



Department  
for Transport

Lord Craig of Radley  
House of Lords  
London  
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*Dear David,*

**Baroness Sugg**  
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I am grateful for your helpful contributions to the Second Reading of the Laser Misuse (Vehicles) Bill on 9 January 2018. During the debate you raised a number of points, which I wanted to address in more detail in writing.

Firstly you raised the issue of different types of lasers such as 'pulse' or 'burst' lasers and whether the term 'laser beam' in the Bill would cover these types. I have been assured that the Bill is not limited to any particular type of laser. A laser is defined by coherence and comprises a single frequency of light or 'beam'. The term 'beam' will therefore cover the different types of laser that you raised. However, I have asked officials to look at this again.

You also questioned whether the term 'pilot' on an aircraft was too restrictive and would not cover other members of the flight crew. I have given this a lot of thought, we have sought to capture those persons who are in control of the vehicle. The Bill specifically refers to pilots "monitoring the control" of aircraft to capture co-pilots, who it could be argued are not controlling the aircraft, but who nonetheless should be covered by the offence because of the important role they play in the safe flying of aircraft.

I understand there may be other individuals on the flight deck, but our view is that the person with ultimate control of the aircraft will be the pilot and that is where the safety risk lies. However, you raise a valid point and I have asked for further advice on this issue to ensure there are no loopholes and all those who are critical to safety of an aircraft are covered. That said, when a laser beam is shone or directed at an aircraft the light tends to fill the cockpit with light, so it is difficult to imagine another member of the crew being dazzled or distracted but not the pilots.

Finally, you and other Noble Lords raised concern about the definition of a journey. It is intended to start when the vehicle is ready to commence its journey. It includes taxiing in the case of aircraft; and for all vehicles will cover any temporary stops along the way, such as stops at a train station, bus stop, traffic lights or when waiting to take-off. It is also intended to

capture journeys of any length, including a journey that returns to the same place at which it began. I have asked my officials to look at ways in which we can ensure that it is interpreted as intended.

I would like to reiterate my appreciation to you for bringing these interesting points to my attention and I look forward to working together to bring forward this important legislation.

I am copying this letter to other Noble Lords who spoke during the debate and will place copies in the libraries of both Houses.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sugg', with a stylized, cursive script.

**BARONESS SUGG**