

RESPONSE TO PETITION HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

PETITION NO 5 and 6 OF 2026

TITLE OF PETITION: PROTECT RESPONSIBLE FIREARM OWNERSHIP IN TASMANIA

The petition of the undersigned citizens of Tasmania draws to the attention of the House:

An arbitrary cap on the number of firearms an individual can possess would:

- Unfairly penalise law-abiding firearm owners who comply with strict licencing requirements;
- Fail to address criminal misuse of firearms – involving illegally obtained firearms rather than those owned by licenced individuals;
- Unfairly impact hunters, sporting shooters and collectors, who need multiple firearms for different lawful purposes; and
- Create unnecessary administrative burdens, without delivering a meaningful improvement to public safety.

Tasmania has a tradition of safe, and responsible firearm use for legitimate purposes such as farming, pest control, hunting, sports shooting and collecting.

Existing licencing and storage requirements already provide a robust framework to ensure firearms are owned and used responsibly.

Legislative change should focus on targeting illegal firearms and increasing penalties for firearm theft/possessing stolen firearms; and on improved information sharing between law enforcement bodies to ensure licences are being issued to fit and proper individuals.

Your petitioners therefore request the House to:

1. Reject the introduction of a cap on the number of firearms an individual can legally possess; and
2. Prioritise policies that target illegal firearms and criminal activity, rather than law-abiding licenced firearm owners/users.

GOVERNMENTS POSITION:

- The Tasmanian Government supports the position of the petitioners.
- Between the e-petition and the paper petition on the same matter, over 11,000 Tasmanians have comprehensively rejected the introduction of an arbitrary cap on the number of firearms that a licenced firearms owner may legally possess, and which would unfairly penalise farmers, hunters and sporting shooters.
- In communities across Tasmania and at events such as AGFEST, responsible firearms owners, their friends and families, and supporters of the Tasmanian way of life were united in their opposition to firearms caps.

- There are 37,000 licensed firearms owners in Tasmania and the safe use of firearms for work and recreation is part of life in Tasmania, particularly in regional areas.
- Arbitrary caps would impact on the ability of our farmers to produce the food and fibre that we need, impact on the ability of hunters to manage wildlife numbers with appropriate tools, and impact the ability of our sporting shooters to compete, including in sporting competitions at the national and international level.
- The Government appreciates those in the community for speaking up and ensuring that their voice is heard when it comes to firearms reform.
- We are pursuing a balance approach to reform that improves community safety while supporting responsible firearms owners.
- The Government's priority is getting firearms out of the hand of criminals and terrorists, not in penalising law abiding firearms owners.
- Our reform priorities are directed at the sources of illegal firearm activity, including mandatory penalties for firearm theft and the possession of stolen firearms, and improving information-sharing between law enforcement agencies to share firearms information in near-real time.
- The majority of firearms-related crime involves illegally held or stolen weapons, not firearms lawfully owned and stored by licenced individuals.
- Those who steal firearms, or are caught with stolen firearms should expect to spend time behind bars.
- That's what the community expects and that is why Parliament needs to ensure that appropriate penalties are applied to those that would harm community safety through theft and trade in illegal firearms.
- The Government is also progressing broader firearms reform, including reclassification of certain kinds of firearms to more restrictive categories and the introduction of Australian citizenship as a requirement for a firearms licence with appropriate carve-outs.
- Firearm ownership in Tasmania is already subject to a strict, risk-based licencing framework administered by Tasmania Police, which assesses an applicant's fitness to hold a licence and the genuine reason for each firearm held.
- The Government does not support the introduction of an arbitrary cap on the number of firearms a licenced individual may possess.
- We appreciate the strong and united advocacy from responsible firearms owners when it comes to this important matter and encourage the Tasmanian Parliament to take note of their concerns.



Hon Felix Ellis MP

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management

Date: 18/8/2026