

Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity
Ministear an Àiteachais agus Ceangal
Jim Fairlie MSP
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Finlay Carson MSP
Convener
Rural Affairs and Islands Committee
Scottish Parliament

By email: rural.committee@parliament.scot

09 October 2025

Dear Convener,

Commencement of Part 2 of the Wildlife Management and Muirburn (Scotland) Act 2024 relating to the Muirburn Licensing Scheme.

I had previously outlined my intention in parliament to bring the provisions in the Wildlife Management and Muirburn (Scotland) Act 2024 relating to the muirburn licensing scheme in to force on 01 January 2026.

I am now writing to notify you that the new licensing conditions for muirburn will now not come into force until Autumn 2026.

In the aftermath of the wildfires which have affected many parts of the country and caused extensive damage to Scotland's peatlands, I have taken the decision to move the commencement date from 1 January, when part 2 of the Wildlife Management and Muirburn (Scotland) Act which relates to the muirburn licensing scheme would have come into effect.

This follows extensive discussions with land managers, game keepers, estate owners and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS).

I believe that delaying the implementation of the muirburn provisions until the start of the next season in Autumn 2026 gives us more time to carefully consider how these necessary changes to licensing can be brought forward in a way which does not adversely affect our ability to prevent and respond to wildfires.

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www.gov.scot

We will continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders and continue these discussions on 14 October at the Wildfires Summit to discuss our approach to muirburn licensing and prevention of wildfires.

I am copying this letter to the Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans

Yours sincerely,



JIM FAIRLIE

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