Thank you for responding to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's Call for Evidence on the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Bill. All submissions will be examined and considered as part of the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill.

Please be aware that questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer before you can submit the form.

Follow the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's Twitter feed - all Committee tweets on this Bill will have the hashtag #aw&lbill.

*1. Please supply your name and contact details:

Name: [Duncan Rogers]
Organisation: 
Address 1: 
Address 2: 
City/Town: 
Postcode: 
Country: 
Email address (if no email leave blank): 
Phone Number: 

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SUBMISSION ID NUMBER 12
2. Please confirm that you have read and understood the Scottish Parliaments “Policy on the treatment of written evidence by subject and mandatory committees”:

☑ Yes

3. Please confirm whether you are content for your name to be published with your submission:

☑ Yes

☐ No

4. Which of the three categories below best describes your interest in the Bill (please tick only one)?

☑ Personal

☐ Professional

☐ Commercial

5. Do you wish your email to be added to the Committee’s distribution list for updates on progress of the Bill:

☑ Yes

☐ No
6. Invitations to give oral evidence to the Committee on the Bill will be based on the submissions received. If you wish your submission to be included amongst those considered for possible invitation to give oral evidence, please indicate here.

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. You may answer questions on the entire Bill, or on any part of the Bill. Please indicate which parts of the Bill you are responding to? (You may select as many options that apply).

☐ All of the Bill

☐ Equalities, climate change and other Scottish Government objectives

☐ Air Weapons

☐ General licensing issues

☐ Alcohol licensing

☐ Civic licensing – taxi/private hire car licensing

☐ Civic licensing – scrap metal dealers

☐ Civic licensing – theatre licensing

☐ Civic licensing – sexual entertainment venues
Name/Organisation: Duncan Rogers,

1. Air Weapons Licensing

You may respond to all the questions or only those you have a specific interest in. (Text boxes have no word limit, they will increase in size accordingly).

13. In what ways will the creation of an air weapons licensing system in Scotland contribute to preserving public order and safety, reducing crime and advancing public health policy?
I strongly feel that the creation of an airgun licensing system will have no beneficial effects on public safety, order or the reduction of crime or indeed on the advancement of any public health policy. Most of the airguns that this proposed bill is targeting are used (in the majority of cases) for target shooting and /or pest control. A small minority of people carry out illegal activities with airguns. These are the very (type) of person who will ignore entirely any legislation introduced and will continue to misuse these tools. These tools are not used, in the vast majority of cases, to create a public nuisance or a health hazard; and yet, to hear the Scottish parliaments Justice Minister speak on the subject, we are led to believe that they are an ever present scourge within our nation. This is patently NOT the case. Indeed, by the Scottish governments own figures publicly available, airgun crime is at an all time low. A public consultation recently carried out by the Scottish governments agents, returned a resounding 87% NO vote on the question as to whether there should be any implementation of licensing for airguns. Despite this figure, Mr Kenny MacAskill initially responded by stating that despite this return figure the Scottish Government would be proceeding with the proposed legislation regardless. Later, Mr MacAskill amended this statement to the effect that the original public consultation did not relate to the question of whether or not to licence airguns, but instead stated that it related to whether or not it would affect other parts of life in Scotland. This (last) is the most disgraceful piece of cherry picking of facts I have had the misfortune to listen to in many a year from a politician. Our Justice Minister is clearly on a mission, and even at the expense of completely disregarding a public consultation; and completely disregarding his chief police officers; and completely ignoring his own governments crime figures, he is bent on this course and nothing will sway him. I would suggest that this behaviour is not the behaviour of a democratically elected justice minister, but is rather the behaviour of a despot or an autocrat. We have laws & rules aplenty to deal with miscreants who misuse airguns (or any guns) Why not apply these laws more assiduously, instead of potentially at best, marginalising, and at worst criminalising a sizeable population of law abiding citizens in Scotland?

14. Is there sufficient provision, or sufficient capacity to provide, suitable numbers of air weapons clubs across all areas of Scotland for use by registered air weapons owners/ users?
There is certainly NOT enough capacity in existent clubs in Scotland to cater for (potentially) hundreds of thousands more users. I have personal knowledge of this as a former member (& New Member Secretary/range safety adviser) at Dunfermline Airgun Club. For decades, the club has held around twenty to twenty five members, and now? It is bursting at the seams with forty five members and only waiting space available. All of the clubs in Scotland are now in this position.

15. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those using air weapons for personal/recreational use?

It will be restrictive if introduced, the public perception that airguns 'are bad' has been pushed and further pushed by the Scottish Governments spin doctors, with Mr MacAskil at the helm. This perception WILL be fermented in future in order to further restrict the use of airguns for recreational use. Of this I have absolutely no doubt whatsoever. Eventually, the only places that can will be allowed for recreational use of airguns will be licensed clubs.

16. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those aged 14 to 17 who use air weapons?

It will put off the young from entering into a very enjoyable pastime. Their parents, who will be hoodwinked into believing the myth that airguns are bad, by our governments publicity system, will deny many the opportunity to partake of a thoroughly harmless and safe hobby. The sports participants will dwindle.

17. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those using air weapons for commercial/professional reasons (for example: for pest control; as part of the tourist/hunting season; as part of fairs, paintballing centre, entertainment sector etc.)?
I personally carry out significant pest control activities on a number of permissions throughout central Scotland, Fife & Perth Kinross. I own literally thousands of pounds worth of kit to enable me to do this safely and efficiently. I personally remove thousands of prey species per year. In addition to this service, I also monitor the permissions I shoot over and report concerns & issues to the landowners or their neighbours. If newcomers are discouraged from this activity, who will, in future, control the depredations of rabbit, grey squirrel, rat and numerous other pest species that low powered airguns are the perfect tool for controlling?

18. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those using air weapons for competitive sporting purposes?

19. Is it equitable for those applying for an air weapons certificate to pay a fee which cannot be refundable irrespective of whether a certificate is granted or not?

No it most certainly would NOT be equitable to pay a non refundable fee in the event that a licence were not granted

20. Will the air weapons licensing system have a positive or negative impact on other areas of the public sector in Scotland (eg. The work of local government, public agencies etc.)?
I suspect that implementation of licensing in Scotland for an unknown number of guns (estimated by the Scottish government's own figures to be anywhere to 100,000+ individual items) will be an organisational nightmare with no benefit.

21. What, if any, might the unintended consequences of introducing an air weapons licensing system in Scotland be?

Criminalisation of a huge number of people, reduction in the pest control area and commensurate damage of structure, property, food and loss of revenue for farmers & food producers.

Also the loss of sales of shooting equipment (guns, sights, clothing, kit) will have a significant effect on many businesses throughout Scotland.

22. Do you have any other comments to make on air weapons licensing aspects of the Bill?

I firmly believe this proposed Bill will do nothing but produce distress and hardship for a huge number of shooters & business owners in Scotland.