INFORMATION SHEET

Ammunition and Ammunition Components: What's the Difference?

Purpose of This Information Sheet

- Under the Western Australian Firearms Act 2024, 'ammunition' and 'components of ammunition' are treated as separate things, and different rules apply to each. This fact sheet explains what each term means.

What is ammunition?

- Ammunition is the completed cartridge that is discharged by a firearm. It also includes anything made or adapted for use as ammunition, and blank ammunition. It does not include ammunition that can't be fired — for example an inert cartridge, a dummy round, or a drill round with no primer or propellant — or a prescribed paintball pellet. *(Firearms Act 2024, s. 5)*

What is a component of ammunition?

- A component of ammunition is any single part of a round, on its own. For a standard centrefire cartridge, this means the cartridge case, the primer, the propellant (gunpowder), or the projectile (the bullet). *(Firearms Act 2024, s. 249)*

What does 'unassembled components of ammunition' mean?

- Under the Act, "unassembled components of ammunition" means sufficient of the components of ammunition to enable ammunition to be manufactured from those components. In practice, if a person has all the separate parts needed to make a round of ammunition (the case, primer, propellant and projectile), rather than just one type of part on its own, they are considered to be in possession of the unassembled components of ammunition.
- The difference between a "component of ammunition" and "unassembled components of ammunition" matters, because separate offences apply to each. It is an offence to possess unassembled components of ammunition without the correct licence. Reloading your own ammunition for your own firearm is generally covered by your existing firearms licence, if it authorises you to use that firearm (see section 117 below). A separate licence is generally needed to manufacture ammunition for any other purpose, such as for sale. *(Firearms Act 2024, ss. 249-257)*

What the Act says;

- "A licence that authorises the use of a firearm by the licensee or an authorised person for the licence also authorises the licensee or authorised person to manufacture ammunition for the firearm for use in the firearm.". *(Firearms Act 2024, s117)*

What is prohibited ammunition?

- Some types of ammunition are prohibited in Western Australia. This includes certain dangerous types — such as tracer, incendiary and armour-piercing ammunition — and a list of specific large-calibre and magnum cartridges. The complete list is in Schedule 1 of the Western Australian *Firearms Regulations 2024.*

Remember
It is an offence under the *Firearms Act 2024* to possess, acquire or supply ammunition, or a complete set of ammunition components, without the correct licence, permit or approval.

Significant penalties apply, including imprisonment. If you are not sure whether something you have is covered, contact Licensing Services before you act.

References to Legislation:

Legislation	Relevant Provision
Firearms Act 2024	Sections - *s.5, s.117, s.249, s254-257*
Firearms Regulations 2024	Regulations - *r.11, Schedule 1*