

Dear Colleague,

Tackling serious violence in our city is the top priority for the Mayor's Office and the Metropolitan Police. Too many lives have been lost or changed forever, too many families have had to endure the pain of grief and trauma. We are jointly doing all we can to put a stop to this senseless violence. These efforts include funding to increase officer numbers and a establishing a new Violent Crime Task Force which is making progress in reducing violent offences; opportunities for those already caught up in violence to leave crime behind; and taking all possible steps to help young Londoners to reach their potential and not be drawn into criminality.

Businesses – particularly retailers – have a vital part to play in preventing violence. Research has shown that too many knives are being sold illegally and ending up in the wrong hands. Last year, 160 knives were sold to teenage volunteers as young as 13 in London as part of trading standards operations, with 1 in 9 stores making an underage sale. These sales are often made because of a lack of knowledge or confidence in applying the law. To tackle knife crime across the supply chain we are pleased to launch a toolkit of good practice for knife retailers in partnership with Trading Standards.

The toolkit is a pack of training resources for businesses in carrying out their legal responsibilities when it comes to selling knives. The training is intended to be easily accessible and includes online training videos, a voluntary best practice agreement and other good practice guidance. All of the tools can be found on the National Business Crime Centre website (<https://nbcc.police.uk/knifeguidance>).

We understand that there are many demands that come with running a business and that time and resource are precious. This can be especially pertinent when it comes to training; with only a small number of boroughs offering training on age-restricted products and small businesses unable to join because they can't afford to leave their businesses for the day, we believe that this online training pack could really help. It is so important to understand and apply the law, first and foremost to protect lives, but also to protect businesses – last year, one retailer received a fine of £498,000 for illegally selling a knife to a child. Learning how to safely carry out I.D checks can also help to reduce the risk of violence against shop staff.

In addition to the toolkit, we are currently undertaking a review to improve our knowledge of knife retailers in London. To find out more and take part in the survey, please go to www.londonvoice.org.uk/knifesales. The deadline for responses is Wednesday 23 October.

Thank you for helping us to stop knife crime in London. We hope these resources are of use to businesses in your area.

Yours sincerely,



Sophie Linden



Cressida Dick

Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis