

# 77805904 - Stan Cook

## Proposed Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-Restricted Sales etc.) (Scotland) Bill

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

-

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Stan Cook

Q1. Which of the following expresses your view of creating a new offence of assault against a worker in the retail sector?

Fully supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Our law has long recognised that assaults can be aggravated, for example against a householder during a burglary, for racial motives. We recognise that assaults on people carrying out their jobs merit severe punishment, e.g.

assaults against the police and fire personnel. I think that retail workers meet the same criteria. We need shops, they are not a dispensable luxury.

**Q2. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to assaults on workers upholding statutory age-restrictions?**

A new statutory aggravation

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Please see my answer to the previous question.

**Q3. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to abuse, harassment, threatening or obstruction of workers upholding statutory age-restrictions?**

A new statutory aggravation for threatening or abusive behaviour or harassment; and a new statutory offence of obstructing a worker upholding an age-restriction.

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Please see before.

**Q4. Do you think that there are other steps which could be taken (either instead of, or in addition to, legislation) to achieve the aims of the proposal?**

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

There should be a publicity campaign to highlight the changes and to show support for retail workers. While recognising that the police are called upon to do a lot, it would be good if they were particularly active here when the new law is introduced. Similarly, fiscals need to be seen to be playing their part.

**Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:**

**Q5.1. (a) Government and the public sector** - Broadly cost neutral

**Q5.2. (b) Businesses** - Some reduction in cost

**Q5.3. (c) Individuals** - Some reduction in cost

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

There will be increased cost for the government at the outset. However, it should be expected that a tougher approach will reduce crime over a longer period and even things out. For businesses, assaults are a difficult cost, both in terms of money and personal suffering. The new law should help both. For individuals, the winner is a greater feeling of safety and of worth.

Q6. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

No

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

As I mentioned, we deal with aggravated assaults already. We should be pretty clued-up as to how to do it.

Q7. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Positive

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

I am not certain of this, but I suspect there is a correlation between assaults and the ethnic background of the retail worker.

Q8. In what ways could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

There is no perceived negative impact.

Q9. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

We know how to do it. It is a question of finding some upfront time and resource to implement.

Q10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal, for example, other trigger points for violence and abuse, and other workers who should be covered?

No.

Q11. Which of the following describes your retail-sector experience (please tick all that apply)?

Working in premises selling alcohol for consumption on the premises (e.g. pub)	No
Working in premises selling alcohol for consumption off the premises (e.g. shop)	No
Working in premises selling other age-restricted products (e.g. tobacco, knives etc.)	No
Working in other retail premises	No
None of the above	Yes

Q12. Which of the following describes your experience of violence or verbal abuse in the retail sector (please tick all that apply)?

I have been the victim of physical violence	No
I have been the victim of verbal abuse	No
I have witnessed colleagues being subjected to physical violence	No
I have witnessed colleagues being subjected to verbal abuse	No
None of the above	Yes

Q13. Please give details of any personal experience that you would wish to share. (Please avoid naming any other person or giving information that would allow another person to be identified)

Our local shopkeeper, a Moslem, has been assaulted at least twice.





