

Gun-toting Lawlessness in Public Areas - Duck Shooting is NOT Regulated

Shooters Party Wants More Public Land for Minority

Regional Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting inc. (RVOTDS)

Thanks to Game Management Authority's (GMA's) advice, we know that at best, GMA only "patrols" about 120 public shooting waterways.

But there are anywhere between 8000-20,000 public waterways open to shooters - no government agency has been able to confirm an estimate.

GMA "patrolled" Kerang last weekend - their presence not helping the threatened species which were shot there.

Elsewhere, the public are told to "report illegal hunting". But GMA's phone lines are unattended outside business hours when most hunting takes place. Callers are directed to police. But police often have neither the time nor interest in attending. Many police are unaware of duck shooting laws to be of help.

In the first few days of the 2022 native bird shoot, RVOTDS were aware of numerous reports of illegal hunter behaviour. From Geelong, to Gippsland, to Central Victoria, there were reports of shooting starting on the water at least half an hour earlier than the legal start time. Both GMA and police were alerted, to no avail.

RVOTDS members are now receiving responses from GMA to reports made online a week ago of likely illegal hunter

behaviour. The responses say reports are "not able to be progressed", because identifying evidence of the offenders has not been provided.

"So It appears it's up to members of the public to put themselves in harms way to collect photos so authorities can do their job. This is shooting. With firearms. In public places. Often near family homes and unsuspecting recreational users" said a spokesperson for RVOTDS.

"Most people do not relish the idea of getting close enough to shooters to get such evidence. In fact, in many places there are rules in place preventing the public from doing so (even though they are public places, paid for by ratepayers and taxpayers)."

The group is disgusted that Jeff Bourman – MP Shooters Party, wants to bring in a law that the public must stay 100m away from shooters at public areas.

"Such a law would mean many regional folks will have to move out of their homes because their houses are within 25-30m of duck shooting. It also means no evidence will ever be obtained of shooters doing the wrong thing. Bourman forgets he is advocating for less than one percent of the population who like to kill native birds, who already have access to thousands of public waterways around the state for a quarter of the year, to the detriment of others."

