



Submission on the Firearms Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2026

Amendment A – Proposed Reclassification of Straight Pull and Button or Lever Release Firearms

Current Proposal

The Bill proposes amendments to sections 14, 15 and 16 of the *Firearms Act 1996* that would remove straight pull action firearms and button or lever release firearms from Category B and place them within Category C.

Proposed Amendment

Remove the proposed reclassification of straight pull action and button or lever release firearms from the Bill.

Alternatively, if Government considers additional regulation necessary, consideration should be given to enhanced storage requirements for these firearms rather than compulsory reclassification, seizure or buyback arrangements.

Submission

The proposed reclassification has not been supported by evidence demonstrating that these firearm action types present a greater risk to public safety than other manually operated firearms already classified within Category B.

Straight pull and button or lever release firearms remain manually operated firearms. They are not self loading or semi automatic firearms, and their practical rate of fire differs only marginally from conventional bolt action rifles when used by experienced firearm owners.

Furthermore, these firearms are not new technology. Straight pull firearm designs have existed for many decades and have been lawfully owned throughout Australia without evidence demonstrating that their continued possession has contributed to increased criminal offending.

The proposed amendments would also create significant financial and administrative consequences. A substantial number of these firearms are lawfully owned by licensed Tasmanians, many of which represent considerable financial investment. Any compulsory reclassification would likely require either a government funded compensation scheme or mandatory modification program.

Experience from previous firearm buyback schemes demonstrates that compensation arrangements frequently become contentious, particularly where firearms possess significant commercial value.



The Committee should also consider whether the proposal addresses the causes of serious firearm offending.

Recent incidents involving licensed firearm holders have highlighted concerns regarding information sharing between agencies and the operation of the "fit and proper person" assessment, rather than deficiencies in the classification of manually operated firearms.

Accordingly, regulatory effort would be better directed towards improving intelligence sharing, licensing assessments and enforcement against criminal misuse rather than imposing additional restrictions upon lawful firearm owners.

Amendment B – Mandatory Sentences for Firearm Related Burglaries

Proposed Amendment

Amend section 16C of the *Sentencing Act 1997* to include burglary and aggravated burglary offences where an offender knew, or ought reasonably to have known, that firearms were stored at the premises.

Submission

The unlawful theft of firearms from licensed owners remains one of the principal pathways through which firearms enter the illicit market.

The existing provisions appropriately strengthen penalties for firearm theft and trafficking. However, they do not adequately address offenders who deliberately target licensed firearm owners or commercial premises for the purpose of stealing firearms.

A targeted mandatory sentencing provision would recognise the heightened public safety risks associated with firearm theft and create a stronger deterrent against organised offending.

Importantly, this amendment directs legislative attention toward criminal behaviour rather than imposing further regulatory burdens upon compliant firearm licence holders.

Amendment C – Safeguards for Inspection Powers

Proposed Amendment

Amend section 82A to require:

- establishment of a specialist compliance unit within Tasmania Firearms Services to undertake storage inspections;



- mandatory use of body worn cameras during inspections; and
- secure retention and destruction of inspection recordings in accordance with prescribed legislative requirements.

Submission

The expansion of inspection powers should be accompanied by appropriate safeguards to protect both licence holders and authorised officers.

A dedicated compliance unit specialising in firearm storage inspections would improve consistency, reduce demands on frontline police resources and ensure inspections are undertaken by appropriately trained personnel with expertise in firearms legislation.

Mandatory recording of inspections would provide an objective record of interactions, increase transparency and strengthen public confidence in the exercise of these powers.

Appropriate safeguards governing storage and destruction of recordings would also reduce risks associated with the retention of sensitive information regarding firearm storage locations.

Amendment D – Practical Notification Timeframes

Proposed Amendment

Amend sections 46 and 57 to provide more practical notification periods for changes to residential addresses and firearm storage locations, particularly for rural and primary production licence holders.

Submission

The notification requirements proposed by the Bill are unnecessarily restrictive and are likely to create inadvertent noncompliance by otherwise responsible licence holders.

Farmers and primary producers regularly move firearms between properties in response to seasonal work, pest management and operational requirements. These movements frequently occur with limited notice.

Providing more practical notification periods would maintain the Commissioner's oversight of storage arrangements while reducing unnecessary administrative burden and improving compliance outcomes.

This amendment would better reflect the operational realities of rural Tasmania without compromising public safety.



121A Lending and borrowing firearms

We agree with these changes to provide clarity on lending firearms. However, there is no mention of ammunition. We would like to see clarification of lending of ammunition alongside the firearm.

Citizenship Requirements

Submission

The proposed citizenship requirements should be reconsidered to ensure that existing lawful licence holders who are permanent residents or citizens of Commonwealth nations are not unfairly disadvantaged.

Many long term residents have lawfully obtained and maintained Tasmanian firearm licences for many years and have demonstrated ongoing compliance with all legislative requirements.

Any reforms should recognise this history of lawful ownership and avoid retrospective disqualification of responsible licence holders solely on the basis of citizenship status.

Additional Matters for Consideration

The following matters are also recommended for further consideration as part of the legislative review:

- Recognition of pre 1900 firearms, where commercially manufactured ammunition is unavailable in Australia, as exempt antique firearms.
- Stronger penalties for the illegal manufacture and modification of firearms, including through 3D Printing.
- Opposition to criminal offences relating solely to possession of digital technical information or blueprints, recognising the limited effectiveness of such provisions and their potential impact on legitimate firearms businesses and gunsmiths.



Carlo Di Falco MP- Proposed Amendments to the Firearms Act 1996 (Tas)

Amendment 1 – Firearm Sound Moderators (Suppressors)

Current Provision

Section 155 – Exemptions

Section 155 currently allows the Commissioner to exempt a person or class of persons from provisions relating to:

- ammunition;
- firearms;
- firearm magazines; and
- firearm sound suppressors.

This means access to firearm sound suppressors is entirely dependent on the Commissioner's exemption powers.

Proposed Amendment

Remove **firearm sound suppressors** from the exemption provisions in section 155 and instead regulate them within **Division 2 – Categories and Authority of Firearms Licences**, or another appropriate licensing provision within the Act.

Rationale

Firearm sound moderators are a recognised hearing protection device used by licensed firearm owners.

Unlike prohibited firearms, they are an accessory rather than a firearm in themselves and should be regulated through the licensing framework rather than requiring discretionary exemptions from the Commissioner.

Moving suppressors into the licensing framework would:

- provide certainty for licensed firearm owners;
- reduce unnecessary administrative burden;



- align regulation with legitimate occupational, recreational and hunting use; and
- continue to ensure only appropriately licensed persons may possess them.

Amendment 2 – International Visitors Hunting in Tasmania

Current Provision

Section 155(1) allows the Commissioner to exempt a person from the Act relating to possession or use of firearms:

- at an approved shooting gallery; and
- subject to any conditions the Commissioner considers appropriate.

Section 155(1A) provides similar arrangements for approved rifle clubs, pistol clubs and ranges.

The Act does not expressly provide for international visitors undertaking lawful hunting activities.

Proposed Amendment

Amend section 155 to expressly include lawful hunting as a purpose for which an exemption may be granted.

For example:

"(c) for the purpose of participating in lawful hunting activities in Tasmania, subject to any conditions the Commissioner considers appropriate."

(or equivalent Parliamentary Counsel wording).

Rationale

While the Commissioner appears to possess a broad discretion to issue exemptions, hunting is not specifically recognised within section 155.

Industry stakeholders have consistently advised that the absence of express wording has resulted in uncertainty and has contributed to overseas visitors being unable to obtain approvals.



Clarifying that exemptions may be granted for hunting would:

- provide certainty for applicants;
- provide certainty for Tasmania Police;
- support regional tourism;
- encourage international hunting visitors; and
- maintain the Commissioner's discretion to refuse unsuitable applicants.

Amendment 3 – Interstate Visitors

Current Provision

Section 55

A resident of another State or Territory is not required to hold a Tasmanian firearms licence if they:

- (a) hold a corresponding licence; and
- (b) are participating in an approved shooting competition or other approved purpose.

Proposed Amendment

Expand section 55(b) to recognise the genuine reasons already established under section 37.

For example:

"...for the purpose of participating in an approved shooting competition or for any genuine reason recognised under section 37."

(or equivalent Parliamentary Counsel wording).

Rationale

The current wording relies upon the interpretation of "approved purpose".

Providing direct reference to section 37 would remove uncertainty and ensure interstate visitors undertaking lawful activities already recognised under the Act, including hunting, primary production, recreational shooting and other genuine reasons, are clearly accommodated.



This amendment improves consistency throughout the Act while maintaining existing eligibility requirements

Amendment 4 – Permit to Acquire Waiting Period

Current Provision

Section 101 – Permit to Acquire Firearms

Section 101 provides that a person must obtain a Permit to Acquire before taking possession of a firearm.

In conjunction with **section 102**, the Act currently imposes a mandatory **14 day waiting period** before a Permit to Acquire may be issued.

For first time firearm owners, this operates in addition to the **minimum 28-day firearms licence application period** under the Act. As a result, a new applicant is already subject to an extensive assessment process, including background checks, genuine reason requirements and safe storage requirements, before they are able to lawfully acquire their first firearm.

Proposed Amendment

Amend **section 102** to:

- retain the mandatory 28 day waiting period for a person's **first Permit to Acquire** only;
- remove the mandatory waiting period for subsequent Permit to Acquire applications made by existing licensed firearm owners; and
- provide that the amendment does not commence until the **National Firearms Register** has been implemented and is operational.

Rationale

Tasmania already has robust safeguards in place before a person can legally acquire their first firearm.

A first-time applicant must:

- complete the firearms licensing process;
- satisfy all fit and proper person requirements;
- demonstrate a genuine reason;
- meet safe storage requirements; and
- wait the statutory minimum licence processing period before becoming eligible to acquire a firearm.



These safeguards ensure that new firearm owners are appropriately assessed before their first purchase.

For existing licensed firearm owners who have already undergone these checks and lawfully possess firearms, the additional mandatory 14 day waiting period for every subsequent Permit to Acquire provides no additional public safety benefit while creating unnecessary administrative burden and delays.

Linking this reform to the implementation of the National Firearms Register ensures that the change is introduced alongside enhanced national firearm recording and tracing capabilities, providing Tasmania Police with improved oversight of firearm ownership and transfers.

This amendment would:

- preserve the existing safeguards for first time firearm purchasers;
- recognise that existing licence holders have already demonstrated their suitability to possess firearms;
- reduce unnecessary delays for compliant firearm owners;
- improve administrative efficiency for Tasmania Police and licensed firearms dealers; and
- align the reform with the commencement of the National Firearms Register.