



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

The Rt. Hon. Alex Fergusson MSP
Galloway & West Dumfries

2002 Act review
Wildlife Management Team
Natural Resources Division Directorate for Environment and Forestry
The Scottish Government
1-C North Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

11th March 2016

Dear

Lord Sandberg

I enclose an extract from the Official Report of the Scottish Parliament's RACCE Committee's evidence session on Wildlife Crime as I believe it is important to emphasize the fact that, despite the considerable spotlight under which mounted hunting takes place, only a handful of prosecutions have taken place. As DCS Scott confirms in our brief exchange, there is no evidence to suggest that mounted hunts are acting outwith the constraints of current legislation.

I would also like to emphasise the use of the word 'asserting' in the letter from the Committee to the Minister Dr Aileen McLeod in the first paragraph of the section on foxhunting. The sentence reads "We were concerned to hear that there is information asserting a prevalence of breaches..." Ref 12 relates to that information which comes from a single source, the League Against Cruel Sports, from a video posted on Youtube.

I would simply wish to comment that the assertion made by L.A.C.S is exactly that – an unfounded allegation which, as DCS Scott confirmed, is without any evidential basis.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Fergusson

ALEX FERGISSON MSP

Please reply to: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Extract from Official Report of RACCE meeting on Wildlife Crime held on

13th Jan 2016

Alex Fergusson (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con):

I was the convener of the Rural Development Committee when the bill went through the Parliament. It is important to recognise that an element of predator control is involved—indeed, part of the reason for hunting as it exists is for predator control. The fox has no natural enemies, other than man. Therefore, I suspect that many landowners, farmers, tenants and others are very keen to have a bit of fox control carried out on their land by whatever method.

As I think that everyone has said, there is a high level of public interest in the issue, which is entirely understandable. Given that level of interest, there is also a high level of monitoring of mounted fox hunting activity by people with varying views on it. Even with that level of public interest and monitoring, there is no evidence to suggest that the mounted fox hunts that exist are acting outwith the legislation that is in place at the moment.

11:00 Detective Chief Superintendent Scott: That is correct.

Alex Fergusson: I just wanted to get that on the record. Thank you.