



**The British  
Woodcarvers  
Association**

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The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP  
Home Secretary  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

12 August 2018

Dear Home Secretary

I am writing to you as the Chairman of the British Woodcarvers Association to express my concerns regarding Section 15 of the Offensive Weapons Bill that is currently before parliament.

Whilst the BWA fully supports the aims of the bill, we are concerned that Sections 15, 17 and 18 would have unintended consequences for both hobbyists and professional workers in a number of fields including: wood carving, wood turning, stone carving and wood, stone and metal working in general. This is because many of the tools we use would be caught under the definition of a "bladed product" as defined in Section 17 of the bill. For example the gouges and chisels we use in wood carving are very sharp, bladed tools which if **mis-used** could be "capable of causing a serious injury to a person which involves cutting their skin" (sub-section 17(b) of the bill).

We would like to respectfully suggest that an additional exemption be included in Section 16 of the bill (Defences to offence under section 15) along the following lines:

"it is a defence ... to prove that they [the seller] reasonably believed that the buyer bought the bladed product for use in a legitimate hobby, pastime or professional trade, such as wood carving, wood turning, stone carving or other forms of wood, stone or metal working".

In the case of wood carving, the seller could confirm that the buyer was a legitimate hobby or professional woodcarver by the buyer quoting their BWA membership number (and we could provide participating sellers with details of legitimate BWA members).

As an alternative, the definition of a "bladed product" could be amended to exclude tools such as chisels that are used for legitimate purposes such as wood carving, wood turning, stone carving or other forms of wood, stone or metal working.

We are also concerned that if our tools are included in the definition of "bladed products" then they could not be delivered to residential properties (Section 15), nor be received by persons under 18 years of age (Section 18). The restriction on delivery to residential properties would make it impossible for our members to order their tools on-line, by telephone or by post and to receive them at home. The 18 years of age restriction would make it virtually impossible to deliver such tools as delivery is often by courier and I doubt whether couriers would be willing or capable of checking the age of the recipient.

One possible solution to the above would be to require all such tools to be delivered to the buyer's local post office sorting office, from which they could be collected provided proof of age was shown.

I hope you will consider our concerns and suggestions in the positive light in which they are offered.

Yours sincerely

Dr Richard Waite  
Chairman  
British Woodcarvers Association