



## Firearms Policy

SFF Tasmania recognises the cultural and economic significance of farming, recreational hunting and sports shooting and support the rights of law-abiding Tasmanians to continue to own and use firearms to pursue these activities. It has long been our position that oppressive firearms legislations only hurt lawful firearms owners and do very little to impede or reduce illegal gun crime and activity. Good firearms regulation must enhance community safety whilst not unduly impeding on the freedoms and rights of law-abiding citizens. The focus of enforcement needs to be on criminals who misuse firearms as opposed to the wasteful and misdirected over-regulation of law-abiding firearms owners. This was seen recently with the attempted banning of harmless gel blaster toys based on appearance laws. We recognise the importance of background checking and licensing of intending firearms owners, as well as safe storage of firearms. However, we believe that the National Firearms Agreement 2017 (introduced in 1996) has failed to address the vitally important issue of illegal firearms importation, distribution and use in crime. Burglary involving firearms theft is treated as property theft, with penalties nowhere near tough enough to discourage participation. Australia has a mature firearms culture and law-abiding firearms owners should not be treated as criminals in waiting. Any future review of the National Firearms Agreement must be evidence based and not based in fear and supposition.

If elected, SFF Tasmania will use their vote in parliament to:

- Campaign for tougher measures and sentencing for illegal firearms trading.
- Introduce legislation that enforces mandatory minimum sentences for serious crimes committed with a firearm, to be served consecutively not concurrently.
- Campaign for improvements to the current firearms' registry, which we believe does little to enhance community safety and, instead, creates 'shopping lists' for criminals.
- Increase access to firearms ranges and facilities across the state, with an emphasis on increasing disabled access and regional shooting facilities.
- Insist on transparency when reporting on firearms related crime by reporting whether the firearms were legal or illegal, and whether the perpetrator was a licenced firearms owner or not.
- Recommend the use of experts to perform low-level administrative tasks like conducting firearm storage inspections and spot audits. This would free up police resources to investigate crimes and deal with real emergencies.