



Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (South Australia) Inc.

Box 1605 GPO Adelaide South Australia 5001

Telephone 0419 849 452

ABN 68 729 176 106

Hon Chris Picton
Minister for Police,
45 Pirie St.
Adelaide

21/2/18

Request for policy statement.

Dear Sir,

As you are aware the Sporting Shooters' Association is Australia's largest body representing the shooting sports with close to 190,000 members.

It is our normal practice at State and National elections to seek policy statements from all political parties in order to inform our members should they be swayed by matters affecting their chosen sport.

The SSAA covers all forms of competitive shooting, with many ranges and clubs across the State. It also provides trained and accredited operatives to assist multiple government departments, conservation organisations and the agricultural sector with feral pest control and over-abundant species management.

We were largely responsible for the development of the State Firearm Amnesty introduced by SAPOL in 2015 and provided considerable input in achieving a responsible Firearm Act last year.

We request your policy position on the responsible, legitimate ownership and use of firearms in this State and your position on continuing dialogue with representative bodies to further improve this regulated freedom of choice within an overarching commitment to public safety.

There are a number of current issues which we believe warrant some discussion. These will be raised with whoever forms government.

Your response would be appreciated and will be distributed to our members.

Yours Faithfully,

Tony Judd,
President.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Judd', is written over a horizontal line.



MPO18D0144

Mr Tony Judd
President
Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (South Australia) Inc
GPO Box 1605
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Mr Judd

Thank you for your letter dated 21 February 2018 in which you seek to explore the State Labor Government's policy position on the responsible, legitimate ownership and use of firearms in South Australia as we head towards the March 2018 State Election.

I would firstly like to thank the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia's South Australian branch for the tireless work you do to advocate for your members and promote the responsible and safe ownership and use of firearms. I note with appreciation the close relationship the SSAA has had with my office, both during my tenure and when the Hon Peter Malinauskas and Hon Tony Piccolo were Ministers for Police.

The State Labor Government is committed to working collaboratively with South Australia's firearms bodies and the firearms community in general to ensure that every member of the community – from collectors and owners to firearms professional – has an opportunity to communicate their views.

The past four years has seen tremendous and important change for the firearms community.

Last year, then-Police Minister, Hon Peter Malinauskas, tabled the *Firearms Regulations 2017*, marking the final stage of the review of South Australian firearms legislation.

Development of the *Firearms Act 2015* and the subsequent regulations was an enormous undertaking, facilitated in large part by the time and valued contribution of the firearms community.

The development of the regulations took fifteen months and involved six industry-specific roundtables, as well as further opportunities for the broader firearms community to provide comment on the resolutions, including two additional general roundtables.

The SSAA made significant contributions during this process, particularly surrounding the practicality of the regulations for firearm owners and users. The regulations would have been poorer were it not for your involvement.

Minister for Police
Minister for Correctional Services
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Road Safety
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health
Minister Assisting the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse
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The collaborative process we undertook to deliver these historic firearms reforms ensure that the current regulations do not unduly burden the 65,000 responsible South Australian firearms licencees. They facilitate the realities and the needs of firearms possession and ownership while also enhancing community safety.

Through these regulations, we have increased firearm security, including a code of practice for the security, storage and transport of firearms.

We have made improvements to public safety and crime prevention, including long-asked-for tethering and other security measures at commercial firing ranges for unlicensed shooters. Unlicensed people charged under the Controlled Substances Act while possessing a firearm will also face heavy aggravated penalties.

We have reduced red tape on firearms owners by extending maximum license terms, and on firearms clubs by reducing administrative burdens in the acceptance of new members.

We have strengthened legislation by reviewing and clarifying contentious laws around imitation firearms, and increasing penalties for sawn-off firearms.

I note your efforts in working with South Australia Police to deliver the 2015 firearms amnesty. The *Firearms Regulations 2017* also provides for a general, ongoing firearms amnesty, allowing responsible firearms owners to dispose of their firearms, accessories and ammunitions in a safe and legal manner.

Our State amnesties have been very successful; between 1 December 2015 and 2 February 2018, 9,618 firearms have been surrendered.

I am proud that this consultative process has delivered these regulations, and I again thank you and your members for your valued contribution throughout the process.

The State Labor Government remains fully open to dialogue and collaboration with the firearms community into the future.

In closing, I would again like to thank you for your continued advocacy on behalf of your members and on behalf of safe and responsible firearms ownership and use in South Australia, under the overarching commitment to public safety.

I trust this information provides assurance to the SSAA and your members that a re-elected Labor Government will continue to work closely and collaboratively with your organisation and legal firearms owners.

I look forward to continuing our productive relationship in to the future.

Yours sincerely



Hon Chris Picton MP
Minister for Police

1 / 3 / 2018



STEPHAN KNOLL MP
MEMBER FOR SCHUBERT

Mr Tony Judd
President
Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SA)
Via email: handyside@ssaasa.org.au

7 March 2018

Dear Mr Judd

Thank you for your letter.

The Liberal party has long been a supporter of legitimate firearms owners and sporting club shooters.

With the new Firearms Act and associated regulation the Liberal party took a strong stance in negotiations to try and get the best outcomes.

We showed through that process that our door was always open to clubs and stakeholders and we worked to ensure that their voices were heard by the government.

The new act and regulations are now coming into force and no doubt once the new system is fully implemented we will need to review it to ensure it is working as intended.

I look forward to working with SSSA and other stakeholders after March to make sure your voices are heard.

Yours sincerely

Stephan Knoll MP
Member for Schubert

Tony Judd
President
Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (South Australia) Inc.
PO Box 1605
ADELAIDE SA 5001

7 March 2018

REQUEST FOR POLICY STATEMENT

Dear Mr Judd,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 21/02/18.

We recognise the role of responsible and licenced firearms use in an agricultural context and in supporting various pest control programmes in our national parks and conservation areas and recreational pursuits.

In considering any future amendments to firearms legislation or practices, the overarching priority for SA-BEST will unashamedly be public safety.

In this context, we remain open to continuing dialogue with your organisation into the future.

Yours sincerely

The SA-BEST Team

28 January 2018

Mr Tony Judd
President
Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (South Australia)
GPO Box 1605
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Mr Judd,

Thank you for your letter of 26 February 2018 requesting the Liberal Democrats' policy position on the responsible legitimate ownership and use of firearms in South Australia and our position on continuing dialogue with representative bodies.

The Liberal Democrats regard the right to own firearms for sport, hunting, collecting and self-defence as fundamental to a free society, irrespective of how many choose to do so. The Liberal Democrats do not believe governments have a general right to limit the ownership of firearms.

The Liberal Democrats believe:

- Sport, hunting, collecting and self-defence are all legitimate reasons for firearm ownership.
- Firearm ownership should be subject to possession of a licence. However, all adults over 18 years of age have a right to a licence unless it has been removed because of a history or genuine prospect of coercion.
- Those who wish to carry a concealed firearm for self-defence are entitled to be issued with a permit to do so unless they have a history or genuine prospect of coercion.
- All genuine sporting uses of firearms are legitimate.
- There should be no registration of long-arms.
- There should be no prohibitions or special limits on semi-automatic firearms.
- Individuals and organisations are entitled to establish facilities that involve the use of firearms. This includes shooting ranges and hunting reserves.
- Impediments to children participating in safe shooting activities should be removed.

- Airsoft and paintball should be deregulated subject to measures to protect innocent bystanders.

Gun ownership, by itself, harms no other person. It says nothing about what might be done with a gun and cannot justify criminal sanctions. However, as with any right, there are associated responsibilities. Failure to meet these may be criminal.

The responsibility of those who own firearms is to only use them for non-coercive purposes or to protect themselves or others from coercion. Those who use firearms for coercive purposes, whether actual or threatened, may have their right to own them restricted or removed.

Self defence

The right to self-defence, including with firearms, precedes the authority of governments. Consequently, while it may be restricted in the case of particular individuals, within limits, it should not be removed on a collective basis. In particular, it is not a privilege to be granted or denied by governments.

In terms of genuine crime control, most gun laws are ineffective. Making gun ownership illegal does not stop gun ownership; it merely affects those gun owners who are law-abiding and least likely to use their guns in crime. Disarming the law-abiding is irrational when the lawless cannot be disarmed.

Australians have a right to decide how best to protect themselves, their families and property. For over two hundred years, many Australians have relied on guns in their homes to sleep more comfortably. Indeed, firearms may be the only means by which people such as women, the elderly and infirm can hope to defend themselves against rapists, robbers and murderers.

The police do not provide security in the home, business or street. They arrive after the crime to take reports and do detective work. The poorer the area, the riskier it is for peaceful residents.

Only armed, law-abiding citizens can be present in sufficient numbers to prevent or deter violent crime before it starts, or to reduce its spread. A criminal is more likely to be driven off from a particular crime by an armed victim than to be convicted and imprisoned for it. Thus, widespread gun ownership will make the community safer.

Ownership of firearms is also the only practical means by which the people can retain any semblance of ensuring that governments remain their servants and not vice versa. Although the ballot box and peaceful protest will always be the preferred means of removing unsatisfactory governments, history is full of examples where those options were denied.

As Thomas Jefferson put it, "What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance?" Or as another US President, Woodrow Wilson, put it, "Liberty has never come from government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of government. The history of liberty is the history of resistance."

Sport

Firearms are also legitimate sporting tools, used in a wide range of regional, national and international competitions including the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. Indeed, shooting is one of the original sports of the modern Olympic Games, commencing in 1896. Semi-automatic pistols are required for certain Olympic events.

It is not legitimate to curtail the sporting activities of one group of Australians while encouraging others, simply on the grounds that their implements have the potential to be used for harmful purposes. Many sporting implements have similar potential, as do a vast array of everyday items.

Hunting

Firearms can contribute to positive environmental outcomes in the hands of hunters. Hunters can be remarkably effective at reducing populations of pest animals such as foxes, pigs, goats, wild dogs and feral cats. These animals have been responsible for enormous destruction of Australian native fauna, with some small marsupial species probably extinct as a result, and they also pose a threat to agriculture in some areas.

Similarly, hunters contribute to positive environmental outcomes by helping to develop and preserve wetlands which concurrently accommodate species that may be hunted such as ducks, while also providing a haven for protected species.

Support for the shooting community and representative bodies

The Liberal Democrats have a long-standing, public position supporting and working for the shooting community. Other parties say supportive things when speaking directly to the shooting community, but provide no real support when it counts.

Senator Leyonhjelm has:

- secured the property rights of rifle ranges,
- fought against creeping prohibitions under the guise of the National Firearms Agreement,
- ensured that representative bodies such as the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia are included in consultations with government,
- made representations on behalf of law-abiding shooters facing ill-treatment, and
- defended the shooting community whenever ill-informed anti-gun hysteria hits the headlines.

I am the lead candidate for the Liberal Democrats in South Australia, and I am a proud shooter. I am keen to continue the hard work of Senator Leyonhjelm in serving the shooting community. My door will always be open to members of the shooting community and their representative bodies.

Warm regards,

Michael Noack
Leader of the Liberal Democrats, South Australia
Lead candidate for the SA Legislative Council