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Mr Ellis MP

I refer to your proposed amendments to the Firearms Act.

Firstly I was an RAAF Supervisor/Instructor for 8 years in dual trades of Avionics: Weapons and Egress Systems along with a secondary Electrical Technician qualification. I was then self employed as a Sports Therapist for 8 years before returning to university to gain a Diploma in Clinical Practice (Paramedic) and joining Metropolitan Ambulance service in 2008. I left the Ambulance service in 2012 returning to Tasmania.

I am a long time firearms user having grown up in country WA working in primary production and hunting before joining the RAAF at 18. I was trained in using and maintaining all of the RAAF inventory in firearms to missiles to HE weapons.

I follow the law and own several firearms. I also hold a position on the North West Pistol Club Committee and regularly attend Club shooting competitions. I support police and their fight against organised crime and crime in general. I have also been the victim of violent armed offenders multiple times whilst serving in the military, more so as a paramedic working in Melbourne but worse still, being attacked in my own front yard by a stranger with a 20cm knife in 2017.

I have read the proposed amendments and other than "Public safety" in the title, the amendments will have zero effect on public safety as criminals will continue to ignore the laws as they always have.

However, "We must make sure our laws are tough on crime and anticipate future potential criminal activity" sounds like a line from 'Minority Report'. there is no "pre crime" unit and predicting crime is a fallacy. firearms crime has existed since 1788 and no police force has ever predicted or prevented a single firearm crime. it is always a response during or AFTER the event. When someone is "facing an armed attacker and seconds count, police are minutes away".

Secondly "We are committed to ensuring that our police and justice system have the powers to stamp out any dangerous activity and can penalise and prosecute unlawful and unsafe behaviours' '. This sounds like a typical 'vote for me! I'm strong on crime" election promise YET, the EXISTING laws FAILED to prevent the man who attacked me with a knife. He served no prison time and he and his family continue to verbally abuse me every time they walk past my property to this day. These amendments are just as ineffective at preventing the social problems in society which is the driving cause of most crime. The existing laws didn't prevent the killing of the 59 year old at Sprent who arrived home to interrupt 4 people stealing his firearms. He was beaten to death and your new amendments wont stop an incident like this reoccurring.

You propose "refusal and cancellation of firearms licences for participants of outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMCG;s) an important amendment to ensure that dangerous gangs do not have access to violent weapons". Seriously? (A:weapons are not violent. people are violent, so why use a deliberately emotive phrase like that? scaremongering the public with anti gun rhetoric?). OMCG's ALREADY have access to blackmarket firearms WITHOUT any licence.

State and Federal Police already have decades evidence that criminals have illegal firearms. They have had them since 1788 and AFTER the 1996 NFA came into effect. Why? because they are criminals and don't follow the law. Second to this, you are proposing that someone who has never been found guilty of a crime will be treated like they are guilty of a crime because of who they associate with? so "guilt by association"? I am dumbfounded. I have no words.

Recognition of toy firearms as firearms? As far as I am aware, it is already an offence to use a firearm or imitation firearm to commit a crime. There is a difference between kids or adults playing in a backyard with Gel Soft toy guns and someone walking into a business with a balaclava holding a toy gun that looks like a gun. Context of playing in a back yard OR demanding money while making threats which, as stated, is not acceptable. ALL states need to clarify TOYS and criminal actions. Simply banning toys because they LOOK real, defies logic and reason.. ANYONE committing crime with a real gun or imitation one is committing crime. CONTEXT. Second, if I paint my 12G shotgun green, yellow and orange does it now become a toy Nurf gun because it looks like one? Context.

re classification of the Lever Action in line with the 1996 NFA relates to *size of the magazine* NOT "to make the licence category of this weapon more proportionate with the safety risk posed". It is a firearm yet you again use the emotive 'weapon' characterisation? and please explain the "safety risk posed". Lever action 12G shotguns have not changed design in **140 years**. it is the same design before the 1996 NFA yet NOW you imply it poses a *different* safety risk? magazine size, that's all the reclassification is. magazine size. "Terminator" is a Hollywood fantasy and DONT make cars explode when you shoot them with a lever action 12G. is that the safety risk you proposed? Hollywood isn't real life.

"Increased capacity for Tasmania police to issue infringement notices to enforce the safe storage of firearms" only affects licensed gun owners and the penalty units seem very excessive and disproportionate for minor infractions. Call me a cynic but it sounds more like revenue raising from licensed firearms owners rather than "public safety".

"offences for the unlawful possession of digital blueprints for the manufacture of firearms, firearm parts and sound suppressors using modern technology such as electronic milling or 3D printing-this is to ensure that there is no unlawful manufacturing of firearms or firearm parts in Tasmania". "Oh dear lord, give men strength, where to start...". it is ALREADY an offence to manufacture firearms or firearm parts without a licence. as for electronic blueprints, the horse has already bolted, you're not getting the genie back in THAT bottle...Firstly, firearms have been *handmade* for a few hundred years....secondly they are STILL handmade all over the planet as the Federal and State police forces can attest to, thirdly you don't need blueprints, a *criminal* can simply disassemble an existing blackmarket obtained firearm, place each part in a 3D scanner and then hit 'SEND' to the 3d Printer so blueprints not required, or simply engineer the parts and re engineer the parts as blackmarket manufacturers do (no 3D printer required) then there is the ACTUAL paper blueprints or printed parts manuals that are ALSO electronically downloadable for the repair and maintenance of firearms by EVERY licenced firearm owner. They are not engaging in unlawful manufacturing yet this proposal makes all licensed firearm owners potential criminals. This amendment is proposing "banning knowledge"..... "Fahrenheit 451" was a warning to the world, NOT a "how to..." book for politicians. As said, it is ALREADY an offence to manufacture firearms or firearm parts without a licence. This proposal is redundant and VIRTUALLY impossible to police the internet (pun intended) and potentially criminalises all licensed firearm owners...or was that simply the intent? Again it is questionable as to how exactly this amendment would stop the criminal from manufacturing a firearm? it doesn't, because criminals ignore the law

It is also well known that the illegal import of firearms is the biggest source of illegal firearms and has been BEFORE the 1996 NFA and simply increased AFTER the ban on semiautomatic firearms. only 4% of shipping containers are inspected on entry to Australia. I was sitting in a pub in Melbourne in 2009 and overheard a conversation about a guy buying a handgun. one guy offered the other guy a Chinese made Norinco 1911 for \$400. The guy said he could make a call and it would be delivered in 20 minutes. he then said it cost him \$40 per gun and he bought 100 directly from a Chinese supplier who shipped them in motorcycle parts consignment. He said the profit was worth the risk. Second, he could supply a new SKS rifle for \$4000. again cost him \$400 but he could only get 10 of them. He had already sold most of them. Do you think he was the ONLY criminal dealing with Chinese criminals? I think not.

Sadly I can not find much with these proposed amendments that will ACTUALLY make the "public safer". What I can see is a lot of scaremongering the public and attempting to SHOW "we are doing SOMETHING about crime" in Tasmania.

Now for the sake of sanity, how about you actually DO something that WILL help decrease crime in Tasmania and make Tasmanians safer.

Firstly you give back Tasmanians right to defend ourselves. "Stand your ground" and "Castle Doctrine" in the USA has repeatedly demonstrated effective defence against criminal attacks and home invasions when people have the RIGHT to do so.

Second to that, remove the clause from the 1996 NBA starting "self defence is NOT a lawful reason to own a firearm". Of course it is. Politicians have armed security, Courts have armed security, the wealthy have armed security, banks and jewelry stores are allowed armed security, even Schools in Melbourne are allowed to have armed security.....but not ordinary Australian citizens....?

Thirdly allow Tasmanians to be licenced and trained to use Tasers, batons, pepper spray or paintball/pepperball guns to defend themselves. Again all the research proves they are effective and non lethal methods of defence. Police are armed when they deal with armed offenders yet when the average citizen is confronted with an armed attacker they are expected to defend themselves with their fists....and call the police (the armed defender) because when seconds count...police are minutes away. The ONLY reason I survived my attacker is because of years of training and experience. the average person would simply have been another murder statistic. no law would have prevented that.

Laws didn't protect the two workers stabbed at Harris Scarfe, the laws didn't protect the poor guy in Sprent who was beaten to death by robbers and laws didn't prevent me from being attacked in my own front yard. Tell me again how laws protect people? they don't. People have to be able to protect themselves.

Next is Sound moderators/Suppressors. Criminals already have them because as I mentioned criminals don't follow the law. State and Federal Police can attest to this. How is it that the Military use them, the police use them, professional hunters use them and the criminals already illegally have them yet the licensed firearm owner cant use them? this is a stupid situation and should be rectified.

The research is clear. Sound moderators/suppressors benefit the users hearing protection (OH@S) the hearing of people closeby and of course those nearby who are bushwalking near hunters or live near ranges. Second, any hunter can attest to the inefficiency of standard hunting. After the first shot the feral animals bolt from the noise and you spend the next 20 minutes waiting for them to come out of hiding. I have seen professional shooters with a suppressed 22LR semiautomatic rifle sit quietly next to a farmers dam waiting for the plague of rabbits. He systematically dispatched 1000+ rabbits as fast as he could pull the trigger with a simple click of the bolt and slight POP from the barrel which was barely audible to the shooter or the rabbits. The rabbits simply continued drinking water as their companions fell over next to them. Several hours later the back of the ute filled with pet food and the farmer handed over a cheque.

The UK allowed hunters to use sound suppressors to reduce nuisance calls to police from civilians who hear 'gunshots'.

Currently it is illegal for licensed shooters to have suppressors because the criminals might steal them..... the same criminals who already have them or can simply illegally make them.

How about you propose solutions that WILL work rather than amendments that won't improve public safety but simply sounds good in an election soundbite...

My 2cents worth

Yours sincerely  
Ernst Millet