

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC"**
**WHAT'S SO GREAT
ABOUT AUSTRALIAN
GUN LAWS?**

By Stephen L. Bakke  July 24, 2015



Here's what provoked me:

Sometimes self proclaimed experts need to be set straight by other self proclaimed experts. That's what this sincere amateur (me) is trying to do in the discussion of gun control in Australia. One question: why do we have to venture so far from home to assert misleading information? It strains my research energy and abilities!

Here's my response:

What's so great about Australian gun laws?

Michael Golding loves Australia's gun laws in his "Commentary" on July 6. Richard Wallace doesn't like Golding's ideas, on July 12. And on July 21, Ken Brindle expresses disdain for Wallace and other "right-wing bretheren." He says they "make stuff up."

I scratched around in my "gun control" archives to find information on Australia, its violent crime, and its rigid gun control regulations introduced after a 1996 mass shooting. As proof of effectiveness, Brindle compares Australia's current homicide rate with the much higher U.S. rate. Here is some information to help evaluate his assertions:

- Australia has always been below the U.S. in homicide rate.
- At the time of the gun ban, Australia's homicide rate was declining. The gun ban didn't accelerate that decline which continues today. The only "uptick" was in 1998-99, right after the 1997 gun ban.
- Accidental firearms deaths went up after the gun ban.
- A study used New Zealand as a "control country" to study the affect of Australia's gun ban. New Zealand is an ideal comparison because of it's almost identical "relevant demographics" – and it's "armed to the teeth" by comparison. Their firearm murder rates remain similar.

You be the judge.