



**Media Release December 14 2006
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Gun Prohibitionists Admit Tough Laws Did Not Affect Murder Rates

The International Coalition for Women in Shooting and Hunting (WiSH) has welcomed new research showing that Australia's 1996 gun laws did not have an impact on the pre-existing downwards trend in firearm homicides.

WiSH Chairwoman Samara McPhedran said "This study adds to the ever-increasing body of evidence that the tough laws, bans, and buybacks did not affect the ongoing decline in rates of murder using a firearm."

The results support peer-reviewed research co-authored by Ms McPhedran and published earlier this year by the prestigious British Journal of Criminology.

"Like our work, this research shows that the reforms may have affected firearm suicide rates, which account for around 80 per cent of firearm-related deaths. However, suicides using other methods also started to drop in the late 1990's, which means we must be cautious about drawing conclusions. It is highly likely that better funding for suicide prevention contributed to overall declines."

"Anti-gun lobbyists have finally acknowledged that the facts demonstrate the laws' lack of effect. This forces us to recall that the half billion dollars spent on bans and buybacks came at the expense of mental healthcare, early intervention strategies, social services, and community policing," said Ms McPhedran.

Contact:

Ms Samara McPhedran – 0415 963 189/+61 415 963 189

Chair, International Coalition for Women in Shooting and Hunting (WiSH)

Dr Jeanine Baker – 0427 186 184/+61 427 186 184

Director, Research and Policy Unit, SSAA (SA) Inc.

References:

British Journal of Criminology: <http://bjc.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/azl084v1>

AIC: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/tandi151.html>

ABC Law Report: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/lawreport/stories/2006/1776336.htm>

WOMEN ON TARGET FOR POSITIVE CHANGE