

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 *Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Criminals Bill* (Queensland)

Executive summary

I support the intent of the Bill and consider it well targeted at criminal misuse and high-risk behaviors. My submission seeks practical amendments that maintain public safety while improving regulatory clarity, focusing police resources on criminals, and reducing avoidable administrative burden on compliant license holders and the Weapons Licensing Branch.

After nearly three decades under the national firearms framework, some restrictions remain contested and are not consistently implemented across jurisdictions, which suggests parts of the framework warrant review and modernization. This submission recommends:

1. an independent review of magazine-capacity restrictions and their measurable effectiveness;
2. a tightly controlled “genuine reason” pathway for Category C and limited Category D firearms for target shooting, with strict participation and compliance safeguards; and
3. improvements to Weapons Licensing Branch processing through digitization and service standards to reduce administrative workload and free police resources for criminal enforcement.

1) Support for the Bill’s objective

The central purpose of keeping firearms out of the hands of criminals and other prohibited persons is sound. Measures that disrupt illicit supply, deter theft and diversion, and increase consequences for criminal possession align with community expectations and should remain the primary operational focus of the Bill.

My recommendations are intended to complement that objective, not dilute it: they aim to ensure that regulatory settings affecting lawful owners are demonstrably effective, enforceable, and do not create unnecessary processing load that diverts attention from high-risk individuals.

2) Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Require an independent review of magazine-capacity restrictions

Introduce a statutory review clause requiring an independent, evidence-based review within 12 months of commencement that reports publicly on:

- whether magazine-capacity limits measurably reduce harm in Queensland;
- whether they meaningfully affect criminal misuse versus primarily affecting licensed owners;
- the compliance and enforcement costs of current limits (including diversion of police time); and
- whether alternative controls (secure storage compliance, theft prevention, suitability screening, targeted audits, and strong penalties for diversion/misuse) deliver equal or better outcomes.

Rationale: Where a restriction is highly visible but its effectiveness is disputed or unclear, a transparent review is the most responsible approach. It strengthens public confidence and ensures policy is outcome-driven rather than assumption-driven.

Recommendation 2: Remove blanket magazine-capacity limits for vetted license holders (or reform them based on review findings)

Subject to Recommendation 1, remove blanket capacity limits applying to vetted license holders, and focus on controls that address real drivers of harm:

- suitability screening and license integrity
- secure storage and theft prevention
- targeted auditing and compliance checks
- strong, enforceable penalties for misuse, diversion, or unlawful possession

If the Government proposes retaining limits, they should be justified against Queensland evidence and paired with clear, consistent rules that are easy to understand and enforce.

Rationale: Criminals do not comply with administrative capacity caps. If the goal is reducing criminal harm, policy should focus on illicit acquisition pathways and diversion prevention, while ensuring licensed owners remain subject to strict storage and suitability requirements.

Recommendation 3: Allow Category C and limited Category D for target shooting under a tightly controlled “genuine reason” pathway

Amend the framework to permit Category C and limited Category D firearms to be approved for target shooting as a genuine reason, using strict safeguards comparable in seriousness to participation-based models already used in other areas of firearms regulation.

This pathway should be narrow, discipline-based, and conditional, including:

- verified club membership and a probationary period
- minimum annual participation requirements with record keeping
- limits on the number held
- strong safe storage obligations and compliance audits
- immediate suspension/revocation for non-compliance
- additional conditions where appropriate (for example, range-only use)

Rationale: A controlled pathway is not deregulation. It replaces broad prohibitions with a system that is transparent, auditable, and enforceable, while keeping strict consequences for non-compliance. It also reduces inconsistency by aligning eligibility with genuine sporting need and proven compliance, rather than category alone.

Recommendation 4: Improve Weapons Licensing Branch processing through digitisation and service standards

Introduce practical administrative reforms that reduce unnecessary burden on police and improve compliance:

- digitised lodgement, document verification, and status tracking for licences and PTAs
- clear published service standards for processing timeframes
- process review to remove bottlenecks and reduce repeat enquiries
- prioritisation of high-risk matters while streamlining routine low-risk transactions

Evidence from lived experience: Current licensing timeframes around **three months** and PTAs commonly **18 days to around a month** create avoidable follow-up calls, resubmissions, and status-chasing, which consumes administrative time better directed toward criminal enforcement.

Rationale: Efficient licensing is a public safety measure. A modern, digitised process improves accuracy, reduces workload, supports better record keeping, and frees policing resources to focus on criminals and illicit supply.

3) Why these changes are consistent with public safety

(a) Targeted enforcement works best when administration is efficient

When the licensing system is slow or unclear, it generates avoidable administrative demand. Reducing unnecessary delays and improving transparency keeps attention on high-risk individuals rather than routine paperwork.

(b) Review improves legitimacy and compliance

A statutory independent review of contested restrictions improves trust and compliance, because rules are clearly tied to measurable outcomes. Where evidence supports a restriction, it becomes easier to defend. Where it does not, reform becomes a public safety improvement, not a weakening.

(c) A controlled sporting pathway can be safer than ambiguous prohibitions

A strict, conditional pathway creates clearer compliance triggers and enforcement levers (membership, attendance, audits, limits, revocation). That is often more enforceable than a blanket prohibition that encourages confusion, inconsistent decisions, and persistent administrative friction.

4) Conclusion

I support the Bill's intent and welcome strong measures aimed at criminals, prohibited persons, theft/diversion, and illicit supply. While this inquiry is active, the Committee has

an opportunity to recommend sensible amendments that maintain public safety and improve effectiveness:

- require an independent review of magazine-capacity limits and their Queensland outcomes;
- reform or remove blanket capacity restrictions for vetted licence holders based on evidence;
- permit Category C and limited Category D for target shooting via a strict, audited “genuine reason” pathway; and
- digitise and streamline Weapons Licensing Branch workflows to reduce administrative load and free police resources to focus on criminals.

Signed,
Toby Lythgo