

Ted,

I refer to your letter of 13th June 2007 to Mr Ian Henderson of Central Science Laboratories, and I note that you make mention of 'shooting birds from a vehicle parked on a public highway is both dangerous and illegal' I just want to clarify a couple of points.

Section 161(2) of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended by sections 35, 38 and 46 of the Criminal Justice Act 1986) states:

If a person without lawful authority or excuse:

(b) discharges any firearm or firework within 50 feet of the centre of a highway,
And in consequence a user of the highway is injured, interrupted or endangered, that person is guilty of an offence.

The personnel of Central Science Laboratories are qualified firearms professionals and do have lawful authority to discharge firearms from a highway and as such their activity is legal.

The firearms personnel were accompanied by spotters who informed them of any persons approaching and at this point they would withdraw their firearms inside the vehicle so as not to cause any alarm to persons passing, and also to ensure that at no time were any persons endangered. I understand that this may appear furtive to persons having no knowledge of the operational requirements.

Further to this the police were made aware of the firearms activities on a day to day basis and were informed of their conclusion.

The position of Cleveland Police on this issue is that no illegal activity has taken place and I would appreciate it if your members could have this situation clarified.

Regards

Rob