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MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 13 March 2008

Firearm licensing fees set to skyrocket

The Brumby Government wants to hike gun ownership fees under the guise of a plan to restructure the licensing and registration process, says David Koch, Member for Western Victoria.

David Koch said the Government's changes will affect firearm owners and users, firearm dealers, firearm collectors, primary producers, handgun clubs and Victoria Police.

"These changes will impose increased fees to a wide range of firearm licenses but in particular, the cost of junior firearm licenses and firearm dealers' licenses will see massive cost hikes.

"Under new regulations, junior licenses will rise from \$39.70 to \$94.50 or 138 per cent.

"This massive hike will discourage young people from taking up the sport or learning about gun safety.

"Many smaller gun dealers will be forced out of business, especially those in rural and regional Victoria as their fees will see a savage and brutal increase of 647 per cent from the current \$965.40 to \$7,209.10.

"These exorbitant fee increases to be set by the Brumby Government on licensed firearm dealers are completely unreasonable and will hit rural communities hard.

"Shutting down local rural and regional gun dealers will force gun owners to either give up their sport or travel long distances to service or purchase firearms and ammunition.

"The Government says these fee increase are needed to meet administrative costs and are being set on a full cost-recovery basis for providing firearm licenses.

"If this is the case, they must be using the most out-of-date and costly licensing system they can find.

"The most expensive license for a firearms dealer in Australia is \$1500 in South Australia and the dealer's license is only \$143 in Queensland.

"These overly excessive and inflated firearms licensing increases make a mockery of the Brumby Government's claim that it will stick to CPI increases on setting the indexation of fees and charges.

"I took the opportunity to raise this matter in Parliament this week directly with the Treasurer, John Lenders, who refused to accept responsibility for firearm license hikes or for guaranteeing license fees would not be increased by these massive amounts", said David Koch.

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