Working with Women Alliance

Exposure Draft: Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism Bill 2026

Focus on Firearms Reform

January 2026

Submitted by
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Acknowledgment of Country

The Working with Women Alliance acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present, and we value the enduring connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to this land.

We value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and knowledge.

About WwWA

The Working with Women Alliance (WwWA) represents two key portfolios: National Women's Safety (NWS) and National Women's Equality (NWE).

The WwWA connects the critical areas of gender-based violence prevention and the advancement of women's economic equality and leadership, bridging these important policy fields for greater impact.

We work with members and stakeholders, including the Australian Government, to provide expertise and advice on gender equality and women's safety.

Executive Summary

The Working with Women Alliance (WwWA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Combatting antisemitism, hate and extremism Bill 2026. Throughout 2025, WwWA participated in consultations regarding the design and operation of the National Firearm Agreement. Our interest in this significant national reform reflected the connection between firearm related homicides in Australia and domestic and family violence.

These consultations occurred prior to the Bondi terrorist attack and while our policy focus has consistently been on the safety of women and children, we recognise that reducing the circulation of firearms, firearm components, and improving background checks of licence holders improves safety for all Australians.

Our feedback on this Bill is limited to the operation of the national buy-back scheme, firearm background checks and illegal manufacture of firearms.

Underlying Assumptions

WwWA assumes that information sharing from the proposed National Firearm Registry and its real-time information portal will permit information sharing with and from the Federal Court and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA). We support access to the national licence and permit verification system from court officials as well as relevant policing, child protection and intelligence agencies. Information regarding legal access to firearms by parties currently with select family law claims at the FCFCOA should be a significant consideration to local police and registry authorities and the Court.

Further, as the policy objective of the National Firearm Register is to enhance sharing of near real-time information between licencing authorities, dealers and police and other officials, we proceed under the assumption that the *Family Law Regulations 2024* will be amended to include the National Firearms Register as an authorised information sharing agency alongside existing state and territory authorities.

Schedule 4: National Gun Buyback

WwWA supports the proposal to implement a national buyback scheme. While the precise operation of the scheme will rely on coordination between Australian state and territory governments and the Commonwealth, WwWA supports a nationwide program.

In the interest of reducing the overall circulation of firearms in Australia we caution against the requirement that participation relies on states and territories enhancing their existing legislative frameworks in the interim period. While amendments to reform existing caps, classification, and permit schemes are welcomed, excluding some firearm holders due to intractable differences at the state and territory level, would do a disservice to the overall objective of the buyback program. Given the buyback proposal is the first of its kind in 30 years, it is entirely probable that unwanted, inherited and surplus firearms have outpaced regulatory requirements across the board. We also caution against limiting eligibility for the buyback scheme to newly restricted or 'surplus' firearms.

WwWA further proposes that rather than buyback schemes being proffered only in response to national tragedies, that a national buyback be a recurring feature of Australia's firearm mitigation strategy. In this regard, we urge Australian governments through the National Firearm Agreement to consider funding national buyback initiatives every 5-10 years, in concert with the ongoing amnesty program.

Schedule 4: Firearms Background Checks

WwWA supports improved background check powers and an expansion of the AusCheck scheme to aid licencing decisions and appropriate-person checks at any time in the life cycle of a licence. Allowing proactive point-in-time checks recognises that the circumstances of a licence holder can change, impacting their risk profile.

It is unclear from the explanatory statement however, how the enhanced AusCheck scheme will interact with the proposed information sharing protocol under the National Firearm Register. The intent of the National Firearms Register must not be simply to track the guns themselves, but to track licence suitability. WwWA urges that relevant risk information obtained through enhanced AusCheck powers be made available through the National Firearms Register portal and accessible to firearm dealers and law-enforcement as well as relevant child-protection officers and family court officials.

Schedule 4: Use of Carriage Service for Firearms and Explosives Manufacture Material

3D printing technology has evolved to enable the illegal creation of firearms and firearm components. Ultimately, the illegal manufacture of firearms, and firearm parts is likely to be for nefarious and criminal purposes and legislation must keep pace to recognise this risk. We support the creation of new offences to prohibit the distribution, sharing and creation of blueprints for the manufacture of firearm and firearm components. To this reform, we also urge the government to consider a provision to make the financing of materials and equipment, which has been used in the manufacture of illegal firearms, an offence.