

Handy Facts To Know re: Proposed Handgun Ban Issues:

- Handgun crime in Britain since the total ban on the legal ownership of handguns introduced in 1997:

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“There was a small percentage reduction in the use of handguns between 1996 and 1998-99, but this was not maintained in 1999-00. This is particularly noteworthy in the context of the Firearm (Amendment) Act 1997 which resulted in the removal of in excess of 160,000 handguns from individuals who had held them legally. The long-term impact that the 1997 legislation is likely to have on the use of handguns in crime cannot be judged with any accuracy at this time but the short term impact strongly suggests that there is no direct link between the unlawful use of handguns and their lawful ownership”

Working Paper Number 4, Page 3.

- Foxnews.com reports that Professor Joyce Lee Malcolm at Harvard University has published a book called *Guns and Violence – the English Experience*. She notes that England’s homicide rates have had their own existence totally independent of the country’s gun laws, weak or strong. This is the same for Australia. She traces the incremental nature of ever-tightening gun laws and shows their true nature as political, same as Australia. She notes that coinciding with tougher gun laws crime rates began their rapid rise to the present high levels. Her work supports recent findings that legislating to diminish the lawful gun ownership of ordinary citizens does not in any way result in lower crime rates.
- The number of handgun related crimes in Britain for the 1999-2000 period, three years after the total ban on handguns in the UK was introduced = 3,685.
- Australian homicides by firearm in 1994 = 49. Australian homicides by firearm in 2001 = 49. So what did the 1996 buy-back achieve?
- Number of previous homicides in Victoria committed by a licenced member of a pistol club with a registered handgun since the settlement of Victoria = ZERO. Tim Costello says that the Monash tragedy is not “an aberration or an isolated incident”. If not, then what is it.
- The total number of ex-registered handguns in police possession that have been stolen from a licenced pistol club member and then used in the commission of a crime = about 5.
- Philip Alpers, (who is an ex-New Zealand anti-gun activist and now with the anti-gun institute the ‘Harvard Injury Control Research Centre) has apparently produced a paper on so-called firearm ‘massacres’ and attributes them to licenced gun owners. Firstly, it is principally an American study on Americans, and it is a paper that has apparently not been peer reviewed, nor has it been published in any academic Journal.
- Tim Costello says that it is easier to get a handgun licence than it is to get a driver’s licence. Would he mind telling us how and where this is the case, and if so, given the number of young people killed on the roads, surely he would be much more effective campaigning for tougher driving licence tests.
- Central repositories – Peterborough SA – In 2000, 600 handguns were stolen in one hit from a repository. *Canberra Times*, December 1999. ‘5,000 firearms are

reported missing from the Army's Moorebank military armoury facility.'

- Notwithstanding the fact that much of the firearms research that comes out of the Australian Institute of Criminology is academically unsound, (the bureaucrat's 'Policy Relevant Research' ie: research must be 'relevant' to the Government's policy) Jenny Mouzos *Australia Institute of Criminology* June 2002. "Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia all experienced dramatic declines from 1994-95 onwards in the number of firearms reported stolen from residential premises" (P4) "The theft of handguns from residential premises in Victoria has declined from 22 thefts in 1994-95 to 14 thefts in 1999-2000." (P5) "It is important to note that there has been a downward trend in the number of firearms reported stolen in Australia" (P6).
- Tim Costello says that "Semi-automatic handguns do exactly the same damage as a semi-automatic rifle" – this is of course absolute rubbish and spoken out of ignorance.
- The three primary weapons used in the commission of homicide in Australia are (in order of volume) 1) Knife (kitchen, not 'Lord of the Rings' style), 2) Hands and feet, (will Tim Costello seek to ban hands and feet), 3) Firearms (virtually all – over 90% – is already illegal use).
- Victoria has 193,000 firearm licence holders who own 549,000 firearms (2.8 firearms each). 6,900 are licensed handgun owners with 47,000 registered handguns. Target shooters hold 16,500, the police hold 10,200, collectors hold 9,000, and the balance is held by others.
- The Government needs to understand the principle of 'method substitution', that is, if one form of weapon is not available, then another simply takes its place. The overall rate of crime does not drop, and has in fact clearly increased.
- 'De-regulation' of the handgun club structure through the banning of handguns will equal disaster. This has already been seen in Britain and has equivalents with the banning of the duck season in NSW where it is now open slather on duck shooting without regulation or control via a 'pest management' permit.
- In 1996 Commonwealth Attorney-General Daryl Williams said that pre-buy-back there were 2.5 million firearms in Australia. This is preposterous. Australian Bureau of Statistics primary source figures indicate that there would be 7 million firearms in Australia in 1996. The buy-back took out 643,000 firearms. By 2002, it is estimated that most of that 643,000 have been replaced by other imports so that Australia is now back up to the original 7 million of 1996.
- The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) regularly quotes in their academic papers anti-gun researchers such as Philip Alpers and Chris Cantor, yet fail to include any of the works of notable pro-gun researchers such as David Copel, Joyce Malcolm, Len Nisbett, John Lott, David Fine, William Tonso, Alan Gottlieb, etc.
- Australia has had a declining rate of homicide by firearm for the last 25 years. This was occurring well before the introduction of draconian gun laws and the trend continues to this day. There is no research that adequately explains this phenomenon.