Submissions at Strategy and Support
Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management
GPO Box 308, Hobart TAS 7001

12 July 2026

Dear Management

Thank you for offering a chance to make a submission for the Police Offences Amendment (Knives and Prohibited Weapons) Bill 2026.

1. Exemptions: While I support an amendment of some type, I feel the proposed exemptions do not go far enough to protect the rights of people engaged in a recreational activity such as fishing, sailing and hiking - in which a knife is used for that purpose. Hence in new legislation the reasons for obtaining and carrying a knife need to be 'reasonable' rather than make exemptions for specific industries (i.e. agriculture) alone. Every warehouse use packing knives. The list of reasonable uses for knives far exceed the reasons for engaging in criminal activities. The legislation should list the reasons in which are deemed to be criminal – E.g. carrying a knife to a nightclub.

2. Rationale for restricting retail sales of knives: The proposed laws will not stop a criminal from obtaining a knife from someone's kitchen, or they may still purchase one legally under the proposed laws. Therefore, making laws / restrictions on retailers (to lock up knives they are selling) are less effective in preventing knife crime. Restricting retailers only supports prevention of an immediate threat by a criminal using it against the shop staff at the time they enter the shop. This risk type then becomes a workplace health and safety issue governed under the WHS Act and managed by WorkSafe Tasmania. In this case, retailers would need to restrict how they sell knives under WHS legislation rather than it being under criminal law. Therefore, the proposed Criminal law should be focused on 'intent', and where the knife is carried, and who is carrying it (say someone with prior conviction).

3. Terminology: I also suggest terminology is carefully used in any new legislation. Legislation should only classify a knife as a 'weapon', (not unlike any other object), when it is used, or intended to be used for criminal activity. A knife needs to be defined as a 'tool' or kitchen utensil to the rest of the population, where it is used in an appropriate setting - such as in someone's fishing bag or kitchen.

4. Under 18s: I cannot comment on whether someone under 18 should be able to purchase a knife as I am unaware of the statistics of youth knife crime in Tasmania, however as a 10 year old I was able to purchase a swiss army knife with my pocket money for camping, and still use it for hikes. I feel that minors should be permitted to carry a knife for the same recreational reasons an adult would. Although most knives

used in recreational pursuits are physically small, a Michetti may differ and hence I support any laws which may align to Victorian Machetti or ‘large’ knife or sword laws.

In summary, it would be more effective if the laws were focused on ‘reasons’ and ‘place’ at which someone may carry a knife. This would provide better clarity to the public, and make Police work more focused on those doing the wrong thing rather than wasting time investigating false alarms.

Kind regards
Joanne Lynch
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