



## SFF SUBMISSION

### FIREARMS AMENDMENT (COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL 2023)

#### Preamble

The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party “SFF PARTY” finds the title of the amendment particularly egregious (community safety); there is nothing in those amendments that make the community any safer than it is now.

As a teenager, I and a number of our members attended Cadets where we were taught how to safely use firearms and learn marksmanship. Many of these were what are now Cat D and even Cat R firearms. We were even permitted to take a SMLE .303 home on the school bus.

What has happened since is a shift in the Australian mindset where firearms changed from inanimate objects with no will of their own to talismans of evil.

The mechanism that was responsible for this shift was willingness of the media to over report and hyper sensationalise rare tragic events.

After Port Arthur, the media reported on it not just here but on the mainland for more than 30 continuous days. At the time the term “gaslighting” had not been coined, but that is exactly what the media and hoplaphobic elements of society did.

Media has to take responsibility for the way that they report mass shootings. It needs to be remembered that the Dunblane massacre happened 6 weeks prior to Port Arthur and the next knife massacre happened 18 months afterwards. These are the only 2 massacres that occurred in Tasmania for the whole of the 20th century.

The Mercury reported on Sat Feb 25 that Google and other social media are facing a Supreme Court challenge in the US over the algorithm that allowed radicalisation of Islamic terrorists resulting in the deaths of 130 people in 2015 in Paris.

By concentrating on rare tragic events, the media embolden individuals who are looking for a way to vent their spleen on society. Perhaps the problem that our gun laws is attempting to fix could be fixed by encourages the media to downplay mass shooting overseas.



## A real solution

A number of firearm representative groups have been calling for mandatory 3 month minimum sentences for anyone stealing firearms and this would be a concrete step forward as it would remove firearms from the possession of career criminals rather than entangling law-abiding citizens in more meaningless “gotcha” regulation. This was based on the US legislation which mandates a minimum 5 year sentence for any convicted felon found in possession of a firearm.

In 1903 and later in 1909, the Australian government introduced the Australia Defence Act which put in the ground work for the Compulsory Military Training Scheme which ran from 1911 to 1927. This was the genesis of the Cadet movement. Under this regime, any parent who prevented their sons from participating in military training in their school would face prosecution and in many cases, incarceration.

Marksmanship was part of this training, all schools had firing ranges and firearm ownership was widespread. Australia had a Civilian Defence Force and mass shootings were unheard of despite few restrictions on firearm ownership.

Perhaps we need to focus on drivers of violence rather than on inanimate objects .

## Specific sections

### Section 3

A firearm sound suppressor is not a gun part; it is an accessory. A firearm cannot operate without a gun part, it can however operate without a suppressor.

### Section 14

This appears irrelevant since it is covered by sec 14(1)(b) which says” rim fire rifle other than self loading” which is what a lever action is.

The SFF party promotes the idea that the gun laws should be simplified ie that many of these categories are done away with. The licencing should just concentrate on the good character of the licensee and not their private property.

### Section 15

The change is inconsistent since centrefire rifles are regarded as high powered and shotguns are low powered. Cat A and Cat B is differentiated on the power factor not magazine capacity. Any firearm that only shoots shot should stay in Cat A



Sec 17 If lever action shotguns which have more than a 5 round magazine is to go into cat d, will the owners be compensated or with they be allowed to exchange their magazines as happened with handguns in 2003?

There is a good reason why lever action shotguns were not included in the original Cat D despite being available since the end of the 19th century. That being that they were unwieldy and were less user friendly than pump action shotguns.

Sec 29 Instead of signalling out OMGs we would be better singling out anyone who is a convicted felon for prohibition?

Sec 104 No valid reason was given for this change and so should stay as it is.

114 Gel blasters are toys and it would be a small matter to have them painted in such a manner to distinguish them from a bone fide firearm. A orange or red tip on the muzzle would be another strategy. If the perpetrator paints the gel blaster black so as to make it appear to be a bona fide firearm, then it would be fair to charge them with carrying with criminal intent.

Section 115 We have no problem with this amendment.

Sec 118 Despite an extensive search I can find no verifiable example of a “silencer” being used in a murder. There are far great benefits than imaginary problems. During the 12 year Melbourne gangland war that lasted from 1998 to 2010 where 36 underworld figures were gunned down, not one of these involved a sound moderator. “Silencers” don’t present a credible danger to the public.

Despite the recent changes to New Zealands’ gun laws after the Christchurch massacre, suppressors are still unregulated over there. It is considered bad manners not to use a suppressor there and in many other countries around the world.

Sec 129 There needs to be a distinction as to what constitutes “blue prints” as opposed to exploded views of firearms. The purpose of these publications with these diagrams is to help people with replacing worn or broken parts; there could be confusion experienced by an officer who conducts an inspection and sees one of these publications open on a bench

Section 129 Amnesty - There should be the option for anyone who is not licensed to bring the parts or ammunition to a dealer. This strategy would result in more parts and ammunition taken out of circulation since the dealer would be able to pay for the items resulting in a win/win situation.

Schedule 1A

# SHOOTERS FISHERS and FARMERS Tasmania



We agree with the additional infringement notices.

END

For more information contact

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