

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Cooktown cannon firing comes to an end**

**January 28, 2020**

**COOKTOWN**

The historical cannon on Cooktown's main street will be turned into a public monument, following direction from the State licensing body.

Weapons Licensing Queensland has directed Cook Shire Council to have the cannon rendered inoperable by an armourer, and registered as a public monument. "Despite our best attempts to preserve the much-loved tradition of cannon firing in Cooktown, Weapons Licensing have informed us that the practice of firing the cannon in a public place is not permitted," Cook Shire Mayor Peter Scott said. "The cannon is classed as a Category R weapon, and there is no provision for Council to hold a licence for this class of weapon."

The cannon, which sits as a tourist drawcard on Cooktown's waterfront and has traditionally been fired annually at the Cooktown Discovery Festival and for special occasions such as weddings, was cast in Scotland in 1803 and brought to Cooktown in 1885 as a defence against the threat of Russian invasion. In recognition of the historical significance of the event, Council will apply to Weapons Licensing Queensland for an exemption to allow the cannon to be fired during Cooktown Expo 2020 events in July and August.

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