

Gel Blasters That Cannot Be Possessed

Tasmania Police is committed to firearms safety in our community. An emerging issue is that of Gel Blasters. Gel Blasters are made of plastic and/or metal and propel a projectile (a hydrated gel ball) at speeds as high as 300 feet per second.

Gel Blasters can be firearms & are not toys

- In some states of Australia Gel Blasters are permitted to be owned without a firearms licence and are used in the same way that Paintball markers (which are also firearms) are used for playing a game on a field between people. This is **not** the case in Tasmania.
- A Gel Blaster constitutes a firearm under the *Firearms Act 1996* if it propels, or is capable of propelling, a projectile by means of compressed gas or air. A pistol version of a Gel Blaster is an air pistol, and a rifle version is an air rifle.
- Some Gel Blasters have semi-automatic and automatic fire options, which may mean they are also prohibited firearms under the *Firearms Act*.
- Some Gel Blasters may not function by propelling projectiles by compressed gas or

air but have the appearance of a firearm and could be reasonably mistaken for a firearm. These are imitation firearms. Unless they are toys, imitation firearms are still classified as firearms under firearms legislation.

- Some people may think that their Gel Blaster is a toy. However, if it is capable of propelling a projectile by means of compressed gas or air (or an explosive), then it constitutes a firearm and is not a toy.
- Gel Blasters are dangerous. They can, and have, caused life changing injuries in Australia. If you find one, treat it like any other firearm and contact police for advice.

What about war games?

- In other jurisdictions Gel Blasters may be used/carried when people are participating in war games, which are simulated military exercises (or similar). However, in Tasmania it is unlawful for anyone to participate in a war game unless they have received the Commissioner's approval to do so. Approval is only given by the Commissioner where it is for the purpose of an historical re-enactment, or a dramatic presentation, or a film, video or television production.





Lawfully Owning a Gel Blaster

ACQUIRING A GEL BLASTER

- To lawfully acquire a firearm – including a Gel Blaster- the transaction must occur through a licensed firearms dealer. The purchaser needs to be appropriately licensed and have a permit to acquire that firearm (see Information Sheet 40 Permit to Acquire). Unless the Gel Blaster is an imitation firearm, it must be registered. It is an offence for a person to acquire, possess or use any firearm that is not registered.

POSSESSING A GEL BLASTER

- To lawfully possess any firearm in Tasmania – including a Gel Blaster - a licence of the category which is appropriate to that firearm is required. This means that to possess a Gel Blaster which is an air rifle, a Category A licence is required. To possess a Gel Blaster which is an air pistol, a Category H licence is required. A person needs a **genuine reason** to possess a Gel Blaster, in the same way that they need a genuine reason to possess any other firearm (see Information Sheet 2 Firearm Licence: Application Process).

GEL BLASTERS THAT CAN'T BE POSSESSED

- There are some Gel Blasters in relation to which a licence under the Firearms Act cannot be granted. For example, Gel Blasters which substantially duplicate in appearance a machine-gun or sub-machine gun or any Gel Blaster that is capable of propelling projectiles in rapid succession during one pressure of the trigger.

How to Surrender your Gel Blaster

- In Tasmania there is a permanent amnesty in relation to firearms. This means that if you are unlawfully in possession of a Gel Blaster and surrender it to the police, no action will be taken against you in respect of that unauthorised possession (see Information Sheet 9 Amnesty & Surrender). Unless you are a firearms dealer, please do not mail a Gel Blaster interstate because it is an offence.
- Please call your local police station to arrange a suitable time and agreed method to surrender any Gel Blasters which you have in your possession unlawfully.
- Do not carry them openly into police stations as this may cause a security response.

For more information, contact Firearms Services at 61732720.



TASMANIA POLICE FIREARMS SERVICES

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