

## FACT SHEET

### ***The Firearms Amendment (Strengthening Firearm Security) Bill 2026***

The Firearms Strengthening Firearm Security Bill 2026 (The Bill) amends the *Firearms Act 1996* (the Act).

The Bill underpins the Government's commitment to strengthening firearms laws targeting criminals and improving community safety. This includes introducing the National Firearms Register (NFR), making Australian citizenship a requirement for a firearms licence application, new offences with minimum mandatory sentencing, reclassification of certain firearms and an antique firearm permit.

Amendments to the Act and related legislation is aimed at improving community safety including for sworn officers and first line responders and increasing national consistency in tracking firearms through the life cycle.

Given the magnitude of the proposed changes to the Act, Government is adding a grandfathering clause to allow current Tasmanian firearms licence holders who are not Australian citizens to maintain their firearms licence.

This grandfathering clause is also extended to capture the firearms that are reclassified to the more restrictive Category C licence. This means that if a Tasmanian licensed firearms owner possesses a straight pull, button or lever release firearm they will be able to keep it after the reclassification comes into effect.

#### The Bill amends the Act by:

- Reclassifying straight pull and button and lever release centre-fire rifles and shotguns to the more restrictive Category C licence. Rimfire rifles that use these operations are not being reclassified.
- Establishing Australian citizenship as the default eligibility requirement for applying for a Tasmanian firearms licence for a recreational genuine reason, this includes Sport and Target shooting and recreational hunting.
- Citizens from any country that are permanent residents in Australia, residing in Tasmania and require a Tasmanian firearms licence for work will be eligible to apply for a Tasmanian firearms licence. This will still be subject to a fit and proper person test and completion of a firearms safety course.
- New Zealand citizens who are residing in Tasmania can apply for a Tasmanian firearm licence.
- Introducing controls around borrowing and lending of firearms so that police know where a firearm is and to make sure firearms don't unknowingly get lent to

someone with an invalid licence. The amendments will allow borrowing and lending between licensed holders but won't allow the firearm to be on lent to a third party.

- A key principle of the NFR is knowing where firearms are stored. The Bill provides that where a person is changing their address or storage location, they must notify Firearms Services 24 hours before, or if this is not practical, no later than 24 hours after the change. This notification is to be completed through an online portal that will be developed as part of the NFR.
- Making changes to allow firearms dealer employees to possess and handle firearms and firearm parts, as well as purchase and sell firearms in the absence of the holder of the firearms dealer licence. This will allow more freedom of operation for firearms dealers.
- Amending the requirement for a resident from interstate who intends to reside in Tasmania will now have seven days to apply for a Tasmanian licence across all categories. Previously such persons who held a Category A, B licence had 3 months.
- Provide that a firearms licence holder notify Tasmania Police at least 24 before, or if not practical, or no later than 24 hours after a change in personal particulars. This was previously 14 days after the change, however this is not in line with the near real time principal of the NFR.
- Requiring that any person in possession of a firearm (whether they are the owner or not) must produce the firearm for inspection when requested to do so by a police officer. This previously only applied to the registered owner of firearms.
- Including definitions which are more contemporary and nationally consistent such as, approved range, borrow, button or lever release firearm, cycle of operation, firearm part, handgun, handgun shooting club, lend, nominated storage location, prohibited handgun, range, recognised DVO, rifle shooting club, straight pull action firearm, suppressor and verify.
- Updating sections 91 and 93 of the Act to allow dealer record keeping to be made and held electronically, in readiness for the implementation of the National Firearms Register.
- Amending the structure of the section relating to the crime of possession of stolen firearms to clarify how a matter can be prosecuted.
- Enabling the offence of possession of stolen firearms to become an alternative conviction for a person charged with unlawful trafficking in firearms. This means that where a court does not find a person guilty of unlawful trafficking in firearms, they may be convicted of possessing stolen firearms, if the alternate charge is proven.
- Provide that unlawful trafficking in firearms can be tried summarily if the defendant and the prosecutor consent. This will speed up the administration of

justice and hold offenders accountable when a matter does not warrant being dealt with as an indictable matter in the Supreme Court.

- Ensuring that a firearm prohibition order will now apply not only to firearms, but will apply to firearm parts, ammunition and suppressors.
- Updating of identification requirements for licence applications as the Act currently references repealed Commonwealth legislation.
- The creation of a mandatory minimum sentence of three months' imprisonment on conviction for possession of a stolen firearm or for stealing a firearm.
- The Bill defines Antique firearms
- The Bill inserts a new Division for Antique firearm permits, which provisions for the application and administration of antique firearm permits, allowing a permit holder to register and possess antique firearms.
- Antique firearm will be registered against either an antique firearm permit or a firearms licence.
- An antique firearm permit will only allow for the possession of an antique firearm if a person intends to use it, they must have a firearms licence of the appropriate category.

The Bill will commence on the day or days to be proclaimed.