

Robert Finlay
[REDACTED]

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Email: [REDACTED]

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Re: Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 submission.

Good morning,

I've reviewed proposed changes to replica Category R firearms and gel blasters and have particular concerns with the wording and structure of Section 67 relating to Reasonable Excuse for possession.

By way of my own bona fides, I'll introduce myself as follows.

- Founding President of the Sporting Shooters Assoc of Aust (Historical Arms Collectors) in 2000.
- Member of the Qld Rifle Association and Sporting Shooters Association of Australia since 1976.
- Founding President, Queen Victorias Rifles, a historically themed shooting club in 2012.
- Reenactor since 1976, and member of the Qld Living History Federation since 1994.
- Member of the Qld Living History Federation Firearms Advisory Sub Committee since 2012.

And it is as a reenactor that I direct my concerns to you.

I currently possess Category R firearms under an extremely restrictive registration process which required me to obtain a Form 31 confirming the non-firing replica specifically manufactured as incapable of being made operable & fired, is in fact deactivated. I then obtain a Permit to Acquire of which a armourer is then required to sign. The replica category R firearm is then noted in a collectors register and stored in a safe compliant under the weapons act. Total cost above purchase \$200.00.....All this for a replica made from plastic drain pipe and resin with no moving parts whatsoever.....a foolish exercise.

You can imagine if attending public events, how troublesome it becomes to bring a safe weighing 150 kgs or more, and/or chaining the said replica to an inanimate object all the while ensuring the licensee is able to prevent public obtaining possessing of the inanimate replica Category R, and one far less realistic in appearance than a gel blaster.

So it was with some frustration that I began discussion with the Weapons Licencing folk in 2016 with a view to obtaining some sanity that a replica made from resin, and possessing no moving or metal parts be free from the above licencing, when around that time gel blaster activities provided a measure of ridicule when compared with Category R replicas, Gel Blasters being freely available and requiring no security whatsoever while as reenactors we bent over backwards to comply, created by-laws, appointed safety marshalls, etc in attempts to comply.

So please, let me begin.

Changes to Section 67 (A) 1 include mention of recreational activities away from public gaze and I quote “in a way not reasonably able to be seen from a public place’

Question 1: While it does not specifically mention re-enactment activities, can I consider this wording can also mean re-enactment training and practices? The wording is suggested above is very broad, not to mention vague....almost intentionally so.

I have spent a great deal of time and patience dealing with the Weapons Licencing branch over this and other changes to Weapons licence conditions (MRD & MR5) and provided a great deal of information and statistics relating to re-enactment activities both in private when in regular practice/s, and under the very public gaze at Anzac Day parades in central Brisbane and regional centres throughout Queensland and other public displays in support of charities such as Legacy, etc. Re-enactment events Queensland wide can number two to three hundred per year including practices, some of which if not all involve replica category R firearms.

It therefore does not make a great deal of sense, if re-enactment is mentioned specifically under Weapons Licence condition MR5, yet receives no mention whatsoever in Section 67 (A) when noting this activity as a reasonable excuse.

Question 2: Changes to 67 (A) 2 discusses participation in recreational activities. Can the same optimistic eye assume this includes public events such as History Alive, air shows, static or active displays or Anzac Day?

I would like to suggest a simple inclusion to 67 (A) 1 to include to 67 (A) 1. 'Training and practices by bona fide re-enactment groups'.

And suggest inclusion of a sentence to 67 (A) 2 include 'Public events attended by bona fide re-enactment groups advised under the Weapons act and its regulations (MRD & MR5)

I'm aware that the Qld Living History Federation provided a submission to the Weapons Licencing Branch earlier this year for what would be considered a bona fide re-enactment group, and although again followed up this month, they are yet to receive a reply or acknowledgement. It would seem prudent for both the QPS and reenactors to have a yardstick and expectation of behaviour when dealing and offering a measure of safe practices.

Changes to Section 67 3 (B) mentions a reasonable excuse being possession by a collector, who is also a holder of a collectors licence.

Question 3: Is it not counter-productive to remove Replica Category R from licencing, only to have a measure of the collectors credentials being a Collectors Licence?

Question 4: I assume this change is targeting folk who are neither captured by 67 (A) 1 & 2 and who are neither reenactors or Gel Blaster members?

I've attached a photograph of a facsimile of a Australian AUG Steyr rifle, a currently legally owned Gel Blaster repainted by a modeller for display in a local military museum, the intention being this piece replicates a rifle used by the ADF in Afghanistan and will provide a display of the transition of firearms used by the Australian in Afghanistan and the Middle

East from 1919 to 2019. This piece is owned by a Qld resident and as a modeller who is neither a firearms collector, a Gel blaster or a reenactor.

I would like to suggest inclusion of a sentence to 67 3 (B), include ' members of historical organisations' which would encompass RSLs and military museums including pop up displays which seem popular during Anzac Day, etc. Possession of a Collectors Licence under the Queensland Weapons Act is costly and does not currently capture all firearms collectors (or their replicas) Queensland wide as evidence above, and their issuance being small. And again, it would seem prudent to make this section easier to comply with, rather than more difficult as currently possession of a gel blaster is obliged to comply with none.

I have provided all the above to the Weapons Licencing branch and sought clarity of these changes though am yet to receive a reply or acknowledgement.

If however the reasonable excuse for ownership and possess specifically excludes reenactors, and makes no mention of re-enactment, parades or public events then four years of work has rather failed.

I'm more than happy to provide any further details, please contact me on Mobile: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

Thankyou,

Robert Finlay



Gel Blaster AUG Steyr rifle mentioned above.