




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2017

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Illegal Firearms, Amnesty

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.35 pm): The Palaszczuk government will continue to support Australia's strict, internationally acclaimed gun laws, because they work. This includes remaining part of John Howard's bipartisan National Firearms Agreement, introduced 21 years ago after the Port Arthur massacre. Last October, amid concerns over gun violence and illegal firearm imports, all states and territories, along with the Commonwealth government, agreed to a number of measures to deal with illegal firearms, including a national firearms amnesty. The amnesty enables any person, including licence holders, to register or surrender unregistered firearms to a firearms dealer or police station without penalty or fear of prosecution. I am pleased to report that, as at 18 August, since the amnesty commenced on 1 July, 5,894 firearms have been surrendered in Queensland. Among those surrendered were 17 firearms that had previously been reported stolen and more than 1,400 which were unregistered.

We were expecting to hear some unusual stories about the surrendered weapons and we were not disappointed. One lethal-looking machine gun was turned in by a Brisbane widow who discovered a cache of weapons while cleaning up her late husband's estate, which also included two grenades and a number of handguns. The machine gun was used to train Royal Airforce fighter pilots in World War I but, thankfully, did not fire any bullets. Instead, it had a camera inside its barrel to take pictures when the trigger was pulled to register hits and misses during training.

I have absolutely no doubt that by reducing the number of unregistered firearms we are improving the safety of the public and the people of Queensland. This amnesty will continue until 30 September. I encourage others to take this opportunity to either register or surrender their unregistered firearms. The Queensland Police Service has asked that anyone intending to surrender a firearm should, in the first instance, attend their local firearms dealer rather than a police station. As there are significant penalties, it is important that anyone intending to surrender a firearm first makes an appointment with a firearms dealer before proceeding directly to that dealer. A detailed list of all participating dealers is on the Queensland Police Service website.