

Submission  
No 35

**INQUIRY INTO GAME AND FERAL ANIMAL  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CONSERVATION  
HUNTING) BILL 2025**

**Name:** Name suppressed  
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Partially  
Confidential

There are many lifestyle scenarios that have not been considered in the context of the subject Bill, and I wish to inject some perspective I believe might be enlightening to many.

I am a 60yo indigenous Australian, and have been hunting and fishing since I was a small child (pre teen), being taught by my father and his brother. In my 50 years of incident-free hunting and gathering, I have been putting food on the table for my family: fish, shellfish, rabbit and venison. I grew up fishing, diving and spearing before and after school, with my elder brother and father. I am currently training my 14yo son to fish, spearfish, shoot and hunt, as I have done since childhood, and my father did before me. My son has been accompanying me on fox and pig hunting trips since he was 3yo, and obtained his Commissioner's Permit to handle firearms under training, as soon as he was of legal age (12yo). He is now a competent hunter and skilled shooter, participating in Kangaroo culls under license from NSW NPWS. He is very knowledgeable with the Aussie bush and wildlife, and the Ocean and its bounty.

Hunting, fishing, spearing, snorkelling (collecting) is a lifestyle for us. It is not a past time or hobby; It is our heritage. It is how we build and maintain our connection to country.

I presently conduct feral pest control on approx two dozen rural properties, for over a dozen primary producers, on an almost weekly basis. My primary targets are foxes, pigs, rabbits, deer and wild dogs. Many of the properties I shoot on, border State Forests which are the source of the feral pests that I hunt and shoot, as the never-ending stream of pests funnel out of State Forests and National Parks onto adjacent private land holdings. I occasionally need to traverse these public lands to access the more remote parts of private properties, as mandated by the prevailing wind and weather conditions, such as flooding. I currently traverse State Forests using a Letter of Authority under my Game License. I don't generally hunt or shoot on these public lands, but I need to access them with firearms in order to service private properties. If hunting was to be expanded across public land, the farmers I shoot for would be impacted by feral pests to a lesser extent.

I have severe tinnitus from 50 years of shooting with hearing protection. I know that my son (like I and my father before me) will suffer hearing loss as a result of shooting: Hearing protection does not fully protect a shooter's hearing. Sound moderators do protect hearing, but despite being legally obtainable, NSW Police will not issue permits to amateur shooters. It's too late for me, but there is time to protect my son's hearing by legalising the use of sound moderators on rifles. Sound moderators also have the added benefit of improving the ethical standard of hunting and culling. I often shoot on small properties, close to main roads and built-up areas (small townships). I frequently choose to not shoot during the most productive times (late at night), out of respect for nearby residents. This limits my effectiveness and has on occasion resulted in livestock losses for farmers, when I've been chasing specific problem foxes and dogs, that struck after I had packed up due to noise pollution considerations. While a moderator does not nearly silence a centrefire rifle, it does reduce the report to levels not alarming to nearby motorists and residents. This quietening of sound also spooks animals less, allowing for closer shots to be taken during culling activities, thus making them more ethical (humane).

In order to maintain high levels of ethical efficiency, I need the right tools for each of the jobs I'm performing. I need rifles and tailored ammunition (hand loaded) for a wide range of conditions/target combinations, including, day, night, dry, raining, rabbits, foxes, dogs, deer, pigs, kangaroos, open country (long range), close scrub (short range). To cater for these scenarios, I require the use of rimfire rifles, small calibre centrefire, high calibre centrefire, high velocity long range centrefire, day scopes rifles fitted with night vision and thermal, shotguns, bolt actions, lever actions and multiple magazines for quick loading. I also need to own firearms for use by my son, as he is not old enough to legally own his own; We cannot share firearms simultaneously, so he needs his own, or he must use a firearm that is less than ideal for a given activity.

Thus, it is obvious that serious shooters/hunters/pest controllers require a significant holding of firearms and firearm accessories, as well as significant holdings of ammunition and reloading components. All this, is required for the legitimate purpose of "sporting shooting". Through this lifestyle, I have developed numerous connections to land owners and other shooters (professional and amateur), and am passing down these 'relationships' to my son.

Shooters and hunters deserve to be respected. The very vast majority of us are responsible people of sound character, and many of us perform services that are invaluable to primary producers (who put food on all our plates), even when our shooting activities may not be conducted on private land. We invest substantially in local communities and outdoor industries, many of my friends have expensive 4WD cars, caravans, bikes, quads and many thousands of dollars worth of hunting equipment and clothing, for the sole purpose of pursuing our outdoor lifestyles that are inherited and/or chosen.

The subject Bill should be fully supported, so that current and future generations of Aussies can grow up, experiencing their innate connection to the land and the Aussie way of life. I grew up in an Australia where rifles were carried freely from car to gun shop without alarming shoppers. People frequently heard distant gun shots without being at all concerned. The alienation of shooting over the past couple of generations has resulted in a fearful society, and we cannot continue to restrict legitimate lifestyles and punish lawful citizens, to comfort fearful people who have little understanding or appreciation of rural and country living. This Bill makes perfect sense to me and those who take the time to have me explain it to them. It is objectively sensible, and should be supported in its entirety.