



Welcome to The Direct Hit Newsletter

November 2024

With the countdown well and truly on for the WA election in March 2025, efforts by SSAA WA and the WA Firearms Community Alliance (WAFCA) are ramping up.

We're working with the WA Nationals in a series of community forums aimed at highlighting the issues, the goals the Nationals have for WA and connecting with like-minded voters all across the state.

This partnership helps raise awareness of the cause and the work of The Nationals WA, who have committed to making WA firearm laws workable and effective at increasing public safety.

Check out pictures from the events via [The Nationals WA on Facebook](#).

aking shooters' voices heard

The first in a series of opinion articles by SSAA WA appeared in the Farm Weekly newspaper this week.

These articles and corresponding full page advertisements will run regularly in the lead up to the election, aiming to engage the firearm owners beyond the SSAA WA membership and people with shared interests across the state.

Check out the first article and share with your networks.

Sporting shooters want their voices heard

INSIDE COVER STORY

By **PAUL FITZGERALD**
State president
Sporting Shooters
Association of Australia (SSAA)

MENTION gun laws in Western Australia, and it's hard to ignore the relentless campaign by the WA Labor government.

Since announcing a rewrite of the Firearms Act in March 2022, the Police Minister has pushed a narrative that WA is under threat from an "American-style gun culture," painting responsible firearm owners as part of the problem. But nothing could be further from the truth.

As president of the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (WA), I feel compelled to challenge this fear-driven rhetoric.

WA's 96,000 licensed firearm owners are law-abiding citizens who understand that owning a gun is a privilege, not a right.

We already comply with strict regulations designed to ensure public safety.

The issue is the new legislation in creating confusion and anxiety, targeting responsible owners instead of working with them.

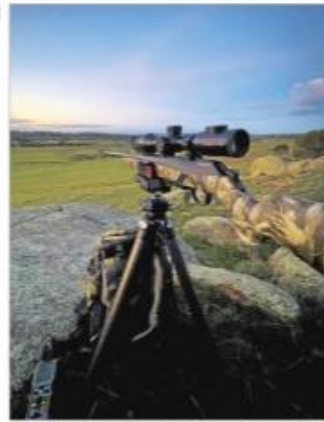
For many, firearms are essential tools for protecting crops and animals on the success of WA's rural agricultural sector.

Farmers rely on them to manage their land, and without these tools, the industry will suffer.

Controlling feral animals is crucial to protecting native species, yet the new restrictions threaten to undermine this long-established practice.

Recreational shooting is also an important part of life in WA, with more than 30,000 people regularly participating in social and competitive events at more than 400 approved gun clubs.

It's not just about hitting



The Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA) is taking aim at the State government's rewrite of the Firearms Act.

targets - it's about discipline, community, and connection.

Yet, the new laws are treating responsible shooters as a threat, erasing a tradition that has been safely enjoyed for generations.

It's not about the act of shooting, but the way we shoot - with respect, responsibility, and a deep understanding of our environment.

Despite the rhetoric, the government's approach is uninterested in listening.

This lack of engagement has alienated responsible gun owners, farmers, and the recreational shooting community - people who should be allies in maintaining safety standards.

The new regulations are not only impractical but intrusive.

They propose that WA Police will determine how many feral animals are on

your property and limit who can carry out pest control.

This level of micromanagement is absurd and will hurt the agricultural sector.

It's time we push back against this overreach and demand a more practical approach.

This is not a matter of being hard on anyone - it's about ensuring that our laws can be enforced in a way that respects the rights of responsible gun owners.

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of responsible gun ownership, and for many, it's a way of life.

For individuals with disabilities, shooting sports can be a rare source of physical activity and community engagement.

To see this dismissed without consideration is deeply concerning.

The most distressing part? The anxiety and fear among responsible gun owners, who now worry about inadvertently breaking the law because of the complex new rules.

This fear has overwhelmed the community's dedication to safety and compliance.

Law-abiding citizens should not be treated as criminals simply because they own firearms.

It's time for a new approach. We need effective regulation that balances safety with respect for responsible ownership.

Lawmakers should engage directly with the firearms community, listen to their concerns, and collaborate on practical solutions.

Public safety and responsible gun ownership can coexist, but it requires open, respectful dialogue.

The upcoming State election is an opportunity for licensed firearm owners, farmers, and supporters of responsible gun ownership to make their voices heard.

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WA on the front foot over law reforms

The Western Australian branch of the SSAA sponsored the State Conference of the National Party at the end of August. The Nationals were the only party to support the rights of shooters during the debate over recent changes to gun laws in that state.

At the conference, state leader of the Party and Leader of the Opposition, Shane Love, committed to move that the regulations due to be released later this year be disallowed. The regulations will provide details around implementation of new legislation and, as they say, the devil's in the detail. Once the regulations are introduced, the Nationals have assured us they'll move to have them disallowed on the first sitting day after introduction (which may be after the state election next year).

We don't yet know the exact date the regulations will be introduced or their start date. While we await clarity, SSAA (WA) will attempt to work with the government and Western Australia police to ensure these regulations do not go further than the legislation intended and that arrangements for their implementation are fair and reasonable.

During the course of the conference, myself and SSAA National CEO Tom Kenyon took the opportunity to meet with several MPs and candidates including Shane Love; Deputy Leader Peter Rundle; Candidate for Bateman, Donna Gordin; Candidate for Central Wheatbelt, Lachlan Hunter; Federal MPs Senator Bridget McKenzie and David Littleproud, as well as the current state member for Central Wheatbelt and candidate for the new Federal seat of Bullwinkle, Mia Davies.

These meetings were fruitful and the Nationals were highly supportive of the rights of law-abiding firearms owners to continue to enjoy their sport, without the onerous restrictions recently placed on them by the Labor government.

SSAA (WA) has been in contact with the Western Australia Liberal Party, seeking their backing for a fairer outcome for sporting shooters and farmers in that state and once we have a clearer picture of their stance, we'll report back to members. It's fair to say, however, that so far their support for the sector on this matter has been underwhelming. I look forward to working with WA members and all firearms owners statewide to achieve a fairer outcome for sporting shooters.

Paul Fitzgerald, President, SSAA (WA)

As published in the Australian Shooter magazine October 2024 edition.
