Outlook

Submission on continued use of machetes for domestic gardens

From camptonp@gmail.com [redacted]
Date Tue 14/07/2026 11:33
To Submissions.Strategy.Support <Submissions.Strategy.Support@police.tas.gov.au>

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The lawful use of a machete within the boundaries of one's private garden should be recognised as a reasonable and legitimate activity when conducted responsibly and without causing alarm to others. Moreover, there should be an blanket exemption for such activities. A machete is, in many contexts, is simply a practical gardening tool, not dissimilar to an axe or pruning shears. It is well-suited to tasks such as clearing dense vegetation, reducing bush fire hazards by cutting back overgrowth, and maintaining larger urban properties where standard tools may be ineffective.
In a private setting, individuals should retain the right to maintain and manage their land using appropriate equipment, provided that such use is safe, appropriate and respectful of neighbouring residents. The key consideration should not be the tool itself, but the manner in which it is used. One could consider meat cleavers, axes, garden forks and chainsaw as dangerous weapons when used out of context and we are not considering their prohibition when used appropriately. If the activity is carried out safely, at suitable times, and without threatening behaviour or unnecessary display, there is no reasonable basis for it to be deemed unlawful.

Moreover, existing laws already address behaviours that cause fear, disturbance, or harm to others. These protections ensure that any misuse of tools, including machetes, can be appropriately managed without imposing blanket restrictions on legitimate domestic use. Allowing responsible use is a commonsense approach respects personal property rights while maintaining community safety, striking a balanced and proportionate approach to regulation. I request that a blanket exemption be granted to all home gardeners for the continued use of machetes.

Paul Campton
[redacted]