



COMMISSIONER

SB15-002174

Ms Sophie Dunstone
Secretary
Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee
Email: legcon.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Dunstone

Thank you for inviting the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (the Department) to provide a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee's inquiry into the *Criminal Code Amendment (Firearms Trafficking) Bill 2015*.

The trafficking of illicit firearms and firearms parts into, and from, Australia is a serious crime. The Department supports measures that seek to deter and disrupt illegal trade in firearms and firearms parts at the border. The Australian Border Force (ABF), the Department's operational arm, is responsible for the protection of Australia's border in partnership with a range of intelligence, law enforcement and other agencies. The identification and analysis of illicit firearm trafficking networks is a high priority for the ABF.

The Department notes that the *Criminal Code Amendment (Firearms Trafficking) Bill 2015* (the Bill) provides a mandatory sentence and increased maximum penalties for offences of trafficking firearms and their parts into, within, and out of Australia. This will ensure that:


- a cohesive deterrence message is delivered;
- firearms traffickers can be held responsible for the consequences of supplying firearms into the illicit market; and
- consistent penalties can be applied to firearms related offences at the border and domestically.

The Department considers that the Bill supports the *Martin Place Siege: Joint Commonwealth – New South Wales Review* in relation to strengthening the ability of the Commonwealth to address the availability of illegal firearms in Australia by introducing mandatory minimum imprisonment terms for firearms trafficking offences.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bill.

Yours sincerely

Michael Outram
Acting Commissioner

 January 2016