

PE1671/P

Petitioner submission of 2 September 2019

Following the Public Petitions Committee meeting of 20th June with representatives from the Pest Management Alliance (PMA), we, the undersigned co-petitioners and representatives of groups supporting this petition, would like to provide our comments on some of the points raised during that meeting. First, however, we would like to thank the Committee again for the opportunity to submit questions.

We support the PMA's statement before the Committee that the purchase and use of glue traps by members of the public and any untrained persons is unacceptable. We urge the Committee to encourage the Scottish Government to take legislative action and introduce a public ban on the sale and use of glue traps.

In addition, we believe, there is clear need for a more robust regulation of the use of these devices by 'professionals'. We therefore welcome the PMA's commitment to revise their existing Code of Best Practice for the Humane Use of Glue Boards (2017) and look forward to receiving and reviewing a draft of their proposed changes, before a new code is released to the association's members. We also acknowledge the proposal by Ms Ward-Thompson to develop a more detailed guidance document and a new training programme for professional users, and are keen to advise the PMA and offer our support in this process.

However, we remain concerned that neither a new Code (or other guidance) nor a training course will be sufficient to ensure that these products are used in a way that minimises the suffering of trapped animals and reduces the risks to other wildlife and pets, unless adherence to regulations and the completion of training become mandatory and monitored. We disagree with the PMA's view that compliance with the current Code is not an issue in the pest control industry and refer to the incident that sparked this petition, resulting in a blackbird being caught and severely injured on a glue trap set by a 'professional' pest controller from a commercial pest control company and member of the British Pest Control Association. We look forward to hearing from the PMA what measures it intends to take to put an end to the, inadvertent or intentional, misuse of these traps by professionals. We maintain our recommendation to the Scottish Government that the risk of misuse of glue traps and unnecessary animal suffering could be significantly reduced through a robust licensing regime such as that adopted in New Zealand. We stress that this, as well as the proposed ban on sales to the public, should apply to all forms of glue traps containing an adhesive strong enough to trap any bird or mammal, and not only those marketed for the capture of rodents, as the welfare issues are the same.

Moreover, we are concerned that the pest control profession in Scotland and the rest of the country remains unregulated. For instance, as Brian Whittle MSP observed, there is no requirement for pest controllers to be a member of an industry association, meaning they are able to access and operate glue traps as well as other traps and poisons without monitoring of competence or compliance with a Code of Best Practice. We support his suggestion that the Scottish Government should consider passing legislation that requires all pest control providers, and suppliers, to be registered with and regularly audited by a certified professional body.

We look forward to the Committee's discussion of the evidence provided by the PMA and further scrutiny of our petition.