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Our ref: MCSL2016/13303

The Rt Hon Fiona Mactaggart MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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D - Fiona -

6 June 2016

Thank you for your letter of 1 June, enclosing an example of correspondence you have received from a number of constituents, referring to the forthcoming debate on fireworks use scheduled for 6 June and asking you to speak for a restriction on fireworks use.

The debate relates to an e-petition to which the Government responded when it reached 10,000 signatures; the petition, together with the response, is attached for your information. Although I am aware that a minority of people use fireworks in an anti-social manner, causing distress to vulnerable people and animals, the evidence is that the majority of the public use them responsibly and with consideration for others. I have no plans at the moment to review the regulations with regard to placing further restrictions on the use of fireworks. I have, however, asked my officials to monitor the situation.

I would, of course, welcome any contribution you wish to make to the debate.

**SAJID JAVID**

**The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP**  
Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and President of the Board of Trade

RECEIVED

07 JUN 2016

Petition 109702

Restrict the use of fireworks to reduce stress and fear in animals and pets

Fireworks now occur at all times of the day and evening for many weeks during the autumn and winter. Pet and animal owners struggle to keep their companion animals safe during this extended period. We call for fireworks use by the general public to be permitted on traditional celebration dates only.

### Summary

We are aware that fireworks can cause distress to animals. Restrictions on the general public's use of fireworks, and permitted noise levels, already exist and we have no plans to extend them.

### Response

Current firework regulations allow fireworks for home use to be sold during the traditional firework periods of Bonfire Night (15 October – 10 November), New Year's Eve (26 December – 31 December), Chinese New Year (the day of the Chinese New Year and three days immediately before), and Diwali (the day of Diwali and three days immediately before).

Suppliers who wish to sell fireworks outside the traditional periods must comply with stringent conditions before being granted a licence by their local licensing authority. This means the availability and use of fireworks outside the traditional periods has been greatly reduced. The regulations also created a curfew preventing the use of fireworks between 11.00pm and 7.00am all year round with the exception of 5 November, when the curfew starts at 12 midnight, and New Year's Eve, Chinese New Year and Diwali, when the curfew starts at 1.00 am on the night of celebration.

We understand concerns about the distress noisy fireworks can cause to pets, livestock and wildlife. This is one of the reasons that there is a noise level limit of 120 decibels on fireworks for home use. We realise, however, that even at this level fireworks noise can be distressing to some animals and refer owners to advice on keeping animals safe during fireworks periods. This is freely available from animal charities, such as the Blue Cross which gives both general and species-specific advice on its website. In addition there is Government-sponsored advice and guidance on the safe and considerate use of fireworks on the Safer Fireworks website.

Excessive noise from fireworks, or noise during the curfew period, can be considered a statutory nuisance and local authority environmental health officers have the power to investigate complaints of fireworks noise and act to prevent it where appropriate. Although there is some use of fireworks outside the traditional periods, we believe that the majority of people who use fireworks do so at the appropriate times of year and have a sensible and responsible attitude towards them. There are no plans at the moment to place further limitations on their use.