

Parliament of Victoria

Firearms Amendment Bill 2026

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Bill Brief

Victorian Parliamentary Library

Content warning: This paper contains information that some readers might find distressing as it refers to recent fatal gun violence events.

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Bill information

Introduced: 17 June 2026

House: Legislative Assembly

Second Reading: 18 June 2026

Commencement: This Act (other than Parts 6 and 7) would come into operation on the day after the day on which it receives the Royal Assent. Parts 6 and 7 would come into operation on a day or days to be proclaimed.

Links to key documents including the Bill, Explanatory Memorandum, Statement of Compatibility and Second reading Speech can be found at the [Library's Infolink page for this Bill](#).

For further information on the progress of this Bill, please visit the [Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary documents website](#).

Introduction

Firearms reform has been a national point of focus since the Port Arthur massacre in 1996. That event saw the initiation of the National Firearms Agreement, in which states and territories agreed to a consistent minimum standard for regulating firearms in Australia. In recent times, the Bondi terrorist attack in December 2025, together with other fatal shootings in recent years, has brought about urgent discussions on whether the firearms regulatory framework is fulfilling its goal.

States and territories have committed to renegotiating the National Firearms Agreement, while several jurisdictions have also committed to firearms reform. Following a rapid review of firearms laws by former Chief Commissioner of Police Ken Lay AO APM, the Victorian Government has agreed to implement all but one of Lay's 16 recommendations. While many of the recommendations either are already in progress or do not require legislative change, Minister for Police Anthony Carbine has introduced the Firearms Amendment Bill 2026 ('the Bill') to implement four of Lay's recommendations through the following measures:

- an update to existing firearm categorisation procedures to account for higher-risk firearms and accommodate emerging technologies and future firearms manufacturing developments;
- a new citizenship requirement limiting licences to Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens with permanent residency and certain others;
- strengthened provisions addressing unlawful use, trafficking and transport risks; and
- a Commonwealth firearms background check to leverage criminal intelligence in firearms licensing and prohibition decisions.

A particular point of debate, however, has been the one recommendation not taken up by Victoria: that a cap be placed on how many firearms an individual licence holder may own. This, along with differing views over whether to participate in a national gun buyback, has raised concerns that the national approach to firearms regulation is becoming fractured through inconsistent implementation.

This Bill Brief provides context for the reforms, as well as outlining the Bill's provisions. The paper also details various stakeholder responses, together with an inter-jurisdictional comparison of recent firearms reform among Australian states and territories. It finishes with a brief snapshot of firearms licensing and ownership in Victoria. It is not intended to provide legal advice or legislative interpretation, nor is it an exhaustive account of the Bill.

1 | Context

Firearms reform since 1996

Firearms regulation has been a nationwide priority since 28 April 1996 especially, when Martin Bryant killed 35 people and injured 23 others in a shooting at Port Arthur, Tasmania. That event led to then Prime Minister John Howard initiating a national gun amnesty and buyback as well as the creation of the National Firearms Agreement (NFA) that same year, which sets out ‘minimum requirements in relation to the regulation of firearms’.¹ It established the underlying principle ‘that the possession and use of firearms is a privilege, not a right, and it is conditional on the overriding need to ensure public safety’.²

A subsequent National Firearms Trafficking Policy Agreement was agreed to by states and territories in 2002, with jurisdictions agreeing to ‘substantial penalties for the illegal possession of a firearm’.³ The revised National Firearms Agreement that was agreed to in February 2017 is the document in current use (although it is being renegotiated again), having incorporated the resolutions of the 2002 National Handgun Agreement.⁴ A permanent National Firearms Amnesty was established in July 2021.⁵

Further firearms reform has been proposed in the wake of several fatal shootings. These include the deaths of two police officers and a civilian in Wieambilla, Queensland, in December 2022, leading to the National Cabinet in 2023 committing to establish a National Firearms Register (still being established). Fatal shootings of a police officer in North Motton, Tasmania, in June 2025 and two police officers in Porepunkah, Victoria, in August 2025 also prompted the National Cabinet to reaffirm calls for firearms reform and stronger regulation.⁶

Bondi attack

The Bondi terrorist attack of 14 December 2025, where gunmen killed 15 civilians and injured 41 others at a Chanukah celebration on the Bondi Beach foreshore, has prompted a number of urgent responses by governments across Australia. National Cabinet met the following day, 15 December, to consider immediate measures.

From that meeting, the Prime Minister outlined several resolutions agreed upon by the first ministers, which would ‘strengthen gun laws across the nation’.⁷ The coordination of reforms responding to the National Cabinet’s resolutions to strengthen gun laws would be led by Premier of New South Wales Chris Minns and Premier of Western Australia Roger Cook:

- accelerating the establishment of the National Firearms Register;
- enabling additional use of criminal intelligence to strengthen firearms licensing regimes;
- limiting the number of firearms that can be held by an individual;
- limiting open-ended firearms licensing and the types of guns that are legal, including modifications; and
- ensuring that Australian citizenship is required to hold a firearm licence.⁸

Public support for firearms reform before the Bondi Attack was reportedly already high. Australia Institute polling commissioned by Gun Control Australia found in January 2025 that 64 per cent of 1,010 respondents (including 65 per cent of those in regional areas) agreed gun

¹ Council of Australian Governments (2017) *National Firearms Agreement*, February, COAG.

² K. Lay (2026) *Rapid Review of Victoria’s Firearms Laws: final report*, 25 May, Melbourne, Department of Justice and Community Safety, p. 11.

³ Council of Australian Governments (2017) op. cit.

⁴ Lay (2026) op. cit., p. 18.

⁵ Department of Home Affairs (date unknown) ‘*Permanent national firearms amnesty*’, DHA website.

⁶ Lay (2026) op. cit., p. 17.

⁷ A. Albanese, Prime Minister (2025) *Meeting of National Cabinet*, media release, 15 December.

⁸ Albanese (2025) op. cit.

laws should be ‘strengthened’, while 70 per cent believed laws should make it harder to get a gun.⁹

Following the attack, on 23 December 2025, a Resolve Political Monitor national survey of 1,010 respondents similarly found there are wide majorities across voters of all major parties for toughening gun laws. There was majority support for each of the following: citizenship requirements (72 per cent supporting), limits on how many guns an individual can own (82 per cent), tougher regulations on high-powered guns (81 per cent), licence duration limits (81 per cent) and a national firearms database (83 per cent).¹⁰

Renegotiation of the National Firearm Agreement and other reforms

In his statement on the National Cabinet meeting on 15 December 2025, the Prime Minister indicated that the National Firearms Agreement would be renegotiated ‘to ensure it remains as robust as possible in today’s changing security environment’.¹¹

The Federal Government also introduced the Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Firearms and Customs Laws) Bill 2026 on 20 January 2026, which passed both houses the same day.¹² Particularly relevant to firearms regulation, the resulting Act introduced the following measures:

- a framework to enable firearms background checks;
- an information sharing and disclosure framework to facilitate the automatic disclosure of firearms information and other prescribed information;
- a public safety test for firearms and weapons, strengthened import controls on certain firearms and firearm-related goods, and amendments to the police certification tests to remove the use of open-ended permits for the importation of firearms and weapons;
- new offences for using a carriage service to deal with firearms and explosives manufacture material, or possessing or controlling this material through a carriage service; and
- a national gun buyback scheme to purchase surplus and restricted firearms.¹³

The Government also established a Royal Commission into Antisemitism and Social Cohesion on 9 January 2026, with the interim report published on 30 April recommending all governments prioritise efforts to ‘finalise and implement an updated and nationally consistent National Firearms Agreement’ as well as ‘implement the proposed National Gun Buyback Scheme’.¹⁴

Progress on the NFA renegotiation as of 9 January was limited, as noted in a communiqué from a joint meeting of the nation’s police ministers and attorneys-general. The communiqué said that ‘Police Ministers have not endorsed the proposals as final as there remains consultation and cabinet approvals required, and subject to further consideration by the Senior Officials Group, noting that the Northern Territory did not agree to progress all proposals’.¹⁵ Some commentators suggest there is added concern for the Federal Government that, despite initial ‘political goodwill’ for gun reform, there has been divergence

⁹ The Australia Institute (2025) *Polling – Gun Control: January 2025*, January, Australia Institute.

¹⁰ S. Wright (2025) ‘Australians unite in backing gun reform’, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 December.

¹¹ Albanese (2025) op. cit.

¹² Parliament of Australia (2026) ‘*Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Criminal and Migration Laws) Bill 2026*’, APH website.

¹³ Parliament of Australia (2026) op. cit.

¹⁴ Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion (2026) *Interim Report*, April, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, pp. 90, 94.

¹⁵ Police Ministers Council and Standing Council of Attorneys-General, (2026) *Communiqué: Joint meeting of Police Ministers Council and Standing Council of Attorneys-General*, media release, 9 January, p. 1.

on key aspects of reform, leading to a fracturing of legislative and regulatory approaches (see also ‘Other jurisdictions’ section).¹⁶

Victorian Minister for Police Anthony Carbines indicated that Victoria will not participate in the gun buyback scheme ‘as it sits currently through the Commonwealth’—likewise Queensland and the Northern Territory.¹⁷ The *Australian Financial Review* reported, ‘Victoria had made its position clear to the Albanese government that if the Commonwealth wanted another buyback, it needed to fund the entire scheme instead of the proposed cost-sharing with the states’.¹⁸

The New South Wales Government is supportive, while Western Australia (WA) organised its own buyback scheme in January and Tasmania is in negotiations with the Federal Government.¹⁹ The WA buyback reportedly reduced the number of guns in the state by 24 per cent, with 83,764 guns surrendered, and the WA Government indicated it would be willing to continue these efforts through a national buyback.²⁰

Victorian rapid review

In Victoria, on 22 December 2025 former Chief Commissioner of Police Ken Lay AO APM was tasked by the Victorian Government with completing a rapid review into the state’s firearms laws, with the following key areas of reference:

- limits on the number of firearms an individual may hold;
- the classification of firearms;
- the licensing scheme, including citizenship requirements;
- licence duration and monitoring;
- illicit firearms and emerging risks;
- imitation firearms and accessories;
- the use of criminal intelligence in licensing decisions;
- information-sharing arrangements between agencies; and
- other considerations for the promotion of public safety.²¹

Following over 19,000 survey responses and over 500 submissions, Lay handed down his report with 16 recommendations. While all but one were accepted by the government, only four recommendations—2, 4, 8 and 10—are receiving immediate legislative reform in this Bill.²² These include that the government consider:

- recommendation 2—legislative change to the *Firearms Act 1996* to update existing firearm categories so that higher-risk firearms are appropriately classified, with sufficient flexibility to accommodate emerging technologies and future developments in firearms manufacture;
- recommendation 4—limiting eligibility of firearm licences to Australian citizens, or New Zealand citizens with permanent residency in Australia who can demonstrate a genuine reason for holding a licence;
- recommendation 8—strengthening laws relating to the management of illicit firearms to address unlawful use, trafficking and transport risks; and

¹⁶ A. Holmes (2026) ‘Australia pushed for stronger gun laws in the wake of the Bondi massacre. So where are they all up to?’, *ABC News*, 29 April.

¹⁷ K. Proust & J. Boaz (2026) ‘Victorian government will not introduce firearm cap following gun law review’, *ABC News*, 25 May; S. Ilanbey (2026) ‘Victoria rejects gun buyback in another setback for Bondi response’, *Australian Financial Review*, 25 May.

¹⁸ Ilanbey (2026) op. cit.

¹⁹ J. Gibson (2026) ‘Tougher penalties, but no gun limit under Tasmania’s proposed new firearms laws post-Bondi’, *ABC News*, 3 July.

²⁰ Western Australian Government, (2026) *Buyback ends with more than 83,000 firearms surrendered*, media release, 20 January.

²¹ Lay (2026) op. cit., p. 16.

²² Victorian Government (2026) *Rapid Review of Victoria’s Firearms Laws: Victorian Government Response*, May, Melbourne, Victorian Government, pp. 2-3.

- recommendation 10—strengthening the use of criminal intelligence in firearms licensing and prohibition decisions.²³

The government indicated that work on recommendations 12 and 13 regarding information-sharing arrangements was already underway, while work would continue on addressing further recommendations, some of which would not require legislative change.²⁴

Recommendation 7 urged the government to strengthen oversight of the ‘licence lifecycle’ and raised the possibility of a ‘mandatory health reporting pathway’ that would help in application of the ‘fit and proper person’ test. This proposal drew the support of the Victorian Coroner Simon McGregor but scepticism from the Victorian Chair of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Dr Anita Muñoz.²⁵

The only recommendation not accepted was the proposal to cap the number of firearms that individual category A and B licence holders could own at four firearms.²⁶ See the ‘Stakeholder responses’ section for more detail on the response to this.

Premier Jacinta Allan outlined the changes that would be proposed in the Bill on 25 May 2026, saying, ‘Mr Lay’s review highlights where Victoria’s firearm laws can be stronger, and that’s exactly what we’ll deliver’.²⁷ However, in not accepting the recommendation of a cap, she noted, ‘The vast majority of licensed firearm owners in Victoria are law-abiding—and these changes will not affect them’.²⁸

2 | Second reading speech

Minister for Police Anthony Carbines indicated in his second reading speech that the Bill was principally created in response to resolutions made by the National Cabinet in the wake of the terrorist attack at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025 and informed by Ken Lay’s rapid review of Victoria’s gun laws. The government’s aims through this Bill are ‘improving firearm safety and protecting the community from the dangers of serious and organised criminals, while at the same time balancing the interests of legitimate firearms users including our recreational hunters, sports shooters and primary producers’.²⁹

The Bill would make it ‘harder for a gun to fall into the wrong hands’ through increased ‘penalties for offences under the Firearms Act that target serious and organised criminality’.³⁰ While there have been calls for caps on how many firearms may be owned by a single licensee, the government has decided not to implement this as a measure in the Bill, citing the need for a balance between firearm protections with the ‘legitimate need’ in some sectors to ‘lawfully possess, carry and use firearms’.³¹

In addition to detailing the provisions in the Bill, the second reading provided a broader context to the reforms playing out in Victoria and other Australian jurisdictions, including the Commonwealth. As well as the Bill linking the Victorian firearm licensing scheme with a Commonwealth firearms background check requirement through the AusCheck criminal history database, the Government indicates that it is cooperating with other states and territories to renegotiate the National Firearms Agreement 2017, following the Prime Minister’s announcement on 15 December 2025.³²

²³ Lay (2026) op. cit., pp. 7–9.

²⁴ Victorian Government (2026) op. cit., p. 4.

²⁵ K. Burge (2026) ‘[Coroner recommends medical checks for gun ownership](#)’, *News GP*, 11 June.

²⁶ Victorian Government (2026) op. cit., p. 4.

²⁷ J. Allan, Premier (2026) [Even harder for a gun to fall into the wrong hands](#), media release, 25 May.

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ A. Carbines, Minister for Police (2026) ‘[Second reading: Firearms Amendment Bill 2026](#)’, *Debates*, Victoria, Legislative Assembly, 18 June, p. 2626.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ *ibid.*

³² *ibid.*, p. 2628.

3 | The Bill

The Bill makes a small number of significant amendments in response to both the National Cabinet resolutions and Ken Lay's recommendations.

Firearm prohibition order scheme

Part 2 of the Bill provides for the continuation of the existing 'firearm prohibition order' (FPO) scheme, which was due to sunset in 2028 (10 years after its introduction in 2018) but will now be a 'permanent policing tool'.³³ The provisions for sunseting of the FPO will be repealed.

Part 5 substitutes a number of increased penalties for existing offences relating to firearm prohibition orders.³⁴

Temporary firearm recategorisation

Sections 7, 8 and 9 in Part 3 would enable the Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police to make a temporary declaration in relation to different types of firearms.³⁵ Specifically, the Chief Commissioner would be able to categorise or re-categorise a firearm. The exceptions—guns for which these temporary declarations would not be able to be made—would be antique and black-powder handguns, which are 'comparatively lower risk' and are typically 'unique and historical'.³⁶

Firearms trafficking offences

Part 4 contains a number of updated or substituted offences and penalties around firearms trafficking, including:

- Possession of a 'traffickable quantity of firearms'—defined as at least two but not more than nine firearms—by a person unless in accordance with the Firearms Act or the regulations: 1200 penalty units or 10 years imprisonment;³⁷
- Possession of a 'large traffickable quantity of firearms'—defined as 10 or more firearms—by a person unless in accordance with the Firearms Act or the regulations: 1800 penalty units or 15 years imprisonment;³⁸
- Acquisition or disposal of a 'traffickable quantity of firearms' by a person without a dealers licence, unless in accordance with the Firearms Act or the regulations: 1200 penalty units or 10 years imprisonment; and³⁹
- Acquisition or disposal of a 'large traffickable quantity of firearms' by a person without a dealers licence, unless in accordance with the Firearms Act or the regulations: 1800 penalty units or 15 years imprisonment.⁴⁰

Licensing—citizenship requirements and background checks

Part 6 inserts a citizenship requirement for firearms licences. It specifies that a firearms licensee must be an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen with Australian permanent residency or 'an individual of a class that is prescribed to satisfy the citizenship

³³ Firearms Amendment Bill 2026, cls 4–6.; Carbines (2026) op. cit., p. 2628.

³⁴ *ibid.*, Part 5.

³⁵ *ibid.*, cls 7–9.

³⁶ Carbines (2026) op. cit.

³⁷ Firearms Amendment Bill 2026, cl 12.

³⁸ *ibid.*, cl 12.

³⁹ *ibid.*, cl 11, new sections 101A(1) and (3).

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, cl 11, new sections 101A(2) and (4).

requirement’.⁴¹ Those exempt from the citizenship requirement include someone who ‘reasonably requires a firearm to earn a livelihood’ or someone who is otherwise prescribed to be exempt.⁴²

Part 7 introduces provisions relating to background checks for individuals and bodies corporate, requiring that a licence not be granted if a background check finds an adverse criminal intelligence assessment or an adverse security assessment. Further, for a body corporate to satisfy the background check requirement, each officer of the body corporate must meet the requirement.⁴³

Commencement

The citizenship and background check requirements are scheduled to commence after a review has been undertaken into the Firearms Regulations 2018, as well as work still to be conducted by Victoria Police (on an upgraded licensing system) and the Commonwealth (on establishing AusCheck).⁴⁴ The rest of the Bill’s provisions commence on the day after royal assent.⁴⁵

4 | Stakeholder responses to the Bill

Parliamentary parties

The period of anticipation surrounding firearms reform since December 2025 has yielded a range of views from political parties and stakeholders. Central to the debate has been the possibility of a cap on the number of firearms an individual licensee may own.

The Nationals Victoria indicated that they would not support any measures recommended by Ken Lay to cap firearms ownership. Nationals Member for Morwell Martin Cameron said such a proposed move ‘unfairly targeted our law-abiding sporting shooters, recreational shooters, and farmers’.⁴⁶ The Nationals indicated that they had collected petition signatures totalling ‘nearly 100,000 Victorians’ to reject a cap.⁴⁷ On the Premier’s announcement that a cap would not be implemented, the Leader of the Nationals in the Legislative Council, Melina Bath, said ‘it was the right call to reject that particular recommendation’, saying that ‘the real issues of firearms trafficking and organised crime’ should be afforded higher priority.⁴⁸

Jeff Bourman, of Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Victoria, has also spoken against proposals for caps on firearm ownership and did so again in a wide-ranging discussion of the Bill with the Hunt the Night podcast, as well as speaking about the new citizenship test. He said that firearm licensing requirements, rather than being narrowed by questions of citizenship, should be aligned with requirements for joining the police or the military, where you need only be a permanent resident:

A permanent resident can join the police or the military, so why can’t they have a shooters licence, just on that alone? Again, how can you give someone a helicopter gunship and say you can’t have a 22-bolt action to shoot rabbits?⁴⁹

The Australian Greens Victoria are supportive of gun reform, and in the wake of the Bondi attack, the party called for:

⁴¹ *ibid.*, cl 21, new section 3D(1).

⁴² *ibid.*, cl 21, new section 3D(2).

⁴³ *ibid.*, cl 34.

⁴⁴ Carbines (2026) *op. cit.*

⁴⁵ Firearms Amendment Bill 2026, cl 2.

⁴⁶ The Nationals Victoria (2026) *Melina Bath MP & Martin Cameron MP: Nationals reinforce support for firearms owners at packed forum*, media release, 11 June.

⁴⁷ The Nationals Victoria (2026) *op. cit.*

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ Hunt the Night (2026) ‘We sit down with Jeff Bourman from SFF and talk One Nation, Firearm Laws and the upcoming Election’, *YouTube*, 26 June.

... strict limits on firearm numbers, bans on rapid-fire and high-powered weapons, time-limited licences with repeated character and family violence checks, mandatory reporting of lost or stolen guns, and a buy-back to remove excess and high-risk firearms.⁵⁰

When the Premier announced that the government had accepted all recommendations except for a cap on the number of firearms a licence holder may own, the Greens alleged that the government were ‘more worried about upsetting powerful gun lobby groups in marginal seats ahead of this year’s election than community safety’.⁵¹

Other stakeholders

There has been a mixed response from non-political stakeholders. The Alannah & Madeline Foundation (founded after the Port Arthur massacre) is a member of the Australian Gun Safety Alliance. The foundation’s CEO, Sarah Davies, welcomed the Victorian Government’s reform announcement in late May, including the implementation of recommendations covering eligibility requirements, classifications of firearms and licence screening measures, while also expressing support for mandatory health assessments. However, she said that ‘rejecting a cap on individual gun ownership is a missed opportunity’.⁵² Gun Control Australia (GCA) was similarly supportive of the reforms but said the decision not to implement a cap was a ‘serious and dangerous failure of public safety leadership’ that would endanger both civilians and police.⁵³

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) supported the decision not to impose a cap, saying it was ‘a sensible and practical outcome for Victorian farmers who use firearms as an agricultural tool of trade’.⁵⁴ The VFF also stated that it would support measures to strengthen firearms laws in the name of community safety, ‘provided changes do not place unreasonable costs, red-tape or administrative burdens on legitimate firearm users’.⁵⁵ Similarly, Field & Game Australia welcomed the rejection of a cap, in recognition of the needs of ‘primary producers, hunters, collectors, and sporting shooters’.⁵⁶

The Sporting Shooters Association of Australia’s (SSAA) Victorian branch was concerned ‘that citizenship requirements, if drafted too narrowly, could unintentionally impact many otherwise suitable and law-abiding recreational shooters, including serving members of Victoria’s police and emergency services who shoot recreationally outside their professional roles’.⁵⁷ The SSAA stated preferred licensing requirements that focused on risk and would not ‘inadvertently exclude people who are already trusted to serve their communities’.⁵⁸

Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia chief executive James Walsh said calls for caps were ‘nothing but scapegoating of licensed shooters by certain politicians’ and reasoned that caps ‘wouldn’t have stopped [the Bondi terrorist attack] from happening’.⁵⁹ However, he did express concerns that new citizenship requirements could have adverse impacts for migrant farm workers ‘who need access to firearms as a result of their work’.⁶⁰

⁵⁰ Victorian Greens (2025) *Victorian Greens back calls for urgent & comprehensive gun reform to keep community safe*, media release, 17 December.

⁵¹ Victorian Greens (2026) *“Total capitulation to the gun lobby” Greens say as Jacinta Allan’s Labor rejects firearm ownership caps*, media release, 25 May.

⁵² Alannah & Madeline Foundation (2026) *Victorian gun reforms fall short of opportunity to reduce firearm harm*, media release, 26 May.

⁵³ Gun Control Australia (2026) *Victoria’s rejection of gun ownership caps is a green light for more illegal firearms on our streets*, media release, 29 May.

⁵⁴ Victorian Farmers Federation (2026) *VFF welcomes sensible firearms review decision for farmers*, media release, 26 May.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ Field and Game Australia (2026) *Member update – Victorian firearms law reforms*, media release, 26 May.

⁵⁷ Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Victoria) (2026) *Firearms Reform Bill Introduced – SSAA Victoria Response*, media release, 17 June.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ Proust & Boaz (2026) *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

5 | Other jurisdictions

The National Cabinet decision to overhaul gun laws following the Bondi attack has led to many but not all states introducing reforms. The National Cabinet had set a 1 April 2026 deadline for signing up to the reforms, with a 1 July 2026 implementation deadline.⁶¹ As of 1 July, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory had not agreed to the national gun buyback scheme, with New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory the only ones to do so. Western Australia completed one independently on 14 January 2026 and Tasmania announced one of their own on 27 February 2026.⁶²

New South Wales and Western Australia

Western Australia and New South Wales have led the process for reform in the wake of the Bondi attack. Before Bondi, in March 2025, Western Australia had enacted the new *Firearms Act 2024*, which included bans for certain high-powered firearms, physical and mental health checks for licence applicants, limits of five or ten firearms per licence owner, and removal of firearms from people convicted of certain offences.⁶³ Following the attack, WA Minister for Police Reece Whitby indicated that the state, having already been through the process of reform and touted theirs as the strongest firearm laws in the country, was ‘in a position now to share our experience and our knowledge with the rest of Australia’.⁶⁴

The NSW Government, in response to the December 2025 National Cabinet firearm reform resolutions and influenced by WA’s legislation, passed the Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 on Christmas Eve. Some of the resulting Act’s provisions commenced immediately while others commenced on 1 July 2026. The immediate changes included limits on the number of firearms that could be owned by a single licence or permit holder—the limits being ten firearms for, for example, primary production and sport/target shooting (among others) and no more than four firearms for all other licensees. No limitation was placed on firearm dealer and collector licensees.⁶⁵

The NSW changes commencing on 1 July 2026 included: a maximum two-year licence term; new safe storage requirements and additional terrorism-related checks; strengthened identity verification requirements; and expansion of NSW Police delegation powers for permit-related decisions on criminal intelligence.⁶⁶

Other states and territories

Among the other states and territories, Queensland has enacted legislative reforms for firearms, while Victoria, Tasmania and ACT have introduced Bills. The following table, adapted from Ken Lay’s rapid review table and updated where possible, details reforms announced or implemented since 15 December 2025 (with the exception of WA).⁶⁷ Columns with no shading are proposed reforms through Bills, while those shaded in light blue are enacted reforms. Northern Territory and South Australia have not been included, as they have not announced new reforms. Information in the table was correct at the time of publication.

⁶¹ A. Albanese, Prime Minister (2025) *Albanese Labor Government will establish a National Gun Buyback Scheme*, media release, 19 December.

⁶² AAP (2026) ‘Gun buyback deadline expires with most states still refusing to sign on’, SBS News, 2 July; J. Rockliff, Premier of Tasmania (2026) *Keeping Tasmanians safe*, media release, 27 February.

⁶³ K. Bourke (2025) ‘WA’s gun laws in national spotlight with national reforms flagged after Bondi terror attack’, ABC News, 16 December.

⁶⁴ Bourke (2025) op. cit.

⁶⁵ NSW Police (2026) ‘Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025’, NSW Police website.

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ Lay (2026) op. cit., Appendix E.

Table 1: Summary of legislative updates on gun reform (columns with no shading indicate jurisdictions where reforms have only been proposed in parliament, not passed; shaded columns indicate reforms that have been passed and implemented. As WA reforms were implemented pre-14 December and influenced subsequent legislation.)⁶⁸

	Vic	WA	NSW	Qld	Tas	ACT
Firearm reforms responding to National Cabinet resolutions	Firearms Amendment Bill 2026	Firearms Act 2024 (Reforms commenced in early 2025, and influenced National Cabinet's reform resolutions. No further changes have been announced)	Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025	Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Act 2026	Firearms Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2026	Firearms (Public Safety) Amendment Bill 2026 (intro. 4 Feb 2026) and Firearms (Firearm Prohibition Orders) Amendment Bill 2026 (intro. 24 Feb 2026)
Status of reforms	Second reading (LA)	Implemented	Implemented	Implemented	Under consultation	Introduced
Caps on firearm ownership	No cap proposed	A general cap of 5 firearms, with exemptions for up to 10	A general cap of 4 firearms, with exemptions for up to 10	No cap included	No new cap proposed. Category C licence firearms already capped at one	Proposal A general cap of 5 firearms, with exemptions for up to 10
New restrictions on classification	Proposal Expanded powers for the Chief Commissioner of Police to temporarily reclassify firearms to account for new developments/technologies.	Prohibition on rapid release action firearms; items excluded from the definition of a 'firearm' now include certain compressed air devices, flares and children's toy guns.	Limits to straight pull/pump action and button/lever release firearms to primary producers; reduced magazine capacity for category A and B firearms.	No changes included	Proposal Reclassification of straight pull and button/lever release (self-ejecting) centre fire and shotgun firearms to the more restrictive Category C licence.	Proposal Recategorisation of certain types of firearms; restrictions on high-risk features such as magazine capacity & rapid-fire mechanisms; prohibition on belt-fed firearms.

⁶⁸ Lay (2026) op. cit.; Firearms Amendment Bill 2026 (Vic); *Firearms Act 2024* (WA); NSW Police (2026) op. cit.; D. Crisafulli & D. Purdie, Premier of Queensland & Minister for Police and Emergency Services (2026) *Nation-leading penalties targeting criminals and terrorists with guns*, media release, 9 February; *Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Act 2026* (Qld); *Firearms Act 1996* (Tas); Draft Firearms Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2026 (Tas); ACT Government (2026) 'Strengthening gun laws', ACT Government website.

Cont.	Vic	WA	NSW	Qld	Tas	ACT
Medical assessment to hold a licence	No changes proposed	Firearms owners to undergo a health assessment (mental and physical health) every five years	No changes included	No changes included	No changes proposed	No changes proposed
Licence duration	No changes proposed	Licences can be granted or renewed for 1, 3 or 5 years	General firearms licence duration of 2 years (down from 5 years).	No changes included	No changes proposed	No changes proposed
Citizenship requirement	Proposal Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens with permanent residency, and people whose livelihood requires a firearm.	Australian citizens, all permanent residents, and other residents as prescribed	Australian citizens, New Zealand permanent residents and those who can demonstrate a genuine reason for holding a licence.	Australian citizens, or limited exemptions for sports and target shooters and people whose job requires a firearm.	Proposal Australian citizens, citizens from prescribed countries such as New Zealand, and exemptions for some including primary producers	No changes proposed
Training requirements	No changes proposed	Mandatory firearms training for all firearms licence holders	No changes included	No changes included	No changes proposed	No changes proposed
Firearm club membership	No changes proposed	Mandatory club membership for competition licence holders	Mandatory gun club membership for all firearms licence holders	No changes included	No changes proposed	No changes proposed
Trafficking and digital blueprint offences and penalties	Proposal Specific offences and stronger penalties for the trafficking of firearms.	Increased penalties for firearms crime	No changes included	Penalties for trafficking firearms or ammunition increased to life imprisonment; a new offence prohibiting possession/distribution of blueprints for 3D-printed firearms	Proposal Stronger penalties for theft and possession of stolen firearms	Proposal New offence for the possession of a digital blueprint for the manufacture of a firearm

6 | Snapshot of firearm licensing and regulation in Victoria

Firearm licensing and regulation statistics

While the number of gun licences in Victoria has been growing slowly, the number of guns has been growing more quickly (Figure 1). This means that the average number of firearms each licence holder owns has been growing (Figure 2).⁶⁹

Figure 1: Total firearms and firearm licences in operation in Victoria⁷⁰

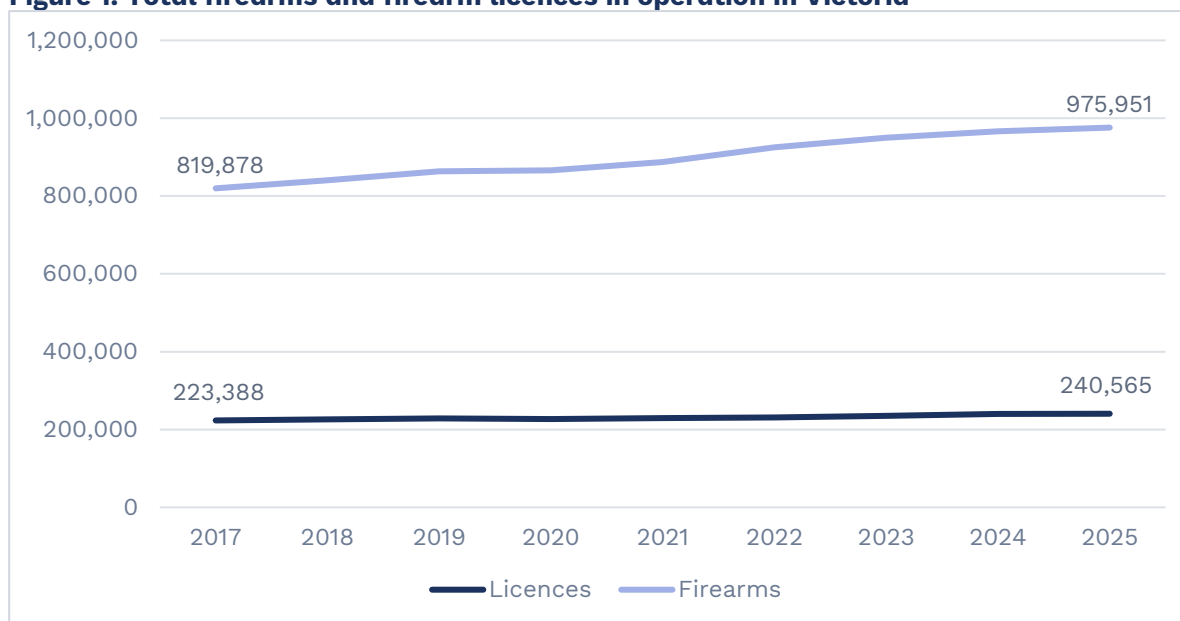
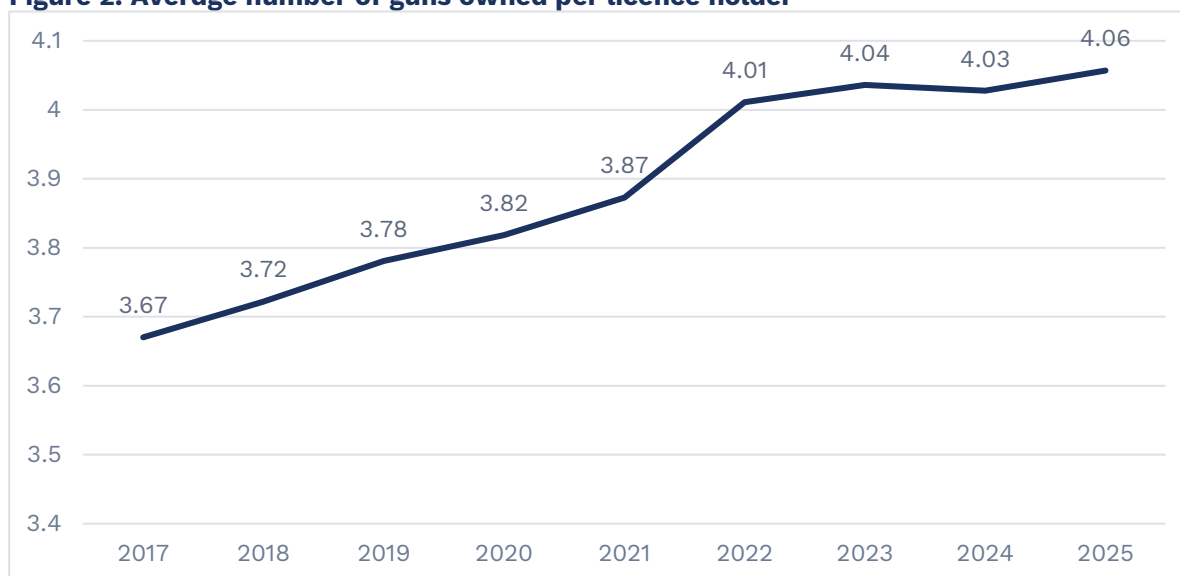


Figure 2: Average number of guns owned per licence holder



Data source: Victoria Police Licensing and Registration System via Lay, Rapid Review of Victorian Firearm Laws.

⁶⁹ Lay (2026) op. cit., p. 33

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

There has also been an increase in the use of firearm prohibition orders (FPOs) in operation over the past eight years. These datasets date back to the most recent renegotiation of the National Firearms Agreement in 2017 and the introduction of FPOs in May 2018. An FPO is ‘made by police and prohibits a person over the age of 14 from acquiring, possessing, or carrying a firearm or firearm related item’ while also prohibiting them from entering venues such as shooting ranges or clubs, firearms dealer premises, collectors clubs and paintball ranges.⁷¹

Table 2: A summary of firearm prohibition orders in Victoria, 2017-18 to 2024-25⁷²

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Number of firearm prohibition orders issued	92	111	231	699	516	409	298	193
Number of firearm prohibition orders in operation	69	176	382	1008	1534	1908	2194	2378
Number of people under 18 years of age who are subject to firearm prohibition orders	2	3	1	11	19	39	42	41
Number of firearms (including firearm-related items but not imitation firearms) seized during any exercise of powers under Part 4A	52	162	76	1003	1120	2559	1162	2045

Data source: Victoria Police annual reports 2017-18 to 2024-25.

Attitudes towards firearms

In addition to the rapid review, a government survey was distributed through Engage Victoria, which was open from 19 January to 3 February 2026 and gauged community opinion on several aspects of firearm use and regulation. The overwhelming majority of responses were from firearm users (16,710 responses), compared to non-users (2,316), with almost two-thirds of respondents hailing from regional Victoria (63.8 per cent).⁷³

Analysis of the survey stated, ‘Users were more likely to believe they had a strong understanding of firearms laws and less likely to support strengthened laws’.⁷⁴ By comparison, non-users were overall less confident in their understanding of firearm laws but were more likely supportive of stronger laws.⁷⁵ When asked if there is an issue with firearms in Victoria, 72.7 per cent of respondents overall believed that there were ‘no significant issues’ with *legal* firearms, while 53.9 per cent said there was an issue with *illegal* use and possession.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Victoria Police (2025) ‘Firearm prohibition orders’, VicPol website.

⁷² Victoria Police (2018) *Annual Report 2017-2018*, September, Victoria Police; Victoria Police (2019) *Annual Report 2018-19*, October, Victoria Police; Victoria Police (2020) *Annual Report 2019-20*, October, Victoria Police; Victoria Police (2021) *Annual Report 2020-21*, October, Victoria Police; Victoria Police (2022) *Annual Report 2021-22*, September, Victoria Police; Victoria Police (2023) *Annual Report 2022-23*, October, Victoria Police; Victoria Police (2024) *Annual Report 2023-24*, October, Victoria Police; Victoria Police (2025) *Annual Report 2024-25*, October, Victoria Police.

⁷³ Lay (2026) op. cit., p. 150.

⁷⁴ ibid., p. 145.

⁷⁵ ibid., p. 146.

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