

## Office for Product Safety and Standards

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FAB Firework Abatement campaign  
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25 April 2019

Dear Julie,

I am writing to you in response to your correspondence dated 16 November 2018 concerning the change.org petition on fireworks. I am sorry that you did not receive our previous reply which my colleagues sent to you on 7 December 2018.

Please accept this letter as our response to the change.org petition.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), which is part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, supports Ministers in ensuring fireworks are safe for consumers to use, and that relevant regulations are working effectively to provide protections where they are needed.

The Government takes the issues associated with fireworks, product safety and the safety of the public very seriously. It understands that many people have strong feelings about the distress that fireworks can cause to individuals and animals, including pets and livestock, as can be seen by the large number of people that took the time to sign your petition. We recognise the importance of ensuring fireworks are used safely and that disturbance is limited. That is one of the reasons why there are existing laws in place to control firework availability and use.

The existing UK legislation on fireworks provides a strong framework controlling the sale of safe goods and the safe use of fireworks. There are also enforcement mechanisms in place to tackle situations when fireworks are sold illegally or misused. Legislation limits when and from where fireworks can be sold and sets maximum noise levels. There are a range of penalties for breaching legal requirements, including imprisonment, in certain circumstances. Where there has been evidence, government has taken proactive measures such as banning certain dangerous items from the UK including bangers and jumping jacks.

As you are aware, there has been both parliamentary debate and wider discussion around fireworks. In response, the Minister with responsibility for fireworks policy and legislation in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Kelly Tolhurst MP, has asked OPSS to develop an up to date and comprehensive evidence base for fireworks.

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The Office for Product Safety and Standards is part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. We strive to enhance protections for consumers and the environment and drive increased productivity, growth and business confidence.

The work officials are carrying out on the evidence base is intended to cover those areas of concern raised in debate, and in recent petitions, and to extend beyond the immediate responsibilities of both BEIS and OPSS. The purpose of the evidence base is to provide the Government with fact-based data. Officials have been in touch with you recently to invite you to share any information, data or research you might have access to, as part of the work being carried out to develop the evidence base, that they would not already have access to or which is not in the public sphere. If you hold any factual data that has not already been published or shared, I would encourage you to share it with OPSS so it can form part of the full evidence base.

Thank you for the work you have done to highlight peoples' concerns about this issue. I hope you will be able to share this response with those who have signed the petition.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Russell', written in a cursive style.

Graham Russell  
Chief Executive

Office for Product Safety and Standards