



Justice Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA
Tel 020 7219 8196/8198 Email justicecom@parliament.uk
Website www.parliament.uk/justicecttee

The Right Honourable Lord Justice Holroyde
The Sentencing Council for England and Wales

7 September 2021

By email only – the Justice Committee’s response to the Sentencing Council’s consultation on the sentencing of firearms importation offences

Dear Lord Justice Holroyde,

The Committee welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Sentencing Council’s consultation on the proposed guideline for firearms importation offences. The Committee thanks the Council for sharing the consultation responses with us. The Committee supports the approach taken by the Council as set out in the consultation document. Although they are low volume offences, the guideline will assist sentencers and help to make sentencing of those convicted of these offences more consistent.

The Committee notes that the resource assessment states that the absence of sentencing transcripts from the magistrates’ courts inhibited the Council’s data analysis. In 2009, the Justice Committee said: “It is unacceptable that basic information such as what factors led to a particular sentence being imposed in a particular case is not collected and made available”.¹ It is disappointing that ten years after the creation of the Sentencing Council, the lack of data on sentencing continues to inhibit the Council’s resource assessments.

We look forward to working with the Council on future guidelines.

Sir Robert Neill MP

Chair
Justice Committee

¹ Justice Committee, Sentencing Guidelines and Parliament: building a bridge, Sixth Report of Session 2008–09, HC 715 para 84