

## Summary Offences (Prevention of Knife Crime) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023

**Submission No:** 5  
**Submitted by:** Jack Beasley Foundation  
**Publication:**  
**Attachments:**  
**Submitter Comments:**



## **Summary Offences (Prevention of Knife Crime) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023**

### **Submission by the Jack Beasley Foundation**

Committee Secretary  
State Development and Regional Industries Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's consideration of this bill.

The Jack Beasley Foundation (JBF) welcomes the introduction of this legislation and offers our strong support of the bill before Parliament. Brett Beasley, an executive board member of our community organisation, has advocated for restrictions on the sale of knives to minors for some time.

These changes will support the efforts of the Queensland Police Service (QPS) to improve community safety by reducing youth violence through minimising the risks associated with knives and other dangerous items.

### **Background: Jack's Murder**

The JBF was created in the aftermath of the tragic murder of 17-year-old Jack Beasley. In December 2019, just like thousands of other teenagers, Jack and his friends caught the tram into the heart of the Gold Coast to go to a party.

A group of teenagers who had also travelled into Surfers Paradise that night made the decision to bring a knife with them. After spending a few hours along the esplanade, they gathered on some benches at the end of Cavill Avenue. Extensive CCTV footage showed a very brief interaction, just an exchange of looks, occurred

between Jack's group and this other group. Jack's group kept walking south and when they were a few hundred metres away, the other group of young men sprinted towards them. They pushed their way through Jack's group, a fight broke out and within a few seconds, Jack was fatally stabbed.

They left Jack to die on the footpath in the middle of Australia's tourist capital. It was a senseless act of youth violence, and a tragedy which devastated so many people in our part of the Gold Coast. The young man who stabbed Jack rightly received the maximum sentence for his actions, but no penalty will ever make up for the loss we have suffered.

### **The Jack Beasley Foundation**

The JBF was established just weeks after Jack's death. It has been community-led from the very beginning; driven by local people who give up so much of their own time. Our first public call for change was through a petition calling for metal-detection to be implemented at Helensvale Station, the place where Jack's killer changed from the train to the tram.

The QPS and the State Government believed in what we were aiming to do and the intent of our original petition, to 'detect knives, save lives', has now turned into nation-leading laws to prevent knife crime. We were immensely proud to have these laws named in honour of Jack and we view this bill the Committee is considering as a vital next step to complement Jack's Law.

Legislation is just one piece of the puzzle. Behavioural change is the only way we are going to have the best chance to stop knife violence. For the JBF to contribute to making sure no other community is devastated like ours has been, we had to stop young people from even thinking about taking a knife out with them.

That's why we created our education program. Since July 2021, the JBF has visited 30 schools across south-east Queensland and northern NSW. We have received visit requests from other parts of Queensland and even from other states.

Delivered in partnership with the QPS, the One Moment presentation aims to educate young people on the dangers of carrying a knife and the long-term effects youth violence has on the victims, their families and friends, and on the offender themselves.

The presentation runs for an hour and includes Brett and Belinda sharing their experience. They want as many young people as they can reach to understand how a split second decision can change the lives of so many people.

We know the decision to take a knife when they're heading out is often done because they think they need it for protection. It is our hope that hearing Brett and Belinda, and Jack's friends, talk about their loss will make some of these young people reconsider this and choose to live their life without a knife.

A QPS officer also attends and runs the students through the laws around carrying knives and tries to give them some awareness about how they are likely not making themselves safer and could become a victim.

To see more of what the program looks like, we encourage committee members to watch this short YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/ne-tX69DqQw>

### **Summary Offences (Prevention of Knife Crime) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023**

The JBF aims to stop young people carrying knives or other weapons and we believe the measures taken in this bill will further support our efforts by making it harder for these dangerous weapons to fall into the wrong hands.

We strongly support the proposed clause regarding the sale of controlled items to minors. Reducing the accessibility of knives and other weapons to minors through the prohibition of their sale is a reasonable and measured step to protect our community.

Many of these purchases by young people are opportunistic. Restricting their ability to easily pick up a knife makes sense. Some people may view this as an inconvenience but that is a small price to pay for the improvement to community safety these laws will bring.

We do not believe any minor should be purchasing a knife unsupervised. There are legitimate reasons for a young person to need a knife, outdoor recreation activities for example, and it is not a lot to ask to have a responsible adult purchase it for them.

All other states in Australia have laws restricting the sale of knives, it is time Queensland did the same.

In general, we welcome media commentary from retailer representative organisations for these legislative changes. They are vital partners in making sure these laws are a success. We note some major retailers already have policies in place to prevent minors from buying knives and we thank them for being proactive.

The last thing we want to see as a result of this is an explosion of online sales of knives to minors. We note the broad definition of 'sell' and in particular the reference to online sales as an attempt to prevent this.

Clarification on how proposed clauses 19K and 19N will be applied in electronic commerce and third-party online purchases is needed. Is this intended to work in a similar way to how online liquor sales are conducted?

For more, please see attached media reports of Brett Beasley's advocacy for these changes for further commentary on the need for these changes.

### **Building on Jack's Law**

In March 2023, Jack's Law was passed by the Queensland Parliament, giving police the power to use wandung devices to search for weapons in safe night precincts and on public transport. In the first seven months, over 3,400 hand-held electronic scanning operations have been conducted, 400 weapons have been seized, 1,070 people have been charged with almost 1,900 offences, and more than 39,000 people have been scanned in safe night precincts and on public transport.

They give some indication of the scale of the problem we are trying to solve. Many Queenslanders will be shocked by these numbers. This is why restricting the availability of weapons to young people is such an important next step in supporting our police in their efforts to tackle youth crime and reduce knife violence. Our hope is that these laws will lead to a reduction in the weapons police find.

Just like the hundreds of weapons taken off the streets thanks to police wandung operations, every single knife these laws stop from getting into the wrong hands is a potential life saved. It is another family and community spared the devastation ours has endured since Jack's loss.

Thank you again for this opportunity to contribute. We would welcome the chance for representatives from the JBF to appear at any public hearings the Committee is holding as part of their consideration.

Kind regards,

**The Jack Beasley Foundation**



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# NEW LAWS TO RESTRICT THE SALE OF WEAPONS TO JUVENILES

**ELISABETH WALSH**

THE Queensland Government is set to introduce new legislation to restrict the sale of knives, certain other bladed items, and replica firearms, including gel blasters, to juveniles. The move comes as part of an ongoing effort to combat knife crime and youth offending in Queensland.

Police Minister Mark Ryan said the State Government was committed to continually looking for new ways to improve community safety.

"These laws will assist in keeping dangerous items out of the hands of young criminals before violent offences can occur," Mr Ryan said.

The proposed laws come on the heels of successful results since the implementation of Jack's Law and aim to reduce the accessibility of these items to young people, deter violent offences and enhance community safety.

Jack's Law is a result of the advocacy of the Jack Beasley Foundation and Brett and Belinda Beasley.

It was enacted after their 17-year-old son, Jack, was fatally stabbed on the Gold Coast in 2019. The law allows police to use handheld metal detecting wands to detect weapons, deter offending, and protect the community.

In the first six months of wandering operations under Jack's Law, police have seized a total of 350 weapons. These operations, which use

handheld metal detecting wands, have been conducted in various locations, including Safe Night Precincts, public transport, and transport hubs.

More than 31,800 individuals have been scanned during these operations, resulting in 904 people being charged with nearly 1,600 offences, most of which are related to weapons and drugs.

Under the new laws, it will be an offence to sell knives, and certain bladed items such as machetes, axes, swords, and replica firearms to juveniles. Those attempting to use false identification to purchase these items could also face charges.

Retailers will have to display signage indicating the prohibition of sales to juveniles, and secure storage will be required for specific bladed items like machetes, axes, swords, sickles, daggers, double-edged blades, and spears.

In addition to restricting sales, the laws will also prohibit the advertisement of these items in a violent manner or in a way that suggests they are suitable for combat.

The legislation is based on research conducted by the Queensland Police Service (QPS), which considered crime statistics and similar legislative responses, such as the restriction on the sale of spray paint to juveniles.

Acting Assistant Commissioner Paul Hart emphasised the importance of these new laws in enhancing police efforts to combat knife

crime and keep communities safe.

"It will allow officers to take action against those unlawfully selling weapons to young people, who may intend to use them to commit violent offences," he said.

"Already, thanks to Jack's Law, police have removed 350 weapons off our streets in just six months – many that could have been involved in acts of senseless violence.

"With every wandering operation we see an opportunity to educate on the impacts of knife crime and intervene in the lives of those who are making the poor decision to carry a weapon.

"The results from Jack's Law speak for themselves, and with further legislation restricting young people's access to weapons – we're confident we can continue to enhance community safety."

Brett Beasley, from the Jack Beasley Foundation, expressed gratitude for the government's support in restricting weapon availability, particularly to young people.

"Belinda and I will always grieve for Jack, but it is very heartening to see that his legacy lives on," Mr Beasley said.

"Six months after Jack's Law came into effect it's really encouraging to see that police are using Jack's legacy to undertake wandering operations right across the state.

"It's clearly making a real difference in helping to keep communities safe.

"It's also very gratifying to see the government take another significant step in relation to restricting the availability of weapons, especially to young people.

"Our work with Jack's foundation will continue with its focus on educating young people about the dangers of carrying knives and other weapons.

"It's great that the government is further supporting our work by making it harder for dangerous weapons to fall into the wrong hands."

Representatives from the Gel Blaster industry expressed their support for the restrictions on the sale of gel blasters to minors, believing it will promote community safety while allowing enthusiasts to continue enjoying the sport.

Various retail organisations, including the Shopping Centre Council of Australia, the Australian Retailers Association, and the National Retail Association, applauded the proposed laws and expressed their willingness to work with the government to ensure effective implementation and educate retailers and customers.

## STABBED TEEN'S PARENTS SLAM KNIFE SELLERS

AMAANI SIDDEEK

The parents of fatally stabbed teen Jack Beasley say a new law preventing underage children from buying bladed weapons will likely save lives and other families from the heartache they have endured.

Speaking to media, father Brett Beasley also took aim at retailers who sell knives and bladed weapons to children.

"It's ridiculous and it's disgusting. I don't know why any retailer anywhere would want to sell a knife or a tomahawk to a child," he said.

"Where are your morals?"

On Sunday, Police Minister Mark Ryan announced new legislation is in the pipeline that will introduce an age restriction on the sales of knives, bladed items like tomahawks and axes, and gel blasters.

It will also require retailers to keep bladed items like daggers, sickles and axes secured under lock and key at all times.

Minister Ryan said: "It's about having another barrier to restricting people from obtaining dangerous items."

It comes as police reveal more than 31,000 people were searched using "wanding" under Jack's Law, with 350 weapons discovered.

Brett Beasley said: "We've been pushing for this since 2021. We need to stop these knife crimes and in particular, we need to stop these retailers selling these knives."

In 2019, Mr Beasley's 17-year-old son was stabbed when he and his friends were confronted by another group of teens.

At the time, CCTV captured a 15-year-old boy stabbing Jack in the chest, killing him.

That boy has since been convicted of Jack's murder and sentenced to 10 years' jail.



## Queensland government proposes new weapons law to help curb violent offending, youth crime

By [Gemma Ferguson](#)

Posted Sun 5 Nov 2023 at 2:10pm, updated Sun 5 Nov 2023 at 3:50pm



Police conduct wandings at a Queensland train station.

Proposed new laws will restrict the sale of knives, other bladed items like machetes, axes, and swords, as well as replica firearms — including gel blasters — to juveniles in Queensland in an attempt to curb youth crime.

The sale of such items will become an offence, as will any attempts to use false identification to purchase such products.

In a bid to combat the notoriety of weapon possession among young people, advertising that is violent or created in a way that suggests the items are "suitable for combat" will also be outlawed.

The Palaszczuk government will introduce the legislation to Parliament following pressure from the Jack Beasley Foundation, the advocacy group behind Jack's Law.

### Key points:

- Police have seized 350 weapons in the first six months of Jack's Law
- Thousands have been scanned on public transport and in nightlife precincts
- Advocates and retailers have welcomed the proposed legislation



The first six months of Jack's Law — which allows police to use handheld metal detectors in public — saw thousands of people, across nightlife precincts and on public transport, scanned with the wands, leading to police seizure of 350 weapons.

### **Jack Beasley Foundation encouraged by new laws**



Brett and Belinda Beasley, parents of Jack Beasley, have been advocating for greater protections against knife crime since 2019. (ABC News: Tobias Jurss-Lewis)

"Belinda and I will always grieve for Jack, but it is very heartening to see that his legacy lives on," Jack's dad Brett Beasley said.

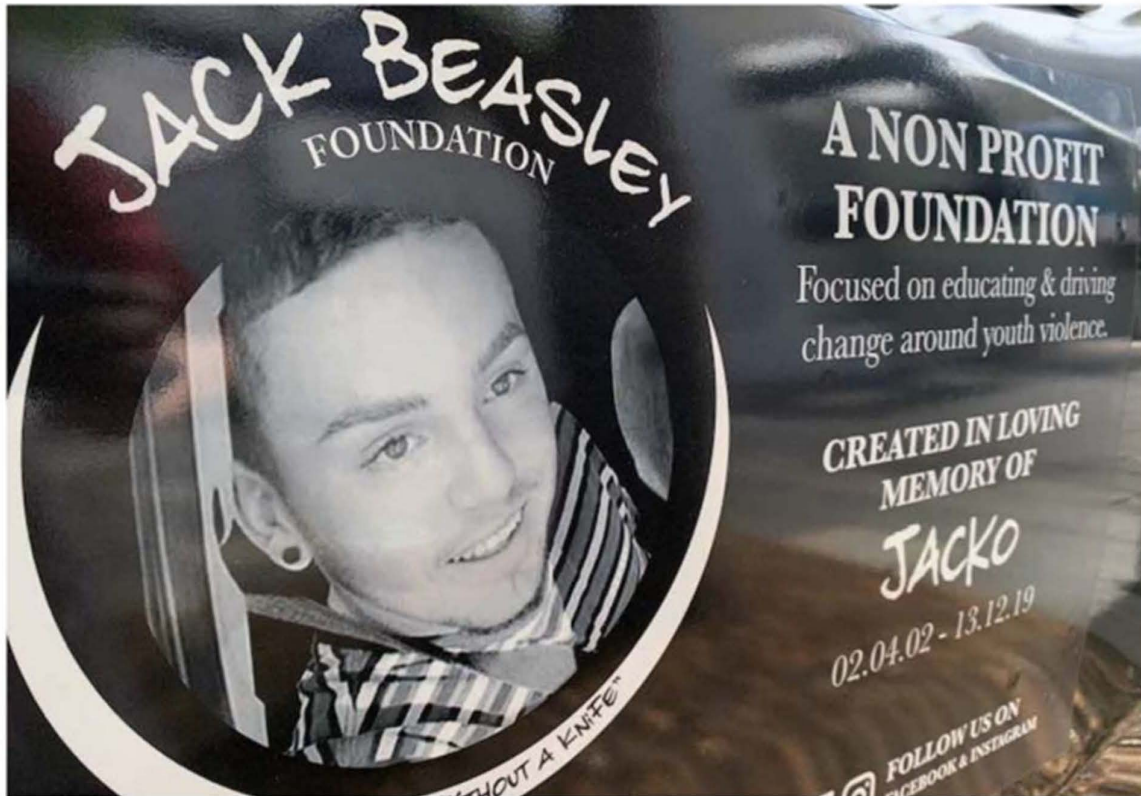
"Six months after Jack's Law came into effect, it's really encouraging to see that police are using Jack's legacy to undertake wand operations right across the state.

**"It's clearly making a real difference in helping to keep communities safe.**

"Our work with Jack's foundation will continue with its focus on educating young people about the dangers of carrying knives and other weapons.

"It's great that the government is further supporting our work by making it harder for dangerous weapons to fall into the wrong hands."

Police Minister Mark Ryan said Queensland was leading the way in the bid to control knife violence.



The Jack Beasley Foundation aims to change attitudes around violence among young people. (ABC Gold Coast: Dominic Cansdale)

"The advocacy from Brett and Belinda (Beasley) has been instrumental in putting Queensland on the map as nation-leading in the fight against knife crime," Mr Ryan said.

"I extend our continued gratitude to them for everything the Jack Beasley Foundation does to educate the community on the dangers of carrying weapons.

"With 1,600 offences detected as part of wandering operations so far, there's no doubt Jack's Law is playing a significant part in keeping Queenslanders safe."

The minister encouraged parents and carers to "have the conversation with young people about knife safety".

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Mark Ryan said over 31,000 people have been wanded with metal detectors in six months.

## Retailers weigh in

Retailers will be required to securely store certain bladed items like machetes, axes, swords, sickles, daggers, double-edged blades and spears prior to sale. They will also need to display signage regarding age restrictions.

Dan Tyne, Director Ausgel International and a spokesperson for the Queensland gel blaster sector, welcomed the news.

"The gel blaster industry as a whole is generally supportive of this move to impose a restriction on the sale of gel blasters to minors under the age of 18," Mr Tyne said.

"We believe it will promote community safety while continuing to allow enthusiasts to continue to enjoy the gel blaster sport in a safe manner."



Brett Beasley has one simple message for any retailers opposed to the new laws.

Angus Nardi, chief executive of Shopping Centre Council of Australia, agreed the proposed laws were an "important and timely community safety initiative".

"We look forward to working with the government on the detail to ensure a clear and effective policy framework, especially plans to educate and inform retailers and customers on any new laws as they come into effect," Mr Nardi said.

"We are willing to work with the Queensland government to get the laws consistent with those of other states to make it easier for retailers to implement and ultimately protect retail staff and businesses," echoed Australian Retailers Association chief executive Paul Zahra.

National Retail Association's David Stout said the new laws were "a necessary step for the safety of our customers".

"Landlords, retailers and team members face an array of challenges with increasing cases of aggression and assaults," he added.

# KNIVES ON HIT LIST FOR STATE

EXCLUSIVE – MADURA MCCORMACK

Gel blasters, replica guns and knives can no longer be sold to children under laws proposed by the state government to combat knife crime and youth offending.

The laws follow years of campaigning by families of fatal stabbing victims and others who have encounters with criminals using realistic looking toy guns.

It would become a crime to sell gel blasters, replica guns, machetes, axes and other bladed items to people under 18.

Retailers would be forced to display signage outlining rules against selling those items to juveniles and anyone caught trying to use fake identification to skirt the rules would face severe penalties.

“Violent” terms used to market bladed weapons, like “head splitter” and “zombie killer”, would also be outlawed.

The laws are being drafted with the government to introduce them as soon as possible, though there are only two sitting weeks left this year.

Queensland is the only state which does not restrict the sale of gel blasters.

There are also no laws restricting the sale of knives in the state, only the possession of one without a purpose.

Police Minister Mark Ryan, in July, commissioned Queensland Police to undertake research on point-of-sale restrictions of knives with the study drawing on crime statistics and legislation in other jurisdictions.

Mr Ryan said the proposed laws would work hand-in-hand with Jack’s Law – allowing police to use handheld detecting wands in authorised locations to detect weapons in a bid to deter offending.

Data revealed police had seized 350 weapons since Jack’s Law was passed in March with 904 people charged with almost 1600 offences.

Jack's Law was a result of advocacy by Brett and Belinda whose 17-year-old son Jack was fatally stabbed on the Gold Coast in 2019.

The Beasleys have been calling for the sale of knives to be restricted.

- Make it an offence to sell knives, certain other bladed items and replica guns (eg gel blasters) to juveniles.
- Make it an offence to use false identification to buy these weapons.
- Make it an offence to advertise these items as "suitable for combat".
- Require retailers to secure bladed items, such as machetes, axes, swords, sickles, daggers, double-edged blades and spears.
- Require retailers to display signage regarding age restriction for sales.

## KNIFE LAWS 'TOO SLOW'

ANDREAS NICOLA

The father of a 17-year-old stabbed to death says the government needs to move faster to restrict the sale of knives, with teenagers still able to easily buy lethal weapons.

Since July there have been calls for laws to be introduced to restrict the sale of knives, mirroring tougher rules in other states.

Following the calls, the state government commissioned new research into point-of-sale restrictions for knives.

Queensland Police confirmed the research had now been completed.

But Brett Beasley, the father of Jack Beasley, who was stabbed to death on the Gold Coast in late 2019 in a random attack, said the laws needed to be changed as soon as possible.

"The longer we leave these laws the way they are, the more kids out there are going to be buying these weapons," he said.

"We need to get in line with the other states and territories. It's a no-brainer, Queensland needs these laws to be changed to be in conjunction with the other states and territories. It needs urgency, it needs to be pushed forward and it needs to be dealt with straight away."

A Queensland Police spokesman said the research had been completed by the Strategic Policy and Legislation Branch of QPS and they were currently preparing advice for the state government.

The research included an assessment of relevant crime statistics, a comparison of approaches to knife crime in other jurisdictions and consideration of existing comparable legislative responses in Queensland.

Asked when the decision would be made, Police Minister Mark Ryan said: "The government will give the Queensland Police Service research and analysis proper consideration and further information will be made available at the appropriate time."

Mr Beasley said there needed to be an end date to this to address the problem.

"I am all for it to be brought forward and pushed through," he said. Once it's researched, it's got to be made public. Queenslanders need to know the outcomes and people want to know why these businesses are selling these knives."

Voice for Victims founder Ben Cannon has also been campaigning for the laws around knife crime to be changed. "Hurry up - for the government to say we're going to consider research and the research is already there," Mr Cannon said. "We're talking about a weapon that can kill and harm. We need to socially say it's not OK."

## TOUGHER KNIFE LAWS NEEDED

Queensland youths are becoming engaged in knife crime in a gruesome trend which has been growing more prevalent over the past two decades.

In a story in today's Sunday Mail, we reveal how grieving families of fatal stabbing victims now want Queensland to place restrictions on the sale of knives to youth under the age of 16.

Brett Beasley, the father of 17-year-old Jack Beasley, who was stabbed in a random attack on the Gold Coast in late 2019, wants laws changed so that the ID of the purchaser is checked, just as it is when buying alcohol.

It's a move that Lee Lovell, the husband of Emma Lovell who died after she was stabbed in a horrific Boxing Day home invasion last year, supports.

Queensland is lagging behind other states in this area.

South Australia, NSW and the ACT have laws making it illegal to sell a knife to someone under the age of 16, while in Victoria there are also restrictions for anyone under the age of 18 trying to purchase a knife.

There are obvious problems with limiting access to knives, given the average kitchen usually has several of them, almost all of which could be used with lethal consequences.

But former senior police officer turned criminologist Terry Goldworthy says the idea of legal restrictions has merit.

If vendors know the law and are willing to follow it, they will refuse to sell a knife in a shop or supermarket, and making it more difficult to purchase a knife is at least closing off one option.

And it is also clear that some action has to be taken, given the problem of knife crime is growing across Australia and has been



the subject of reports by the Australian Institute of Criminology.

This newspaper, which has been reporting on the knife crime problem for some time, published statistics on knife crime in Queensland late last year.

Those stats showed the number of people aged 10 to 21 arrested for knife crime jumped from 1236 in 2017-18 to 1597 by 2021-22.

And news reports on knife crime are now commonplace.

On Friday night a 40-year-old man was rushed to hospital after being stabbed and robbed while delivering pizza in Ipswich.

Queensland Police say the delivery man was attacked at Bellbird Park about 7.15pm and suffered stab wounds to his arm and torso.

Four boys – all aged under 17 – were each charged with armed robbery and acts intended to cause grievous bodily harm.

This brutal and disturbing trend clearly has to be confronted.

Tougher laws may well be part of the solution.

# WHY IS IT SO EASY FOR KIDS TO BUY KNIVES

EXCLUSIVE - ANDREAS NICOLA AND SHAYLA BULLOCH

The grieving families of fatal stabbing victims want the state government to introduce new laws restricting the sale of knives to teens mirroring tougher rules in other states.

The pleas come after a Sunday Mail investigation this week found how disturbingly easy it was to buy the weapons from major retailers.

When asked about the lack of laws around their purchase, Police Minister Mark Ryan yesterday revealed he had commissioned new research into point of sale restrictions for knives.

Mr Ryan told the Sunday Mail he had asked Police Commissioner Katarina Carroll to have the Queensland Police Service conduct the research to determine “whether any benefits could be derived from such an approach”.

“That work has not yet been completed but when it is the results will be given careful consideration,” he said. “The government will always consider evidence-based measures that support community safety.”

Earlier on Saturday at a police facility open day, Ms Carroll said she would support strengthened laws around the sale of knives. “Definitely, whatever you can do to strengthen your laws and learn from others is indeed important,” Ms Carroll said. “It’s important to learn from each other, it’s important to know what’s working well, what else we can implement, what else we can research, what other initiatives are there.

“We look at all of that and advise government on what we think works.”

Ms Carroll said strengthened laws could be a way to bring down knife crime.

“If we see that has curbed knife crime in other areas that would be a recommendation that we would make.”

The move for new research comes after the husband of Emma Lovell, who died after she was stabbed in a horrific home invasion in North Lakes on Boxing Day, lamented why anyone needed to carry a knife.

“It’s just such an extreme thing to be using, there needs to be more of a deterrent to using a knife,” Lee Lovell said.

He said there should be tougher restrictions on their sale and harsher sentences for those found carrying a knife.

“If someone wants to get a hold of something they are going to get a hold of it,” he said. “But if there is some sort of regulation or protocols so people are stopped, if it even stops one person, that’s got to be a good thing.

“There was such a let down with the system and not just my specific case. If people were doing the right thing, if the government learnt to push harsher sentences this (my wife’s death) would never have happened.”

Mr Lovell’s pleas were supported by Brett Beasley, whose son Jack was stabbed on the Gold Coast late 2019 in a random attack.

Mr Beasley said children should not be allowed to buy the weapons and retailers should be made to check ID, as is required when purchasing alcohol.

“The whole legislation and the whole law needs to be looked at around the sale of knives to juveniles,” he said.

“There needs to be a penalty for the people purchasing but (also) for the person selling that knife to another kid.”

In South Australia, NSW and ACT it is illegal to sell a knife to someone under the age of 16. In Victoria, laws restrict the sale of the weapons to those under the age of 18.

But in Queensland, there are no laws restricting the sale of a knife, only the possession of one without purpose.

A Sunday Mail investigation involving the purchase of five different knives from multiple stores found retailers used varying levels of discretion to monitor the sale of the weapons.

One purchase of a kitchen knife from a major supermarket through a self-serve checkout was made without any prompts or checks by staff.

Another sale at a hardware store prompted a warning at the self-serve checkout, with a staff member asking to confirm the purchaser’s age.

Dangerous hunting knives at one camping retailer were locked by a security mechanism but other knives were accessible without staff intervention with no questions asked at face-to-face registers. Mr Beasley said the Sunday Mail’s exercise showed it was too easy to buy a knife.

“It’s absolutely crazy you can walk in and buy a knife and you can walk in and steal a knife from a shelf,” he said. “The supermarket and major chains need to lock knives away.”

Coles supermarkets have no restrictions on the sale of knives at Queensland stores.

A company spokeswoman confirmed a “point-of-sale –restriction” for knives only existed in stores in the ACT, NSW, South Australia and Victoria where there were state government regulations.

In March 2022, Woolworths made a decision to remove the sale of knives at about 200 high-risk stores nationwide.

“A proof of age verification is also required for customers looking to purchase a knife at one of our self check-outs,” a Woolworths spokesman said.

Bunnings confirmed there was a policy in its Queensland stores where proof age is required before items like utility knives are purchased.

Mr Ryan said he believed the core issue with knives was not their availability but where and how they are used, pointing to the success of Jack’s Law in helping prevent the emergence of knife culture.

#### STATES THAT PROHIBIT THE SALE KNIVES TO UNDERAGE KIDS

##### ACT

It is illegal to sell knives to someone under the age of 16. A sign must also be displayed at places which sell knives saying so. Proof of age may also be required.

##### NSW

It is illegal to sell a knife to a person under the age of 16. The only exception is that retailers are allowed to sell

a plastic knife designed as an eating utensil.

##### VICTORIA

The sale of knives and other controlled weapons to those under the age of 18 has been illegal since 2011.

##### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A ban on the sale of knives to people under 16 came into effect in February 2013.

## STABBED 'FOR NO REASON'

SHAYLA BULLOCH - ANDREAS NICOLA - TOBY CROCKFORD

TWO boys aged just 15 and 16 have been accused of randomly stabbing another young man to death as horrified police and victims of crime raise alarm at the rising trend of youths carrying knives.

A frustrated top cop has slammed the latest tragedy as "absolute rubbish" and a loss of life "for no reason" as the scourge of youth crime continues to menace the state.

Aiden Rhys Bower-Miles, 20, on Friday became the latest among 16 people killed allegedly by juveniles in two years.

The father of Queensland teen Jack Beasley, who was stabbed on the Gold Coast in 2019 during a random attack, has called on supermarket chains to lock up their knives in cabinets to further restrict access to the weapons.

South Eastern Regional Crime Coordinator Detective Superintendent Brendan Smith said he was frustrated and fed up that such senseless acts of knife crime kept happening.

"A young person has been murdered over no good reason, absolute rubbish really," he said.

Mr Bower-Miles was allegedly stabbed in the neck and died during an altercation at Underwood, south of Brisbane, about 1am on Friday.

Police will allege Mr Bower-Miles was coming home from a party with a group of friends when they became involved in a fight with the two teenagers on Fermont St.

Superintendent Smith said the two accused boys were allegedly sitting in a parked Audi at the end of the street "smoking drugs".

“It would appear there has been a chance meeting and a conflict has arisen,” Supt Smith said. “There was a bit of conflict, verbal conflict ... (which) turned into a physical altercation. Just a conflict ... who is the tougher group.”

During the altercation, Mr Bower-Miles was allegedly stabbed in the neck.

Supt Smith said the man initially didn't realise he was injured.

“It would appear no one knew he had been stabbed ... he seemed to realise something was wrong and asked his friends to call police and ambulance and collapsed.”

Mr Bower-Miles died at the scene.

The two accused teens fled in the dark-coloured Audi and took themselves to Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital about 7am on Friday for injuries they also suffered in the fight.

Police tracked them both down late on Friday afternoon, arresting the 16-year-old Logan boy at a Gold Coast shopping centre, where they also found the Audi.

The 15-year-old boy was arrested at a Mount Gravatt East home.

Neither of the accused had a serious offending history.

Supt Smith said he was incredibly frustrated that young people were still carrying knives as weapons.

“We've been talking about it for a long time,” he said. “Had they not had a knife we wouldn't be here today. There's no valid reason to carry a knife. I don't care what anyone says, you don't carry a knife.”

Brett Beasley, whose son Jack lost his life at just 17 at the hands of two teens, said he was disappointed to see these knife incidents happening so frequently.

“That's absolutely devastating for that poor guy's family. How many times is this going to happen before something gets done to these kids?” he said. “We know firsthand what that poor fella's parents are going to go through. It's absolutely devastating that he's lost his life for nothing.”

Mr Beasley said items such as spray paint at hardware stores were already locked in cabinets, so knives should also be off the shelves.

“Where are these kids getting these knives? I’d like to call out all the major chains,” he said. “You can just walk in there willy-nilly and you can buy a carving knife.”

The Sunday Mail attempted to buy a knife through a supermarket self-serve checkout, which prompted an age verification check by a staff member before the purchase could be finalised.

The juveniles accused of Mr Bower-Miles’ murder faced court on Saturday.

The Sunday Mail applied to the court to report on the matter but the request was denied “as the court is not in a position to make any proper determination under the Youth Justice Act”.

On the application’s refusal, senior Palaszczuk government minister Yvette D’Ath said it was up to the courts to decide if the media should be granted access to a courtroom.

“As of course we know that when it comes to youth matters generally they’re not open to the court for a range of reasons,” Ms D’Ath said.

“Because if that youth is found to not be found guilty and convicted of that offence, then this could carry with them for the rest of their lives despite not being convicted.”

Ms D’Ath, the former attorney-general and minister for justice, expressed her condolences to the loved ones of Mr Bower-Miles.

“It’s horrific,” she said.

“Knife crime is a problem and I know the QPS (Queensland Police Service) are doing a lot of work ... It is just absolutely tragic.”