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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **New Study Vindicates Gun Laws, Again**

The National Coalition for Gun Control has hailed the Special Report by the Tasmanian Auditor-General into Gun Control, released today, as a vindication of the 1996 round of reforms.

Coalition Chair, Roland Browne, said that the reduction in firearm-related crime, the reduction in hospital admissions for gun trauma and the reduction in gun suicides was very good news.

Mr Browne said, "Reduced access to firearms is the only way to deal with the menace of gun abuse. The next stage in gun law reform in Australia is a ban on semi-automatic handguns".

Mr Browne said the study sounded a warning to governments such as Tasmania that are reviewing the *Firearms Act 1996* with a view to watering the Act down.

Mr Browne said plans by Police Minister Llewellyn to do away with any of the cornerstone requirements of the 1996 National Firearms Agreement should be abandoned.

Mr Browne called on the Minister to read the Auditor-General's report, and to direct his current review<sup>1</sup> of the Firearms Act to examining a ban on semi-automatic and military handguns.

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NOTE: This is the second report in 9 months to show the success of tight gun laws in reducing gun crime and gun deaths<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Minister announced a review of the Firearms Act in April, 2003 (yes, 2003!) and has not announced an end date for the review. In announcing the review the Minister proposed a review of the 28 day cooling period for the purchase of 2<sup>nd</sup> and other weapons. This would be a breach of the national Firearms Agreement, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Firearm related deaths: the impact of regulatory reform J Ozanne-Smith, K Ashby, S Newstead, V Z Stathakis, A Clapperton. *Injury Prevention* 2004;10:280-286. Monash University.