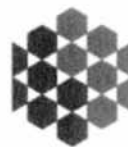


FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Department of
Justice
www.dojni.gov.uk

Minister's Office Block B,
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Ballymiscaw
Belfast
BT4 3SG
Tel: 028 90522744

private.office@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk

Our ref SUB/1386/2015

Christine Darrah
Committee Clerk
Committee for Justice
Room 242 Parliament Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

1 December 2015

Dear Christine,

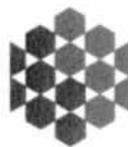
**THE FIREARMS (VARIATION OF FEES) ORDER (NORTHERN IRELAND)
2015**

Further to my letter of 23 September to the Committee regarding this Order, I am writing to advise the Committee that it will be made to come in to operation on 22 February 2016.

At the oral evidence sessions on the Justice (No. 2) Bill on Thursday 26 November some Members expressed a concern about the Fees Order coming in to operation when the legislative changes were not settled. The Minister has asked me to write to the Committee to clarify the position.

My previous letter highlighted that the intention was to make the Order on or before 1 December. The SL1 was subsequently agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 1 October 2015. The Minister believes that the commencement date of 22 February gives a reasonable lead in period for the introduction of the change and time for publicity regarding the changes and notification of those seeking re-grants.

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At present the PSNI is, in effect, subsidising shooters. The Minister, given the extremely tight financial backdrop, is clear that this is unsustainable.

In addition, the Minister has asked me to reiterate that he intends to introduce the changes, highlighted to the Committee in June, concerning the firearms legislation. He has asked officials to continue their work on these and to settle the clauses for the Justice (No. 2) Bill as soon as possible.

I should be grateful if you would bring this update to the attention of Committee members and assure them of his commitment to the legislative changes.



**TIM LOGAN
DALO**