



Combined Firearms Council of Victoria

Victorian Shooting Industry Forum

#CFCVforum



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Combined Firearms Council of Victoria

Opening

Neil Jenkins - Secretary



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Full member organisations

- Field and Game Australia
- Firearm Traders Association
- International Practical Shooting Confederation
- Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Vic)
- Victorian Amateur Pistol Association
- Vintagers (Order of Edwardian Gunners)



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The need for a different approach

- CFCV started as a response to the 2002 handgun restrictions, but quickly drew a broader response from across the shooting community because of the longer term policy implications for the shooting sports
- Advertising campaign quickly arranged in the lead up to the 2002 Victorian State Election including full page ads in the Herald Sun, The Age and Weekly Times - circa \$150k
- Similar campaign was run in 2006 with 'election forums' held that year and in 2010 where the major parties made specific pro-shooting election commitments. This did not happen in 2014



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What we do

- **Electoral support:** by financing election related expenses (ie HTVs, nomination fees, corflutes and ads) in support of pro-shooting candidates, and against those who oppose shooting
- **Mailouts:** direct appeals to shooters in key electorates through member organisations
- **Parliamentary briefing notes:** to keep MPs aware of issues of concern to us
- **Broader issue awareness:** Some work in the media and in more recent times, using social media to connect with the broader shooting community



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Our current work

- Our **number 1** internal priority is to raise awareness among shooters of how to vote properly
- In 2015 we established a **new workplan**, which will broaden our base within the shooting community and make greater use of social media to disseminate pro-shooting voting advice in the lead up to the next federal / state elections
- This involves building a **strong email list** and a **robust online fundraising platform** as two of the key tools to manage this growth



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Challenges for 2016

- Deferred fight on repeating actions
- 20th Anniversary of Port Arthur - anti-gun groups will renew their fight on repeating actions (ie lever actions) and handguns. South Australia and the Federal Government remain 'weak spots' for us
- Federal Election - targeting some sitting MPs
- US gun debate has implications for the debate here
- **Great Forest National Park** proposal locking out hunting
- Poor oversight of Victoria Police command as it relates to policy development



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(Dark green area is hunting area affected by the proposed Great Forest National Park)

Will the politicians care?

- The majority of them have only ever worked in politics as:
 - An advisor or electorate officer
 - A unionist
- There are many good politicians who put in long hard hours for their communities. However the long term prospects of political parties and careers depends on just one currency. **Votes. No votes, no career.** The delivery of outcomes for shooters has been further complicated by **factional fights**. The influence of state directors, secretaries and others in the major parties who are invisible to the broader community cannot be understated.
- You could count the number of MPs who have shooters licences on maybe two hands. However the major party MPs will vote “along party lines” when told to - as they have done in the past.
- Even if they voted to protect shooting, consider that there are **128 MPs** in state parliament, 7 of whom are Greens MPs who are determined to have hunting banned.
- One day they will hold the **Balance-Of-Power** so we **must** be ready for that day and cannot afford to be inept.



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“Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn’t mean politics won’t take an interest in you”

Pericles (430 B.C.)



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CFCV achievements since 2002

Bill Paterson - President



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CFCV achievements since 2002

- We provide a co-ordinated voice for much of our industry.
- We wear the Black Hat.
- Re establishment of the Police Minister's Victorian Firearms Consultative Committee.
- Establishment of the Victorian Shooting Sports Safety Foundation.
- We achieved recognition among politicians that shooters can influence critical seats.
- We gained Vic. Govt. Agreement to finance a State Shooting Centre. This morphed into the \$12 million Shooting Sports Fund.



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Outcome of the NFA review

Russell Bate OAM



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Outcome of the NFA review

- There has been no review of the NFA - thus far!
- There has been no final outcome.
- After the State & Territory Police Ministers voted down the Federal Justice Ministers recommendations on the Adler, it was referred back to the Senior Officers Group for review and recommendation back to COAG April 2016.



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Before '96

- Martin Bryant kills 35 people, injured 18 - 28th April '96
 - Known to have a mental illness.
 - A suspect in a previous murder.
- Around that time Daryl Williams (Ag) receives a bureaucrat's plan for the review of firearms legislation in Australia.
- That plan forms the basis of the NFA
- Liberal majority “neutered” the Nationals
- Some Nationals hindered rather than helped (“pump action shotguns - not necessary”)



NFA Review - Background

- Martin Place Siege Review Report - January 2015
- Senate inquiry into illegal firearms April 2015.
- States & Territories agreed to review of the NFA at Law Crime and Community Safety Council (LCCSC) - May 2015.
- Firearms Industry Reference Group formed - 17th August 2015.
- Submissions to the review requested- 20th August 2015.
- The FIRG met with Minister Keenan, Sydney 26th August 2015, Canberra 16th September and Canberra October 21st.
- Industry Reps invited to attend **National Firearms and Weapons Policy Working Group** meeting - Brisbane 7th August, Sydney 26th August and Melbourne 24th September 2015



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Where it begins - Martin Place Siege Review Findings

“Monis entered Martin Place with a pump action shotgun. It was short, having been sawn off at the barrel and at the end.

*...it appears that the firearm used by Monis **may** have entered Australia lawfully and became a 'grey market' firearm when not returned as part of the 1996 National Buy Back program.*

Monis was at no time issued a firearms licence, and at no time did he legally own or import a firearm.”

- Martin Place Siege Review



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Martin Place Siege Review - Recommendations

6. *The Commonwealth, States and Territories **should simplify the regulation of the legal firearms market through an update of the technical elements of the National Firearms Agreement.** (?)*
7. *CrimTrac, in cooperation with Commonwealth and State Police and law enforcement agencies, should prioritise bringing the National Firearms Interface into operation by June 30 2016*
8. *States and Territories' police forces should conduct an urgent audit of their firearms data holdings before the National Firearms Interface is operational where this has not already occurred.*
9. *The Commonwealth and the States and Territories should give further consideration to measures to deal with illegal firearms.*



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What is an *“update of the technical elements of the National Firearms Agreement”*?

“The object of the Review is to ensure that the NFA remains current in the light of technological advancements and changes to the firearms market since it was signed almost two decades ago”

- Keenan to Bate et al.. - August 20 2015



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Why do we need “*an update of the technical elements of the National Firearms Agreement*”?

- Keenan’s statement clearly demonstrates the lack of knowledge of firearms at the highest levels of government - state and federal.
- There have been no technological advancements in firearms since the 1996 agreement. Firearms in use today are the same as those in use a century ago.
- Even self-loading firearms are over 100 years old with the Browning A5 shotgun developed in 1898. The Adler lever action shotgun is essentially the same as the Winchester Model 1887 developed in 1887. Pump action, lever action, bolt action and break action firearms have all been with us since the 19th century.
- **Significantly the Martin Place Siege review made no reference to or recommendation for the re-classification of firearms**



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The Adler – Help or Hinder?

- It sure didn't help
- The Adler ads provided just what the police and antis wanted
- It is **legal!**
- It clearly underscored the problems with the NFA
 - it was a negotiated agreement
 - a political response
 - as such it is full of apparent contradictions



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What have we learned?

- Many of us are still making the same mistakes:
 - confusing politics with reason;
 - believing that policy is based on facts;
 - assuming that firearms are understood by politicians and bureaucrats;
 - that public opinion doesn't matter;
 - that “they are from the government and they are here to help”!



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What we don't know

- What did the Federal Minister request the Senior Officers Group do in relation to the Adler and NFA review?
- What will VicPol's recommendation be to the Federal Minister?
- Will Victorian stakeholders be consulted?
- When?



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*“I don’t make jokes.
I just watch the government
and report the facts”*

Will Rogers



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Key issues and how they affect you

Bill Paterson - President



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Key issues and how they affect you

- Issue #1

Public Licence:

- Ranges from - need to feel secure to a level of comfort.

Extreme views:

- a strategy by some that recreational guns should be removed from citizens. (e.g. Police see guns as a 'health and safety' issue for members)

Tactics :

- Restrict categories of guns / Genuine reason / Genuine need / Proven use / Ability to use / Storage (safe - secure) / Hunting restrictions.



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The areas we fight in

- The ability to **OWN** firearms:
 - Complex laws, Federal and State.
 - Tedious licensing.
 - Strict storage laws which authorities would like to tighten.
 - Little leeway if you transgress.
- The ability to **USE** firearms:
 - Areas available for hunting are shrinking or under threat.
 - Hunting seasons and bag limits have to be continually fought for.
 - “public concern” used as a means of harassing shooters.
 - Try getting a new shooting ground approved.



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They still use the Goebble's method

- Repeat a lie often enough and it will be accepted as truth.
- Lies we must never let become accepted:-

The fewer the guns, the safer the society.

- senate inquiry.

Hunting is cruel and fosters violence.

- last state election, hunting/family violence.

Reduce hunting, protect wildlife.

- duck season, no science but reduce bag limits



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What can we learn from?

- Hunting is a legal activity; so is smoking, but try and do it.
- The analogy is there: if government does not have the appetite to ban something, just cite public concern and restrict, restrict and complicate.
- Our challenge is to turn public opinion with regard to the activities which shooters undertake.
 - Is this possible?
 - Anzac Day - how the public rallied around our diggers after the anti-Vietnam protests



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What can we do?

- **Enjoy it**
 - There are some who believe that that we are in a sunset sport and accept whatever terms are imposed. What about our grandkids?
- **Fight it**
 - Fight further restrictions and try to be seen as “responsible” / Doomed to fail due to the “cable tie” approach by authorities.
- **Change the way we are perceived**
 - Address the discomfort some people feel re firearms / Re establish hunting as a part of our cultural heritage. Market ourselves / Tap into the passion for cooking and organic food.



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Our Image

- The image our opponents put forward:-
 - A MAN who wants the power of a gun.
 - A violent nature, desensitised by cruel hunting methods.
 - No interest in the long term future of wild life and the environment.
 - Not someone I would know, or wish to.
- The image we need to have accepted:-
 - People with a passion.
 - Ethical hunters who practise humane game harvesting.
 - People who believe that the long term conservation and improvement of wildlife and the environment is in their own best interests.
 - Someone like my uncle or cousin.



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CFCV strategic directions & communications

Neil Jenkins - Secretary



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CFCV's new workplan

- Workplan initially designed to re-start the CFCV
- It took on a new direction with the **opportunities** provided by social media
- In mid-2015 we established new **website, Facebook / Twitter / Pinterest and LinkedIn** pages. Approx three thousand now regularly follow us - although that is still a small number.
- Using **SurveyMonkey** for feedback on issues and other matters. **Return of semi-autos - especially 22s - was the number 1 concern raised by shooters.** Shooters were also very unhappy with the role the Police played in 2015 on the Adler issue.



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CFCV's new workplan

- Objective is two fold. The first is to build as big a **following** with Victorian shooters as possible. The second is to run an aggressive **fund raising platform** to help fund the work we are doing for the broader shooting community.
- Both tasks require us to tap into the broader pool of shooters **who are not members** of shooting organisations - approx. 3 out of every 4. Other shooters need to contribute to the work we're doing for the shooting community, noting that **the main organisations have funded the fight to date.**



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How firearms policy is made in Australia

It should be like this

1. **Identify** the problem
2. **Analyse** the problem
3. **Consult** stakeholders
4. Develop **options**
5. Seek a **decision**
6. **Implement** the decision
7. Evaluate & if necessary, **revisit** the decision

Like our work? Like us on 

... but it's more like this ...

1. Read the **Herald Sun**
2. Make a **decision**
3. Go on **3AW**. Talk about "rapid fire" & illegal guns
4. **Don't consult**. Not now.
5. Ok. Consult. If you **MUST!**
6. Propose **increased fees** for shooters

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- Policy remains a 'hot-button' issue for shooters
- This post had over 340 'shares' on Facebook

Where you fit in

- The Victorian shooting community is **not strong enough to protect what we do**.
- We need to show it **how effective political action can be**. We need you to help make the average shooter aware that we remain under a serious political threat.
- The CFCV's voting advice is **not based on supporting any particular party**. Rather it is based on supporting pro shooting candidates (and opposing those against it) and putting the Greens last. The strategy respects political choices the individual voter may wish to make.
- You can:
 - **FOLLOW US** (to stay informed);
 - **JOIN US** (to be better engaged with us); or
 - support our **FIGHTING FUND** (for our election campaigns).



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Where you fit in

- To help you with this, we're happy to make presentations to your clubs & executives to help them better understand how we can help them.
- Let your members know **why politics is important, (or arguably critical)** to their future and what we do for them through our member organisations.
- We're happy to help with articles in your publications.



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2016 Federal Election

Bill Paterson - President



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2016 Federal Election

- Normal election - Lower House and half of Senate.
 - 3 yr terms Lower; 6 yr terms Senate
- Double dissolution - both houses
 - Would need to be called by 11th May.
- Independent senators
 - David Leyonhjelm
 - Ricky Muir
 - Jacqui Lambie
 - Glenn Lazarus



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2016 Federal Election

- Only the Greens are declared anti guns, anti hunting.
- We work well with all other parties.
- We identify politicians who are supportive of our aims and encourage members to vote for them.
- We also identify those (particularly in marginal seats) who are against us.



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2016 Federal Election

- In marginal seats where we have a strong “pro” vs a strong “anti”, we have direct mailed FGA and SSAA members in the electorate.
- In the upcoming election:-
 - We have already identified two “targets”. Sitting members in marginal seats who have come out with anti shooting\ hunting stances ...
- In doing this we must be careful not to generate Greens support for the candidate we are targeting.



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2018 State Election

Bill Paterson - President



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2018 Victorian State Election

- Again, we work well with all parties - except the Greens.
- Labor - avoiding putting a foot wrong.
 - Continued to support the Shooting Sports Fund (they “started” it).
 - Their target in the last election was inner suburbia (EW Link).
- Libs - doing nothing (avoiding strife)
- Nats - they talk to us.
 - They were a great help when in power.
- Country Alliance (now Country Party) - have become too anti-National.
- Shooters & Fishers Party - have a close working relationship with us.



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*“A government which robs Peter to Pay Paul
can always depend on the support of Paul”*

George Bernard Shaw



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Lunch
Resuming at 1:15



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Questions – panel discussion

Jack Wegman – Vice President



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Closing

Bill Paterson - President



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