

# Firearms and Ammunition (Amendment) Bill 2025 to be gazetted on Friday

A spokesman for the Security Bureau (SB) said today (March 19) that the Government will publish the Firearms and Ammunition (Amendment) Bill 2025 in the Gazette on Friday (March 21) and introduce it into the Legislative Council (LegCo) for First Reading and Second Reading on April 2 to implement the relevant requirements of the "Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition" (the Firearms Protocol).

The spokesman said, "The Firearms Protocol entered into force in 2005 to strengthen control over licit firearms, prevent their diversion into the illegal circuit, and promote relevant law enforcement co-operation among the States Parties. The Firearms Protocol has entered into force for the People's Republic of China (including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) since January 18, 2024. The Firearms Protocol stipulates the requirement to criminalise the illicit manufacturing of or cross-border trafficking in firearms, component parts and ammunition, as well as falsifying or illicitly obliterating, removing or altering the requisite markings on firearms.

"Under the Firearms and Ammunition Ordinance (Cap. 238) (the FAO), the existing regulatory framework regulates the manufacturing and import or export of firearms (including their component parts and ammunition) by way of trade or business by the dealer's licence regime, and does not contain specific provisions for criminalising the illicit manufacturing and import or export of firearms (including their component parts and ammunition) by way other than trade or business. There is also no mandatory legal requirement on marking of firearms, and no criminal offence of falsifying or illicitly obliterating, removing or altering such markings. We therefore have to amend the FAO in order to fully implement the Firearms Protocol."

The spokesman emphasised, "Apart from criminalising the aforementioned types of conducts and enhancing the penalties for the illicit manufacturing of and cross-border trafficking in firearms (including their component parts and ammunition) for greater deterrence, the Bill will also align with international practices in the regulation of firearms by requiring markings to be made on firearms at the time of manufacture and import for the purpose of identifying and tracing each firearm. The detailed technical marking requirements and specifications will be set out by way of subsidiary legislation after the amended FAO comes into force."

The spokesman added, "The SB has briefed the holders of dealers' licence in firearms on the Bill, and consulted the LegCo Panel on Security in February 2025. The trade and the Panel supported the Bill in general. We will continue to consult the trade in the formulation of the relevant subsidiary legislation."