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: 
Organisation: FSB Scotland
Address 1: 
Address 2: 
City/Town: 
Postcode: 
Country: 
Email address (if no email leave blank): 
Phone Number: 

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
SUBMISSION ID NUMBER 124
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
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?

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?

15. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those using air weapons for personal/recreational use?
16. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those aged 14 to 17 who use air weapons?

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.)?

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?
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.)?

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

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

The introduction of a certificate scheme is intended to reduce the threat posed by irresponsible use of air weapons. However, it seems reasonable to suggest that the overwhelming majority of air gun owners represent little or no threat to public safety. Consequently, requiring the majority to complete an application process, (which is likely to be costly in terms of time and resources for both applicants and Police Scotland) does not appear to be particularly well targeted legislation.

While the Scottish Government has indicated that it would seek to reduce some duplication by shortening the process for individuals already holding a shotgun/firearm certificate, there is potentially scope to reduce the process further, or perhaps integrate it with the existing shotgun certificate process. Regulation which is targeted and proportionate is more likely to be effective.
Lastly, the Scottish Government may need to consider how to approach enforcement in relation to air weapons purchased online from sellers outwith Scotland.