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## **MINISTER'S CERTIFICATE CASTS DOUBT OVER HANDGUN LAWS**

Police Minister, Andre Haermeyer, has come under fire yet again over his handling of gun laws by not following the proper legal processes.

Vice President of the Combined Firearms Council of Victoria, Bill Paterson, said that regulations governing the use of handguns could be challenged in court because of the procedural failures.

The regulations, which set fees for handgun licences and permits to acquire and specify which competitions handgun shooters can compete in, came into effect earlier this year.

“Basically, if the regulations are declared invalid, then this would take the whole gun debate we had last year back to square one,” he said.

“A successful challenge would cast doubt on the competitions that handguns can be used for. It could also require handgun licences and permits to be provided free of charge.”

Under the Subordinate Legislation Act, the Minister is required to certify that the regulations were made in compliance with the requirements of the Act.

“The Minister certified that the regulatory impact statement considered the economic impact of the regulations, but it did not. The word ‘economic’ doesn’t even appear in the document, so the Minister has certified something that simply did not happen.”

“The fact that there are real problems with the statement and certificate could create the basis for a legal challenge,” he said

In March, a Parliamentary committee appointed to oversee the making of regulations wrote to the Minister in relation to another concern about the failure to advertise the regulatory impact statement in the Victorian Government Gazette. The Minister subsequently apologised for the error.

Mr Paterson said it was a concern that the Minister did not seem to care all that much about the failure to comply with the legal requirements for making the regulations.

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