

The long awaited 'Offensive Weapons Bill' was introduced to the House of Commons today, and given its First Reading. This stage is formal and takes place without any debate. The next step is for MPs to consider the Bill at a Second Reading, where the bill will be debated. The date for second reading has not yet been announced.

The process is long winded, if you follow this link you can see the progress of the bill:

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/offensiveweapons.html>

The Bill seeks to extend the prohibitions on possession of firearms to;

- **“any rifle from which a shot, bullet, or other missile, with kinetic energy of more than 13,600 joules at the muzzle of the weapon, can be discharged” (this is 10,000ft/lbs)**
- “any rifle with a chamber from which empty cartridge cases are extracted using
  - I) energy from propellant gas, or
  - li) energy imparted to a spring or other energy storage device by propellant gas, Other than a rifle which is chambered for .22 rim-fire cartridges”
- “any device (commonly known as a bump stock) which is designed or adapted so that –
  - I) it is capable of forming part of or being added to a self-loading lethal barrelled weapon (as defined in section 5791b) and (2A)), and
  - li) if it forms part of or is added to such a weapon, it increases the rate of fire of the weapon by using the recoil from the weapon to generate repeated pressure on the trigger...”

A full copy of the Bill is available here: [https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0232/cbill\\_2017-20190232\\_en\\_4.htm#pb6-l1g28](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0232/cbill_2017-20190232_en_4.htm#pb6-l1g28)

### **What does this mean for .50cal?**

As it stands, unless the text of the bill is amended, the rifles will be banned. Compensation will be paid. However, now it is NOT the time to give up. The bill will be debated, and amendments are to be expected.

### **What happened to the consultation?**

The consultation has finally been concluded, the results (which are unsurprising) can be viewed here: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/717673/SUMMARY\\_OF\\_CONSULTATION\\_RESPONSES.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/717673/SUMMARY_OF_CONSULTATION_RESPONSES.pdf)

### **What next?**

A Home Affairs committee has put a call out for evidence, we will be submitting evidence. <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/serious-violence-inquiry-17-19/>

We need to get back in touch with our MPs. A number are on side, but most are just 'sitting on the fence', seemingly ignorant of the technicalities and too lazy to read our brief. We will be putting together yet another letter to MPs, however this will be very much simplified, and will reflect the fact that a draft bill has been presented to parliament. It will also concentrate less on the term “.50cal” and focus more on phrases such as ‘larger calibre’ target rifles. We will be taking the lead,

and helping the NRA and BASC to inform their members of the situation. Now that we are talking about an energy limit, not a calibre, this might make shooters wake up and realise that all firearms are genuinely at risk. Don't forget that this proposed ban has come about with no evidence of any actual risk, there was no terrorist plot and the stolen rifle was so useless to criminals it was abandoned.

**Time scale**

Right now we have no idea, it would seem that there are 11 steps to the process (plus any repetition if amendments are implemented), so this might take a while. In the meantime, once you have lobbied your MP