



June 6, 2016

Fire Chiefs and UK Government support UK Fireworks industry ahead of Parliamentary debate

Fire chiefs have said any move to restrict the sale and use of fireworks could have the opposite effect and lead to an increase in illegal use.

Fire and Rescue Services support for the British Fireworks Association's position comes ahead of a parliamentary debate on the issue on Monday, June 6, triggered by an online petition calling for the restriction on the sale of fireworks.

Andy Hubble, BFA spokesperson and director of Star Fireworks, said: "In our view any further restrictions on the sale and use of fireworks would lead to a sharp rise in unregulated, untraceable sales and illegal imports into the country from Europe.

"The current law around fireworks – which has included 16 new pieces of legislation since 2004 – is effective and proportionate. The industry is already heavily regulated.

"Our view on this petition is backed by the Chief Fire Officers Association and the UK Government.

"Millions of people enjoy fireworks every year for birthdays, weddings, anniversaries and countless other celebrations. Fireworks have been enjoyed in the UK since the 16th century."

Gary Walsh from the Chief Fire Officers Association, who said legislation put in place following the review of all explosive legislation and enactment of the Explosive regulations 2014, was "proportionate to the risk".

Mr Walsh said: "Any proposals to shorten sales periods could have an opposite impact with the potential to increase illegal firework sales, black market and rogue traders."

Mr Hubble said: "The British Fireworks Association strongly opposes the antisocial use of fireworks and we have written to all MPs actively calling for tougher penalties on their misuse, which would mean raising the maximum fine for anyone found guilty from £1,000 to £5,000.

"The UK fireworks industry is a responsible industry that puts safety first, provides a product that is enjoyed by 10 million people every year and supports thousands of jobs around the country."

The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has said that the laws and regulations in place provide robust guidance on the safe use of fireworks. In its official response to the petition, BIS said:

“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.”

Contact

If you have any questions about this media release or would like to speak to a BFA spokesperson, please contact Chris Sealey on 07786 512833/01287 610404, or email: chris.sealey@dtw.co.uk. Alternatively, contact Chris Taylor on 07949 287356/01287 610404, or email: chris@dtw.co.uk

About the BFA

The British Fireworks Association (BFA) was founded in 2002 and represents the majority of the UK's manufacturers and importers of consumer fireworks.

Our aim is to promote the safe and sensible use of fireworks that are manufactured and tested to the highest standards, and to achieve this we actively participate in all changes to the legislation on fireworks. BFA members are represented on committees and working groups throughout the UK and Europe where fireworks are on the agenda.

Members of the BFA have to comply with strict criteria and also a Members Code of Conduct. Find out more at www.britishfireworksassociation.co.uk