COMPETITOR FIREARM COMPLIANCE GUIDE

Taking target firearms overseas to the United States

Part 1 explains Australian export clearance and US ATF Form 6NIA permit requirements.
Part 2 sets out the four-step process for travelling with competition shotguns and ammunition.

PART 1 Understanding Australian & US border requirements

You must hold an ABF Restricted Goods Permit (RGP) and an approved US ATF Form 6NIA

Taking a competition shotgun to the United States constitutes a temporary export from Australia and a temporary import into the US. Travellers entering under the Visa Waiver Program (ESTA) or a nonimmigrant visa must comply with Australian Border Force (ABF) export controls and the US *Gun Control Act of 1968*.

Under US federal law (18 U.S.C. §§ 922(g)(5)(B) and 922(y)(2)), nonimmigrant visitors must hold an approved **ATF Form 6NIA (5330.3D)** supported by a qualifying sporting exception—such as an official competition invitation from the ATA, NSSA, NSCA, or USA Shooting, or a valid US state hunting licence.

IMPORTANT — APPLY AT LEAST 8 TO 10 WEEKS PRIOR TO TRAVEL: While ATF processing typically takes 6–8 weeks (valid for 12 months / multiple entries once granted), your Australian ABF Restricted Goods Permit (RGP) is valid strictly for 28 days from approval. Carry printed copies of your approved Form 6NIA and shoot invitation when flying.

PART 2 How to organise it, in order

1 Obtain your approved US ATF Form 6NIA Temporary Import Permit

- Download the current **ATF Form 6NIA (5330.3D, Rev. June 2025)** from **atf.gov** and email the completed PDF to **imports@atf.gov** (or fax to +1 304 616 4554).
- Attach your official US competition invitation/entry confirmation (or valid US state hunting licence) and passport details.
- Enter exact shotgun details (manufacturer name & country, model, gauge, barrel & overall length, and exact serial number).
- List all ammunition quantities you intend to bring into the US—unlisted ammunition will be refused entry by CBP.

ATF Firearms & Explosives Imports Branch • +1 (304) 616-4550 • imports@atf.gov • atf.gov

2 Obtain Australian Border Force (ABF) export clearance

- Register as a client in the Integrated Cargo System using **Form B319** (with 100 points of ID) to obtain your Customs Client ID (CCID).
- Lodge an **Export Declaration (Form B957)** up to 60 days before departure to generate an Export Declaration Number (EDN).
- Apply for your **Restricted Goods Permit (RGP)** within **28 days of departure** (covers up to 4 break-action shotguns and 4,000 target rounds without a separate Defence Export Controls permit).
- Verify that serial numbers on your ATF Form 6NIA, Form B957, and RGP match your State Registration Certificates letter-for-letter.

ABF Border Information • 131 881 • abf.gov.au

3 Notify your airline and pack to strict aviation & US TSA standards

- Book firearm carriage directly with your airline (e.g. Qantas, United, Delta, American) at least 72 hours prior to departure.
- Pack shotguns unloaded in a heavy-duty hard-sided case locked with **non-TSA padlocks** on every latch point (under TSA rules, only the passenger may retain the key/combination).
- Pack ammunition (max 5 kg gross weight per passenger, Division 1.4S) in factory boxes per airline & TSA rules (check whether your international carrier mandates a separate checked bag).

4 Airport processing: Depart Australia and clear US Customs (CBP)

- **Departing Australia:** Arrive 3.5 hours early. Present shotguns, licence, registration, Form B957, and RGP to ABF for physical serial inspection and stamping before airline check-in.
- **Arriving in the US:** At your first US port of entry, declare firearms to US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and present your printed ATF Form 6NIA, shoot invitation/hunting licence, passport/ESTA, and shotgun. (If connecting domestically in the US, re-check the gun case after clearing CBP.)
- **Returning to Australia:** Remove all unused US-purchased ammo unless authorised, declare firearms on your Incoming Passenger Card, and present your stamped RGP/export papers to ABF for smooth re-entry.

FOUR THINGS THAT HOLD TRAVELLERS UP

✖ **Late ATF lodgement or expired RGP** (apply 8–10 weeks out for ATF Form 6NIA, but lodge ABF RGP within 28 days of departure)

✖ **Missing shoot invitation at US entry** (CBP inspects both the approved Form 6NIA and your qualifying sporting invite/licence)

✖ **Using TSA-master-keyed locks on gun cases** (TSA regulations require high-security locks opened solely by the traveller)

✖ **Skipping ABF inspection on departure** (unverified exports trigger re-entry holds and penalties on return to Australia)