

MEMBER GUIDE

Summary

Of the *Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025* for licensed firearm owners

JULY UPDATE



These legislative changes represent one of the most significant reforms to firearms regulation in New South Wales in decades. They reshape who can hold a licence, what can be owned, and what is required to remain compliant.

What has changed

Who can hold a licence

- Firearms licences are now primarily restricted to Australian citizens
- Mandatory identity verification applies to all new applications and renewals

Licence settings

- Standard licence terms reduced from 5 years to 2 years
- Existing licences remain valid until their current expiry

Firearm ownership limits

- Enforceable caps on the number of firearms a person may possess
- All firearms are counted across all categories
- Higher limits require Commissioner approval based on genuine reason

Firearm reclassification

- Certain commonly owned firearms are reclassified into more restricted categories
- Some members will need to apply for additional or different licence categories
- Where reclassification occurs, current licences continue to authorise possession while new applications are assessed

Ongoing licence obligations

- Club membership (or an approved exemption) is now a formal licence condition
- Licence holders must nominate what happens to firearms upon death

Reviews and appeals

- Most licensing decisions now require an internal review first
- External appeal rights to the Tribunal (NCAT) have been removed for firearms-related decisions, except decisions to make a Firearm Prohibition Order (FPO).

Overall, the reforms place greater emphasis on eligibility, traceability, active participation through approved clubs, and proactive compliance. Members are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these changes early, assess how they apply to their individual circumstances, and seek guidance where needed to ensure continued lawful ownership and participation in shooting activities.

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SSAA NSW

The sections that follow break the legislative changes into three practical sections to help you quickly identify what applies to you and what action (if any) is required. Members are encouraged to read each section carefully and use the check prompts below to guide their review.

As you read through this guide, we suggest you ask yourself the following questions under each section:

Immediate Actions and Eligibility

Do any of the changes affect my eligibility to hold a licence now, or require me to provide information or take action immediately (for example, citizenship status or identity verification)?

Firearm Ownership and Reclassification

Do I own firearms that may be affected by new ownership limits or reclassification, or will these changes affect future acquisitions?

Licence Requirements and Obligations

Do I meet all ongoing licence conditions, including club membership, licence duration, storage requirements, and estate planning obligations?

PTA Applications

If I apply for a Permit to Acquire, do I meet the applicable safe storage and safety requirements, and any additional eligibility requirements?

Each section explains what has changed, what it means in practice, and what members should do next. Reviewing this information early will help avoid disruption, delays, or unintended non-compliance as the reforms take effect.

Key Messages for Members	What Members Should Do Now
Your licence remains valid	Check your genuine reasons
Shooting continues	Update SSAA membership if required
SSAA NSW is actively engaged at every level	Prepare for PTA and storage inspections
Membership growth strengthens our position	Encourage eligible family members to join
Practical solutions are being pursued	Stay engaged with branch communications
Change is ongoing – stay informed	

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Immediate Actions & Eligibility



Recent reforms have introduced stricter eligibility rules for firearm ownership in NSW, with a strong focus on citizenship and residency status. If you hold a licence, it's important to check your status and act promptly to remain compliant.

Non-Citizens

- The legislation does not automatically cancel licences held by non-citizens or temporary visa holders. However, it adds citizenship and residency as criteria for issuing or renewing a licence under section 11.
- Limited exemptions may apply, including certain New Zealand citizens with permanent residency, provided their genuine reason falls within approved categories (e.g., primary production, pest control, business employment, animal welfare).

What to do now: Monitor official updates and community notices, and arrange lawful transfer, surrender, or storage of firearms through an approved dealer if permitted.

Permanent Residents (PRs)

- PRs remain eligible for licences but must meet the same “genuine reason,” residency, and fit-and-proper person requirements as citizens.
- Proof of residency and ongoing compliance with safety and storage obligations is required.

Identity Verification

- All new applications and licence renewals must include identity verification using a Commonwealth service or a Commissioner-approved process. Applicants must provide the necessary consents, documents and information to enable identity verification.
- Required documents and consents must be submitted within the timeframe set by the Commissioner; failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the application.

Recent reforms have introduced limits on the number of firearms you can own and reclassified certain firearm types in NSW. If you hold a licence, it's important to check your firearm categories and authorised limits to stay compliant.

Firearm Ownership Limits

- Licences are now subject to caps on the number of firearms you may possess and use.
- All firearms across all categories are counted toward your limit.
- You cannot acquire additional firearms if doing so would exceed your authorised limit.
- The Commissioner may approve higher limits based on genuine reason.

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Firearm Ownership & Reclassification



Firearm Reclassification

The following changes affect licence categories:

- Straight-pull and pump-action firearms → reclassified to Category C
- Button- or lever-release firearms → reclassified to Category C
- Semi-automatic air guns (not all air guns) → reclassified to Category B
- Firearms using belt-fed or linked ammunition systems → prohibited

If a firearm you already own is reclassified:

- Your existing licence continues to authorise possession while your new application is being considered.
- You must apply for the appropriate licence category.

Recent reforms have introduced new requirements for club membership, licence duration, estate planning, and firearm acquisition in NSW. If you hold a licence, it's important to ensure your membership is current, your estate plans are in place, and you comply with storage and acquisition rules to remain lawful.

Club Membership

- Licence holders must be a member of a Commissioner-approved shooting, hunting, or collectors club, or
- Hold a formally recognised exemption.
- Club membership is now a condition of your licence.

Licence Duration and Reviews

- New licences are issued for 2 years, not 5 years.
- Existing 5-year licences remain valid until expiry.
- Most licensing decisions now require an internal review first.
- Direct access to NCAT is revoked, with firearms prohibition orders being the main exception.

Estate Planning (Death Nominations)

Licence holders must nominate what happens to their firearms if they die:

- Surrender to police, or
- Temporary transfer to another licensed person (maximum 6 months), or
- Temporary transfer to a firearms dealer (maximum 6 months).

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Licence Requirements & Obligations



Storage and Permits to Acquire (PTAs)

- Safe storage requirements apply before a PTA can be issued.
- A valid safe storage inspection must be confirmed.
- Additional eligibility requirements, including terrorism-related checks, apply.