

Media Release

The Hon Anthony Carbines MP
Minister for Police
Minister for Crime Prevention
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GIVING POLICE MORE POWER TO CRACKDOWN ON CRIME

The Allan Labor Government will crackdown on organised crime and how machetes are classified – as part of new laws to boost police powers on illegal firearms and weapon sales.

Introduced into Parliament today, the *Firearms and Control of Weapons (Machetes) Amendment Bill 2024* will amend existing laws to make it easier for police to serve a firearm prohibition order (FPO) on a person.

While the scheme has seen Victoria Police issue more than 2,000 FPOs to keep illicit firearms out of the hands of serious and organised crime members, currently FPOs must be served in person which can prove difficult where a person is avoiding police.

Under this new Bill, police will be able to stop a person in a public place and direct that they remain there or accompany an officer to a police station or other safe place for up to two hours for the purposes of serving an FPO.

Police will also be able to apply to a magistrate for a warrant to enter a premises to search for and serve a person an FPO. Where an individual in detention has declined a visit by a police officer, police will also be able to serve an FPO on that person by registered post.

These amendments will ensure that the scheme continues to give police the powers they need to disrupt the use of illicit firearms and keep the community safe.

Separately, the Bill will amend the *Control of Weapons Act 1990* to ensure that there is no doubt that a machete is a controlled weapon.

By clarifying the definition of a controlled weapon, the legal status of machetes will be absolutely clear – they cannot be possessed, carried, or used without a lawful excuse or sold to anyone under the age of 18.

While machetes are frequently used for legitimate and lawful purposes, such as clearing food crops, gardening and maintaining trails - clarifying to traders that machetes are controlled weapons and proof of age must be checked before sale will help police ensure machetes don't end up in the hands of minors.

The penalty for carrying a controlled weapon with an unlawful excuse is a fine of more than \$23,000 or a jail term of one year.

It is an offence for a person to sell a controlled weapon to any person under 18, with a fine of up to \$3,846. It is also an offence for a child to purchase a controlled weapon, with a fine of up to \$2,308.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Police Anthony Carbines

"The illicit use of a firearm or weapon is dangerous and unacceptable. With these changes, we're continuing to give Victoria Police the powers they need to keep everyone safe."

"This Bill makes it clear that a machete is a weapon and not a tool to be sold to a minor – reducing the risk of them ending up in the hands of someone under 18."