



NSW Police Force
www.police.nsw.gov.au

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Introduction to Firearms

The NSW Government is committed to an agreed national approach to the control of firearms. Firearms ownership and use is a privilege, which is conditional on the overriding need for public safety.

All firearms owners and users must be aware of their responsibilities under the legislation.

All newcomers to firearms must pass an approved firearms safety training course in the safe handling and responsible use of a firearm.

This FACT Sheet is a brief introduction to firearms and the law. If you would like to know more about your responsibilities as a firearm owner or user in NSW, you can get a copy of the NSW Police booklet, "Firearms (Longarms) Users Guide - Rights, Wrongs and Responsibilities" from your club, shooting range or the Firearms Registry website.

Why are there firearm laws?

NSW has firearm laws to protect public safety and promote the responsible and safe use of firearms.

The *Firearms Act 1996* and the *Firearms Regulation 2006* contain information on your obligations for lawful possession and use of a firearm in NSW.

What are my legal responsibilities?

As a firearms owner in NSW you are required to familiarise yourself with the Firearms Act and Regulation and comply with all the requirements.

Additionally you must:

- * Ensure public safety is paramount, and
- * Comply with your licence or permit conditions and take all reasonable precautions to ensure your firearm:
 - * Is kept safely, and
 - * Is not lost or stolen, and
 - * Does not come into the possession of an unauthorised person, and
 - * Is only used for purposes connected to the genuine reason for possessing the firearm.

What are my social responsibilities?

As a firearms owner in NSW you are bound to act in a safe and responsible manner whilst using a firearm and ensure that those around you do the same.

You must:

- * Never mix shooting with alcohol or drugs, and
- * Never act in a foolhardy way around firearms.

What should I do if I become aware of an illegal activity?

If you become aware that illegal activity is occurring, for example, if you know of an unlicensed person who owns a firearm you should contact either:

- * Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000; or
- * Operation Vulcan on 1800 659 657.

Why do I need a firearms licence?

If you want to own or possess a firearm for personal or professional reasons in NSW you must have a licence or permit authorising possession and use of the firearm.

How do I apply for a firearms licence?

You can apply for a licence by calling the Firearms Registry Customer Service line on 1300 362 562 or download permit application forms from our website www.nsw.police.nsw.gov.au/firearms.

To apply for a firearms licence you must:

Have a genuine reason for possessing and using a firearm:

Genuine Reasons include:

- * Sport/Target Shooting;
- * Recreational hunting/vermin control;
- * Primary production;
- * Vertebrate pest animal control;
- * Business or employment;
- * Occupational requirements relating to rural purposes;
- * Animal Welfare;
- * Firearms Collection.

Complete an approved safety course:

Your licence application cannot be approved without providing proof of completion of an approved firearms licence qualification course.

For training providers contact:

The Firearms Safety Training Council - 02 94863077,
Sporting Shooters Association Australia - 1300746683,
Your nearest firearms club or the NSW Firearms Registry.

You can download the book "Firearms (Longarms) Users Guide - Rights, Wrongs and Responsibilities" from our website under Brochures.

Send the forms to the Firearms Registry

Complete & post your licence application forms, along with proof of completion of an approved firearms safety training course, proof of identity and any other required documents to the Firearms Registry.

What is a permit to acquire?

A Permit to Acquire is required for each firearm you want to acquire. For initial PTA's, there is a mandatory 28 day waiting period from receipt of your application before your Permit to Acquire can be issued. For second and subsequent PTA's for the same type of firearm as one already registered to you, there is no waiting period. All transactions for the acquisition and disposal of firearms are conducted by a licensed Firearms Dealer.

Do I need to register my firearm?

All firearms, unless they are exempt, must be registered. The Firearms Registry maintains a central registry of firearms that includes information on the particulars of the firearm, such as its serial number, to enable its identification.

Safe storage (firearms and ammunition)

The safe storage of firearms and ammunition is essential to ensure that your firearm does not fall into the wrong hands such as children, unauthorised people or criminals. Remember, it is illegal to allow an unauthorised person to possess or use your firearm.

There are different requirements for safe storage depending on the type of firearms you possess and the type of licence you hold:

- * Safe Storage Level 1 - Category A & B requirements,
- * Safe Storage Level 2 - Category C, D & H requirements,
- * Transportation of Firearms,
- * Ammunition Safe Storage, Purchase & Possession,
- * Dealers, Collectors, Prohibited Firearms, Prohibited Weapons and Security Firms.

All these FACT Sheets are available from the Firearms Registry website.

Basic firearms safety

There are four basic rules to ensure firearms safety:

1. Treat all firearms as if they are loaded;

2. Always point your firearm in a safe direction (never allow the muzzle of your firearm to point at another person);
3. Never load a live round into the chamber of a firearm until you are ready to shoot; and
4. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.

The first rule about firearms is that safety is your top priority. Always follow these general principles:

- * When passing a firearm to someone or when picking a firearm up, check whether the firearm is loaded by opening the action and looking inside the chamber;
- * Your firearm is your responsibility;
- * Always ensure that the firing zone is clear and identify what is beyond your target;
- * When you have finished shooting remove the magazine (if fitted), unload and check that the chamber is empty;
- * Make sure that all firearms are transported according to the guidelines to prevent misuse or theft;
- * Never allow unauthorised access to your firearm or ammunition;
- * Do not climb fences or obstacles with loaded firearms;
- * Encourage safe and responsible handling of firearms in the field, on the range and within the community;
- * Understand the operation of your firearm, keep it in good repair and always use the correct ammunition;
- * Never store firearms and ammunition together. Ensure they are safely locked away when not in use;
- * Never mix shooting with alcohol or drugs;
- * Be familiar with the legal requirements for safe storage, firearms ownership, possession and use in NSW or in any state or territory you may visit; and
- * Dispose of unwanted firearms lawfully. Surrender them to police or sell them to or through a licensed firearms dealer.

Where can I find more information?

The information provided in the FACT Sheet is for general guidance only. Applicants and licensees should familiarise themselves with the *Firearms Act 1996* and the *Firearms Regulation 2006*, which are available on the NSW Legislation website - www.legislation.nsw.gov.au.

Firearms Registry

Address

Locked Bag 1
Murwillumbah NSW 2484

Telephone

1300362562

Interstate

02 66708590

Fax

02 66708558

Email

firearmsenq@police.nsw.gov.au

Website

www.police.nsw.gov.au/firearms



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