



SSAA Militaria Collectors Tasmania Inc

PO Box 350 Glenorchy Tasmania 7010

ABN 19 506 674 593

SSAA T17

Website: www.milcolt.org.au

Email: ssaamilcolt@gmail.com

I support the proposed changes to the *Firearms Act 1996*, particularly the recognition of antique firearms as valuable historical items and collectibles. The government's efforts to reduce unnecessary regulation for antique firearm owners are commendable. However, I believe that the additional questions raised in the consultation paper could unnecessarily complicate the process. There is no evidence provided by Tasmania Police to suggest that antique firearms pose a risk to community safety, especially since no commercial ammunition is available for these firearms.

Our view is that pre-1900 firearms should be explicitly written into the Act, similar to the Victorian *Firearms Act 1996*, which states:

"This Act does not apply to a firearm that was manufactured before 1900, if—

(a) in the case of any such firearm that is a longarm—

(i) it does not take cartridge ammunition; or

(ii) if it does take cartridge ammunition, the cartridge ammunition that it takes is not commercially available."

This provision was excluded in the 1996 Tasmanian Act, and an exemption was implemented by a previous Commissioner of Police as a workaround.

1. Fit and Proper Person Test for Antique Firearm Owners

I disagree with the suggestion that owners of antique firearms should be subject to the same "fit and proper person" test as general firearm license holders.

Reasons for Disagreement:

- **Historical and Cultural Value:** Antique firearms are primarily valued for their historical, cultural, and collectible significance, not for their functionality as weapons. Requiring the same level of scrutiny as for modern firearms is unjustified, given the distinct nature of antique firearms, especially since no commercial ammunition is available.
- **Low Risk:** Most antique firearms are incompatible with modern ammunition, significantly reducing their potential for misuse. The likelihood of these firearms being used in a crime is extremely low. Imposing additional background checks would overburden law-abiding collectors without improving community safety.

Recommendation:

Remove the "fit and proper person" test for antique firearm owners, as it would add unnecessary complexity without enhancing safety.

2. Tagging and Identification of Antique Firearms

I am concerned about the proposal to require antique firearms to be tagged with identification tags.

Reasons for Disagreement:

- **Value and Integrity of the Firearms:** Antique firearms derive value from their originality and condition. Adding tags could damage or devalue these items. For collectors, maintaining the integrity of the firearm is crucial.

Recommendation:

Reject the idea of tagging antique firearms to preserve their historical and collectible value.

3. Licensing of Antique Firearms That Can Be Fired

I believe the proposal to treat all antique firearms that can fire, even if commercial ammunition is no longer available, as regular firearms should be reconsidered.

Reasons for Disagreement:

- **Functional vs. Commercial Ammunition Availability:** The fact that an antique firearm may be capable of firing does not equate to it posing the same risks as modern firearms. Many antique firearms are designed to fire obsolete ammunition, and the absence of commercially available cartridges means that these firearms are unlikely to be used in any harmful way.
 - **Preserving History:** Many collectors acquire antique firearms for their historical and cultural significance, not for use as weapons. Overregulating these firearms could hinder the preservation of important historical artifacts.
-

Conclusion

Our view is that pre-1900 firearms should be explicitly written into the Act, similar to the Victorian *Firearms Act 1996*:

"This Act does not apply to a firearm that was manufactured before 1900, if—

(a) in the case of any such firearm that is a longarm—

(i) it does not take cartridge ammunition; or

(ii) if it does take cartridge ammunition, the cartridge ammunition that it takes is not commercially available."

Additionally:

- A list of commercially available ammunition should be produced, similar to other states, and should exclude ammunition that can only be sourced overseas.
 - This is particularly relevant for black powder cartridges, which are used in 99% of pre-1900 firearms and are not available for import into Australia.
-

References

- Ammunition availability | QPS
- *Calibres No Longer Commercially Available.pdf*
- *Attachment-3 Consultation Paper: Antique Firearms.pdf*
- Antique weapons | QPS
- *Firearms Registration Fact Sheet.pdf*

Thank you for considering my feedback.

Shaun Gleeson
President

SSAA Militaria Collectors Tasmania Inc