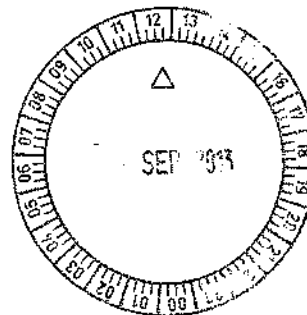


The Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation
GPO Box: A 11
PERTH, Western Australia 6837



To Whom It May Concern (The Chair),

Inquiry into the Firearms Amendment Regulations 2013
Wednesday 11th September 2013 at 10.30am

I am aware that you are Chairing an *Inquiry into the Firearms Amendment Regulations 2013* on Wednesday 11th September 2013 at 10.30am in the Legislative Council Committee Office, 18-32 Parliament Place, West Perth in Committee Room 1.

I write to inform you that as a Landholder, Farmer and recreational Sport Shooter (Clay Pigeon and Target), I strongly object to the continuation of ineptitude as it pertains to the planning, management and implementation of Gun Licensing Controls in the State of Western Australia. I substantiate my considered position on this as follows;

- The Western Australian Government has recently chosen to overly Tax farmers (and other shooters) for owning firearms which, amidst other pursuits, are voluntarily used to maintain control on a rising tide of feral pests. As firearm owners, we as farmers and shooters are, at our expense, facilitating the destruction of these feral pests at no cost to the Federal or State Government or to the Community at large. We bring only a benefit. Clearly, the WA State Government is applying yet another 'populist', greedy, short sighted tax encumbrance upon farmers, the rural sector and upon recreational sports people. This foolish policy should immediately be reversed as the imposition of Gun Registration has proven to be a worthless, maladroit manner in which to control guns and gun ownership. In the main, Gun linked criminality is not perpetrated by registered Gun owners, but by criminals. I say do something about the criminal minority, don't persecute the innocent majority of law-abiding citizens with repulsive, ill-conceived taxes.
- If 'the costs of gun registration' are used as an argument for the charges, this is baseless, as the Registration programme is inefficient and in some senses (in its current form), achieving very little.
- Whilst I fully support 'character/fitness for purpose' testing as it pertains to Firearm Ownership, the current modus operandi does nothing to provide security to those of us doing the right thing. It is clear that the Government (Police) have chosen to target the 'innocent' in a bid to get control of what is perceived to be a criminal 'gun issue'. This is akin to banning alcohol because some members of the public choose to either drink irresponsibly or flout drinking laws or to ban Harley Davidson Motorbikes because some elements of our society use them in association with other 'underhand' activities. In the wrong hands, a highly powered Holden Commodore is a killing machine too.....as is a kitchen knife.
- It is not necessary to allocate the same time, resources and energy to each additional firearm required by an already 'vetted' firearm owner. I.e: 'Blanket' fees should not apply.
- Those vested with the authority to assess firearm ownership should be able to provide a quantifiable, qualitative and educated assessment. Differing calibres are required by those firearm owners who partake in a variety of disciplines (hunting, target shooting etc.) – full stop. If one chooses to shoot a fox, the caliber selected is appropriate for that purpose. If one chooses to fly to the Northern Territory to hunt buffalo, or to target shoot, the caliber selected must be appropriate for that purpose and the right to own such a caliber should be available.
- The past decision to 'outsource' the initial processing of firearms applications via Australia Post has only created opportunity for further security breaches as it relates to the anonymity of firearm ownership and the protection of information in the administrative 'chain'.

In truth, having lived in and legally owned or utilised firearms in a number of countries, I remain absolutely flabbergasted by the negative attitude, inept policy and naivety that surrounds the ownership or use of firearms in this state. Hunting, shooting and firearm ownership are legal activities and this is a Free Nation.

I would be happy to assist in any committee to provide constructive input and work towards effective policy creation in this area.

Thank you
Ian

Ian Blevin