Penalties

Anyone who manufactures, sells, purchases, transfers or acquires a self-contained gas cartridge weapon on or after 20 January 2004 will commit an offence under the Firearms Act 1968. You will be liable for a maximum of 10 years imprisonment and will soon be liable for the new minimum sentence of 5 years.

Anyone who is found in possession of a self-contained gas cartridge weapon on or after 30 April 2004 without it being entered on a valid firearm certificate will also commit an offence under the Firearms Act 1968 and will be liable for the same penalty.

If you have applied for a firearm certificate before 30 April 2004 but your application is outstanding or is the subject of an appeal, you will not be liable for prosecution.

Dealers

Retailers will not be able to trade in self-contained gas cartridge weapons from 20 January 2004 although you may continue to hold existing stock until 30 April 2004. If you wish to sell the weapons abroad or to provide a repair service, you must apply to the Home Office for the Secretary of State’s authority under section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968 and to register with the police as a firearms dealer. Applications must be submitted before 30 April 2004.
From 20 January 2004, under the provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, it will be an offence to manufacture, sell, purchase, transfer or acquire any air weapon that uses a self-contained gas cartridge system.

Anyone who already owns one of these weapons must obtain a firearm certificate for it from the police. Applications for firearm certificates must be made before 30 April 2004.

As an alternative, existing owners can hand their weapon into the police for disposal. Again, this must be done before 30 April 2004.

From 30 April 2004 it will be an offence, punishable by a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 10 years imprisonment, to possess a self-contained gas cartridge weapon without the necessary firearm certificate.