



BANNING OFFENSIVE WEAPONS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

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Introduction

The Police Federation of England & Wales represents 140,000 police officers from the rank of constable to the rank of chief inspector.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the consultation document **Banning Offensive Weapons**.

It is important to remember that it is police officers who are likely to have to resolve any situation involving any person carrying any weapon of offence, it is therefore crucial that any change to existing orders or legislation takes account of this fact to protect those officers carrying out the business of protecting members of the public.

We will answer your questions as they appear in the body of the document.

Q1 *Should curved single edged swords (sometimes known as Samurai swords) be added to the offensive weapons order ?*

Yes the weapons should be added to the offensive weapon order.

Q2 *Do you agree with the definition as suggested and should there also be a minimum length of blade for the weapon?*

We believe there should not be a defined length of weapon. A bladed weapon is a bladed weapon. If you were to put a length to it then this would allow individuals a defence and also cause unnecessary bureaucracy in deciding whether it was or wasn't the size as described.

Q3. *Should there be any exemptions for genuine Japanese swords? On what grounds?*

It is difficult to see where any exemptions should apply, save for any weapon used in theatrical or film making.

Q4 *Should there be an exemption for martial arts practitioners? How should this exemption be framed?*

If there were to be any exemptions for martial arts practitioners any exemption would have to be framed with registration or licensed in particular with importing and exporting.

Q5 *Are there other weapons which have been used in violent crime that should be banned?*

Any weapon can be used as a weapon of offence and it has to be the person in possession of it to justify carrying the weapon and this then becomes an aggravated factor when a sentence is applied. Before we continue banning everything we have to look at the scale of the problem.

Q6 *If so, how are these weapons best described?*

See above.

Q7 *Are there any exceptions, exemptions or defences in respect of existing offensive weapons which should be added?*

We believe these are sufficiently catered for within the current legislative framework.

In summary, we believe to do nothing isn't an option. We would welcome any proposals as to how any change would be monitored; which agency would take ownership of the issue? Would it be the retail industry or crime and disorder partnerships linked to the police of the area?

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