

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

**Organisation:** Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (NSW) Inc.  
**Date Received:** 5 March 2021

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The Hon. Robert Borsak, MLC

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION – Firearms and Weapons Legislation Amendment (Criminal Use) Bill 2020**

Dear Mr Borsak

We are writing to thank you for the time you have taken to discuss the concerns of the 58,000 members of SSAA NSW and over 240,000 legal firearms users, in NSW, who participate in the shooting sports.

We appreciate you meeting with us regarding Firearms and Weapons Legislation Amendment (Criminal Use) Bill 2020 and the potential for the Bill to criminalise the legal activities of legal firearms owners.

The stated purpose of the Bill is to target the criminal use of firearms, which we whole-heartedly support. The current wording of the Bill, however, will instead criminalise many current legal activities of legal firearms owners.

We recently lodged an ePetition and received over 25,000 signatures (over and above than the amount required to have it debated in Parliament) in just 13 days. It has become the fastest growing petition in the history of ePetitions and will shortly also be the largest ePetition lodged with parliament (currently it is the second largest). The ePetition has nine weeks to go and the great response is indicative of how important this issue is to our members, farmers and all legal firearms owners.

The NSW Farmers Association has joined with us in expressing their shared concern for the Bill, recently notifying their members of the negative consequences.

As discussed, we would welcome the opportunity to be consulted further on the Bill. We respectfully request that:

1. a Ministerial Industry Advisory Group be established as an ongoing initiative to provide a dialogue between government and industry stakeholders, regarding issues including this Bill;
2. we be provided the opportunity to establish protections for legal firearms owners within the Bill;
3. legal firearms owners are differentiated from criminals and are written into the Bill, as per the minimum standard provided by South Australia legislation (below);
4. legal firearms owners receive the same civil rights as all New South Wales citizens; and
5. the basic lawful rights of legal firearms owners be supported by the appointment of a firearms commissioner.

As an example, the South Australian Firearms Act 2015 already addresses the separation of legal firearms owners from criminals. As a minimum, we seek the same provisions for legal firearms owners in NSW:

*(3) Subsection (1) does not apply to—*

*(a) the manufacture by a person of a firearm or firearm part in accordance with a licence held by the person...*

*(4) It is a defence to a charge of an offence under subsection (1) or (2) to prove that, in the case of a firearm part—*

*(a) the firearm part was for a firearm registered in the name of the person who manufactured the firearm part...*

We believe that strengthening the laws to target criminals can be accomplished without criminalising legal firearms owners, farmers and sports shooters.

Once again, we thank you for your time and consideration of the preservation of our sport and the removal of these negative consequences from the Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Lance Miller

President

SSAA NSW

Jai Rowell

CEO / Executive Director

SSAA NSW