Submission on the Police Offences Amendment (Knives and Prohibited Weapons) Bill 2026

To: Tasmania Police and the Tasmanian Government
Subject: Submission on the Police Offences Amendment (Knives and Prohibited Weapons) Bill 2026

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed Police Offences Amendment (Knives and Prohibited Weapons) Bill 2026.

Firstly, I support the Government's objective of reducing knife-related crime and improving public safety. Restricting access to dangerous weapons by those who may misuse them is a reasonable goal, and Tasmania should take proactive steps to prevent the rise in violent knife incidents that have occurred in other Australian jurisdictions.

However, I believe the proposed legislation should carefully balance public safety with the legitimate use of knives and machetes by responsible citizens, tradespeople, farmers, outdoor enthusiasts, and collectors.

Knife Sales to Minors

I support prohibiting the sale of knives to persons under 18 years of age, provided there are practical exemptions for legitimate purposes such as:

- Agricultural work
- Apprenticeships and trade training
- Food preparation and hospitality training
- Outdoor education programs
- Sporting and recreational activities

Young people involved in farming, hunting, fishing, scouting and vocational education often have legitimate reasons to possess and use knives under supervision. Any legislation should ensure these activities are not unnecessarily restricted.

Retailer Responsibilities

The proposed requirements for retailer signage, secure storage, and age verification appear reasonable in principle. However, compliance obligations should be proportionate and not place excessive administrative burdens on small businesses and rural retailers.

The Government should provide:

- Clear guidance materials
- Retailer training resources

- A reasonable transition period before enforcement
- Consistent statewide standards

This will help achieve compliance without creating unnecessary costs for business operators.

Proposed Machete Prohibition

While I understand community concerns regarding machete-related violence, I have concerns about a broad prohibition that may affect law-abiding Tasmanians who use machetes for legitimate purposes.

Machetes remain important tools in:

- Agriculture
- Land management
- Weed control
- Bush regeneration
- Forestry activities
- Rural property maintenance

I recommend that any prohibition include clear and practical exemptions for occupational, agricultural and land-management uses. The licensing or exemption process should be simple and accessible to avoid creating unnecessary red tape for rural communities.

Focus on Criminal Misuse

The legislation should focus on individuals who carry knives or prohibited weapons with criminal intent rather than creating burdens for responsible users.

Enforcement efforts should prioritise:

- Repeat violent offenders
- Gang-related activity
- Public possession without lawful excuse
- Threatening or intimidating behaviour

Strong penalties for criminal misuse are appropriate and may have a greater public safety benefit than restrictions that primarily impact law-abiding citizens.

Conclusion

I support measures that improve public safety and reduce knife-related violence in Tasmania. However, I encourage the Government to ensure the legislation remains practical, proportionate and respectful of the legitimate use of knives and machetes in agricultural, commercial, recreational and educational settings.

A balanced approach will strengthen community safety while avoiding unintended impacts on responsible Tasmanians who use these tools legitimately.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Green
Tasmania Resident / Concerned Citizen