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## Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia

### National Firearms Agreement Technical Improvements Principles

Version 1.1

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[www.sifa.net.au](http://www.sifa.net.au)



## Contents:

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. SIFA Principles
4. SIFA Contacts

## 1. Introduction

*This document is entitled Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia National Firearms Agreement Technical Improvements Principles Version 1.1 September 2018.*

This document has been produced by the Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia to address unresolved technical elements of the National Firearms Agreement 1996 and the Martin Place Siege Report 2015.

This document is subject to quarterly review by the Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia.

This document specifically references the National Firearms Agreement and the recommendations of the Martin Place Siege – Joint Commonwealth–NSW Review:

- 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;
- CrimTrac, in cooperation with Commonwealth and State Police and law enforcement agencies, should prioritise bringing the National Firearms Interface into operation by the end of 2015.
- 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;
- The Commonwealth and the States and Territories should give further consideration to measures to deal with illegal firearms.<sup>1</sup>

The Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia is committed to working within the appropriate Australian regulatory compliance frameworks in all our activities related to Australian defence, law enforcement and civilian markets.

<sup>1</sup> *Martin Place Siege: Joint Commonwealth-NSW Review 2015 p50*



## 2. Background

### Context:

The National Firearms Agreement requires that firearms be registered upon importation and that individuals be licensed to possess firearms.

Registered firearms held by licensed firearms owners do not hold a statistically significant position in reporting of gun related violence in Australia.

Theft of firearms from licensed firearms owners is proven statistically irrelevant in reporting of illegal firearms use.

Individual Australians are permitted to engage in a range of firearms related activity subject to extremely strict licensing, use and storage regulations.

### Critical Issues:

Primary failures of existing systems under the National Firearms Agreement are established as:

- a) poor quality of data in State Police Registries; and
- b) lack of appropriate systems to track data between state and territory jurisdictions.

Technical elements of the National Firearms Agreement that require review include:

- Variations between states and territories about how the NFA is administered, particularly in terms of:
  - differing licensing periods;
  - differing licensing conditions around possession of Category D and Category C firearms;
- National consistency to restrict movement of firearms to the illicit market:
  - accountability of deactivation standards; and
  - agreed firearm descriptors;
- Technical upgrades to systems for registration, licensing and permitting at federal and state levels:
  - real time availability of decision-critical data;
  - consistent use of firearms descriptors;
  - completion of the National Firearms Identification Database (NFID) and Australian Firearms Information Network (AFIN; also known as the National Firearms Interface) and deactivation of the paper-based National Firearms Licensing and Registration System.

## 3. SIFA Principles

The following are principles supported by the Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia and guide our advocacy around improved Australian firearms security.

### a) Recommendation 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."*

1. SIFA supports the implementation of an ongoing National Firearms Amnesty:

SIFA recommends that a permanent National Firearms Amnesty be introduced to facilitate the removal of firearms from the illicit market.

2. SIFA supports technical automation of Permit to Acquire Systems.

SIFA recommends that the federal government funds an urgent upgrade program for states to automate a fully integrated POS Permit to Acquire System that enables law enforcement real time access to critical licensing and permitting data and supports informed decision making.

3. SIFA supports technical automation of Registration and Licensing Systems.

SIFA recommends that that federal government funds an urgent upgrade program for states to automate a fully integrated Licensing and Permitting System to provide complete digital management capability for law enforcement and Registries personnel.

4. SIFA supports technical automation of Licensed Firearms Dealer Systems.

SIFA recommends that the federal government funds an urgent upgrade program for states and territories to enable real time reporting by LFDs of firearms transactions, to ensure consistency of firearm descriptors, to enable online import applications and other transactions.

### b) Formalised industry to Federal Government engagement

1. SIFA supports the recall of the Firearms Industry Reference Committee (FIRG).

Until 2016 the FIRG had enabled direct industry to government engagement and provided critical industry insight to the Federal Labor and Federal Liberal National led Commonwealth Governments for decades.

Industry supports the immediate recall of the FIRG so that industry and government can work together to address required upgrades to the technical elements of the NFA.

### c) Formalised industry to State Government engagement

1. SIFA supports the establishment of formalised industry to state and territory government engagement mechanisms.

These state and territory engagement mechanisms would provide a forum for Members to meet and interact with industry experts around the health of the National Firearms Agreement within each jurisdiction.

## 4. Contact

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