

FACT SHEET

The Firearms Amendment (Strengthening Firearm Security) Bill 2026

(post Amendments in the House of Assembly)

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 unrelated to work purposes, new offences with minimum mandatory sentencing, reclassification of certain firearms and an antique firearm permit framework to facilitate the registration of antique firearms that were not previously captured in the firearms register.

Amendments to the Act and related legislation are aimed at improving community safety including for sworn officers and first responders. The amendments will also increase national consistency in registering and tracking firearms through their life cycle.

Recognising that there are many cases of non-citizens who have lawfully held firearms licences for many years, in some cases decades, and not committed offences the Bill includes a grandfathering clause to allow current Tasmanian firearms licence holders who are not Australian citizens to maintain their existing firearms licence.

The Bill amends the Act by:

- Inserts an object of the Act section that ‘the object of this Act is to ensure that public health and public safety is the paramount consideration in relation to the regulation, registration, and control of firearms within Tasmania.’
- The Bill broadens the definition of close associate and requires that the Commissioner must not grant a firearms dealer employee licence to an applicant who has a close associate who is not a fit and proper person.
- Allows the Commissioner to temporarily classify (including as prohibited) by Gazette notice a new type of firearm not previously categorised, for a single period of up to 24 months, thus allowing time for parliament to consider how to approach such a firearm
- Reclassifying straight pull action 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 recreational hunting or sport and target shooting genuine reasons.
- Citizens from any country that are permanent residents in Australia, residing in Tasmania and requiring a Tasmanian firearms licence for work related genuine reasons will remain eligible to apply for a Tasmanian firearms licence. Applicants will still be subject to the 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 and will be considered like an Australian citizen with a fit and proper person test and the requirement for completion of a firearms safety course.
- Adds the likelihood of the person using the firearm to threaten or cause unlawful harm or damage to another person or to an animal or property as a matter the Commissioner must take into account in determining that an applicant is not a fit and proper person.
- The Bill introduces an amendment stipulating the Commissioner also take into account whether or not the members of the applicant's household are fit and proper persons.
- Adds family violence history (per *Family Violence Act 2004*) including recognised precursor/risk-factor behaviour and escalation patterns, as a consideration the Commissioner must take into account before granting a firearms licence.
- Adds an automatic exclusion period of 10 years for a person convicted of a family violence offence, within the meaning of the *Family Violence Act 2004*, or if an offence in another jurisdiction which if committed in Tasmania would be family violence offending within the meaning of the Act.
- Adds a prior conviction for fraud or deception to procure a firearm, firearm part, ammunition, licence or permit or other authorisation as a disqualifying factor from being granted a firearms licence.
- Introducing controls around borrowing and lending of firearms so that police know the storage address of firearms and to make sure firearms are not 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 amendments to permit 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 firearms dealer businesses to continue trading when the dealer may be absent.
- Will require and applicant for a firearms dealer employee licence to be subject to the close associate considerations that already apply to an applicant for a firearms dealer licence.
- Inserting a new section that the Commissioner must cancel a firearms dealer employee licence if a close associate is not a fit and proper person.
- Amending the requirement for a resident from interstate who intends to reside in Tasmania to 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 hours before, or if not practical, no later than 24 hours after a change in personal particulars. This is to ensure the near real time accuracy of information contained in 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 or a person who carried a firearm.
- Introducing definitions which are necessary for the operation of the NFR or are modernised to be 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 inserts a new Division for Antique firearm permits, which provides for the application and administration of antique firearm permits, allowing a permit holder to register and possess antique firearms.
- Antique firearms 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 an antique firearm (Category B), they must possess a firearms licence of the appropriate category.
- Amending the section regarding Reviews (S.141) to reflect the changes in General restrictions on granting licence (S.29).
- Provide for transitional arrangements for reclassified firearms allowing the holder to apply for a new firearms licence of the more restricted licence category (Category C) and for them to not surrender the firearm till the application has been determined.
- An applicant will be able to maintain possession of the recategorized firearm until the new licence application has been determined.

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