

Basic Firearms Education Program Report

Enhancing Safe and Responsible Ownership under the Federal Firearms Licensing Act 2026
(Cth)

Drafted for illustrative and analytical purposes

February 2026

1 Executive Summary

This report outlines a proposed Basic Firearms Education Program (the Program) designed for individuals intending to purchase firearms under the *Federal Firearms Licensing Act 2026* (Cth) (the Act). The Program’s primary goals are to promote education on safety, responsible use, and lawful ownership, aligning with the Act’s emphasis on a “well-regulated liberty.”

It differentiates between low-risk firearms (requiring no license) and higher-risk categories (semi-automatic and full-automatic), ensuring tailored training that minimizes risks while respecting cultural, rural, and consumer protections.

The Program is structured as a mandatory educational pathway for prospective owners, administered by licensed training providers under the Federal Firearms Licensing Authority (FFLA). It covers essential topics in a concise, practical format, with one-day core training for basic firearms and extended sessions for advanced types.

This approach fosters informed ownership, reduces accidents, and supports the Act’s transition from fragmented State systems to uniform federal regulation.

2 Program Structure and Content

The Program is divided into modules delivered by FFLA-licensed training providers. Core training (for no-license firearms) is completed in one day, including classroom and range components. Advanced training for semi-automatic or full-automatic firearms adds two days of specialized physical usage.

2.1 Module 1: Safety and Basic Operation (No License Required Firearms)

- **Focus:** Emphasize fundamental safety rules and hands-on operation of low-risk firearms, which require no licensing under the Act (e.g., single-shot handguns, bolt-action rifles, straight-pull rifles, and single-shot shotguns).
- **Content:**

- Four Rules of Firearm Safety: (1) Treat every firearm as loaded; (2) Never point at anything you don't intend to destroy; (3) Keep finger off the trigger until ready to shoot; (4) Be sure of your target and what's beyond it.
- Basic operation: Loading/unloading, sighting, trigger control, and malfunction clearing for specified types.
- Practical demonstrations: Safe handling without live ammunition initially, progressing to supervised dry-fire exercises.
- **Duration:** Integrated into the one-day core training.

2.2 Module 2: Safe Storage

- **Focus:** Educate on secure storage to prevent unauthorized access, theft, or accidents.
- **Content:**
 - Requirements: Firearms must be stored unloaded in a locked safe or container, separate from ammunition.
 - Legitimate Safes: A safe is considered compliant if purchased from a licensed firearms dealer or a certified Australian safes company (e.g., those meeting Australian Standards AS/NZS 3809 for firearm security).
 - Best Practices: Trigger locks, cable locks as supplements; child safety education; environmental considerations (e.g., humidity control for rural areas).
- **Duration:** 1–2 hours within the one-day core.

2.3 Module 3: Basic Ammunition Knowledge

- **Focus:** Provide foundational understanding of ammunition types, compatibility, and safe handling.
- **Content:**
 - Types: Rimfire vs. centerfire; handgun cartridges (e.g., .22 LR for single-shot); rifle rounds (e.g., .308 for bolt-action); shotgun shells (e.g., 12-gauge birdshot/slugs).
 - Compatibility: Matching caliber/gauge to firearm; dangers of mismatches (e.g., chamber explosions).
 - Storage and Handling: Cool, dry places; avoiding tampering; recognizing defects (e.g., corroded primers).
 - Legal Aspects: Ammunition purchases require proof of lawful ownership under the Act.
- **Duration:** 1 hour within the one-day core.

2.4 Module 4: FFLA Lawful Ownership

- **Focus:** Detail requirements for establishing and maintaining lawful ownership under the Act.
- **Content:**
 - Proof of Purchase: Mandatory receipt from a licensed dealer, including date, description, and serial number.
 - Serial Numbers Preserved: Illegal to remove or alter (punishable by 10-year prohibition order); importance for traceability.
 - CCA 2010 Warranty Intact: Ensures consumer protections (e.g., defects, returns); dealers must provide CCA-compliant warranties.
 - Distinctions: Lawful vs. illegal ownership; consequences of violations (e.g., prohibition orders with grace periods).
- **Duration:** 1 hour within the one-day core.

2.5 Module 5: Range Firing

- **Focus:** Practical, supervised live-fire experience to build competency.
- **Content:**
 - Supervised Shooting: Basic marksmanship for no-license firearms (e.g., accuracy at short ranges).
 - Safety Protocols: Ear/eye protection, range commands, cease-fire procedures.
 - Delivery: All core Program elements (Modules 1–4 plus firing) completed in one day for efficiency.
 - Provider Licensing: Any qualified training provider (e.g., shooting clubs, instructors) can obtain an FFLA training license via a streamlined application, ensuring widespread access.
- **Duration:** 2–3 hours hands-on within the one-day core.

2.6 Module 6: Differences Between Functional Regulation vs. Hybrid Models

- **Focus:** Explain the Act’s model to highlight improvements over prior systems.
- **Content:**
 - Functional Regulation (Act’s Model): Uniform federal licensing via FFLA; risk-based (e.g., no license for low-risk firearms); aligned with CCA for protections; eliminates NFA/State registries.
 - Hybrid Models (Pre-Act): Fragmented State/federal overlap (e.g., NFA inconsistencies); higher bureaucracy; less emphasis on cultural/rural exemptions.
 - Benefits: Reduced black markets, better Indigenous/rural provisions, stakeholder reviews for adaptability.

- **Duration:** 30–45 minutes within the one-day core.

2.7 Module 7: Advanced Training for Semi-Automatic or Full-Automatic Firearms

- **Focus:** Specialized education for licensed categories (urban semi-autos, full-autos for ventures/education).
- **Content:**
 - Same Process as Core: Complete Modules 1–6 first.
 - Additional: 2 days of physical firearms usage training, including malfunction drills, rapid reloading, controlled burst fire (for full-auto), and scenario-based safety (e.g., farm culling for rural semi-autos).
 - Emphasis: Higher responsibility due to faster fire rates; urban vs. rural distinctions.
- **Duration:** +2 days beyond core.

3 Implementation and Accessibility

- **Provider Requirements:** FFLA licensing for trainers ensures quality; includes background checks and facility standards.
- **Cost:** Fee-for-service, subsidized for Indigenous/rural participants.
- **Certification:** Completion certificate required for purchases under the Act.
- **Integration:** Aligns with Doctrine’s Principle 5 (Safety and Education).

4 Rationale for the Basic Firearms Education Program

4.1 Introduction

The Program is essential to the Act’s success, providing a rationale grounded in safety, equity, constitutional alignment, and practical efficacy. It addresses gaps in the pre-Act hybrid system by emphasizing education over restriction, supporting the hypothetical section 114A right to bear arms.

4.2 Key Rationales

- (1) **Public Safety and Risk Reduction:** Mandatory training reduces accidents (e.g., via safety rules and range practice). Differentiated modules match firearm risk levels—basic for low-risk types, advanced for semi/full-auto—preventing over-regulation while mitigating dangers.

- (2) **Promotion of Well-Regulated Liberty:** By educating on functional regulation vs. hybrid models, the Program empowers owners, reinforcing uniform federal oversight. Grace periods in prohibitions tie into rehabilitative education, deterring black markets.
- (3) **Equity and Accessibility:** One-day core training minimizes barriers; FFLA licensing for providers ensures rural/Indigenous access. Cultural provisions protect landcare rights, applying equally to farms.
- (4) **Consumer and Economic Protections:** Integration with CCA 2010 educates on warranties/proofs, enhancing dealer/owner assurances. Safe storage rules leverage Australian standards for legitimacy.
- (5) **Constitutional and Adaptive Alignment:** Grounded in section 51(ii) for administration, it respects section 117 uniformity. Stakeholder reviews (per Doctrine) allow periodic Program updates.
- (6) **Efficiency and Evidence-Based:** Condensed format (one day core) respects time constraints; advanced training ensures competency without excess. Rationale draws from global models (e.g., hunter safety courses), adapted for Australia.

4.3 Conclusion

This Program rationally supports the Act by fostering educated, responsible owners, balancing liberty with safety, and ensuring long-term adaptability through reviews. It positions Australia as a leader in functional firearms regulation.