

AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS NOTICE 2003/08

Amendments to Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations. Introduction of controls on handguns for sports shooters and international sports shooters

Following agreement at the 12th meeting (6 December 2002) of the Council of Australian Governments on new handgun controls, the Minister for Justice and Customs undertook to have new regulations and procedures for imported handguns in place by the end of December 2002.

The legislative amendments vary the interpretation of a certified sports shooter and certified international sports shooter in Part 4 of the Regulations. Police certification for importations of Category H handguns for such persons is now subject to the handguns complying with the new restrictions on barrel length, calibre and capacity.

Additionally, disposal (sales) to sporting shooters by firearms dealers will only be possible where the handgun complies with the new restrictions.

An outline of the new regulations is as follows:

The importation of handguns and handgun parts for the purposes of sports shooting will continue to operate under the police authorisation test. However, the definition of a “certified sports shooter” and a “certified international sports shooter” has been amended to ensure that these categories of importer are prohibited from importing Category H handguns, Category H handgun magazines and Category H handgun barrels that do not comply with the following specifications:

a calibre not greater than .38”, unless the handgun is required for participation in a specially accredited sporting event, in which case the calibre must not be greater than .45”

a barrel length of at least 120mm for a semi-automatic handgun and at least 100mm for a revolver or a single-shot handgun, unless the handgun is a highly specialised target pistol; and

a shot capacity of not more than 10 rounds.

Muzzle loading pistols and cap and ball percussion-fired revolvers manufactured after 1 January 1900 are excluded from the new restrictions.

Until an in-principle agreement is reached by the State and Territory Police Ministers on the specially accredited events, certified sports shooters and certified international sports shooters will be unable to import a handgun or barrel of a calibre that exceeds

.38”.

# Firearm dealers

Firearms dealers are now restricted in the type of handguns they can dispose of to certified sports shooters or certified international sports shooters. These must meet the new requirements for barrel calibre, length and magazine capacity outlined above.

# Firearm parts and magazines

Barrels, magazines and cylinders imported separately for a Category H handgun are subject to the same import controls as the handguns to which the part relates, for certified sports shooters and certified international sports shooters.

Further information regarding the amended Regulations may be obtained from:

# Canberra

Manager Firearms and Weapons Policy Cargo Branch

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Tel: 03 9244 8536 / Fax: 03 9244 8680

# Queensland

Supervisor Firearms Cell Customs House

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**Western Australia** Manager Cargo Services Customs House

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Fremantle, WA 6160

Tel: 08 9430 1397 / Fax: 08 9430 1397

**South Australia** Supervisor Client Services Customs House

220 Commercial Road Port Adelaide SA 5015

Tel: 08 8447 9283 / Fax: 08 8447 9487

**Northern Territory** Supervisor Cargo and Trade Customs House

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(signed) Phil Burns

National Director, Cargo and Trade Division 5 February 2003