



**Australian
BORDER FORCE**

Australian Customs Notice No. 2020/14

Firearms changes to the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956

On 25 March 2020 the *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Amendment (Firearms) Regulations 2020* (the Amendments) will come into effect. The Amendments change conditions on the importation of certain firearms and certain firearms devices under Schedule 6 of the *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956* (the Regulations).

The Amendments

Firearm Accessory

Bump stocks, auto gloves and similar devices that give a firearm the capability of being operated in a way that mimics fully automatic and/or burst fire operation are now defined as firearm accessories and are controlled on import. Firearm accessories can only be imported with a valid Department of Home Affairs (Department) permit and therefore must comply with at least one of the following tests:

- the official purposes test
- the specified purposes test, or
- the returned goods test.

The requirement to meet one of these tests may also be met by compliance with either the public interest test or the national interest test.

The Amendments are necessary to ensure that the community remains protected from these new and emerging technologies, for which there is no legitimate civilian use.

Any person who intentionally imports a bump stock, auto glove or similar device without the appropriate permission may be liable for a penalty under subsection 233BAB(5) of the *Customs Act 1901* (the Customs Act) of imprisonment for 10 years or 2,500 penalty units (currently \$525,000), or both.

Category H articles

The Amendments remove redundant conditions on the importation of Category H articles (handguns, and frames or receivers of, or for, handguns) by firearms dealers, reducing the regulatory burden associated with these importations. The Amendments for Category H articles have two key aspects:

1. Firearms dealers importing Category H articles for stock purposes are no longer required to present a Category H certificate to the Australian Border Force (ABF) upon importation. Firearms dealers will still require appropriate import permission to import Category H articles.
2. Firearms dealers who import Category H articles for stock purposes are no longer required to report details of disposal of Category H articles to the ABF. Regular reporting to their relevant State or Territory firearms registry must continue.

Serial number requirements

The Amendments extend the current requirement for a firearm to bear a unique serial number to frames and receivers, whether imported as part of a firearm or not. In addition, the Regulations now prescribe requirements for the location, format and appearance of unique serial numbers.

The serial number requirements will commence on 24 March 2021. This 12 month implementation period will allow for further consultation between the Department, the ABF and firearms importers. It also allows importers to make any necessary changes to ensure compliance with the new requirements before they commence.

A prescribed approach to the location, format and appearance of unique serial numbers will improve the recording of data in firearms systems. This will assist police and other law enforcement agencies to manage the registration, licensing and movement of firearms, frames and receivers being imported into Australia and being moved between states and territories.

Further information

For further information regarding these changes please consult the legislation directly, including the explanatory statement for the Amendments, at www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F1996B03651.

For more information on exporting or importing firearms from/to Australia, please see the [ABF website](#). Enquiries should be directed to the Firearms Team at firearms.enquiries@homeaffairs.gov.au.

[Signed]

Matthew Duckworth
Assistant Secretary
Customs and Border Revenue Branch
Customs Group

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