

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Scrutiny Panel with an update on the evolving debate around firearms amendments in Jersey, with a particular focus on the holding of ammunition at home. This submission contrasts the concerns raised with the Connétables in September 2024 by the author of this report, concerns that were highlighted at the scrutiny hearing on 10th November, with the more recent announcement by the Comité des Connétables on 1 January 2026, in respect to amendments to the Firearms (Jersey) law 2000.
- 1.2 It also reiterates the risks currently managed across Jersey's twelve parishes, especially in relation to the storage of ammunition in domestic settings.
- 1.3 The report draws on a wide range of evidence, including local risk assessments, UK coronial findings, international developments, and the lived experience of Jersey's own policing and licensing system.

2. Background and Context

- 2.1 Firearms licensing in Jersey is a complex and multi-layered process. As of September 2024, there were 1,119 certificate holders and 8,378 registered firearms on the island. However, the actual quantity of ammunition held in the community remains unknown.
- 2.2 The system is further complicated by the existence of 118 different documented licence conditions and twelve separate groups of decision-makers, each representing a parish. This decentralised approach has led to inconsistencies and, at times, confusion about best practice and risk management. A key point of concern is that the overwhelming majority—around 90%—of firearms certificates are issued for recreational shooting, with the condition that firearms may only be used on approved ranges.

- 2.3 Despite this, there is currently no uniform policy preventing these certificate holders from storing ammunition at home. The aspiration, as articulated in the September 2024 presentation to the Connétables, is that recreational shooters should not hold ammunition at home at all. This approach is not without precedent; Guernsey, for example, has long restricted home storage of ammunition for range-only users, allowing it only in exceptional circumstances.

3. The Comité Announcement

- 3.1 On 1st January 2026, following a significant period of consultation between the States of Jersey Police and the Comité, the Comité des Connétables announced a new policy whereby all firearms certificates would be issued without ammunition by default.
- 3.2 Applicants wishing to possess ammunition would need to apply to their Connétable and provide proof of regular club attendance. In most cases, only a minimal amount of ammunition would be authorised for home storage. While this represents a step forward, it does not, in the opinion of the author (SOJP) go far enough.
- 3.3 The amendments still allow for the continued holding of ammunition at home by recreational shooters, provided certain criteria are met. This falls short of the aspiration for zero home-held ammunition among recreational shooters and does not fully align with the risk reduction model previously advocated by both local and international experts.

4. Assessment of Risk

- 4.1 From a professional standpoint, the proposed amendments are disappointing because they do not adequately address the core risks identified over several years of review and consultation.
- 4.2 Allowing even a minimal quantity of ammunition to be stored at home by recreational shooters maintains the existing risk profile. The distinction

between 'minimal' and 'large' quantities is largely academic in terms of public safety; the presence of any ammunition in a domestic setting creates opportunities for misuse, theft, or tragic incidents. The aspiration should be clear: all recreational shooters—who currently make up 90% of certificate holders—should be required to purchase and use ammunition only at approved clubs, with no home storage permitted.

- 4.3 This would significantly reduce the risk of firearms and ammunition being accessed inappropriately, whether by the certificate holder themselves during a period of crisis, or by others through theft or negligence.
- 4.4 Similarly, and through association, the current system, which relies on twelve parishes and their respective Connétables to make decisions, perpetuates inconsistency and complexity. Without a centralised, statutory framework for control, efforts to ensure public safety are undermined.

5. Evidence from Jersey's Own Risk Assessments

- 5.1 Jersey's Community Risk Register (CRR), Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP), and the SOJP Firearms Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment (STRA) documentation consistently identify the most credible high-harm scenario as a low-sophistication attack or domestic siege by a lone actor. In such cases, the ready availability of weapons and ammunition in the home can materially worsen the consequences.
- 5.2 The SOJP STRA (2025) specifically highlights the risk posed by lone individuals or small groups, and stresses the importance of removing opportunities for such actors to access firearms and ammunition outside of controlled environments. Recent operational decisions, such as the use of hostile vehicle measures at large events, demonstrate that CRR outputs are not merely theoretical—they are actively used to inform risk management across government.
- 5.3 The Firearms Licensing briefing to Connétables in September 2024 made it clear that one of Jersey's greatest threats is an individual in emotional or mental health crisis, potentially radicalised, committing a random act of

extreme violence (see later references to recent events in Australia). The risk is significantly increased if that individual has access to both firearms and ammunition at home. Moving ammunition purchase and use into controlled club environments is a direct and proportionate mitigation. It removes a domestic access point without impairing legitimate range-based recreation.

6. Learning from the UK and International Experience

- 6.1 The UK has faced several high-profile tragedies involving licensed firearms holders, most notably the shootings in Dunblane and Plymouth. The inquests following the Plymouth (Keyham) incident led Senior Coroner Ian Arrow to issue Prevention of Future Deaths reports, calling for fundamental reform of firearms licensing, nationally accredited training for licensing officers, and a risk-based approach to suitability decisions. The Home Office has since strengthened statutory guidance, making it clear that where risk is material but not conclusively proven, the licensing decision must err on the side of public safety.
- 6.2 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has repeatedly documented the dangers of inconsistent licensing and urged robust, auditable processes. The direction of travel is clear: reduce access to firearms and ammunition where risk cannot be confidently managed. This logic supports the removal of home-held ammunition for the 90% of Jersey certificate holders whose firearms are restricted to use on approved ranges.
- 6.3 Guernsey provides a useful comparator within the Channel Islands. There, police routinely attach conditions to firearms certificates that limit the acquisition and possession of ammunition to approved clubs. This model has been stable and effective for years, demonstrating that a more restrictive approach is both practical and proportionate.
- 6.4 Internationally, Australia has also moved decisively in response to recent incidents. The Wieambilla inquest in Queensland (2025) analysed a case where a lone-actor group ambushed police using high-powered rifles stored at a rural property. The coroner's recommendations focused on intelligence,

resourcing, and operational readiness for self-initiated threats. In New South Wales, sweeping gun reforms were introduced in January 2026, including ownership caps, mandatory club membership, and tighter appeals processes—all aimed at reducing the risk of firearms and ammunition being accessed in domestic settings. Further restrictive measures linked to Bondi Beach are initiable.

7. Recommendations and Conclusion

- 7.1 Given the weight of local, national, and international evidence, the direction of travel for Jersey should be clear. For the 90% of certificate holders whose firearms are for recreational use only, there should be no home storage of ammunition. All ammunition should be purchased and used at approved clubs, with no exceptions except in tightly governed, clearly evidenced cases of operational need. The amendments proposed by the Comité, while a step forward, do not achieve this goal and leave Jersey exposed to the same risks identified in other jurisdictions.
- 7.2 A centralised, statutory approach to firearms and ammunition licensing is urgently needed to ensure consistency, reduce risk, and protect public safety. The lessons from historical incidents and recent events abroad must inform Jersey's policy, not only to prevent tragedy but to demonstrate leadership in public safety.
- 7.3 Jurisdictions facing similar lone-actor challenges have chosen to remove such access in favour of club-only purchase and use. Jersey should do likewise for the vast majority of certificate holders, with limited, tightly governed exceptions only where a clearly evidenced operational need exists.
- 7.4 In summary, it is concerning that the 1 January 2026 amendments stop at 'minimal' home ammunition allowances for range-only shooters. The risk work for many years, and especially so since Sept 2024, has consistently shown that any domestic ammunition access for this cohort preserves the very access pathway 'we' are attempting to close.