

Consultation Options Assessment

Title: Ninja Swords – Legal Definition and Defences

Type of measure: Secondary Legislation

Department or agency: Home Office

OA number: HO COA 1004

Contact for enquiries: Esperanza Gomez

Date: 13/11/2024

1. Summary of proposal

We are proposing a legal description of Ninja swords that seeks to strike the right balance between banning Ninja swords and not bringing within scope of the ban other swords and bladed articles that are used for legitimate purposes.

We are also proposing that the defences¹ that currently apply to curved bladed swords and will apply to zombie-style knives and zombie-style machetes when this legislation comes into force, should apply to Ninja swords.

2. Strategic case for proposed regulation

Problem under consideration

There have been a small number of cases wherein Ninja swords have been used to kill someone. Whereas it is welcomed that only few incidents seem to involve such swords, the government cannot be complacent, and will be taking proactive action to restrict access to Ninja swords. Ninja swords can cause a great deal of harm if used for violent intent, inflicting devastation and fear across communities.

The government has committed in its mission to make the streets safer to reduce knife crime by 50 per cent in the next decade. Part of this pledge includes the banning of Ninja swords.

¹ such as for historical importance, made by hand or for religious purposes.

Evidence to support the problem statement.

In the year ending June 2024, police recorded a total of 50,973 offences, involving a sharp instrument. compared with the year ending in June 2023 (49,187 offences). This was a four percent increase. There were also notable increases seen in the number of robberies involving a knife or sharp instrument, for up to eleven per cent compared with the previous year. Of all recorded homicides of the same year, the proportion of homicides where a knife or sharp instrument was used as the method of killing was 44%, a slight increase compared to the 42% the previous year².

In the year ending in March 2024, there were over 18,000 cautions and convictions made for possession of a knife or offensive weapons, accounting for 29 per cent of total offences. This was a slight decrease of two per cent compared with the previous year³.

The government's comprehensive approach in improving preventive measures (such as through the new 10-year Young Futures programme) and tougher actions against those who offend aim to reduce the number of offences involving a sharp instrument, and the number of people carrying offensive weapons.

Between April 2023 and April 2024, there was a three per cent increase in the number of hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object⁴. There is cause for government intervention so that there are fewer people admitted into hospital for this reason.

Why is government action or intervention necessary?

Knife crime is a complicated issue, requiring multi-faceted solutions, and this government is determined to put in place measures seeking to bring down violence involving knives.

The government is launching a public consultation seeking views on the legal description, proposing to apply to Ninja swords. The proposed legal description aims to strike the right balance between banning Ninja swords that do not have a practical nor legitimate purpose whilst allowing the possession of swords and knives that typically have a legitimate use and purpose.

The Home Office are also seeking views on whether the same defences should be provided, in line with the current approach to other offensive weapons and swords. There are a number of defences available to those who manufacture, sell or possess a prohibited weapon as enlisted under section 141 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 (CJA 1988)⁵, the Home Office is proposing that these same defences are extended to Ninja swords.

The list of prohibited offensive weapons to which section 141 of CJA 1988 applies, was expanded in 2024 by secondary legislation to include 'zombie-style knives' and 'zombie-style machetes'. The Home Office will also add Ninja swords to the list by secondary legislation.

What gaps or harms would occur if government doesn't intervene?

² [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk)

³ Knife and Offensive Weapon Sentencing Statistics: January to March 2024 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/knife-and-offensive-weapon-sentencing-statistics-january-to-march-2024/knife-and-offensive-weapon-sentencing-statistics-january-to-march-2024)): <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/knife-and-offensive-weapon-sentencing-statistics-january-to-march-2024/knife-and-offensive-weapon-sentencing-statistics-january-to-march-2024>

⁴ Crime in England and Wales: Other related tables - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk): <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwalesotherrelatedtables>

⁵ Criminal Justice Act 1988 (legislation.gov.uk): <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/33/section/141>

Knife crime impacts victims through emotional and physical harm, as well as inflicting costs on the economy and wider society (for example through loss of output, and costs to health and victim services, police and the wider criminal justice system). The extent to which a ban on Ninja swords reduces knife enabled crime will determine the extent to which these costs are reduced.

3. SMART objectives for intervention

As part of the government's pledge of make the streets safer, the government has committed to banning Ninja swords. The intended outcome is to reduce knife-enabled crime involving Ninja swords.

The primary objective is bringing the types of Ninja swords that do not have a legitimate nor a practical use into the scope of the ban, whilst allowing the possession of swords and knives that do have a legitimate or practical use. The Home Office want to ensure that the right balance has been struck between taking tougher actions against the possession of Ninja swords and knives that could be used as weapons whilst allowing for law-abiding citizens to continue possessing certain knives that are used for legitimate reasons.

This legislation will not be the first of its kind. Most recently, the government banned zombie-style knives and machetes – having added these types of knives into the list of prohibited weapons to which section 141 of CJA 1988 applies.

4. Description of proposed intervention options and explanation of the logical change process whereby this achieves SMART objectives

The Home Office have conducted extensive research on the typical features of Ninja swords that are marketed in the UK, and this will be tested via a public consultation.

The Home Office will be launching a public consultation on our proposals of a legal definition of Ninja swords that are to be in scope of the ban, and whether existing defences should be extended to apply to Ninja swords as well.

Adding new bladed articles onto the list of prohibited weapons is not new – and most recently, Parliament agreed to do the same for zombie-style knives and machetes coming into force on 23 September 2024.

The Home Office will be laying a Statutory Instrument to amend CJA 1988 (Offensive Weapons) Order 1988 to expand the list of prohibited weapons to include Ninja swords.

5. Summary of long-list and alternatives

Banning Ninja swords is a government manifesto commitment. The Home Office are consulting on how to deliver this commitment by seeking views on the legal description and whether the government need to provide defences and exemptions to the ban.

There was no longlist of options as this is a manifesto commitment. It was not possible to exempt small and micro businesses / medium-sized businesses from the scope of the policy as this would undermine the purpose of the ban (to protect public safety).

6. Description of shortlisted policy options carried forward

Option 0 – Do nothing.

Option 1 – Consultation on a legal description of Ninja swords that are to be in scope of any incoming bans. Extend existing defences to apply to the manufacture, sale and possession of Ninja swords.

There is a wide range of swords marketed in the UK as Ninja swords. In developing the legal description for these swords, Home Office tried to strike the right balance between bringing within scope of the ban the type of Ninja swords we wish to ban and minimise the types of other swords and machetes that may be brought within scope as an unintended consequence. Examples include knives that are used for agricultural purposes, or sporting purposes, or knives that are kept by way of historical importance. The Home Office recognises that there are legitimate reasons why someone might possess such a knife or sword.

The Home Office want to test in the consultation whether defences need to be provided, such as for historical importance, made by hand or for religious purposes, in line with legislation which applies to curved swords and zombie-style knives.

As the list of prohibited weapons are provided as part of CJA 1988 Order – the Home Office intend to enact this policy by adding Ninja swords to that list, making it an offence to manufacture, sell or possess a Ninja sword.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

The effect of applying a legal definition to Ninja swords and extending defences will be monitored using feedback/evidence from the police on the use of Ninja swords in knife-related offences, and Trading Standards through the monitoring and testing of the supply and purchase of Ninja swords, and through MoJ statistics relating to the prosecution of relevant offences. The Home Office will also keep under review the impact of the measures on business, particularly the impact of any administration cost from any surrender and compensation scheme, as well as any impact on business revenues.

8. Minimising administrative and compliance costs

A surrender and compensation scheme will be introduced ahead of Ninja swords being prohibited. The details of the scheme have yet to be determined. However, based on previous schemes, the total cost of administering the surrender and compensation scheme is estimated to be £273,000. There is no expected administrative burden on businesses aside from making returns through the surrender and compensation scheme.

Declaration

Department: Public Safety Group – Home Office

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Firearms and Weapons Policy Unit
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Minister responsible: **Minister for Crime, Policing and Fire**

I have read the Consultation Options Assessment and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the leading options.

Signed:



Date: 13/11/2024

Summary: Analysis and evidence

Due to an absence of evidence on the prevalence of Ninja swords specifically defined in section 6 of this consultation OA, specific analysis for the different policy options is not possible at this stage. The policy on which Ninja swords will fall into scope of the ban is still being established, with findings from the public consultation informing this. The appraisal section treats the policy options as a general ban on the ownership/ supply of (non-specific) Ninja swords. Responses to the consultation will help estimate the prevalence of Ninja swords specifically defined in section 6, and therefore will enable the estimation of different impacts for the different policy options.

Price base year: 2024/25

PV base year: 2024/25

This table may be reformatted provided the side-by-side comparison of options is retained	Option 0: Business as usual (baseline)	Option 1: Consult on a legal description of Ninja swords that are to be in scope of any incoming bans. Extend existing defences to apply to the manufacture, sale and possession of Ninja swords.
Net present social value (with brief description, including ranges, of individual costs and benefits)	Option 0: Do Nothing / Counterfactual (baseline) The Do-nothing option	Total NPSV is estimated to be between -£0.36M and -£2.1M, with a central estimate of -£0.97M, over the 10-year appraisal period. The monetised costs include the set-up cost to government of the surrender and compensation scheme (estimated to be between £0.28M and £1.19M, with a central estimate of £0.68M, over the 10-year appraisal period); the ongoing cost to businesses from the loss of revenue of Ninja swords (estimated to be between £0.04M to £0.79M, with a central estimate of £0.21M, over the 10-year appraisal period); the ongoing cost to the criminal justice system associated with enforcing the legislation, namely courts, legal aid, and probationary costs (estimated to be between £0.04M and £0.12M, with a central estimate of £0.08M, over the 10-year appraisal period).
Public sector financial costs (with brief description, including ranges)	...	Set-up cost to government of the surrender and compensation scheme (estimated to be between £0.28M and £1.19M, with a central estimate of £0.68M, over the 10-year appraisal period); the ongoing cost to the criminal justice system associated with enforcing the legislation, namely courts, legal aid, and probationary costs (estimated to be between £0.04M and £0.12M, with a central estimate of £0.08M, over the 10-year appraisal period).

<p>Significant un-quantified benefits and costs</p> <p>(description, with scale where possible)</p>	<p>...</p>	<p>Public safety benefits in the form of reduced incidents of serious violence are anticipated. However, these are not quantified in the appraisal as there is not sufficient evidence available to determine how many offences will be avoided as a result of the individual proposal. Instead, breakeven analysis has been undertaken using the 'economic and social costs of crime' report, to determine the number of homicides, robberies, and violence with injury offences which would need to be prevented in order for benefits to outweigh net costs of the policy. The legislation would only need to prevent one homicide across the 10-year appraisal period, to have a net benefit to society. Alternatively, preventing 63 incidents of violence with injury or 79 incidents of robbery across the 10-year appraisal period (in the central scenario) would also mean benefits would outweigh costs.</p>
<p>Key risks</p> <p>(and risk costs, and optimism bias, where relevant)</p>	<p>...</p>	<p>The cost of the surrender and compensation scheme will be dependent on the number and value of Ninja swords, as well as the rate of compliance with the scheme.</p> <p>There is a lack of quality data surrounding the prevalence of Ninja swords, both in the retail market for knives and used in knife-related crimes.</p> <p>It has been assumed that the number of in-scope knives estimated to be used in crime is equal to the number of in-scope knives sold per year. This will overestimate the number of knives sold per year if the same knife is used for multiple crimes. This may also underestimate the volume of knives sold per year if there are in-scope knives that have been purchased but not used in knife crime.</p> <p>The extent to which benefits are realised will depend on whether there is a displacement effect. For example, the overall level of knife crime could remain the same if non-prohibited knives are purchased and used in place of prohibited knives, which may or may not lead to less severe injuries. A similar unintended consequence of the knife ban could be that manufacturers of Ninja swords make minimal changes to knife design to barely meet legislation requirements, with no effect on overall use of these knife types in crime. Conversely, if the ban has a wider scope, then the cost of the surrender and compensation scheme will be greater.</p>
<p>Results of sensitivity analysis</p>	<p>...</p>	<p>...</p>

Annex

A. Evidence Base

1. Monetised impacts

Costs

Set-up costs

Central government

1. Individuals and retailers who currently own swords, within the scope of the ban, will be eligible for compensation. The level of compensation has not yet been determined.
2. The Home Office is aware from recent experience of the surrender and compensation scheme for zombie-style knives and machetes that the administrative costs of the scheme are £684,461. A further £31,225 has been claimed to date under the scheme (although a number of claims are still being assessed). A total number of 45,495 zombie-style knives and machetes were surrendered for compensation under the scheme. A further 424 were surrendered without compensation being claimed.
3. The total set-up cost to central government from the Ninja swords surrender and compensation scheme is estimated to be **between £0.28 million and £1.19 million, with a central estimate of £0.68 million** (present value). These values are based on estimates of the administrative and compensation costs of the surrender and compensation scheme for Ninja swords. These estimates were developed prior to the conclusion of the zombie-style knives and machetes surrender and compensation scheme and have not been updated based on this new evidence.
4. There are further evidence gaps regarding whether exemptions to the legislation on ownership would apply, the volume of Ninja swords stocked by UK retailers, and whether retailers would be likely to take part in any surrender and compensation scheme. As part of the consultation, the Home Office will engage with wholesalers and retailers of Ninja swords to estimate the volume of Ninja swords currently stocked in the UK, (to understand many Ninja swords would be surrendered under the new scheme).
5. Refined estimates, based on finalised costs from the zombie-style knives and machetes surrender and compensation scheme, will be included in the final Impact Assessment.

Ongoing costs

Wholesalers and retailers

6. Wholesalers and retailers will incur a loss of future profits which they could have made had they been able to buy and sell Ninja swords. However, there is a substantial absence of evidence on the size of the retail market.
7. Responses to consultation questions will help determine possible future impacts on wholesalers and retailers based on the average profit per unit (at both wholesale and retail stage) and total units sold. Engagement with trading standards may also help identify who are the main sellers of Ninja swords, and what the estimated size of the market is.
8. Table 1 sets out the approach taken to calculate the ongoing annual cost to retailers and wholesalers from no longer being able to sell Ninja swords, with the limited evidence currently available.

9. Based on the assumptions and calculations set out in Table 1, the ongoing cost to central wholesalers and retailers over the ten-year appraisal period is estimated to be **between £0.04 million and £0.79 million, with a central estimate of £0.21 million** (present value).

Table 1: ongoing cost to wholesalers and retailers – assumptions and methodology

Assumption	Value	Source/ methodology
Annual volume of offences involving a knife, both violent and possession	77,890	Number of police recorded violent and sexual offences involving a knife ⁶ and number of possession of article with blade or point offences. ⁷
Proportion of knife crime involving swords	1.6%	Estimate obtained from Home Office Homicide Index data on the proportion of homicides by sharp instrument involving a sword.
Annual volume of crimes involving swords	1,218	Annual volume of knife crime multiplied by the proportion involving swords.
Proportion of swords used in crime which are Ninja swords	Low: 25% Central: 50% High: 75%	Internal Home Office estimate, large range used to reflect the uncertainty.
Volume of Ninja swords used in crime per year.	Low: 305 Central: 609 High: 914	Annual volume of crimes involving swords multiplied by the proportion involving Ninja swords.
Volume of Ninja swords sold per year	Low: 152 Central: 609 High: 1,828	Internal Home Office estimate, assuming one knife offence equates to one knife purchased (central estimate), one knife purchased equates to two knife offences (low estimate), half of the knives purchased lead to an offence whilst the other half are not purchased for use in crime (high estimate).
Average retail value of Ninja swords	Low: £30 Central: £40 High: £50	Based on the minimum compensation value of swords under the OWA 2019 surrender and compensation scheme (£10) and observed retail value of Ninja swords. ⁸
Annual ongoing cost to wholesalers and retailers	Low: £5,000 Central: £25,000 High: £92,000	Annual sales of zombie-style knives and machetes multiplied by average retail value.

Source: Home Office estimates 2024, figures rounded to the nearest £1,000.

⁶ Crime in England and Wales: Other related tables, March 2024, Table F3a:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwalesotherrelatedtables>

⁷ Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables, 2023/24: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables>

⁸ The range for average compensation value is above the minimum compensation value of Ninja swords in the surrender and compensation scheme in anticipation that more expensive knives (example of which have been found through search of retail markets) will be compensated at a higher value on proof of receipt.

10. There is uncertainty surrounding the proportion of knife crime involving swords. The Home Office will engage with policing stakeholders to understand if any further data and evidence exists on the prevalence of swords, and specifically Ninja swords, involved in knife-related crime.

Police and Criminal Justice System (CJS)

11. If retailers choose to ignore the ban on sale of Ninja swords, and if owners continue to possess prohibited weapons, there will be enforcement costs for the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, HM Courts and Tribunals Service, HM Prison and Probation Service, and the Legal Aid system.
12. Given that retail compliance with section 141 of CJA 1988 is high, it is estimated that the main impact on volume of offences of the legislation will be on the possession of offensive weapons in private. As the volume of searches under section 142 of CJA 1988⁹ are extremely low (offensive weapons are mainly found when searching for other prohibited items¹⁰), there is expected to be a negligible enforcement cost to the police.
13. However, there are expected to be ongoing costs to the CJS associated with the additional offences of possession of an offensive weapon in private. These assumptions and costs are set out in Table 2.
14. The impact on custodial sentences is not monetised due to the low volume of custodial sentences for this offence (45 custodial sentences in year ending December 2023), and the small impact on overall number of convictions (between two and six per year). The low probability of receiving a custodial sentence on conviction (8.5 per cent), coupled with the short average custodial sentence length (2.2 months) leads to a negligible impact on annual prison places (0.03 in the central scenario).
15. The CJS is expected to incur costs associated with legal aid, courts, and probationary services. These costs are estimated to be **between £0.04 million and £0.12 million, with a central estimate of £0.08 million over the 10-year appraisal period** (present value)¹¹.

Table 2: ongoing cost to the CJS – additional assumptions and methodology

Assumption	Value	Source/ methodology
Annual court proceedings for possession of prohibited weapons in private under Option 1	711	Ministry of Justice (MoJ) outcomes by offence data tool – Year ending December 2023 data.
Conviction rate for possession of prohibited weapons in private under Option 1	75%	Proportion of proceedings that lead to convictions - MoJ outcomes by offence data tool – Year ending December 2023 data.
Volume of additional annual convictions for possession of prohibited weapons in private under Option 1	Low: 2.1 Central: 4.1 High: 6.2	Additional court proceedings for possession in private of Ninja swords (711 x 0.02 x 0.25,0.5,0.75) multiplied by the conviction rate.

⁹ Section 142 Criminal Justice Act 1988 - Power of justice of the peace to authorise entry and search of premises for offensive weapons: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/33/section/142>

¹⁰ Knowledge obtained from consultation with the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC).

¹¹ Estimates provided by Ministry of Justice

Likelihood of case going for trial at the magistrate's court	99%	MoJ magistrate's court data tool – Year ending December 2023 data. Based on the proportion of prosecutions that go for trial in the crown court (1%).
Likelihood of receiving a community sentence upon conviction	19%	MoJ outcomes by offence data tool – Year ending December 2023 data.
Likelihood of receiving a suspended sentence upon conviction	5%	MoJ outcomes by offence data tool – Year ending December 2023 data.
Total estimated volume of additional community sentences under Option 1	Low: 0.4 Central: 0.8 High: 1.2	Volume of additional convictions multiplied by the likelihood of receiving a community sentence upon conviction.
Total estimated volume of additional suspended sentences under Option 1	Low: 0.1 Central: 0.2 High: 0.3	Volume of additional convictions multiplied by the likelihood of receiving a suspended sentence upon conviction.

Source: MoJ 2023 data¹², internal Home Office estimates 2024

Benefits

16. The intention of the measure is to reduce the possession and use of Ninja swords in offences. This cannot be quantified as there is not sufficient evidence available to determine how many offences will be avoided as a result of the individual proposal.
17. The Home Office will engage with experts/academics via the consultation, to understand whether the banning of Ninja swords is likely to reduce the number of knife offences involving Ninja swords (and in general), and to what degree.
18. Breakeven analysis has been undertaken to determine the number of homicides, robberies, and violence with injury offences which would need to be prevented in order for benefits to outweigh net costs of the policy. The unit cost to society (excluding cost in anticipation¹³) of a homicide is £4.13 million (2024/25 prices), robbery is £0.01 million (2024/25 prices), and violence with injury is £0.02 million (2024/25 prices).¹⁴
19. Based on current evidence and estimates, Option 1 would only need to prevent one homicide across the 10-year appraisal period, to have a net benefit to society. Alternatively, preventing 63 incidents of violence with injury or 79 incidents of robbery across the 10-year appraisal period (in the central scenario) would also mean benefits would outweigh costs. There were approximately 2,000 homicides, 200,000 assaults with injury, and 170,000 robberies, recorded by the police where a knife or sharp instrument was used, in the last 10 years.¹⁵

¹² MoJ outcomes by offence data tool, December 2023:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2023>

¹³ Reduction in costs in anticipation are excluded from breakeven analysis, as the marginal impact on crime reduction is unlikely to have a notable impact on defensive expenditure or insurance administration costs.

¹⁴ Home Office Economic and Social Costs of Crime, second edition (2018):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/732110/the-economic-and-social-costs-of-crime-horr99.pdf

¹⁵ Crime in England and Wales: other related tables, Table F3a (excluding Greater Manchester Police), March 2024:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwalesotherrelatedtables>

Overall

20. NPSV is estimated to be between -£0.36 million and -£2.10 million, with a central estimate of -£0.97 million over the appraisal period (2024/25 prices, present value). This is summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Summary CBA, NPSV, BNPV and EANDCB, £ million (PV) over 10 years.

Costs	Low	Central	High
Total set up costs	0.28	0.68	1.19
Total ongoing costs	0.08	0.29	0.90
Total costs	0.36	0.97	2.10
Benefits			
Total benefits	Not monetised	Not monetised	Not monetised
NPSV	-0.36	-0.97	-2.10
BNPV	-0.04	-0.21	-0.79
EANDCB	0.00	0.02	0.09

Note: NPSV = Net Present Social Value, BNPV = Business Net Present Value and EANDCB = Equivalent Annual Net Direct Cost to Business

Source: Internal Home Office estimates 2024

2. Non-monetised impacts

21. Individuals and retailers with Ninja swords, will incur a cost equal to the value of the weapon. The details of the compensation scheme have yet to be determined. However, based on previous schemes, the amount of compensation is assumed to be equal to the value of the weapon, so these costs will ultimately fall on central government.
22. There may be some administration costs associated with completing surrender and compensation forms as well as costs for individuals who don't meet the minimum threshold for total value of weapons returned and are therefore unable to receive compensation. It has not been possible to calculate these costs.
23. Border Force, HMRC, Police and CJS may incur a cost through the time taken to familiarise themselves with the prohibition of the specific knife type, and the surrender and compensation scheme. However, given that the knives within the scope of this ban are very similar to the already prohibited samurai sword, and that previous familiarisation costs for much wider offensive weapon bans have been low, any familiarisation costs incurred are expected to be negligible. Given the uncertainty, the Home Office will invite organisations to understand whether they would be likely to incur any familiarisation costs associated with the legislation.
24. There may be an enforcement cost on Border Force and HM Revenue & Customs if confiscations occur. As compliance with the legislation on manufacturing, supplying, and importing offensive weapons (section 141 of CJA 1988) is historically high¹⁶, the marginal cost of adding Ninja swords to the list of prohibited weapons is expected to be negligible. However, as part of the consultation, the Home Office will invite specific groups to understand whether there may be an enforcement cost associated with the legislation.

¹⁶ Average of eight prosecutions per year between 2013 and 2023 under Home Office offence code 19520, though the trend has increased in 2022 and 2023.

MoJ outcomes by offence data tool, December 2023:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2023>

25. The proposal may also lead to a reduction in fear of crime, particularly where there are public concerns in relation to specific types of weapons designed to look menacing. This benefit will not be monetised for the final Impact Assessment due to an absence of evidence on the specific drivers of fear of knife crime, and the extent to which the proposals will affect this.

3. Expected overall impacts.

26. This regulation is expected to impact central government, UK businesses (suppliers of Ninja swords), and UK households (owners of Ninja swords). There are expected to be costs related to the surrender and compensation scheme, costs associated with the loss of revenue from Ninja swords, and enforcement costs to the CJS.
27. There are expected to be benefits associated with reductions in knife crime and public fear of crime, however there is uncertainty surrounding the extent to which the legislation will reduce knife-related crime, and public perceptions of safety.

4. Distributional impacts

28. The benefits associated with the legislation are likely to be more concentrated in areas where knife crime is more geographically concentrated, such as the West Midlands and London¹⁷.
29. There is expected to be an impact on small and micro-businesses, however the scale if this impact is uncertain, as there is an absence of evidence/data on the size of the market for Ninja swords and the composition of retailers. The Home Office will engage with experts, and the sector via the consultation, to understand the size and composition of the market for the supply of Ninja swords.

5. Impacts on wider government priorities

Business Environment

30. There is limited evidence to suggest there will be an impact on the ease of doing business in the UK. It is estimated that only the market for Ninja swords would be adversely impacted, however the scale of the market and its **impact on the business environment is unknown.**

International Considerations

31. The legislation includes provisions on the importation of Ninja swords, however the scale of the market for imported Ninja swords is unknown.

Natural capital and Decarbonisation

32. There is not expected to be an environmental impact of the legislation.

¹⁷ ONS police force area data tables (March 2024):

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables>

B. Statutory Equalities Duty

All Consultation OAs are required to have the Statutory Equalities Duty reviewed by the SRO before signoff.

Mandatory specific impact test - Statutory Equalities Duties	Complete
<p>Statutory Equalities Duties</p> <p>Our overall assessment is that the proposed policy will not directly discriminate anyone under the protected characteristics as enlisted above.</p> <p>We recognise that there are some indirect discriminations that could be introduced with the proposed policy, namely against adults, people of black and ethnic minorities and those who are male.</p> <p>However, the policy itself does not distinguish between criminalising those of a certain trait, characteristic or background. The policy will be applied to those who commit the offence of carrying an offensive weapon, including Ninja swords regardless of any predisposing factors.</p> <p>We believe that the broader objectives of the policy – which is to increase safety for the public through the prohibiting of ninja swords that could be used to perpetuate violence – would justify any unintentional and indirect discrimination against anyone with a protected characteristic.</p> <p>The SRO has agreed these summary findings.</p>	<p>Yes</p>