



UPDATED

National gun register to include details of farmers

Farming groups are cautiously welcoming a National Firearms Register that is set to cost \$250 million. See some of the concerns.

[Nikki Reynolds](#)

@nikki34158551

2 min read

December 11, 2023 - 10:38AM

The Weekly Times

1 comments

Farmers who own guns will have their personal details included in a \$250 million national firearms register.

It has raised concerns about what potential sharing, leaks or database breaches could mean if the information got into the wrong hands.

The register, 27 years in the making, was instigated by former prime minister John Howard after the Port Arthur massacre and will address gaps in how firearms are managed across all states and territories.



David Jochinke, president of NFF and farmer from Murra Warra.

National Farmers Federation president [David Jochinke](#) said the NFF recognised the tragic events that led to the national cabinet tasking the police ministers council to report on options to implement a national register.

“Primary producers constitute a substantial portion of legitimate firearm users in Australia,” he said.

“Firearms regulations are an important tool for keeping communities safe; the NFF promotes the safe and legal use of firearms and encourages all primary producers to follow their state/territory regulations.”

Mr Jochinke said the NFF did not oppose the implementation of the register; however, it should be implemented with minimal regulatory impact or burden on law-abiding firearm owners, such as farmers.

Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers interim chief executive officer Alastair Cameron said gun owners had concerns about what a leak or breach of the new database could mean if it got into the wrong hands.

“TFGA is very concerned that any such leak from a more widely accessible national system could put farmers at significant risk,” he said.

Sporting Shooters’ Association of Australia media and politics officer Rachael Oxborrow said the government would assist states and territories with funding the reforms.

“At this stage, we are hearing no indications that costs (of the register) will be passed to firearm owners,” she said.

However, she feared it would essentially be law-abiding people who would have their details included on the register.

“Unfortunately, a criminal is not going to abide by police regulations, and they are not going to be picked up by a [firearms](#) register,” she said.

Mrs Oxborrow said the database would be able to track a gun throughout various ownerships.

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission estimated there were more than 260,000 firearms on the domestic illicit market. The exact number cannot be determined because there was no data before the implementation

of the National Firearms Agreement of 1996, following the Port Arthur massacre.

The report estimated many people still possessed “grey-market” firearms that were not surrendered during the 1996 and 1997 gun buyback schemes.