

SSAA feedback to suppressors policy topic

The Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (SSAA Inc) submits that suppressors (also referred to as moderators) should not be classified as high-risk items. They are simple firearm accessories designed to reduce sound, recoil, and muzzle flash when firing.

Many jurisdictions around the world are reducing their restrictions on suppressors, most notably the United Kingdom because of their many benefits and minimal danger to public safety.

Their use provides clear benefits, including:

- Improved hearing protection for shooters and those nearby
- Enhanced accuracy and comfort
- Reduced disturbance to wildlife
- Greater feral control efficiency
- Minimized unnecessary alarm to the public

Addressing Concerns About Criminal Use

Concerns that suppressors may be misused by criminals are not supported by evidence. Suppressors are already easier to manufacture illegally than firearms, yet there is no evidence of widespread criminal use in Australia or internationally. We believe criminals favour concealable firearms, such as handguns or shortened (cut down) firearms, and are unlikely to use accessories that add length or reduce concealability. Also, the sound of gunfire adds to the intimidation factor of their illegal activities.

To date, no credible peer-reviewed research or crime data demonstrates that suppressors pose a meaningful risk to public safety. Anecdotally, police see little to no criminal use of suppressors or any need to continue to treat them as a dangerous item.

Licensed Firearm Owners and Compliance

Licensed firearm owners with registered firearms can readily comply with reasonable requirements for suppressor possession. This may include:

- Assignment of a unique serial number
- Registration of the item
- Secure storage in line with existing firearm storage requirements

Such measures would provide effective oversight while allowing licensed shooters to access the legitimate safety and environmental benefits of suppressors.



Consultation Questions

1. What benefits can you see from alignment regarding how suppressor information is recorded?

Consistency in serial number and registration requirements across all jurisdictions would provide clear benefits. It would reduce confusion, ensure uniform oversight, and support the smooth trade and lawful movement of suppressors nationwide.

2. What concerns do you have regarding how suppressor information is recorded?

Suppressor details should be recorded against the firearm licence holder, not tied to specific firearms. Because suppressors are interchangeable across multiple firearms, linking them to individual firearms would create unnecessary duplication and administrative burden.

3. Do you have any comments regarding minimum marking requirements for suppressors?

All suppressors should carry a unique serial number to enable straightforward identification and registration.

