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**Firearms Registry  
Firearms Licence Qualification Course (FLQC) Consultative Group**



**NSW Police Force**

<b>MEETING DETAILS</b>	
<b>NAME:</b>	Consultative Group Meeting #1 – Firearms Licence Qualification Course (FLQC)
<b>DATE:</b>	Thursday, 16 November 2023
<b>TIME COMMENCED:</b>	9.30 am
<b>LOCATION OR VENUE:</b>	Sydney Olympic Park, NSW 2127
<b>CHAIRPERSON:</b>	Janelle Ivankovic
<b>SECRETARIAT:</b>	Mitchell Scott
<b>ATTENDEES:</b>	Janelle Ivankovic
	Jason Thomas
	Nathan Vedder
	Mitchell Scott
	Terry Layton
	James Walsh
	Mark Stannard
	Tony Crilly
	Tony Gavan
	Paul Burns
	Craig Golding
	Peter Beaumont
	Peter Szaak
	John Varoutsos
	Gary Bryant
	Robert Baird
	John Howden
	Tim Featonby
	Joe Amoroso
	Andrew Mallen
	Mark Costello

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**1. Introductions**

During introductions, each Attendee was given the opportunity to outline why they wanted to participate in the Consultative Group. While each Attendee's motivation came from unique and varied backgrounds a common theme was recognition that the existing FLQCs could be improved but that any improvement should strike a balance between safety and regulation and not be unnecessarily onerous.

Further comments included:

- A desire to promote consistency between States and training providers:
- To reduce the amount of misinformation circulating between shooters and clubs.
- To improve safety and competency of licence holders.
- To prevent overregulation of the firearms Industry
- That an onerous FLQC would risk deterring potential firearms licence holders from the industry.
- That consideration should be given to ongoing training that is provided by Clubs to its members.
- That any changes should not prevent other organisations from becoming involved in FLQC delivery.

It was noted that some Attendees did not believe that the current training structure needed to be reviewed and expressed concerns as to the potential impact of any changes.

Following introductions, there was a discussion that touched on whether the period of time between a customer completing an FLQC and possessing and using a firearm would reduce the effectiveness of the training. Following these comments, it was posed to the group to consider:

- How long they believed that the FLQC holds its currency,
- Whether there should be a time limit between when a customer completes an FLQC and when they can get their firearm licence.
- Whether licence holders should be required to complete a 'refresher' course, and if so, how often.

There were also discussions regarding the potential adoption of online components, not only in relation to the delivery of an FLQC, but also for supplementary or refresher training to licence holders. The majority of the group appeared to acknowledge that, while online components could be beneficial (and likely favoured by the younger generations), that a face-to-face component was critical, particularly when delivering the practical component of a FLQC and to allow instructors to more accurately judge the competency of a customer.

**2. Course Outcome and Learning Objectives.**

The Attendees were posed a hypothetical question regarding the expectations that they would have for a person who has completed an FLQC. The responses varied between a 'customer being entirely independent' and a 'customer being able to safely handle a firearm but requiring assistance or supervision from a distance'. It appeared from this discussion that there was a distinction drawn between customers who were club members (who would receive ongoing supervision and assistance from club officials), and other customers who may not have the benefit of ongoing supervision and who may fire a firearm for the first time on a rural property without supervision.

Further expectations included, that a customer:

- Should be able to understand regulations and safely handle firearms, but that there should be no expectation that the customer can fire accurately.
- Should be able to walk onto a range, understand directions given to them and fire competently at a close distance.
- Should be seen to use a firearm before a trainer can consider them competent.
- Should be trained by someone who is an experienced firearm user, not someone who has merely received a certificate.
- Should be personally responsible for identifying if they require further training instead of requiring them to undertake some form of supervision.
- Should be deemed capable of hitting a target during a live fire component.
- Should be required to meet a high standard of competency by their trainer as any future failure by the customer may damage the industry and result in further regulations.

During discussions relating to a customer's ability to fire accurately, importance appeared to have been given to the customers understanding of muzzle awareness and ability to fire in a safe direction as opposed to requiring them to meet a minimum level of shooting accuracy. There was also further discussion relating to the structure of an FLQC, with suggestions that training should be customisable to address customers with varying degrees of competency. It was also suggested that the FLCQ should cover the common elements that apply to all licence holders (i.e safe handling, storage, cleaning etc) with further individualised training to be provided to customers depending on their Genuine Reasons and particular knowledge (e.g. a veteran who is proficient in handling firearms but may not know the requirements around transport or safe storage), provided that such a customisation would still require the customer to demonstrate that they meet a minimal standards benchmark.

While implementation of a live firing component was suggested and strongly supported by some Attendees, such a proposal was strongly opposed by others who had concerns relating to the practicality of such a requirement and how it would be facilitated. Such comments included limitations on an instructor and customer's ability to access ranges due to their physical location, or the withholding of authorisation for access by range officials.

There was also a comment made about the need for customers to have a high level of competency as any failure by them may result in further regulations being imposed on the industry.

<b>3. Core Structure and Core Course Elements.</b>	
Using the Firearms (Longarms) Users Guide as a base document, the Attendees where then asked to outline what elements they believed should make up the core requirement of the FLQC.	
The following proposed elements were identified:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legal and Social responsibilities.</li><li>• Identification of firearm types and parts</li><li>• Unique risks associated with each types of firearm (such as the unloading of lever action firearms).</li><li>• Identification of ammunition types and components</li><li>• Basic Safety Principles</li><li>• Transporting and safe storage requirements</li><li>• Genuine Reasons and compliance</li><li>• Disposal of Firearms and Firearm parts</li><li>• Firearms Amnesty</li><li>• Cleaning and maintenance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to purchase a firearm</li><li>• Shooting positions</li><li>• Legal awareness and where to find further information</li><li>• Role and responsibility of a Licence holder</li><li>• National safety firearms code</li><li>• Dealing with malfunctions/issues</li><li>• Safe handling and passing of firearms</li><li>• Identifying danger zones and hard surfaces</li><li>• Understanding P650s</li><li>• Reinforcing the NFA code of conduct</li></ul>
Due to time constraints in completing the activity, the above list did not reflect a complete list of elements that would have been proposed by the Attendees to make up the core requirement of the FLQC.	
There was also suggestions regarding the structure of the course with chapters detailing the Genuine Reasons and the concept of ‘fit and proper person’ being moved at the beginning of the course. There was also a desire to identify specific sections and clauses of the firearms legislation that instructors consider are overlooked by licence holders such as club participation and transport requirements.	
Recommendations were also made to update the training material to include references to gel blasters, Airsoft gun and paintball guns as well as identifying new firearm actions such as the ‘straight pull’ and ‘button release’.	

There was then a discussion regarding the inclusion of standard hunting/range protocols as a core element of the course. While there was disagreement between the level of detail that should be included (namely due to protocols varying between ranges), there was a general agreement to include a brief chapter identifying the role of a range officer, basic safety procedures when attending any range and drawing a new licence holders' attention to the existence of Range Standing Orders.

**4. Additional Course Elements**

Attendees were asked to identify any learning outcomes specific to a licence category, genuine reason or authority that would not form part of the core course elements but that could be considered for a specialised module.

Suggestions included the following:

- Computer systems training for dealers.
- Safe operation of Category D firearms.
- Discipline specific training for range officers.
- Euthanising animals safely.

**5. Conclusion**

At the end of the day, Jason Thomas presented the Attendees with a number of questions relating to the knowledge and practical assessment requirements of the FLQC. Attendees were advised that the questions were being posed to them for consideration on the expectation that they would be asked to provide commentary in due course.

**Meeting Closed:** 4:00PM

**Next Meeting to be scheduled:** February / March 2024