

August 11, 2015

The Hon. Michael Keenan MP,
Minister for Justice,
P. O. Box 6022,
House of Representatives,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA, 2600.

ORIGINAL

Dear Minister,

Since you abolished the Commonwealth Firearms Advisory Council you have given assurances, both in private meetings and in public statements, that the industry would be consulted on matters of interest to it.

The industry has assumed that when you gave these assurances you did so on behalf of the Government.

The stock reply Government members are sending in response to queries about the review of the National Firearms Agreement says that you have stressed that the decision is not about targeting law-abiding gun owners.

On Friday I joined the cast which assembled in Brisbane for an exchange (I would not describe it as a consultation) with the members of the Firearms and Weapons Policy Working Group—all 40 of them, or whatever their number is.

After leaving the meeting, I was told that the Government had made a regulation concerning lever action shot guns. There was not any mention of this decision at the meeting although it is inconceivable there were not people in the meeting who knew about it.

Not only does the regulation prohibit the import of lever action shot guns with a magazine capacity of more than five rounds but it also prohibits the import of magazines with a capacity of more than five rounds.

Evidence linking lever action shotguns with a magazine capacity of more than five rounds to terrorism has not been produced, and we believe does not exist.

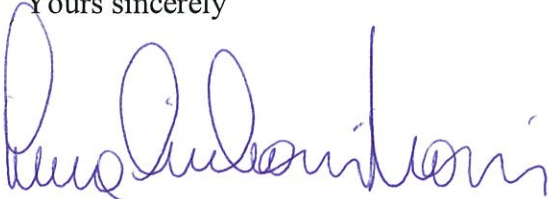
While we note the rhetoric about this prohibition's being temporary, we also know that the National Firearms and Weapons Policy Working Group has had an agendum dating back to at least 2005 to re-classify lever action firearms.

There are in Australia about 4,000 lever action shot guns which are registered and owned by law-abiding gun owners. These owners now are unable to buy magazines to replace or supplement the magazines they currently use. While law enforcement agencies were consulted on this regulation and its impact, the industry and representatives of these law-abiding gun owners were not.

There is already a high level of skepticism among recreational shooters about the Government's statement that it is not targeting law abiding gun owners.

This latest example of failing to consult reinforces the impression that this Government has not the slightest interest in consulting the industry or recreational shooters about issues affecting them and heightens the prevailing level of skepticism about the Government's attitudes and intentions within the sport.

Yours sincerely



Luca Scribani Rossi

Chairman

Cc: The Hon. Tony Abbott MP, Prime Minister
Senator David Leyonhjelm