

Submission
No 195

**INQUIRY INTO PROVISIONS OF THE FIREARMS AND
WEAPONS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CRIMINAL
USE) BILL 2020**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Attention, Members of Parliament,

I am writing to you as a licensed shooter and law-abiding firearm owner. I have serious concerns over the "Firearms and Weapons Legislation Amendment (Criminal Use) Bill 2020", currently before the NSW Parliament.

The Bill does NOT clearly differentiate between licensed firearm owners and criminals. As a law-abiding firearms licence holder I would support any rational legislation that helps to prevent the criminal use of firearms, but this bill simply criminalises everyone. The current draft legislation has numerous deficiencies that are likely to cause unintended consequences.

Moreover, the Bill does not in any way differentiate between the minority of firearm types favoured by criminals, in fact quite a limited range, and the much larger majority of firearm types used for recreational and sporting activities, and including those which are downright antiques. Experience clearly shows none of the latter types pose any threat to the community whatsoever.

It is plainly obvious to anyone who reads the daily paper, or listens to the news, that **criminals and terrorists are only interested in automatic handguns and fully automatic large calibre rifles, ie 'assault rifles', which are virtually machine-guns, and nothing else.** Persons who try to put all the numerous types of recreational firearms into a criminal category must be mentally disturbed themselves.

The vast majority of firearm types used for recreational and sporting activities would be scorned by all criminals or terrorists. A gift of one of these recreational firearm types would be treated as a joke by a criminal or terrorist. Or perhaps, by a terrorist, as a mortal insult, meriting revenge, if they were offered such a gift.

In many respects this bill resembles something drafted in a totalitarian state which aims to suppress a democratic minority. The Chinese Communist Government would approve of it.

As it stands, the Bill creates a serious threat to all licensed firearm owners and to many other persons. Many people who own and possess a selection of quite ordinary tools and hobby materials could be accused of possessing firearm precursors used to make firearm parts, and could be significantly negatively impacted by this Bill.

This Bill needs to be modified to clearly specify that if a licensed firearm owner has a legitimate need to make a part or make minor modifications to a registered firearm, he is not considered a criminal. Also the mere possession of everyday items or hardware by licenced firearm users should not be made into an offence. The provisions of this Bill are far too sweeping, far too ambiguous and far, far too open to police misinterpretation and abuse of power. The Bill entitles an arrogant policeman to act on the merest suspicion of an offence, totally without reasonable cause.

Also, **antique firearms and associated miscellaneous antiques, which are not required to be registered under the appropriate Act**, would, as this proposal stands, be incorporated. All routine maintenance and routine repairs whatsoever would fall under the sweeping categories of this bill. For example, if I refurbish the French Polish on the butt of an antique 1700's muzzle-loading musket, I could be accused of an offence.

All these matters need to be rectified. Also, ambiguous references to "computer software and plans" as precursors could result in acknowledged reference texts being considered criminal.

It is urgent that this Bill be amended so so that it CLEARLY states that IT DOES NOT APPLY to licence holders possessing firearms under LICENCE CATEGORIES A, B and C. If a person wishes to own something in a higher category, that is something resembling a machine gun or an automatic pistol it is reasonable, to a degree, that they be subject to some appropriate restrictions. But not otherwise.

Yours Faithfully,