from a landowner.

Recent reviews in New South Wales and Western Australia have revealed widespread misuse of this process, with landowners prosecuted for selling or duplicating authorities. In some cases, relatively small landowners had issued authorities to hunt to thousands of individuals. The system lacks any meaningful validation, and shooters may use an authority for one property to shoot on any property in Queensland.

In Western Australia, all authorities were cancelled and replaced with a set of guidelines developed using data from the Department of Primary Industries. These guidelines determine both the type of pests present on a property and the number of authorities a landowner can issue. Responsibility for managing these authorities now rests with the landowner rather than the hunter whose license remains valid for five years.

Recommendation: Queensland Police audit the Authority to Hunt system, consult with Western Australia and New South Wales regarding their data and implement a revised system that provides strong regulation, validation and oversight of Authorities to Hunt.

Protect political integrity

Political donations from the firearms industry should be prohibited, consistent with restrictions applied to other high-risk industries. A [2019 report](#) by the Australia Institute found the Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia (SIFA) - the peak body for Australia’s five largest firearms suppliers - spends on a per capital basis, amounts on political campaigning comparable to those spent by the National Rifle Association (NRA) in the United States.

Two prominent examples include the “FLICK‘EM” campaign during the 2017 Queensland state election and the “*Not. Happy. Dan.*” campaign during the 2018 Queensland state election.

Recommendation: Queensland should prohibit political donations from the firearm industry or related parties.

Reform the Minister's Firearm Advisory Forum

The previous Minister's Firearm Advisory Forum was an ad hoc Committee with meetings often called with less than one day's notice and its membership was unclear and almost entirely made up of firearm industry representatives.

A new consultation Committee should be established after expressions of interest from interested parties; the membership should ensure all sectors of Queensland community are represented; the meetings to have a clear governance structure, terms of reference, minutes and scheduled meetings.

This would enhance transparency of firearm matters that affect the Queensland population.

Recommendation: Queensland government reconstitute the Ministers Firearm Advisory Forum.

Letter of support from Public Health Association of Australia

Mr Martin Hunt MP
Chair, JICS Committee
Parliament of Queensland



Dear Mr Hunt,

Endorsement of the Australian Gun Safety Alliance submission on the *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026*

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) is a founding and active member of the Australian Gun Safety Alliance. Our organisation is the leading body for public health and harm prevention in Australia, and as such we understand the need for the strong management of firearms in Australia and for the focus always to be on public safety.

We fully support the principles of the Alliance, which are to:

- Ensure a safer community for Australian children
- Have all jurisdictions comply with the National Firearms Agreement
- Increase public awareness of the poor compliance by all Governments
- Hold governments to account for their non-compliance
- Contribute to a balanced public conversation about the importance of a strong gun safety framework
- Provide informed advice to governments on matters relating to a safer community regarding the use and possession of firearms.

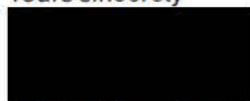
We understand that the Queensland Parliament is undertaking a review of the state's proposed firearm law reform. PHAA will not be making a separate submission. We have contributed to the Alliance submission to the inquiry and we support their calls.

Our general conclusion is that while content of the Bill may make some positive difference to a limited range of the many forms of gun violence and harm, the most striking feature of the Bill is what it *fails* to cover, in comparison to better reforms being made in other jurisdictions. The Bill makes no provision for limiting numbers of guns held, tightening licencing conditions, regular licence renewals, and other key matters.

We particularly wish to repeat the words of Walter Mikac AM, Founder of the Allanah and Madeline Foundation, in his cover letter to the Alliance submission:

"I am extremely disappointed at the Queensland Government response that ignores any attempt to restrict firearms in Queensland. Only increasing penalties is the epitome of locking the gate after the horse has bolted. The Queensland community deserves better and their public safety should be paramount to the demands of firearm users and their lobby."

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Adj/Prof Terry Slevin.

Adj/Prof Terry Slevin
Chief Executive Officer

Australian Gun Safety Alliance Members

