

THE AUSTRALIAN FIREARMS MANAGEMENT LOBBY GROUP.

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Level 6, 82 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Australia.

www.firearmslobbyist.com.au

Contact: William John Wilcher
Ph: -

@firearmslobbyist.com.au

The Honourable Will Hodgman M.P.
Premier of Tasmania. Minister for Sport & Recreation, Tourism, Hospitality & Events,
Aboriginal Affairs and Heritage.

Member for Franklin

Level 11, 15 Murray Street
Hobart.
Tasmania 7000.

5 May 2017.

Dear Premier Hodgman,

**RE: THE AUSTRALIAN FIREARMS MANAGEMENT LOBBY GROUP – PROPOSED ADDITION TO
REGULATION 10 OF THE TASMANIAN FIREARMS REGULATION 2016 TO INCLUDE AN
ADDITIONAL “PRESCRIBED EVENT”.**

I am the director of W. J Wilcher Pty Ltd (Australian Company Number 092 287 646) trading
as “The Australian Firearms Management Lobby Group” (“the Lobby Group”).

The Lobby Group is a registered third party Lobbyist in the following jurisdictions within
Australia: -

- The Australian Federal Parliament.
- The State Parliament of New South Wales;
- The State Parliament in Victoria;
- The Parliament of the Australian Capital Territory;
- The State Parliament of Queensland;
- The State Parliament of Tasmania;
- The State Parliament of South Australia; and
- The State Parliament of Western Australia.

The focus of the clients of Lobby Group is directed towards matters relating to the lawful,
licensed and legitimate use of Firearms in the licensed sporting or licensed recreational

scenarios with the ethos of preserving existing firearms laws and, where appropriate, seeking sensible and balanced changes to the existing firearms laws.

- In that context, “sensible and balanced changes” will never include proposals to bypass licensing requirements to possess or use firearms or to advocate the legalisation of fully automatic firearms for civilian or sporting use.
- The Lobby Group utilizes two Lobbyists, both of whom are Barristers at Law, each holding Masters degrees in law. One of the Lobbyists is the eminent Queen’s Counsel, QC.

The Lobby Group now has the following registered clients who reside within your electorate: -

The registration of clients of the Lobby Group is continuing to grow, in both Tasmania and in other States and Territories of the Commonwealth.

Presently, we are engaged to Lobby for changes in the *Tasmanian Firearms Regulations 2016* to reintroduce “Classic Division Major” for International Practical Shooting Confederation (“IPSC”) handgun competition shooting. The firearms used by the IPSC Shooters competing in that division are chambered for calibres greater than .38 of an inch (.38 Calibre) up to .45 of an inch (.45 Calibre).

The State of Victoria has already approved the use of handguns with calibres of .38 to .45 of an inch for 13 listed handgun shooting matches, including “Classic Division” for International Practical Shooting Confederation. We attach a document issued by Victoria Police to that effect. Item 62 on that document lists the approval in Victoria for IPSC “Classic Division.”

Prior to the changes that occurred in 1996, many IPSC clubs in Tasmania had competitors who used handguns chambered in .45 Colt ACP.

At present, section 18(3)(a) of the *Tasmanian Firearms Act 1996* operates to the effect that a pistol used for sport or target shooting should not exceed more than .38 of an inch in calibre.

However, with an appropriate authorisation issued under section 58A (1) of the *Tasmanian Firearms Act 1996*, pistol sport or target shooters are permitted to possess and use pistols with a calibre of greater than .38” for two listed “Prescribed Events” in Tasmania, as set out in Regulation 10 of the *Tasmanian Firearms Regulations 2016*.

Under Regulation 10, the “Prescribed Events” are: -

- (a) The “Metallic silhouette” event; and
- (b) The “Western (single) action” event.

The Lobby Group has been engaged by a number of licensed Pistol shooters, including the above listed persons who live within your electorate, to seek the insertion of a third category of "prescribed event" into Regulation 10 of the Tasmanian *Firearms Regulation* 1996) being, "Classic Division, International Practical Shooting Confederation."

As can be seen in the annexed "Approved Handgun Shooting Matches" document as issued by the Victorian Police, item 62 listed on that document prescribes that "Classic Division – International Practical Shooting Confederation" as an approved Handgun Shooting Match in Victoria for calibres of .38 to .45 of an inch.

International Practical Shooting Confederation ("IPSC") is a pistol shooting sport that has wide participation in Australia and Internationally. Indeed, the 18th IPSC world titles is scheduled in Chateauroux, France, this coming August / September 2017. At this point in time, approximately 52 competitors from Australia will be competing at those world titles, which are held every 3 years.

The type of handgun used in "Classic Division" in IPSC is based on the Colt 1911 semi-automatic pistol. This type of pistol not issued to any Police or Military forces in Australia. The nomenclature, "1911" signifies its date of introduction into military service in the United States of America. The technology in the "1911" handguns is old by modern standards.

The IPSC Rules state that the magazine capacity for Classic Division using calibres greater than .38 of an inch is to be no more than 8 rounds of ammunition. Accordingly, 8 round magazines are compliant with both section 18(3)(e) of the Tasmanian *Firearms Act* 1996 and Regulation 7(e) of the Tasmanian *Firearms Regulations* 2016, each of which prescribes a maximum magazine capacity of 10 rounds of ammunition.

Our clients are seeking parity with Victoria to allow the use a higher calibre handgun for IPSC "Classic Division" competitions.

The legislative framework is in place to allow suitable persons to seek approval for use of the handgun of a calibre of greater than .38 of an inch.

As we understand it, many licensed handgun shooters in Tasmania already possess the necessary authorisation under section 58A of the Tasmanian *Firearms Act* for use in participation in the prescribed "Metallic Silhouette" and "Single Action" events, and actively participate in those events. No changes to that regime of approving possession and use of sporting / target handguns with a calibre of greater than .38 of an inch are being advanced.

Should the addition of this category of "prescribed event" be approved, each competitor wishing to participate in that division would be required to obtain the necessary authorisation as required under section 58A of the Tasmanian *Firearms Act* 1996. This provides for an additional level of vetting by the issuing authority before any authority is issued.

A minor addition to the *Tasmanian Firearms Regulation* to include the third category of "prescribed event" in Regulation 10 of the *Tasmanian Firearms Regulation* is not a complicated task.

So that we may report back to our clients, we would be pleased if you would provide your position in respect to the following: -

1. The addition of "Classic Division International Practical Shooting Confederation" as a "Prescribed Event" for the purposes of Regulation 10 of the *Tasmanian Firearms Regulation 2016*; and
2. If the answer to question 1 is in the affirmative, whether you will assist in seeking support amongst your Parliamentary colleagues and departmental heads for the proposed addition to Regulation 10 of the *Tasmanian Firearms Regulation 2016*. To these ends, we intend to write to other local members of Parliament on behalf of clients of the Lobby Group that reside in their electorates; and
3. If you have any objections to, or concerns about the proposed change to Regulation 10 of the *Tasmanian Firearms Regulation 2016*, please provide particulars of any objections or concerns so that we may address them.

We look forward to your response in due course.

Yours Faithfully

William John Wilcher.
Australian Firearms Management Lobby Group.

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Mr William John Wilcher
The Australian Firearms Management Lobby Group
Level 6, 82 Elizabeth Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Wilcher

On behalf of the Premier, Will Hodgman MP, I would like to acknowledge and thank you for your letter of 5 May 2017 regarding the proposed addition to the Tasmanian Firearms Regulations 2016.

Yours sincerely

DEPARTMENTAL LIAISON OFFICER

12 May 2017

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THE AUSTRALIAN FIREARMS MANAGEMENT LOBBY GROUP.

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Australia.

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Contact: William John Wilcher

Ph:

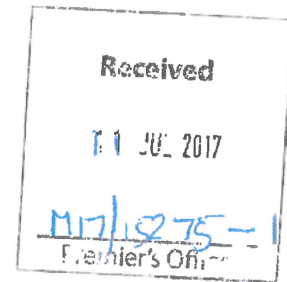
@firearmslobbyist.com.au

Office of the Premier of Tasmania
Level 11, 15 Murray Street
Hobart.
Tasmania 7000.

6 July 2017.

Attention: Departmental Liaison Officer

Dear |



**RE: THE AUSTRALIAN FIREARMS MANAGEMENT LOBBY GROUP – PROPOSED ADDITION TO
REGULATION 10 OF THE TASMANIAN FIREARMS REGULATION 2016 TO INCLUDE AN
ADDITIONAL “PRESCRIBED EVENT”.**

I refer to my letter to the Honourable Premier, Will Hodgman MP of 5 May 2016 on behalf of our client,

I note the contents of your reply on behalf of the Honourable Premier dated 12 May 2017. Thank you for the courtesy of that reply. Sadly, other members of the Tasmanian Parliament have not provided any response thus far.

The purpose of this letter is to ascertain what position that the Honourable Premier is taking in regard to the proposed amendment to the Regulations as set out in detail in my letter of 5 May 2017.

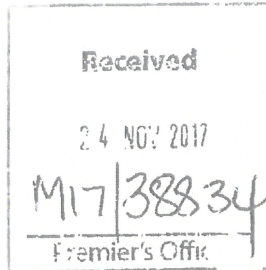
We would be pleased to receive any update on the proposed change to the Regulation. I am available to attend upon the Honourable Premier in Hobart to further explain the proposed change at a date and time convenient to us both.

I look forward to your reply in due course.

Yours Faithfully.


William John Wilcher
Australian Firearms Management Lobby Group.

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Graham Park
President, Shooters Union Australia
PO Box 11220 Centenary Heights
QLD 4350

W. Hodgman
Level 11
15 Murray Street
Hobart, Tasmania, 7000

15 November 2017

Dear Premier,

On behalf of the executive and members of Shooters Union Australia, I am writing to you to set the record straight on firearms issues in Australia. I wish to challenge the common myths about firearms based on the facts, rather than emotive arguments. Shooters Union Australia has prepared the attached Top 10 Firearm Myths fact sheet to challenge many of the arguments often put forward to advocate for further gun regulation in Australia.

Our organisation fully supports efforts to reduce gun crime and the illegal use of weapons in Australia. We were also supportive of the national gun amnesty, which concluded in September, and have advocated for it to become a permanent initiative.

However, we believe the additional firearm regulations suggested in the National Firearm Agreement 2017 will only negatively impact the rights of law abiding firearm owners. They do not address the true problem of criminal gun use, which is caused by illegal importations, manufacture and theft.

We are sending these Top 10 Firearm Myths to you to make the case for sensible and appropriate gun legislation, focused on the criminal use of weapons rather than further restricting the rights of law abiding firearm owners.

Shooters Union Australia is an apolitical, member-based organisation that represents legitimate firearm owners across Australia. We work with all political parties that are interested in promoting the rights of firearm owners.

The membership draws on a cross-section of the community who share an interest in sensible firearms legislation that enhances the safety of Australians. Our members and supporters include law enforcement officers, members of the military (including reserve forces), primary producers, sporting shooters and feral pest controllers.

Please let us know if you would like more information about these Top 10 Firearm Myths or to meet with our organisation to discuss these issues further.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Graham Park".

Yours sincerely,
Graham Park
President

MYTH EIGHT: MOST GUNS USED IN CRIME ARE STOLEN FROM LICENSED FIREARM OWNERS

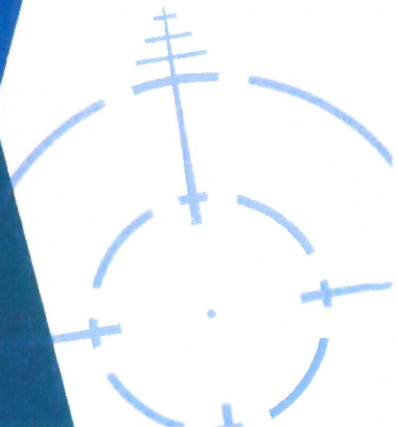
REALITY: A 2014 Senate Inquiry into "The ability of Australian law enforcement authorities to eliminate gun-related violence in the community" found: "The hypothesis that illegal guns are mainly stolen from registered gun owners was not supported by the evidence presented to the Committee". The inquiry also found "that most guns used in the commission of crime do not originate from licensed firearm owners".

MYTH NINE: LICENSED SHOOTERS ARE NOT PROPERLY TRAINED

REALITY: To obtain a licence, shooters must complete safety training, and, in most states, a pistol shooter needs to compete at their club six to 12 times a year to maintain a licence. This is far more often than police officers in many states or territories, who may only be required to practise shooting once a year.

MYTH TEN: ALL GUNS ARE DESIGNED TO KILL PEOPLE

REALITY: Licensed firearm owners are required to demonstrate a legitimate reason to own a firearm, must undergo rigorous police checks and complete safety training before they are eligible for a firearm licence. Law-abiding firearm owners include sporting shooters, farmers, feral animal pest controllers and hunters. As for their guns, many sporting shooters' firearms are designed specifically for target shooting, use relatively low-velocity ammunition and are not easily concealed.



TOP 10 FIREARM MYTHS

Tightening of firearm legislation merely targets law-abiding firearm owners. It does nothing to prevent criminal misuse or stop criminals from obtaining guns via illegal importation, manufacture or theft.

Shooters Union Australia (SUA) urges politicians to base firearm regulations on the facts, not emotion. This brochure highlights some of the myths about firearms that have been used to justify legislative change – despite the facts telling us otherwise.



SHOOTERS UNION AUSTRALIA:

- Represents the views of hundreds of thousands of firearm owners in Australia
- Actively promotes the rights of law-abiding firearm owners
- Supports sensible firearms legislation covering licensing, use and storage.

CONTACT US

Shooters Union Australia
M 0409 701 109
E info@shootersunion.com.au



MYTH ONE: GUN AMNESTIES REDUCE THE LIKELIHOOD OF GUN CRIME

REALITY: SUA believes there should be a permanent gun amnesty initiative in Australia, but understands gun amnesties do not reduce gun crime. Amnesties benefit people who want to do the right thing, including those who inherit an unregistered family heirloom or have previously failed to register one for fear of heavy penalties. Criminals who pay a lot of money to smuggle or manufacture illegal firearms will not participate. The myth that gun amnesties reduce criminal weapons is reinforced by the 2013 Queensland gun amnesty where nearly 65 per cent, or 14,000 of the 19,000 guns handed in were simply re-registered and returned to well-meaning, law-abiding gun owners.

MYTH TWO: FURTHER GUN REGULATION WILL REDUCE CRIMINAL USE OF FIREARMS

REALITY: People with a criminal record are already prohibited from holding a firearm licence or legally owning a gun, with licensed firearm owners required to undergo rigorous police checks and safety training classes. Rather than targeting law-abiding firearm owners, the Government should focus more on criminals who access weapons via the illicit guns market. The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission's (ACIC) "Illicit Firearms in Australia" report released in October 2016, confirms "the illicit firearms market is driven in part by outlaw motorcycle gangs, Middle Eastern organised crime groups, and other groups engaged in trafficking illicit commodities such as drugs".

MYTH THREE: MORE LEGALLY OWNED GUNS WILL LEAD TO MORE GUN-RELATED DEATHS

REALITY: There has been a steady decline in the number of gun-related deaths in Australia since 1980, despite the number of legal firearms and licences continuing to grow in Australia. According to the Australian Institute of Criminology's (AIC) homicide statistics, "the percentage of homicides committed with a firearm continued on a downward trend which began in 1969. In 2003, fewer than 16 per cent of homicides involved firearms". Meanwhile, the ACIC's "Illicit Firearms in Australia" report 2016 shows a 9 per cent increase in the number of legally owned firearms between 2011 (2.75 million) and 2016 (2.89 million) and an 11 per cent rise in firearm licences between 2011 (734,000) and 2016 (816,000).

MYTH SIX: THE 1996 GUN LAWS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DECLINE IN AUSTRALIA'S GUN-RELATED HOMICIDES

REALITY: The decline in gun-related deaths in Australia was already evident well before the 1996 gun buyback. According to the ABS "Firearm Deaths, Australia, 1980 to 1995" report, the firearms death rate declined by 46 per cent between 1980 (4.5 deaths per 100,000) and 1995. The AIC's Weapons Use in Violent Crime statistics from 1995 to 2012 show the gun-related death rate continued to decline, with only a few spikes, following the implementation of the 1996 gun laws. Research also shows that New Zealand, Canada and the United States' firearm homicide rates declined over the same period, despite these countries NOT enacting any similar gun laws to Australia's.

MYTH SEVEN: THE REGISTRATION OF FIREARMS REDUCES GUN-RELATED HOMICIDES

REALITY: Landmark research¹ found the registration of firearms and Australia's 1996 tougher gun laws were unlikely to have been responsible for the decline in gun homicide rates in recent decades. Comparing Australia, Canada and New Zealand's firearm homicide rates, the study found these all declined between 1990 and 2010, even though both Canada and NZ allow semi-automatic firearms that were banned here in 1996. It also found registration of guns does not explain declining rates of shooting homicides, given the vast majority of shooting homicides involve unregistered guns (90 per cent in Australia, 80 per cent in Canada). Canada abandoned long-arm registration in 2015 (citing a lack of benefit to public safety) after spending about \$5 billion over 15 years implementing their system. NZ also dumped long arm registration after more than 40 years for the same reasons as Canada, yet it has the lowest gun homicide rate. The research instead found socioeconomic disadvantage and the illegal drug trade played a greater role in gun homicide rates, as opposed to tighter gun controls, which did not influence criminals who committed gun violence. Given firearm registration across Australia costs an estimated \$80 million each year in administration costs, Government would be better off investing this money in police resources to fight crime.

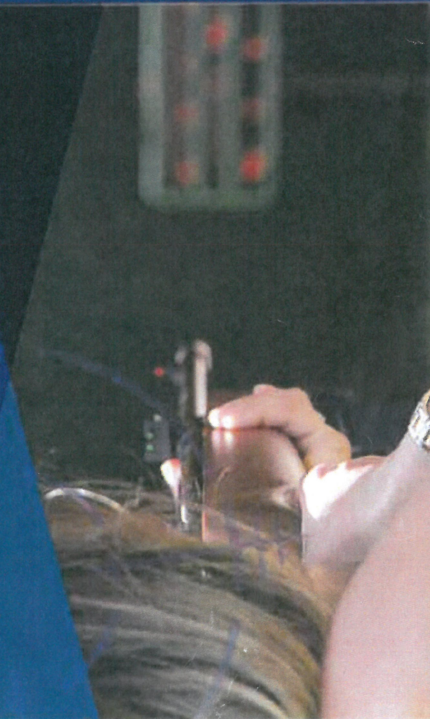
MYTH FOUR: LICENSED GUN OWNERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR GUN VIOLENCE

REALITY: According to an AIC study, "The Licensing and Registration Status of Firearms Used in Homicide", more than 90 per cent of firearms used to commit homicides are not registered and their owners are not licensed. According to the report, "those who commit homicide in Australia are individuals who have circumvented legislation and are the least likely to be affected if further restrictions on firearms ownership are introduced".

MYTH FIVE: FIREARMS CAUSE MORE DEATHS EACH YEAR THAN OTHER WEAPONS

REALITY: Knives, not guns, are the most commonly used weapon in homicides, according to the National Homicide Monitoring Program's "Homicide in Australia 2012-13 to 2013-14" report. It found knives were responsible for 86 deaths in 2013-14, while beatings accounted for 37 deaths and guns for 32. The report also showed a 63 per cent decline in gun-related homicides since 1989-90.

¹ McPherson, S., Baker, J., Singh, P. (2010) Firearm Homicide in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.



(DPaC)

M18/6986

From: Lesley Podesta
Sent: Thursday, 1 March 2018 7:13 PM
To: Hodgman, Will (DPaC)
Subject: Urgent and Sensitive

Categories: PO TO DRAFT/Reception to Ack

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Dear Premier,

Apologies for direct note but I'm writing with deep concern regarding the press release from the Police Minister regarding the relaxation of regulations regarding gun laws in Tasmania.

This is deeply disturbing to the Foundation which has long admired your principled position to adhere to the COAG agreement on gun control. A number of the changes outlined in the press release directly undermine our harmonised gun laws.

Premier, I'm acutely conscious that you are trying to be re elected but how can you agree to this? You are a good and decent man. I know you must feel very uncomfortable with what is being proposed.

Please reassure me that you will personally consult with the Foundation and Port Arthur survivors and first responders before you embark on any such changes. This is so important.

Kind regards,

Lesley Podesta

CEO

Sent from my iPad,

From: The Premier (DPaC)
Sent: Thursday, 12 April 2018 1:20 PM
To: @amf.org.au
Subject: Firearms Laws



Dear Lesley

Thank you for your letter.

Our firearm laws are among the toughest in the world and that is how they will remain. The Government will never compromise the integrity of our laws nor the public safety they provide.

We remain fully committed to the National Firearms Agreement.

Following our changes to toughen storage laws early in the last term, the Council of Australian Governments (CoAG) subsequently determined that all jurisdictions should amend their firearms legislation relating to one particular type of shotgun.

This necessary step became an opportunity for stakeholders to raise other practical deficiencies they saw in Tasmania's legislation, in particular relating to the well-known need of many farmers to have more practical access to safe and efficient firearms for their legitimate crop protection needs without compromising the key policy elements of our existing laws.

Over the past four years, we have received strong input on firearm policy from a diverse range of stakeholders and all quarters of the community, and we have listened to all perspectives. Our new reform proposals reflect the input we have received.

Our commitment to take amendments to the Parliament, a process which will include full public consultation, was conveyed to stakeholders 23 days before the election, and we encouraged stakeholders to promote and discuss the proposal publicly which they did.

We remain committed to engaging in extensive consultation. Accordingly, we are supportive of a Parliamentary inquiry into the proposed changes, which will further allow Tasmanians a chance to have their say on any proposals.

Thank you for your interest in this very important matter, and I encourage you to fully participate in the community consultation process.

Yours sincerely

Hon Will Hodgman MP

Premier
Minister for Tourism, Hospitality and Events
Minister for Parks
Minister for Heritage
Minister for Trade

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