

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

Group: 3

Program: 1.2

Question No. SBE15/041

Senator McKenzie asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2015:

Ms Smith: Essentially, after the Martin Place review, there was a recommendation relevant to the review of the national firearms agreement. As a result of that, there is a group called the Firearms and Weapons Policy Working Group, of which I am the chair. We have coordinated a number of meetings just of the group to begin with to—

Senator McKENZIE: Who is on that group—sorry, Ms Smith—while we are at it?

Ms Smith: On that group are representatives from Queensland police and New South Wales Police as well as the New South Wales police ministry. We have Victoria Police. We also have the Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation. We have Tasmania Police. We have South Australia Police. We have Western Australia Police, Northern Territory police—

Senator McKENZIE: Excellent! You don't want to leave them out.

Ms Smith: ACT police and the Australian Federal Police. We have the Australian Crime Commission. We have CrimTrac, and we have the Attorney-General's Department.

Senator McKENZIE: Right! A lot of justice and a lot of police officers.

Ms Smith: Indeed. The group met on a number of occasions to work through the Martin Place recommendations, of which there were four relating to firearms, not just to do with the national firearms agreement. We then determined that it was appropriate to consult with a broad range of people who were associated with firearms associations as well as groups who were associated with gun control lobbies or law councils and suchlike, so we have had a series of meetings with those groups to talk about the kinds of issues where they see that there would be a benefit in arguably amending the NFA for technical elements of it, not the fundamentals of the agreement, and also any concerns that have been raised by their associations. Generally, the people who have come to those consultations represent many, many thousands of members, so they are bringing quite—

Senator McKENZIE: Hundreds of thousands—800,000 law-abiding firearm owners.

Ms Smith: We had many different associations attending.

Senator McKENZIE: And the gun control lobby.

Ms Smith: Each has different representation.

Senator McKENZIE: Just on notice, if you could outline the meetings—not minutes or anything but just who, when and where—that would be great. Are there recommendations that you are taking to your policy working group at any point? Around the review of the NFA, are there a set of recommendations? How does that all work?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

In August and September 2015, the Firearms and Weapons Policy Working Group (chaired by the Attorney-General's Department) conducted consultative meetings with the following groups in relation to the National Firearms Agreement technical update:

- Firearm Safety Foundation (Victoria)
- National Firearms Dealers Association

- Australian Clay Target Association
- Field and Game
- National Farmers' Federation
- NIOA
- Beretta
- Winchester
- Raytrade
- Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia
- Shooting Australia
- Combined Firearms Council
- Outdoor Sporting Agencies
- Public Health Association of Australia
- Crime Stoppers
- Law Council of Australia
- The Alannah and Madeline Foundation

Three consultative meetings were held with representatives from the firearms community. One meeting was held with gun-control and public safety advocates.

The Law, Crime and Community Safety Council considered the FWPWG's recommendations regarding an updated NFA at its meeting of 5 November 2015 and referred it back to the National Justice and Policing Senior Officials Group for further advice. COAG will consider the updated NFA in the first half of 2016.