

FIREARMS BILL 2024

Second Reading — Amendment to Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party) [3.04 pm]: I will conclude my remarks in support of the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, just hold on for two seconds. Members, if you could keep the background noise down, that would be much appreciated.

Ms L. METTAM: Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

I conclude my remarks on the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition by indicating that we support the motion to move this bill to the Standing Committee on Legislation to ensure that the bill has no unintended consequences. As I stated from the outset, the Liberal Party is not opposed to this legislation, but the bill has a number of issues that we would like to see clarified. We will be moving amendments on some matters. We would like to see this scrutiny undertaken to ensure that there are no unintended consequences.

As the member for Central Wheatbelt stated, this government has used the legislation committee only once, and that was with a relatively inane bill—the Sports and Entertainment Trust Bill. This government believes it is beyond scrutiny and accountability. This is about ensuring that this important piece of legislation is as good as it can be. Although the Minister for Police referred to the Law Reform Commission—we support the fact that this is in response to the Law Reform Commission report—it was not the Law Reform Commission that drafted this bill; rather, it was drafted by the government and the minister with his team. As the member for Central Wheatbelt also pointed out, when it comes to drafting legislation, we have seen a number of bills presented to this house that have had to be amended on the floor by the government.

This motion is about ensuring that there are no unintended consequences and that the legislation is as good as it can be, and that the government illustrates its commitment to transparency, accountability and scrutiny on behalf of the broader WA public. Quite obviously, there is broad interest in this legislation, whether by one of the key stakeholders who supported it, whether the Pastoralists and Graziers Association and the Western Australian Farmers Federation that have been quite engaged in this process with the government in terms of considering what the amendments represent or whether some of those lawfully licensed firearm owners who have legitimate concerns. I will leave my comments there. I urge the minister and the government to support this motion, and I look forward to the response.

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Deputy Speaker casting his vote with the noes, with the following result —

Ayes (6)

Ms M. Beard	Mr R.S. Love	Mr P.J. Rundle
Dr D.J. Honey	Ms L. Mettam	Ms M.J. Davies (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (44)

Mr G. Baker	Ms M.J. Hammat	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Ms A. Sanderson
Ms H.M. Beazley	Ms J.L. Hanns	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms J.J. Shaw
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr T.J. Healy	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Ms R.S. Stephens
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr M. Hughes	Ms L.A. Munday	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Ms C.M. Collins	Mr H.T. Jones	Mrs L.M. O'Malley	Dr K. Stratton
Mr R.H. Cook	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr P. Papalia	Mr D.A. Templeman
Ms L. Dalton	Ms E.J. Kelsbie	Mr S.J. Price	Mr P.C. Tinley
Ms D.G. D'Anna	Ms A.E. Kent	Mr D.T. Punch	Ms C.M. Tonkin
Mr M.J. Folkard	Dr J. Krishnan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr R.R. Whitby
Ms K.E. Giddens	Mr P. Lilburne	Ms M.M. Quirk	Ms S.E. Winton
Ms E.L. Hamilton	Ms S.F. McGurk	Ms R. Saffioti	Ms C.M. Rowe (<i>Teller</i>)

Question thus negatived.

Second Reading Resumed

MS J.L. HANNS (Collie–Preston — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.12 pm]: I rise to make a very short contribution to today's debate on the Firearms Bill 2024. I start by saying that as a regional member and someone who grew up in regional Western Australia, I am particularly interested in this legislation. Having grown up on farms and having friends who owned their own farms, I obviously know that firearms were, and are, a very important part of the job that farmers do. In my electorate of Collie–Preston, much of Preston lies within farming communities.

I want to mention a couple of those places to give people an understanding of the sorts of communities where farming is particularly important. They include Boyanup, Burekup—the minister’s home town, I believe—Capel, Dardanup, Elgin, Ferguson, Mumballup, Paradise, The Plains, Upper Capel, Waterloo, Wilga West, Worsley, Yabberup, Yourdamung Lake and Roelands. All those locations fit within the Preston part of my electorate. Farming is very important to those communities and the local economy. I note that the member for Roe and I share a border in the east of that very important farming region. Noting that those farming communities are very important in my electorate, I acknowledge that firearms obviously form a very important part of the job that farmers do in that region. Vermin control and the humane destruction of livestock are all part of the life of farming. The use of firearms by primary producers in those instances is incredibly important.

I also want to quickly note, as a teacher and deputy principal for 30 years before I came to this place, that emergency evacuation drills are done at school for fire, bomb threats and those sorts of things. Students and staff are prepared so that in the unlikely event of an emergency, everybody can be evacuated safely. It was not many years ago that a special practice was put in place in schools to prepare for an active shooter onsite. I had never really considered that to be necessary in Western Australian schools. Again, in the unlikely event of that being required, it is something for which we absolutely have to prepare our staff and students. The balance between community safety and responsible firearm ownership is incredibly important, and I wanted to highlight that during the debate on this bill today.

A number of people contacted my electorate office about this bill. I want to put on the record for the minister that one person who contacted my office a week or two before the buyback commenced was a retired farmer who had no use for his firearms anymore, and he could not wait to come to the local Collie Police Station to hand in those firearms and get some money for them. Another person, whom I know personally, got a property letter when he was 19 years of age and he is now in his 60s. When the police contacted him about the update to the legislation around property letters, he did not realise that the farm on which he was registered to shoot had been sold many years ago. He no longer knew the property owner, but he was quite surprised to find that he could still use that letter to go and shoot on that property. Again, I wanted to highlight a couple of examples of people who had contacted my office.

Something that was raised with me recently was clause 57, “Primary producer licence to be granted for landholding”. I refer specifically to subclause (3), which states —

A Primary Producer Licence must not be granted for a landholding for which another Primary Producer Licence has been granted and is in force.

One issue that has been raised with me is family farms. A primary producer licence might be issued to the farmer who is maybe the —

Mr P. Papalia: The patriarch.

Ms J.L. HANNS: The patriarch—I thank the minister, although I was trying not to use that language. I could call that person the original farmer. Other family members—maybe a son and a daughter—might live on the same landholding in separate housing. As the bill currently stands, the family members in this example must not be granted a primary producer licence as one has already been granted for that landholding. For example, dad or mum is the person to whom the primary producer licence has been granted. In effect, that would mean that the son or daughter could not concurrently be granted a primary producer licence. That issue was raised with me by constituents and I wanted to highlight it here.

As I explained at the beginning of my speech, my electorate is very reliant on farming and I wanted to spend a couple of minutes highlighting that today. I commend the bill to the house.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.18 pm]: I rise to confirm the position of the Leader of the Opposition that we will oppose the Firearms Bill 2024. I add that had the minister and the government actually agreed to the bill going to the Standing Committee on Legislation, it might have been a different result. But here we are; we have seen it again. All the members of the government have just traipsed through and followed the minister. He would not even consider it. This was the opportunity to get things right. As the member for Central Wheatbelt pointed out, many mistakes have been made by this government. This was an opportunity for the Standing Committee on Legislation to look at the bill properly. It is disappointing.

I point out that there are some good elements of the bill and there are some that need rectifying, and the member for Collie–Preston has just pointed out one of those elements. We will be asking many questions. It is disheartening for the people of Western Australia when this government just pushes forward and does not think about decent scenarios in which the legislation committee might be able to improve the bill. Of course, we saw it with the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill 2021, which the government ended up backing away from. It is a real disappointment. I have said many times that this government’s tentacles are reaching into people’s lives, especially the lives of regional people. Whether it is in farming, fishery, forestry or firearms—the four Fs—this government

loves to try to dictate people's lives, especially if they live in regional Western Australia. It was funny; I was at the farm on Sunday night and a branch fell over the driveway. I went down and got the chainsaw and while I was cutting it up, I thought: how long is it going to be before this government wants me to get permission to cut up a branch on the driveway of my own farm? That is the way this government is going.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: It is quite appalling. Many family businesses have been messed up by this government.

Nonetheless, we are talking about 90 000 law-abiding firearm licence holders. We are talking about a lack of clarity and a lack of consultation. We look forward to the consideration in detail stage. We know that the police force does not have the resources. We have heard the questioning over the last couple of days. We have heard the minister admit that it lacks resources, and no more so than for the digital licensing and registry system, as I pointed out in my contribution yesterday. I received this letter a couple of weeks ago —

In order to ensure a smooth transition to your new Digital Licence, the Firearms Act Reform Project Team needs to validate the following licence information:

- Residential Address
- Postal Address
- Storage Address/es
- Mobile Phone Number, and
- Email Address.

I was told that I needed to communicate with the team. What did I do? I rang the team—three times. There was no answer. The fourth time I rang the team, I thought that I would leave a message and see what happened. There has still been no reply. What worries me is the lack of resources and the lack of follow-up. I am one of the 90 000 licensed law-abiding citizens whom this particular legislation will be ruling over. These are real-life examples. From my perspective, we have had a lack of consultation. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, there are nearly 30 000 signatures on a petition asking for a couple of extra months. Those people are begging for a couple of extra months for some extra consultation and the opportunity to point out some of the issues that they have had to deal with, but this minister will not have a bar of it: “We’re cutting it off at the one-month mark.” We have seen no transparency. The minister quoted some figures in his response about the amendment. We have seen no transparency about those responses and whether this government has taken them on board and worked them into the legislation. Considering that there has been no transparency, I thought that I would provide some transparency and read some of the feedback from my constituents. According to my notes, the first person who has written to me says —

I’m looking forward to seeing how the over 6500 submissions have been considered and used to reshape the WA Government’s lazy and ill-thought-out Firearms Act Reform Consultation Paper released in October 2023.

2016 the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia published its review of the Act and made 143 recommendations, with community safety being the paramount consideration, but only 13 of the 143 recommendations of the LRC Report been incorporated into this consultation paper

Another one refers to the Law Reform Commission and says, according to my notes —

Recommendation 39: The renewal process should not require a license holder to reconfirm his or her genuine reason or genuine need or require a ‘fit and proper’ test.

Recommendation 54: There should be no upper limit on the number of firearms a single license holder may possess

Recommendation 56: The size of the property should not carry greater weight than any other consideration when determining the reasonable justification for a particular firearm

Recommendation 57: The place where a firearm may be used should not be restricted only to those properties that were the subject of the property letters

That is relevant to what the member for Collie–Preston just spoke about —

Recommendation 62: it should not be necessary to renew a property letter.

Another submission states, according to my notes —

Further evidence can be found contradicting the minister’s position below in the Attorney General Department’s submission to the Australian Government Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

where the department states clearly that **“Further, putting additional restrictions on the legal ownership of firearms would not necessarily reduce firearm-related crime.”**

In another submission, the person outlines that they use firearms for pest control, livestock management, land conservation, humanely euthanising animals and target shooting. They believe that these amendments should focus more precisely on the criminal misuse of firearms rather than affecting law-abiding citizens, like this person, who have responsibly held firearms for decades.

Another one refers to the buyback and states that the pricing schedule is laughable and there will be financial loss to the owners.

Mr M.J. Folkard interjected.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: It also says that it is extremely embarrassing and will stand neatly shoulder to shoulder with the now repealed Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act. People like the member for Burns Beach can yell out; that is not a problem. I am trying to provide some transparency and give people an understanding of the feedback that regional members have been receiving from our constituents. Another one is from a former UK and WA police officer and states, according to my notes —

In my experience registered firearms owners are the most law abiding individuals you will come across

Most consider it (their firearm licence) a privilege

current police minister cannot justify his proposed actions by simply quoting “public safety” all the time

Another one states, according to my notes —

The Minister responsible has continued to ignore requests for consultation, and actively continues to vilify current licensed gun owners who have shown that they are responsible, compliant and law-abiding gun owners already subject to some of the strictest gun control measures within the country.

The list goes on. For the sake of transparency, I wanted to run through some of the feedback that our constituents have been passing over.

As I said earlier, the minister certainly loves talking about the American gun system and the rest of it. But he has failed to demonstrate how this bill will improve safety. Certainly, as I said, the opposition will be asking questions. The minister has tried to put fear into the state. That map was put on the front page of *The West* a couple of years ago, and the Leader of the Opposition referred to the media stunt in which the minister was out firing a large calibre rifle in Bullsbrook. This is all part of the plan to put fear into the people of Western Australia. This is why the opposition will be asking questions.

The member for Collie–Preston spoke about the fact that we share a border between our two electorates. I worry, being a regional member, when I see the rapid growth of our feral pest population, whether it is feral pigs, foxes, cats or kangaroos. I assure members in this place that there is an ever-growing number of feral pests. It is important to have high-quality licensed firearm owners with those different categories of licences with the ability to keep the pest population down. More pine plantations are being planted. I also worry about the fire control scenario. The two things I worry about in relation to those pine plantations are fire control and the feral pest population. That is a key element, and we cannot underestimate its importance.

We all know firearms need to be dealt with very carefully. As the person said I mentioned a minute ago, it is a privilege to own a firearm, and licensed firearm owners do not take ownership lightly. Certainly, I will have questions about the mental health assessments. As pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, it will be a challenge. I look forward to further explanation from the minister on how this will play out. We know there are challenges in our health system and our mental health system at the moment in getting access to appointments and the like. I am interested to know whether this will be similar to drivers’ licences, for arguments sake, and how current firearms licence holders will be treated when compared with future new firearm holders. The opposition will ask those questions.

I certainly do not agree with what seems to have evolved over the years with the sale of property letters on the internet and the like. No-one would agree with that. Clarity is needed regarding farming properties, where, say, a farming family might have two or three different properties that could be located 10, 20 or 100 kilometres apart. How will that relate to firearms transfer? As the member for Collie–Preston spoke about, how will that work within a family scenario with mum and dad and children involved? How will it work? The opposition will ask these questions during consideration in detail.

As I said, the property letter situation is very important because when we have a feral pest population out there, we need a method to ensure we are not overrun, whether it be by foxes or cats that do a lot of damage to the native animal population. We need to understand how the property letters situation will be involved.

As I said at the start of my contribution, I am concerned about the buyback scheme being unrealistic. A lot of feedback I have received is that the actual value of certain firearms under the scheme is unrealistic. The proposed values could be okay in some cases with an old .22 or an old air rifle that has no particular collector's value or whatever, but I have had feedback of concern from many firearm owners that the value of certain firearms is much higher than indicated and is nowhere near catered for within the buyback scenario. I think the minister said that once the \$64 million runs out, or 1 August happens, the buyback will potentially wrap-up. I guess these are my questions: will it continue, and for how long, if the \$64 million figure is not used up? Is 1 August a definite cut-off point or will it be extended for months on end after then? Perhaps the minister could answer that in his response.

I am also concerned about storage regulations, as the Leader of the Opposition spoke about.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I know many conscientious licensed firearm holders at the moment have very good storage facilities. I have heard talk that we may go to four-millimetre thickness for storage cabinets or the like, instead of the current three or 2.5 millimetres or whatever it might be. I will certainly have questions for the minister on storage facilities and how that will play out. Of the 90 000 licensed firearm holders being talked about here, many have very good storage facilities in place now. I would hate to see something sweep through for the sake of an extra millimetre or the like. I will be interested in hearing from the minister and his advisers on that aspect.

I agree that some of the proposed transport arrangements in transporting firearms long distances are positive. There was that issue with Australia Post several years ago. A firearm shop in Esperance found it very challenging to transport firearms from Perth, arriving from interstate or overseas, to Esperance if they could not use those accredited couriers like Australia Post at the time. I appreciate some changes in that regard. The other disappointment is that we were promised to be given at the briefing some information on some draft regulations before the debate, but we have seen nothing. Once again, that is disappointing and very challenging.

Mr P. Papalia: That is not what the member was told. The member was told that we would talk about it in consideration in detail, and we would give insight into what the intent is with the regulations. We did not say we would give them to the member before the debate.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I was in the briefing, and my understanding was that there would be some provided. Anyway, we can beg to differ on that, minister. This is once again another scenario in which it is very challenging to debate legislation when a raft of regulations is somewhere in the background and we are not quite sure how they will evolve.

Mr P. Papalia: The member knows that is normal, right? Regulations are written after the bill is passed.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Yes, I understand that.

Mr P. Papalia: I have offered to give the member insight beforehand for some of the ones that you are concerned about.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: As I said, it is challenging. We all recall the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill: we were told, "No, no; it's all okay. Don't worry about the regulations; that will be fine." Then we had the minister talking in this place about regulations that had just been drafted, which had many more implications than he was aware of, and we saw where things went from there. That is our experience. I am just trying to set out what happened.

As the minister knows, the bill is 20-odd millimetres thick. There are many pages to go through. Quite a bit of questioning will certainly be required.

As the Leader of the Liberal Party said, we hope there are no unintended consequences. We will certainly be asking questions about this bill, not only on behalf of licensed firearm holders, but also on behalf of many people in regional areas and on the outskirts of the city. It is not just farmers and people in the regions who will be affected, but also people in the inner city. Many licensed firearms owners live in the central part of Perth and the inner suburbs. On behalf of all those people, the opposition will certainly be asking those questions.

MS M. BEARD (North West Central) [3.41 pm]: I rise to make a short contribution to the debate on the Firearms Bill 2024. I know that I have a short time in which to speak; the Minister for Police advised me.

We all understand that this is a complex piece of legislation and that there was a need for change. We also understand that given the size of the legislation and its level of detail, a lot of people will take a long time to absorb its content. The feedback that I have received is very much along the lines of what other members have said today—that was particularly the case from those in my region. The bill is a very big document. There is a lot to understand and consume. The short window of time that people have had to look at the legislation has not given a lot of those people I have spoken to in the regions the time to understand it. Although organisations and industry groups have been consulted, a large number of people do not belong to those groups. They feel that they need time for extra consultation and an extended period to understand the changes and consider what questions they would like answered.

I am very aware of public safety; I understand that is paramount. However, the feedback that I have received from business owners, pastoralists and even non-gun owners in my community is that most people who have been issued

a gun licence are very much law-abiding citizens. They feel that there is an overreach. Given that they are law-abiding gun owners, they are asking a lot of questions about how they find out the statistics on the incidents that have occurred. Did they involve licensed guns? Were they stolen? They are trying to find out exactly how many law-abiding people have not abided by the law. That is a common question that I was asked. At the end of the day, people are asking for more time for consultation.

There is a level of discomfort in my patch around some of these changes. They have already been touched on, so I will not dwell on a lot of them. The justification around the gun laws is based on statistics that do not report the incidence of registered versus unlicensed guns. That is something that people want to source. The 2016 Law Reform Commission of Western Australia's *Review of the Firearms Act 1973 (WA): Project 105 final report* stated —

... Firearms Legislation should place no greater burden on firearms owners ... than is reasonably necessary in order to achieve the primary aim.

Mr P. Papalia: To keep people safe.

Ms M. BEARD: Yes, to keep people safe.

Mr P. Papalia: Public safety.

Ms M. BEARD: Yes, but most people are saying they believe that the people who have the licences are using them safely.

Mr P. Papalia: Public safety is the primary aim. All that flows from there.

Ms M. BEARD: Yes, but they are actually saying that they believe they are doing the right thing; they have been licensed for a very good reason, like we do with our car. If people do the wrong thing, it gets taken away from them.

Ms S.E. Winton: Once someone is dead.

Ms M. BEARD: Oh, gosh.

Ms S.E. Winton: That is what you are saying.

Ms M. BEARD: I am not saying that at all.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members.

Ms M. BEARD: Lots of people have contacted me, but I will quote a couple of people relating to a common theme. One person said that they understand the regulations will be coming but they do not know what they will be and a lot will depend on the regulations. However, they cannot find anything specific about storage upgrades or mental health requirements. They also said it appears that the commissioner has all the powers in nearly every instance and that even the appeal eligibility through SAT seems unclear. These are some of the things that people want clarified and they want to understand. Regarding permission to hunt on land, this same person said —

Whilst it's needed from a safety perspective. It is unclear how this will work without being an administrative nightmare. I have several people who shoot roos here for sustenance. 95% do the right thing and I consider it an essential service for grazing control. WAPOL have never been interested in pursuing those doing the wrong thing, even though the old act allowed for it.

They were interested to understand how that will change or what will be different in that regard. Regarding the professional roo shooter business licence, they said —

A licence like this is needed but it should allow for the use of semi-automatic ... for culling of large feral herbivores and pigs, especially from helicopters.

They were referring to open pastoral grazing properties. Some of these properties are a million acres in size. They continued —

Currently this is restricted to Ag department shooters only who cannot cover the state as required.

Often they need more. They have donkeys and camels, which are very destructive animals, on their properties. These are some of the things that they want to raise. This person is a primary producer. As someone with a primary producer licence, he has a target licence and a hunting licence. These are issues that have come from people in my area.

The other thing that people have raised with me, which has already been raised in this place, relates to the digital licensing system. People have queried how safe it will be and asked about its integrity, given what occurred with Medibank and Optus. They want to know how long the transition will take and whether people applying for licences in the future will be held up. People have also spoken to me about the story that appeared on the front page of *The West Australian*. They are concerned about the digital recording and licensing system and the provision of information.

I have a lot of active gun clubs in my patch. I understand that there is a category for elite athletes. However, every elite athlete does not start off being an elite athlete. I was given the example of someone who needs 14 clubs in their golf bag—certain ones for different greens, sand wedges for bunkers and chippers for all sorts of strokes. The same applies to people who shoot in clubs. They often shoot across multiple disciplines. That was raised with me by a lot of people.

Ammunition is also an issue for a lot of people. People asked how they will access ammunition and whether there will be minimum and maximum amounts, especially for people who live in regional areas and are a long way from the places they source ammunition. Transport was clearly an issue. As the member for Roe said, that has seemingly been rectified. There are 13 very active shooting clubs across my electorate, and they are keen to understand and have more information and more time to consult as individual groups with the relevant people to get a better understanding of the legislation. Rightly, many of them feel like they have been unfairly targeted in the sense that they are well armed to do what they are doing, they are trained and they have very rigid protocols in their clubs. They feel that in some instances, this bill may impede future competitions.

I have been asked a lot about the numerical gun limit. People are asking whether the number matters if they have five or 10 guns. A lot of people have said that we need to find a solution to the problems around the numerical gun limit. A large portion of gun owners hold a lot fewer guns, but some hold them for good reason. They are arguing that there should not be a difference in the maximum gun limits for people who are licensed and doing the right thing. That is the feedback I have had. Guns are the tools of the trade for people who live on large properties. They have very large properties of a million acres or more and they have large teams of people. Some of those people are concerned about how this might pan out for them being able to undertake what they need to do for pest control. Some of them compete as well. They are very active in that space and are also very responsible.

It is important for the professional and recreational hunters who partake in wildlife management plans to have an understanding of how this legislation will impact them and of the intricacies of what they will be allowed to do. There are a lot of factors to consider, including animal size, distance, terrain and ammunition availability. Guns are not just tools; they are essential instruments for keeping their properties the way they need to be. The hunters and shooters who participate in conservation and wildlife management programs use their skills to assist in the conservation of animals on all those properties. They deal with feral species in particular. They are actively working with farmers and landholders in various ways. Further north, there is a range of wild animals, including wild horses, camels, goats, dogs, foxes and rabbits. That takes multiple types of guns. I am not a gun owner. There are different guns for different species and different requirements. One person told me that rabbits and foxes will require a minimum .22LR cartridge, wild dogs and kangaroos require a .222 calibre rifle cartridge, and feral goats require a .22-250 calibre rifle cartridge. All those different types of animals are on those properties, which validates their point.

Each event that target shooters partake in demands specific firearms tailored to the nuances of the sport. Imposing limits on firearm ownership will not only stifle their passion, but also hinder the growth and development of a popular sport and sporting community. They cannot become an elite or professional shooter overnight. That needs to be considered when people aspire to be an Olympian or a top-level shooter.

The storage requirements are another sticking point. A lot of people have upgraded their storage units and gun safes recently. They are concerned that if they have to replace those, there will be a cost. They are also concerned about how long that will take and what the time line will be to do that.

The property letter regime has been raised with me. People are worried about the property letter regime and about providing digital submissions. Getting the internet, particularly further north, is nearly impossible at times. They hope that both options will be available. People cannot get a phone out in the middle of those million-acre properties because they are not within Telstra's range. It will not necessarily be possible for people to check property licences or confirm who is on their property, or whatever the case may be. They are concerned about the security of those property letters and the time frames around them. They are also concerned that bringing on this new system of digital property letters and licences will be an enormous cost to them. They are asking me how long it will take and whether the resources will be made available to make sure that it happens in a timely manner. I am sure that will be able to be rectified at the consideration in detail stage.

Another issue that has been brought up is the physical and mental health checks. People are saying that is a concern. They are not opposed to them, but the difficulty for a lot of them is that an undue burden will be placed on an already strained healthcare system. I have heard that from people many times. Some people are very concerned that the checks will be very subjective. If someone does not like someone in a small community, or whatever the case may be, the outcome may impact them for the wrong reasons. It is difficult in a lot of regional areas to access GPs and it is a long way between hospitals or nursing posts. That is a consideration that people have asked me to raise.

The gun buyback has also been raised with me. Some people are happy with it because they have made money when they got back a lot more than the \$100 that they paid for it. However, others say they have guns that are worth

more than what they would get back from the voluntary buyback scheme. They also asked what will happen if they do not volunteer to hand in their guns. Does voluntary mean voluntary, or will it be mandatory? That has caused confusion for a lot of people. One man said that if he was told that LandCruisers were recalled because they were no longer allowed on the road, he would not be happy if he got back only 10 per cent, and the same applies to his guns. There are a few concerns about that. I think there is a six-year window for the buyback. If someone bought a gun from a dealer 12 months ago and the dealer had bought the gun five or six years prior as part of a bulk buy, as they do, and the gun owner goes to get their money back, they will be told that it is outside the six-year period, even though the gun owner has owned it for only a year.

Another thing to note is that the law-abiding gun owners are telling me that a lot of non-law-abiding people have illegal weapons and the gun owners believe they should be targeted, as opposed to the people who are doing the right thing. Some people have not heard about the buyback deadline. I am interested to know whether the buyback system will be extended. Will there be a time line on that? What will happen when it expires?

In conclusion, the many people I have spoken to are unsure about the detail of the bill and the regulations. As we heard today from previous speakers, they believe that this bill is an overreach. They have a lot of unanswered questions and hope that consideration will be given for an extension of time so that, as people become more aware of the legislation over time with the increased publicity, they can come to the table and iron out some of their queries and concerns.

There is no detail in this bill and a lot of people I have spoken to are also scarred by the experience they had with the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act. They are incredibly nervous about this important bill, and we need to get it right. I look forward to receiving more detail about the legislation during the consideration in detail stage and to further scrutinising the bill. I hope that the minister considers sending the bill to the Standing Committee on Legislation. I do not find myself being able to support the bill at this time.

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt) [3.58 pm]: I have two minutes. I might start, although I could repeat myself when we return to the Firearms Bill 2024. I want to make a contribution to this legislation. Many of my constituents have spoken to me about it. Contrary to the Minister for Police's characterisation of people who have concerns with the bill being gun-toting American-style yahoos, they are actually sensible licence holders who take their responsibility very seriously. They are tools of the trade for many people. I am a regional member of Parliament, but I have spoken to people who reside in the city and do vermin and pest control for local governments and private organisations. They have a good understanding of what is required for them to do that effectively. I dislike the narrative that the government is painting. It is a very reductive debate; it is good and bad. The government is discounting the thousands of law-abiding licence holders who do the right thing and share the same sentiment as the government, which is that community safety is paramount. They are aware that it is a privilege to have a licence or be granted a licence, because every sensible person believes that community safety has to be a priority and it must be at the centre of that regulatory and licensing regime. I have had no argument from anyone on that front. Yet, the minister —

Mr T. Healy interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I dislike the snide remarks coming from the left, because, once again, we have the black and white thinking from members who, I am sure, are not going to stand and contribute to the debate. Unless the member is going to do that, I do not wish to take his interjections. We, on this side, have not sought to marginalise or demonise anyone in the community who has a different view. I understand that some people have a particular perspective.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.