## Commonwealth of Australia

### FACTS & LEGISLATION
- Firearms are a privilege. They are not a right.
- Major Legislation & Policy:
- Firearm Victimization Rate (per 100,000 people):
  - 1990 – 1.9; 1995 – 2.6; 2011 – 1.1
- Firearm Use in Committing Homicide:
  - 2001 – 22%; 2011 – 14%

### Why so Different?

#### CULTURE
- Firearms are not mentioned in the Australian Constitution.
- Aboriginals, the indigenous people of Australia, were viewed as timid and not considered to be a serious threat.
- Military personnel and free men had firearms, but ‘government men’ were not allowed firearms except for when hunting.
- Escaping to the West meant death. Not freedom or adventure.
- Australians did not have to fight a war against the British for their independence. In fact, they are still under the British crown.
- Australians willing to give up their weapons and surrender them during buybacks and amnesty periods.

### Background for the Topic
- Australia is often thought of as a positive model for firearm regulation in the ‘Western’ developed world.
- Debate exists in the United States as to whether firearms legislation should be made more restrictive or not, however there is consensus that change of some sort is needed.
- One claim has been that the United States has a lot to learn from, or should adopt, Australia’s system. One proponent of this would be the Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop.

## United States of America

### FACTS & LEGISLATION
- Firearms are as a right. They are not viewed as a privilege.
- New firearm legislation tends to occur following the death of important figures and not mass shootings.
- Major Legislation & Policy:
- Firearm Victimization Rate (per 100,000 people):
  - 1992 – 6.3; 2011 – 3.2
- Firearm Use in Committing Homicide:
  - Both 1992 & 2011 – 73% male victims; 49% female victims

### Why so Different?

#### CULTURE
- Firearm ownership rights are included in the US Constitution.
- Native Americans were often seen as violent and dangerous people who needed to be defended against and fought.
- American colonists and frontiersmen valued firearms for protection and as tools.
- Desired to go West and explore.
- Americans fought a war of independence against the British, instilling a perceived need for firearms for protection.
- Americans are willing to fight to keep their firearm rights:
  - NJ Smart Guns & South Carolina Submitted Bill to Secede