

From: Redacted
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To who it may concern,

The North West Houndowners Association has represented hunters and firearm owners for well over fifty years. We have three branches on the north west coast and members from all areas of the state. We've had representation on many government bodies including sadly , the now defunct Game Management Liason Committee .

We applaud the government for their stand on firearm legislation in response to the tragedy at Bondi and especially the support of changes to the act to mandate offences relating to the theft of firearms and the possession and use of stolen firearms. This is something our organisation has supported since the 1996 firearms act was endorsed.

As wallaby hunters our organisation has supported primary producers across the state for decades in their ongoing control of vertebrate species and the most commonly used firearm for this purpose has been the 12 gauge shotgun. Prior to 1996 the most used gun for this purpose was the five shot self loading or pump action shotgun which had long replaced the older double barrel firearms that had been used since white settlement.

Most semi automatic firearms were banned or tightly controlled after Port Arthur , and almost immediately the numbers of pest species has exploded.

Over the last ten years or so certain types of firearms have become very popular with hunters because of their ability to allow quick follow up shots and also the weight and recoil advantages. These guns include, straight pull, lever or button release guns that allow hunters to best control game numbers safely and effectively in nearly all parts of the state.

The suggested changes to the firearms act to reclassify these types of firearms for hunters will only make the task of hunters so much more difficult and expensive. It will also most likely result in the reduction of numbers of people involved in hunting activities .The move to reclassify shotguns will have no bearing on public safety but will immediately see an increase in wallaby numbers and with this the health risks that are already a concern for local government and road users.

Rather than reclassifying these firearms it would be much more cost effective to allow their use by licensed hunters and landholders statewide as has been the case for many years.

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