



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

By email only

**Sgt Andrew Marvin,
Wildlife Crime Coordinator,
Police Scotland**

**Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee**

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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05 May 2022

Dear Mr Marvin,

Independent Monitoring of Satellite tags fitted to raptors (PE 1750)

At its [meeting on 15 March 2022](#), the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee considered the above petition. The petition calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce independent monitoring of satellite tags fitted to raptor species, to assist the police and courts in potential wildlife crime cases and to provide data transparency.

The Official Report for this meeting is available on [the Scottish Parliament's website](#).

Members agreed to seek further information and views from Police Scotland regarding the implementation of the new data-sharing protocols in the first year of the satellite tagging scheme and the robustness of the data being gathered.

In its [report to the Scottish Government published in November 2019](#), the Grouse Moor Management Review Group recommended “more thorough regulation of the fitting and use of satellite tags coupled with more expeditious sharing of information”. It also recommended that NatureScot should ensure that the licences issued for satellite-tracking of tagged raptors include a condition that commits the data holder (i.e. the owner of the tag) to be listed on a register of data holders. Another recommendation was that Police Scotland and NatureScot should cooperate expeditiously in sharing data regarding tagged birds found dead or missing in suspicious circumstances.

We note from the Scottish Government’s [November 2020 response to the review](#) that NatureScot had agreed new data-sharing protocols for all permit holders who

wish to employ satellite-based tracking of tagged raptors birds under licence with the British Trust for Ornithology. The response also said that these protocols would be in place for the start of the 2021 tagging season, implementing the above recommendations.

The Grouse Moor Management Review Group also recommended that on receipt of shared data and associated information, Police Scotland should expeditiously process the shared data and associated information to determine whether or not it warrants referral to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

We have written to NatureScot to request an update on the implementation and performance of the protocols. We would welcome any relevant data from Police Scotland on the processing and management of shared data and associated information as well as the referrals this has led to.

In order to help the Committee to a view on whether changes in protocols have been effective, we would also value Police Scotland's views on the impact the changes have brought about and if the review's recommendations have made a difference to Police Scotland's work in this area of wildlife crime.

The Committee would appreciate a response by 01 June 2022.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dean Lockhart', is written over a faint, light blue circular watermark or stamp.

Dean Lockhart MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee