

Liberal Democratic Party (Liberal Democrats) www.ldp.org.au)



LDP President Peter Whelan is a keen shooter.

In the 2010 Federal election, the Liberal Democratic Party is running candidates for the Senate in all States except for Tasmania, plus 22 selected House of Representatives seats.

Our strategy is to get a candidate elected to the Senate through preferences with other minor parties. Senate preferences will not favour the major parties (Labor, Coalition and Greens) - we will assist another minor party first.

In the House of Representatives, the strategy is to use our preferences to determine the outcome in marginal seats. The party will not be recommending preferences on a uniform basis, but seat by seat.

The Liberal Democrats have branches in all mainland states and is registered to contest Federal Elections. The NSW

branch recently merged with the Outdoor Recreation Party which is registered to contest that State's election in March 2011.

The Liberal Democrats support the right of an individual to own firearms for sport, occupation, collecting and self defence.

The right to own firearms is fundamental. Consequently, while it may be restricted in the case of particular individuals, within limits, it should not be removed on a collective basis. In particular, it is not a privilege to be granted or denied by governments.

The Liberal Democrats believe that Australians have a right to decide how best to protect themselves, their families and property. Firearms may be the only means by which people such as women, the elderly and infirm can hope to defend themselves against rapists, robbers and murderers.

The police do not provide security in the home, business or street; it is not their responsibility. They arrive after the crime to take reports and do detective work. Only armed, law-abiding citizens can be present in sufficient numbers to prevent or deter violent crime before it starts, or to reduce its spread. Widespread gun ownership will make the community safer.

Firearms are also legitimate sporting implements, used in a wide range of regional, national and international competitions including the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. Shooting is one of the original sports of the modern Olympic Games, commencing in 1896. It is an injustice to curtail the sporting activities of one group of Australians while encouraging others, simply on the grounds that their implements have the potential to be used for harmful purposes.

The Liberal Democrats believe firearms can contribute to positive environmental outcomes in the hands of hunters. Hunters using firearms can be remarkably effective at reducing populations of pest animals such as foxes, pigs, goats, wild dogs and feral cats. Pest animals have been responsible for enormous destruction of Australian native fauna, with some small marsupial species probably extinct as a result; they pose a threat to agriculture in some areas. Similarly, hunters contribute to positive environmental outcomes by helping to develop and preserve wetlands which concurrently accommodate species that may be hunted such as ducks, while also providing a haven for protected species.

The LDP's specific firearm policies include:

Sport, hunting, occupation, collecting and self-defence are all legitimate reasons for firearm ownership.

Firearm ownership should be subject to possession of a licence. However, all adults over 18 years of age have a right to a licence unless it has been removed because of a history or genuine prospect of coercion.

Those who wish to carry a concealed firearm for self-defence are entitled to be issued with a permit to do so unless they have a history or genuine prospect of coercion.

All genuine sporting uses of firearms are legitimate.

There should be no registration of long-arms.

There should be no special prohibitions on semi-automatic firearms.

Individuals and organisations have a right to establish facilities that involve the use of firearms. This includes shooting ranges and hunting reserves.

Remove regulatory barriers to sustainable yield hunting by both amateur and professional hunters of kangaroos, crocodiles and ducks.



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