

Media Release

The Hon Wade Noonan MP

Minister for Police

Minister for Corrections



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LAWS TO TACKLE GUN CRIMINALS IN FORCE FROM TODAY

New laws to help police remove illegal guns from our streets come into force today.

Four laws fast-tracked by the Andrews Labor Government will help tackle the firearms black market by closing gaps in the state's gun laws and giving police more powers to prosecute gun crimes.

Under the reforms to the Firearms Act anyone caught possessing three or more unregistered firearms over a 12-month period can be prosecuted for trafficking.

The new laws will also help Victoria Police deal with firearms held by serious and organised crime groups, such as bikies. Where a firearm is found but those present deny any knowledge of the weapon or claim it is not theirs, the laws will place the onus on the person to show the firearm is not in their possession.

A new offence – the “manufacture of firearms” – will carry a maximum penalty of 10 years' jail. This recognises this offence as a serious crime that leads to unregistered guns circulating in the community.

In addition, a new “theft of a firearm” offence in the Crimes Act will carry a maximum penalty of 15 years' jail, up from the current maximum of ten years. This is to reflect the gravity of the act as stolen guns are often used in serious crime.

The new laws commence as the Government supports a review by Victoria Police to identify any potential improvements to our gun laws and as the Commonwealth, states and territories begin the development of a national strategy on illegal firearms.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Police Wade Noonan

“We have fast-tracked these laws so from today police can get to work cracking down on those criminals who put illegal guns on our streets.”

“We are serious about helping police ensure they have the laws to combat the circulation of illegal firearms.”

“Criminals don't care about state borders. That's why we support a national gun amnesty and the Commonwealth, states and territories adopting a unified approach to tackling illegal firearms.”