

Statement

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Minister for Police
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VICTORIA LEADS NATIONAL BLUEPRINT ON ILLEGAL FIREARMS

Today I joined Commonwealth and Police Ministers in States and Territories in Canberra to announce the development of a national blueprint to tackle illegal firearms.

While Victoria is home to many legal gun owners who obey the law, our target is criminals with illegal guns.

This is a national issue. Our borders do not stop criminals from trafficking firearms – and neither should they stop governments working together to clamp down on the illegal gun market.

Victoria Police need to understand the movement of illegal firearms, including into the country and between states. We are determined to support them in this work.

That is why, as part of an agreement reached at the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council meeting in Canberra, the Commonwealth, States and Territories have agreed to develop a national strategy.

The first step is for the Australian Crime Commission to undertake a more extensive criminal intelligence investigation on the provenance and extent of illegal firearms in the Australian community.

In addition, Victoria is seeking ongoing support from the Commonwealth Government for Operation Trident.

Operation Trident is the Victorian arm of the multi-jurisdictional taskforce to tackle organised crime, especially in drugs and firearms, across the maritime supply chain, including in our ports.

Victoria has also agreed to participate in a coordinated nationwide gun amnesty in 2016 to allow owners of unregistered firearms to either surrender or register them. Details will be worked out by officials in the first half of the year.

Victoria supports the integrity of the National Firearms Agreement. Today's meeting will see further work by senior officials and Police Commissioners on updating the classification of lever-action shotguns. The Council will consider a report on this at its next meeting.

The Government is supporting Victoria Police to combat gun crime with new laws coming into force on 1 December for the theft, possession, trafficking and manufacturing of firearms.

These new laws will help tackle the firearms black market and remove illegal guns from the community.

I also welcome a review by Victoria Police to identify any potential improvements to our gun laws.