

Cr Matthew Bourke

Chairman for Lifestyle and Community Services



28 November 2016

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Hon Mark Ryan
Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective
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BY:

Dear Minister Ryan,

I write to advise that Brisbane City Council (BCC) will be applying to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) for approval to add a suppressor to its Weapons License. The use of a suppressed weapon is for the control of pest animals within Brisbane City.

As you may be aware, Council has a mandated responsibility under the Biosecurity Act 2014 to ensure that invasive pest animals are controlled on land under its jurisdiction. To control and reduce Brisbane's current pest animal population, it is necessary to use a range of management measures which include trapping and shooting as part of an effective ethical program.

While trapping and exclusion fencing are efficient management tools, ground shooting remains an effective management measure. However, as you would appreciate, the loud noise generated from a large calibre rifle can cause disturbance and fear to local residents living near management areas. Furthermore, the discharge noise has the added adverse impact of scattering groups of animals, which significantly reduces the opportunity to target multiple pest animals at a single location.

Additionally, and despite Council notification to Policelink, QPS officers have been dispatched to respond to public complaints and concerns about firearm noise generated from a council management program. The police response can also create an anxious scenario for officers of both organisations in the field.

I can confirm that Council has purpose built facilities and procedures in place to ensure the correct use and storage of weapons and has an exemplary service record in the safe discharge of firearms.

Given this, I am now seeking your support for Council's application to use suppressed weapons for the specific purpose of pest animal management.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Matthew Bourke

CHAIRMAN
LIFESTYLE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES





Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and
Minister for Corrective Services

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Councillor Matthew Bourke
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Dear Councillor Bourke

Thank you for your letter dated 28 November 2016 advising that Brisbane City Council is considering the use of a suppressor on rifles for the purpose of pest control.

I appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns regarding the impact of noise from a rifle when your officers are conducting pest control.

I am advised a 'silencer' is a category R weapon as defined in section 8(h) of the Weapons Categories Regulation 1997. The licensing and registration regime of the *Weapons Act 1990* does not support the acquisition, possession or use of category R weapons, which includes silencers.

As you may be aware, the National Firearms Agreement (NFA) was established after the 1996 Port Arthur massacre. The Queensland Government remains committed to the NFA, which can only be changed with agreement from all States and Territories.

Therefore the Queensland Police Service Weapons Licensing advise that they are unable to issue a licence or exemption for a Category R weapon to a local authority.

I trust this information is of assistance. Should you require further information, Ms Ellen McIntyre, Chief of Staff, is available on telephone (07) 3035 8300.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely

The Honourable Mark Ryan MP
**Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and
Minister for Corrective Services**