

SPORTING SHOOTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

MEDIA RELEASE

4 November 2004
For Immediate Release

The impact of gun-control laws called into question.

The Sporting Shooters Association of Australia Inc. said today that a recent Monash University report claiming that new gun laws were responsible for a reduction in firearm-related deaths in Victoria was misleading.

SSAA (SA) Inc. President, Dr Jeanine Baker, said "The only reason the authors were able to find an overall decline was by including firearm suicide. The report creates the false impression that suicides can be prevented via restrictive gun-control legislation, while at the same time ignoring the issue of method substitution. Both Australian Institute of Criminology and Australian Bureau of Statistics research indicate marked increases in suicide by other means between 1979 and 2000."

Dr Baker went on to say that until the Federal and State Governments recognized that the only way to address suicide rates was to fund prevention programs, Australia's suicide epidemic was unstoppable.

SSAA researcher, Samara McPhedran, said that "The authors have failed to adequately account for the influence of other factors on suicide deaths, or the decline in firearm-related violence across all states beginning around 1979. These very fundamental flaws invalidate the claim that changes to Victoria's gun laws in 1988, together with further restrictions introduced in 1996, were the driving forces behind the decreases."

Dr Baker said that the SSAA would continue reviewing the Monash University data, but that "The conclusion that restrictive firearm legislation introduced in Victoria in 1988 made a difference in that state simply don't hold water when you take a close look at the figures."

Comment:

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