

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

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Australian Recreation Union

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 on behalf of: Australian Recreation Union (ARU)

Date: 16 February 2026

Organisation Overview: The Australian Recreation Union (ARU) is Australia's dedicated union representing recreational shooters, hunters, fishers, 4WD enthusiasts, campers, and other outdoor recreationists. Founded by passionate advocates including former members of established shooting organisations, the ARU works to protect and promote responsible access to outdoor pursuits against unnecessary restrictions. Our growing membership includes thousands of law-abiding Queenslanders who use firearms responsibly for sport, recreation, and legitimate rural activities.

Executive Summary

The Australian Recreation Union (ARU) strongly supports the *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026*. This Bill represents a proportionate, evidence-based response to serious threats – including terrorism, organised crime, and hate-motivated violence – while avoiding the punitive blanket restrictions imposed in some other jurisdictions.

We commend the Queensland Government for focusing on disqualifying high-risk individuals rather than imposing arbitrary limits on lawful owners (e.g., no magazine caps or firearm number limits). The ARU and our members fully endorse measures that enhance public safety without eroding the rights of responsible Queenslanders.

Key provisions we strongly support include:

- Strengthened fit and proper person tests.
- Enhanced Firearm Prohibition Orders.
- Tougher penalties for illegal activities (e.g., 3D-printed firearms, reckless discharge, trafficking).
- Mandatory steel storage upgrades.

To make the Bill even more effective and balanced, we offer two constructive recommendations:

1. Explicitly affirm and streamline access to Category D firearms for primary producers, rural landowners, and those who assist them in pest management.
2. Introduce clear safeguards and definitions for the use of “criminal intelligence” in licensing decisions to ensure fairness and transparency.

1. Strong Support for the Bill's Objectives and Key Provisions

The ARU represents thousands of responsible recreational shooters and outdoor enthusiasts across Australia, many of whom reside in Queensland's rural and regional areas. Our members are law-abiding citizens who value public safety and condemn the misuse of firearms in any form, including hate crimes and terrorism.

This Bill rightly targets the root causes of firearms-related risks:

- **Citizenship requirement (new s10(2)(h) with exemptions):** A sensible measure with appropriate carve-outs for genuine occupational and sporting/target shooting reasons, protecting legitimate users.
- **Broadened fit and proper person assessment (amended ss 10B and 10C):** Considering all relevant criminal history and circumstances closes loopholes without unfairly penalising rehabilitated individuals.
- **Reformed Firearm Prohibition Orders:** Fixed durations, direct Commissioner issuance, and expanded powers will better neutralise threats from recidivists and associates of criminal organisations.
- **New and increased penalties:** Provisions like the blueprint material offence (ss 67A–67B),ism B), reckless discharge (s 56A), and escalated trafficking penalties demonstrate zero tolerance for illegal firearms activity.
- **Storage upgrades:** Requiring solid steel containers is a practical enhancement that responsible owners can easily comply with.

These changes will keep guns out of dangerous hands while preserving access for the vast majority of Queensland's 200,000+ licensed owners – many of whom are ARU members or supporters engaged in recreational shooting, hunting, and rural pest control.

3. Recommendation 1: Affirm Access to Category D Firearms for Rural Pest Management, Including Assistants

Many ARU members are rural landowners, primary producers, or recreational hunters who actively support biosecurity efforts by controlling feral animals on private and public lands. Feral pests (pigs, deer, dogs, foxes, rabbits) inflict hundreds of millions in annual damage to Queensland's agriculture, environment, and livestock.

Category D firearms (e.g., self-loading centre-fire rifles) are proven tools for humane, efficient, and safe large-scale pest control on extensive properties. They are already heavily restricted to occupational genuine reasons under the Weapons Act.

To ensure Queensland's rural communities can continue vital pest management – especially in light of growing feral populations – we recommend the Bill (or accompanying regulations) explicitly state:

"Category D weapons remain available to primary producers and rural landowners for occupational pest management purposes. This includes persons who support or assist in managing pests on rural properties (e.g., family members, employees, neighbours, or approved contractors), provided they meet genuine reason requirements, complete required training, and pass the fit and proper person test."

This clarification would:

- Align with the Bill's occupational exemptions (s 10(2C)).
- Recognise the community-based nature of rural pest control.
- Support biosecurity without broadening recreational access inappropriately.

Our members who assist landowners (often on a voluntary or mutual-aid basis) play a critical role in these efforts. Explicit inclusion would prevent unnecessary bureaucratic barriers while maintaining strict oversight.

3. Recommendation 2: Safeguards for Criminal Intelligence in Licensing Decisions

The ARU supports robust intelligence use to identify risks. However, where "criminal intelligence" (explicitly referenced in s 10C(1)(c) and potentially broader under s 10B) forms the basis for refusing, suspending, or revoking a licence, procedural fairness is essential to maintain community trust.

We recommend:

1. **A clear statutory definition** of "criminal intelligence" as information from law-enforcement/intelligence agencies not tested in open court.
2. **A reliability threshold:** Adverse intelligence must be corroborated or otherwise assessed as reasonably likely to be accurate and relevant before it solely grounds an adverse decision.
3. **Natural justice:** Provide applicants/licensees with a non-sensitive summary of concerns and an opportunity to respond.
4. **Robust review:** Retain full merits review by QCAT, with protected closed sessions for sensitive material.

These safeguards – modelled on existing national security frameworks – would prevent errors, ensure proportionality, and uphold confidence in the system.

Conclusion

The ARU proudly supports the *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026* as introduced. It is a targeted, responsible reform that enhances safety while respecting Queensland's recreational shooting and rural traditions. With our recommended enhancements – affirming Category D access for pest management assistants and adding intelligence safeguards – the Bill will be fairer, more effective, and better supported by the community.

The ARU urges the Committee to recommend passage of the Bill with these amendments (or equivalent commitments). We are available to provide oral evidence or further detail.

Thank you for considering this submission on behalf of Queensland's responsible recreational shooters and outdoor enthusiasts.

On behalf of the Australian Recreation Union

Glenn Parker

Australian Recreation Union Queensland Delegate