

Supplementary paper for the Lower House Committee

Category "C" Firearms

Use of Cat "C" Firearms for Reason 1

As there is greater demand upon shooters to fulfil culling obligations for property owners it would be appropriate that the shooters have access to the same tools to achieve this. This is also similar to the view taken by the TF&GA. As Tasmania has reduced the use of 1080 then alternative methods are required. The only options are fencing and Shooting. Unfortunately Fencing appears to be inadequate once they have been damaged by wombats entering, giving access to macropods. The onus to control Macropod and Possum numbers is falling much heavier upon Landowners Agents and contractors.

Use of Cat "C" Firearms for Reason 2

The use of Cat "C" firearms for competition is not a new idea. In the original NFA the members of the Australian Clay Target Association were permitted to retain their Cat "C" firearms. The use of Cat "C" for reason 2 would greatly assist our shooters to compete in international events. Currently we allow the use of self loading pistols with a capacity of no greater than 10, so the use of a self loading rifle with a capacity no greater than 10 or a self loading or pump action shotgun with a magazine capacity no greater than Five wouldn't seem inconsistent.

To have a Cat "C" for competition should place some responsibility upon the owner to comply with strict requirements regarding both club membership and minimum attendances. Currently for Cat "H" a shooter must attend a minimum of six shoots and retain club membership. This would be appropriate for cat "C" also.

Currently their use for competition is allowed in the Northern Territory.

Enhanced Public safety: The widening of availability for Cat "C" has the ability to enhance public safety as the storage requirements are substantially more stringent for Cat "C". For example, if a shooter engaged as an agent for a landowner was using Cat "A" and "B" firearms and possessed less than ten firearms, they wouldn't be required to have anything other than a 2mm thick safe. But once a Shooter has a Cat "C" then they would be required to have a safe with 3mm walls and have an alarm installed which would make the theft of the firearms less likely.

Licensing: The shooter would need to complete all the relevant courses currently in place and also be required to pay the prescribed licence fees. The costs involved in this is quite large and we believe that will cause a limitation in the number of applicants. This may restrict only the shooters whom have a genuine need and requirement to apply for Cat "C".

Storage and Transportation: There are currently upgraded storage specifications for Cat "C" and they would need to meet with any transport guidelines.

Usage: Any Cat "C" firearm must be either in safe storage or under the control of an appropriately licenced shooter at all times.

Sound suppressors (Cat "S")

The use of Sound suppressors has been accepted by many countries, (some which are heavily regulated) and has recently been made available to recreational shooters in both NSW and SA. The benefits of sound suppressors are many but some of the major ones are Reduced noise for the shooter, Reduced recoil for the shooter, less disturbance for the public around rifle ranges (and whilst shooting smaller acreages), less distressing for livestock and as game doesn't get spooked it increases the chance of multiple culls. In regards to less disturbance the use of Suppressors may result in fewer unnecessary call outs for our rural police officers enabling them to concentrate on other duties.

The use and ownership of Sound Suppressors is not prohibited under the National Firearms Agreement. so the introduction of them by a state wouldn't cause any breaches of the NFA.

The State government some time ago did its own study that recognised the effectiveness of sound suppressors for achieving some of these goals. Unfortunately, the study restricted itself to the use of rimfires. The use of suppressors on centrefire rifles is common both overseas and among vertebrate shooters in NSW, SA and ACT where they have displayed their value as an effective tool.

Licensing: The SSAA would like to see the licensing of a Cat "S" shooter as a licence endorsement. Also, the shooter would need to display club membership, Landowners permission and/or a Crop Protection Permit upon application or renewal.

Storage and Transportation: The best way to address this is in two parts as a Sound suppressor can be permanently fixed or removable. If a Sound suppressor is permanently fixed or integral the firearm must be stored and transported in compliance with the requirements for the category of the firearm it's attached to. If the Sound suppressor is detached then it may be stored in compliance with the requirements of Cat "A/B". This would reduce the chances of a Sound suppressor falling into the hands of an unauthorised person.

Registration and Permit to acquire: All Sound suppressors should be registered within seven days of manufacture or Import. This could be done by the same process and at the same cost that is used for a firearm entering the state. The registration number should be marked upon the Sound suppressor either by engraving, etching or stamping in a manner that cannot be removed. The serial numbers could be three-part numbers with the first part being the bore size (expressed in three digits), the second part being a two-letter code for the dealer and the last a three-digit number for the amount made in that size and by that dealer. It would look something like this 308AA001.

To apply for a Sound suppressor or an integral Suppressor /Rifle permit to acquire, the cost should be set at \$100.

Usage: Any Sound suppressor must be either in safe storage or under supervision at all times. Any Sound suppressor would be under control of an endorsed shooter only. This would mean that it couldn't be borrowed by anyone other than a Cat "S" licence holder. Any unendorsed shooter must only use a suppressor whilst under direct supervision of an appropriately endorsed licence holder. Any shooter found using a Sound suppressor on a handgun should have their licence cancelled.