

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

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Submission By: Guy Boaz

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I wish to provide to the committee my views regarding the proposed “Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026”.

First, I would like to indicate my support for what is evidently a thoughtful and considered approach to the act of terrorism committed at Bondi late last year. I do believe the current Queensland firearms laws, when properly enforced, are fit for purpose in ensuring legally acquired firearms are in the possession of law-abiding residents in Queensland. However, I also understand the need, in the current climate, for the government to review and update the law where deemed necessary with the aim of preventing a similar occurrence from happening here in Queensland.

The purpose of this submission is to express my concern at the proposed new requirement for firearms licence holders to be Australian citizens. As I understand the drive for this change is that citizenship is thought to be a marker of someone who holds and follows Australian values. The proposed bill has, in my opinion, the following issues:

1. The first consideration is that one of the alleged shooters at Bondi was an Australian citizen by birth. This individual was also not a licenced firearms holder. This provides evidence that neither the “Australian values” assumed with citizenship nor the threat of legal action over the possession and use of a firearm deterred that particular individual. As an aside, I wish to point out that the worst terrorist attack in New Zealand which resulted in the deaths of 51 people was carried out by an Australian citizen. Citizenship therefore provides no guarantee against these types of attacks.
2. There are a significant number of Permanent Residents, including New Zealanders, living in Queensland. A proportion of these people hold, or wish to obtain, a firearms licence in order to carry on a past-time they enjoyed back in their country of origin. These people, through the act of obtaining their Permanent Residence, have provided a clear indication to progress to citizenship and thus provide evidence of an intent to follow Australian values and obligations as well as obey Australian law.
3. The proposed changes to citizenship requirements further penalise the holders of Permanent Residence visas when consideration is given to the time required from the granting of a permanent residence visa through to citizenship approval and finally the granting of that citizenship. This can take up to 6 years or more. This includes the many New Zealand and British Permanent Resident holders who make up a significant portion of holders of this class of visa. Additionally, there are many New Zealanders on a Special Category Visa who have entitlement of residence but which is cancelled on leaving Australia (to visit family, for example) and reacquired on return.
4. If these changes are implemented, it should be noted that non-citizens will still be able to use a firearm in Queensland. Section 2.20(2) of the Weapons Act states that:

(2) If a person who—

- (a) is not a resident of Queensland; and
- (b) is visiting, or intending to visit, Queensland; establishes that the person is entitled, under the law of the place where the person resides, to possess a weapon of a particular type, the person may be issued with a licence for the weapon as prescribed by regulation. ‘

(3) The licence is—

- (a) valid for the period, not longer than 3 months, specified in the licence; and
- (b) must be endorsed as a visitor’s licence

Likewise, the current law also allows residents of other States and Territory's to enter Queensland on there respective State or Territory licence to undertake recreational shooting (as an example). As I understand it, this Bill does change this aspect. Therefore, it can be concluded that non-citizens will still be able to lawfully shoot in Queensland under the current provisions. It appears the proposed law changes will only penalise those non-citizens resident in Queensland who would otherwise pass the police vetting provided under the current law.

Finally, I'd like to draw attention to the importance of language, specifically the use of the word "weapon" when describing a firearms licence. There is a reason I have used "firearms licence" in this submission and that is to provide a distinction from the term weapon and all the negative connotations it encompasses. Any object can be a weapon. A car carrying a bomb, as illustrated at Bondi and numerous other places around the world, including Northern Ireland, is a weapon. A firearm when used within the framework of the law, is a tool lawfully used in the past-time of target shooting, hunting or such other legal and peaceful activities. Referring to the licence as a "Weapons Licence" conflates firearms licence holders as possessors of weapons and who may pose a risk to the safety of others. I understand the current law is deemed the "Weapons Act" and in 1990 when this was promulgated the distinction was perhaps not such an issue. In today's climate I believe the distinction is important should be investigated to change the title with referencing to the licence to the more neutral "firearms licence". This will further support the intent of the law to only allow responsible, law-abiding residents who have been carefully vetted by police to possess firearms.

Thank you for your consideration.