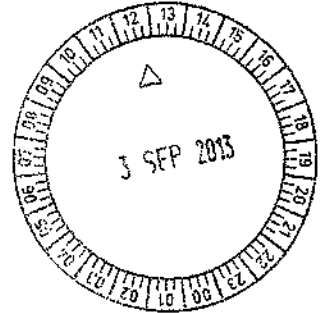




The Hon. Rick Mazza MLC
Member for the Agricultural Region
Parliament of Western Australia
Shooters and Fishers Party



The Chair
Mr Peter Abetz MLA
Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation
GPO Box A11
PERTH WA 6837

Dear Chair

My submission of 21 August 2013 regarding the increase in fees and charges relating to Firearms Licensing has been acknowledged and I have received advice that the Committee will hold a public hearing on 11 September, 2013.

A further aspect of the fee increases that the Committee may wish to consider is whether it is appropriate for any part of the fee to be apportioned to the maintenance of a Firearm Management System that has, for some considerable time, been inaccurate and unreliable.

A recent Information Systems Audit Report by the Western Australian Auditor General into the Firearms Management System concluded:

"The Firearms Register and supporting systems have numerous weaknesses in the controls over data input, processing and reporting. As a result we have no confidence in the accuracy of basic information on the number of people licensed to possess firearms or the number of licensed or unlicensed firearms in Western Australia. In the absence of reliable information, WAP are unable to effectively manage firearms licensing and regulation in WA."

A copy of this report can be found at:

https://audit.wa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/report2013_11.pdf

The report's findings are corroborated in correspondence to me from Dr Leo Laden who I understand will make a submission along similar lines directly to the Committee. Dr Laden has given his permission for his correspondence to be shared as he will be overseas from 8 September for several weeks.



It may also assist the Committee in its deliberations to reference the minutes of meetings of the Firearms Consultative Committee, originally convened in 2010 to represent the interests of the various stakeholder groups. The Committee and a working group was established following widespread dissatisfaction within the sector.

From inception, WA Police insisted that minutes of the meetings of this group remain confidential however there is anecdotal evidence that they may reflect on the decision to increase the fees and charges. In any event, the fact that there is an impost on members, as representatives of wider organisations, to maintain the confidentiality of meetings has been widely questioned along with the legal imperative of the requirement.

Should the Committee find it appropriate to raise these matters it may be of some assistance.

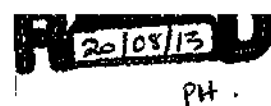
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Mazza', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rick Mazza MLC
Member for Agricultural Region

30 August 2013

Hon. Rick Mazza,
C/- Parliament House.



Dear Rick,

I believe Howard Barks has mentioned to you an insurmountable problem I am having with the Police concerning guns on my Firearms Dealers Register.

I have been involved with firearms ever since we arrived in WA way back in 1966 and now that I have retired from active medicine, I spend most of my time doing exactly what I chose to do, buying, selling, trading and shooting antique firearms, and improving my Colonial Arms Museum

Over the years I have shot for the Australian Team at 9 overseas World Muzzle Loading Championships, been a Firearms Dealer since 1978, served as SSAA (WA) president for 5 years, founder and President of Perth Muzzle Loading Club for 35 years and the list goes on and on.

For as long as I can remember the WA Police firearms licencing and recording system has been a complete shambles. Recording the guns owned by the law abiding, as well as serving no demonstrable benefit, can best be described as a grossly inaccurate record of some of the guns owned by the law abiding.

Since I have been a dealer I have probably had about 6 stock checks. Each time there were dozens of guns supposedly on my records that had either been sold and not deleted or just materialized from out of the blue. I believe that the end results were that the Police just wrote the extra guns off.

About 4 weeks ago the Police contacted me so that a stock check could be organized, and this was booked a few days later. The usual stock check consists of picking 6 guns at random and checking them off against the Police record of my stock guns.

Everything was quite kosher and then I was hit with a bomb shell. The very polite Police Officers told me that my records showed I had 749 guns on my books, did that sound about right? I told them that I probably had between 200 – 300 guns in stock and certainly had nowhere near the number they quoted.

The following day I received an e mail containing 157 pages of the nearly 4000 guns I had sold since starting my dealers register, and 30 more pages of the guns supposedly in stock.

On looking through the 30 pages of guns I am supposed to be holding, many of the guns were of makes and types I have never even heard of. Pages 5 – 9 listed assorted guns, many made in factories by well known gun firms but without any serial numbers, and the nonsense goes on and on.

There is no way one can check guns which have no serial numbers, and I was so upset about the whole mess that I decided to do my own stock check. Several day later everything on my Dealers Register had been check and numbered, the relevant figures being :- Hand Guns 178, Longarms 243. TOTAL 421.

A copy of my stock was sent to the Police and I informed them that what ever was on their records, and not on my stock list is an error, and not of my making.

Several days later I received a phone call from the Police who had been informed that the mess was causing me unnecessary stress, and that any recording errors were not mine and solely down to the error prone Police system.

I have not heard from the Police since then.

If you would like to know any more about this sorry state of affairs, I can always be reached on

Kindest regards,

Leo Laden. MBBS, LRCP, MRCS.

16/8/2013.

Legislation, Delegated

From: Fergusson-Stewart, Anne
Sent: Wednesday, 4 September 2013 2:58 PM
To: Legislation, Delegated
Subject: FW: Firearm Licensing Charges

Importance: High

Hello, can the following email be downloaded and attached to the Hon Rick Mazza's submission of 30 August 2013 on the increase in fees and charges for Firearm Licences as an appendix?

Thank you.

Kind regards

Anne Fergusson-Stewart
on behalf of Hon Rick Mazza MLC

From: Grasso, Mark
Sent: Wednesday, 4 September 2013 12:46 PM
To: Fergusson-Stewart, Anne
Subject: FW: Firearm Licensing Charges
Importance: High

Dear Anne,

Victoria Police, Licensing & Regulation Division is in receipt of your correspondence dated 30 August 2013 in relation to the fee arrangements for firearm licences in Victoria.

Please be advised that it is our understanding that the current Government's general position on the setting of fees in Victoria is one of cost recovery. However, as the setting of fees in Victoria is a matter for the Victorian Department of Justice, it is suggested that any further specific enquires related to firearms fees be directed to office of the Police Minister.

Regards,
Mark Grasso | Manager, Policy & Publications Unit
Licensing & Regulation Division - Public Support Services Department | Victoria Police

From: Fergusson-Stewart, Anne
Sent: Friday, 30 August 2013 5:10 PM
To: LRD-LICENSING & REGULATION-MGR
Subject: Firearm Licensing Charges
Importance: High

Hello

I am doing some research for the Hon Rick Mazza MLC in Western Australia.

Are you able to provide me with information in regard to the subsidisation by the Victorian Government of any categories of firearm licence?

Or is the cost of licensing, co-licensing and additional firearm registration set at "cost recovery"?

Your early response would be very much appreciated.

Kind regards

Anne Fergusson-Stewart
Office of Hon Rick Mazza MLC

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