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 #awlbill.

*1. Please supply your name and contact details:

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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 X

3. Please confirm whether you are content for your name to be published with your submission:
Yes
No X

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

5. Do you wish your email to be added to the Committee's distribution list for updates on progress of the Bill:
   Yes
   No X
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  X

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 X

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
In order for something to be considered an airgun it would need to be a lethal barrelled weapon so while the bill has set the power level at 1 joule until they reach a power level of a lethal barrelled weapon they are not airguns.

Replica firearms including airsoft are dealt with by the Violent Crime Reduction Act

It regulates and grants exemptions for films, sporting use and so forth and may be a reserved matter.

Paintball and Airsoft should be granted a specific exemption in the bill as they're sport's enjoyed by many people.

The bill also plans to put airgun sound suppressors under the licence as well. Whether such powers are devolved and the extra costs to license such accessories should also be looked at.

Fees should be refunded if a licence isn't given and accurate compensation should be dealt if people need to surrender their guns.

The main thrust for air gun regulation came after a child died by being shot in Easterhouse, a deprived area in Glasgow. Both the victims parents and the shooter had been charged on separate occasions for drugs offenses. The air rifle wasn't found and it was also claimed to have been made more powerful.

The reason I bring these details to your attention is that air gun crimes have been falling yet this bill is to be brought in for the sole benefit of problem areas at the expense of the rest of the country. The restrictions on drugs doesn't seem to have had an effect so why would air gun licensing? The air gun was never found so it may have been an illegal firearm already.

A consultation in 2013 found that the majority of the replies were opposed to the licensing of airguns for a variety of reasons. A few of the minority of those supporting the proposals were from animal rights organisations relying on emotive arguments to support the licence plans. I find it rather hypocritical seeing as dogs have killed more children in recent times and cats have killed more wildlife and peoples pets inside their gardens than air guns, yet there is no calls for more responsible pet ownership.

There are some unintended consequences to consider.

Air guns help take care of small scale pest control. Without it people may ignore a problem until it spreads or gets big enough for professionals to deal with. The other options may be to use traps or poison which could affect other animals or pets.

Other incidents I have heard about were swans getting shot however I had also heard that people were hunting Swans to eat. With the rise of food banks and in light of the attempts by the DWP to deny the public their basic needs it's not beyond the realms of possibility that some people are trying to hunt for food. Something that's a far more serious subject than an ill thought out licensing law which does little else than grant the government and licensing boards more unneeded powers at the expense of the public's freedoms.