

Submission
No 249

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 14 August 2020

Partially
Confidential

Dear Parliament NSW.

The proposed bill contains so many problems that it weeks could be spent highlighting the inadvertent consequences of enabling such a broad, vague and dangerous piece of legislation. I will try and identify a few of the issues that will directly affect Law Abiding Firearms Owners (LAFO).

Many LAFO perform routine tasks, maintenance and repairs on the firearms. This is due to a number of factors, including timeframes, distance to licenced gunsmiths and having the necessary parts and skills to undertake repairs or maintenance.

As a factual example I was competing in a national match in Canberra a few years ago when a firearms extractor snapped. This is a tiny piece of shaped metal used to withdraw a fired case from the chamber. This made the \$10,000 target gun unusable half way through the match. I happened to have a spare extractor for the same brand of action and we able to replace it within the 8 minutes available before the next target was presented. I order these spare extractors from the US and they take well over 12 months to get in and there are usually NEVER any spares in Australia. They are a \$40 item.

Under the proposed legislation I would be liable to jail and loss of FAL (Firearms Licence) just for possessing or attempting to posses such a piece of equipment. This item is so dangerous that when I contacted the NSW Firearms Registry and the AFP and the ABF not one of these organisations even required any paperwork to bring the item into Australia. But now I could go to jail just for even attempting to locate one. Not to mention it would put a \$10,000 firearms unusable for a year whilst trying to get the parts.

Another example is multiple use. I have one particular rimfire rifle that has two stocks and two triggers. I can use it as hunting rifle with its standard trigger or swap out the stock and install the new trigger which is set up much lighter as a target trigger and use the same firearm in target events. Under the proposed changes I would need to possess two firearms instead of one.

I have a simple tool called a bolt disassembly tool that is used to relieve firing pin spring pressures when bolts are stored between matches. This item is not a firearm part but would land me in jail

I have screws, pins, springs, extractors, ejectors, action screws, sling screws, scope rings, scope bases, bolt tools, NOT ONE of these items can be used to MANUFACTURE a firearm, however this proposed legislation would make me a criminal with about 40 plus new offences.

Having this legislation enabled would be detrimental to all serious LAFO. This is akin to charging a person with not being a licenced builder because he bought some nails from Bunnings or a licence plumber for possessing a tap spring and washer. This is NOT oversimplifying things, this is exactly what is being proposed. Imagine being convicted for downloading a diagram on how to replace the spark plugs on your lawn mower.

LAFO cannot be expected to visit a licenced gunsmith for every simple little service or repair required. There are fewer than a dozen licenced gunsmiths in Australia. The distances are huge and given our current Covid restrictions we couldn't even get to some of them if we wanted to. It is illegal to post firearms straight for repair so what choices are left.

Would you call an electrician to replace a light bulb, or a plumber to install a new hose fitting on the garden hose? Because that is what you are now requiring of honest hard working people who have jumped through every hoop and hurdle thrown at them since 1996.

This bill may attempt to disguise itself as being targeted towards criminal enterprises however make no mistake the law of unintended consequences will see this bill interpreted to the Nth degree. Indeed in my area the firearms legislation is enforced brutally, but has a conviction rate of less than 5% for matters that make it to defended proceedings. Having this legislation enforced to its final conclusion would see many honest people having their licences revoked and charges laid. Of course they would be thrown out of court but by then the damage is done.

If you have ever bought a home improvement tool from Bunnings or a car item from Supercheap and you are NOT a builder or mechanic could you honestly be in favour of this legislation.

I am available for comment should you wish to discuss this further.