

# PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

## MEDIA RELEASE

### GUN BUYBACK CRITICISED

*6<sup>th</sup> February 2004*

Member for Tamworth Peter Draper has strongly criticised the Gun Buyback Scheme currently operating in Tamworth.

“Having attended the mobile van today, Police seemed pleased with the response to the scheme,” said Mr Draper today. “I got the impression that they believed pistol owners were happy with the monetary value being placed on their guns.”

“Speaking to sporting shooters was however a totally different issue, with unanimous criticism regarding the outcome that Police are looking for. Sporting shooters were visibly upset at yet another infringement on their right to participate in their chosen sport.”

“One shooter was told that the pistols being taken were the guns that Police wanted to get off the streets,” Mr Draper said. “He responded that the guns were not on the streets. Until he had to hand them in, they had been safely locked away in his gun safe where they had safely been kept for many years.”

“Other shooters have told me that Police resources should be concentrated in the southwest of Sydney instead of taking guns off highly regulated, law abiding sports people in regional NSW.” commented Mr Draper. “It is extremely unlikely that any of the guns handed back in Tamworth would have ever found its way into the hands of criminals.”

“When was the last time we had a drive-by shooting in Tamworth or Gunnedah,” was a common sentiment expressed to Mr Draper during the last week. “Sydney is where the effort is needed,” was another.

“I have also received a lot of criticism over the safety audit on registered gun owners since it commenced in the Oxley Command,” Mr Draper said.

“While Police are professional and courteous, the registered shooters strongly believe that these resources could be used in a much more effective way to reduce criminal activities,” Mr Draper continued.

“Police should be knocking down doors in Sydney where the illegal unregistered guns are, not making appointments to inspect weapons stored safely by responsible owners,” Mr Draper concluded.

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