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Notes:

Questions marked thus [R] indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of 900000 or greater indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Minimum Wage

Margot James:

[209683]

To ask the Attorney General, how many companies have been prosecuted for not paying minimum wage in each of the last nine years.

Mr Robert Buckland:

Records are available from 2006-07. With the agreement of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, HMRC started considering prosecution for minimum wage offences from May 2006.

The following table shows the number of employers who have been prosecuted with offences connected with the National Minimum Wage (NMW) since then, and of those prosecutions, the number who have been prosecuted under Section 31(1) "Employer refuses or wilfully neglects to pay NMW" alongside other offences.

	PROSECUTIONS STARTED FOR ANY NMW OFFENCES	CHARGES OF FAILURE/ REFUSAL TO PAY NMW
2006-07	1	0
2007-08	1	0
2008-09	5	2
2009-10	1	1
2010-11	0	1
2011-12	1	0
2012-13	0	0
2013-14	0	0

The majority of employers identified as paying below the NMW pay arrears on receipt of a formal Notice of Underpayment. Where they do not do so, HMRC pursues recovery through the civil courts. For deliberate non-compliance or obstructive behavior HMRC operates a policy of selective and exemplary criminal investigation action to enhance their enforcement strategy. HMRC's approach to tackling underpayment of NMW through the civil courts is the best way to ensure that money is paid back to the person underpaid and provides the most effective resolution for tax-payers. Criminal investigations may not result in arrears being paid to workers and are therefore reserved for the most serious cases.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Apprentices

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[210186]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what plans he has to change funding of the Apprenticeship scheme.

Nick Boles:

We are planning to route funding for apprenticeship training directly through employers. This will put employers in the driving seat in terms of securing the most appropriate training, giving them a greater stake in guaranteeing that the training provision their apprentices receive is high quality. We are trialling a simplified funding model for apprenticeships based on new employer-designed standards in the 2014/15 Academic Year.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/336036/BIS-14-975-Trialling-our-new-apprenticeship-funding-model.pdf

■ British Business Bank

Lorely Burt:

[209752]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what service the British Business Bank offers to the manufacturing sector.

Matthew Hancock:

[holding answer 15 October 2014]: In the year to end June 2014, Business Bank programmes facilitated £76.4m of new lending and investment to businesses in the manufacturing sector.

Thirteen percent of the businesses we support through our Enterprise Finance Guarantee are in the manufacturing sector. The programme has already supported 2958 businesses in this sector.

■ Government Digital Service

Chi Onwurah:

[210277]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress has been made by his Department in 2014 on implementing and maintaining the Government Digital Services training programme.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Government Digital Services provide different strands of training, resources and support to help Government create and run digital services effectively. These include "Assessors" training which provides training for those assessing digital services against the Digital by Default Service Standard and support and training for Service Managers and digital specialists - for example the Service Manager Induction Programme.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and its partner organisations take up these opportunities regularly and our staff implement what they have learnt in order to build and maintain simple, clear and fast digital services.

We will continue to work with Government Digital Services to create successful digital services so people will prefer to use them.

■ Holiday Leave

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[\[210148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, whether he plans to include both non-compulsory and non-guaranteed overtime in calculations of holiday pay; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Swinson:

The Government wants to get the right balance between the needs of employers and employees. We want to see jobs created and protected, and for those jobs to provide employees with appropriate reward for their hard work.

The Government does not believe that overtime that is non-compulsory or non-guaranteed should be included in holiday pay. We argued accordingly when we intervened in the case of *Fulton v Bear Scotland* which was heard by the Employment Appeal Tribunal in late July. The Tribunal has not yet issued its ruling.

■ Open Business Forum

John Mann:

[\[209010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many times the Open Business Forum that he asked Sir Philip Green to set up in 2012 has met; and whether he plans that minutes of those meetings will be made public.

Jo Swinson:

The creation of the Open Business Forum was announced on 23 February 2012 by my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister, who asked his adviser on corporate responsibility, Philip N. Green, to act as Chair. Companies and organisations represented on the Open Business Forum included Business in the Community, Trading for Good, Aviva, Procter and Gamble, Carillion, E.ON and Waitrose. As this Department did not provide the secretariat for this group, I am unable to confirm how many times the Open Business Forum met and whether it is planned that the minutes of its meetings will be made public.

■ Vocational Training

Rushanara Ali:

[\[209719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the budget of the employer ownership fund has been in each year since 2011; what proportion of that budget has been spent in each such year; and how many apprenticeship starts have been created in each such year.

Nick Boles:

[holding answer 15 October 2014]: Final Approved answer to 21955

Since 2011 the budget and spend for the employer ownership fund has been:

12-13 13-14 14-15

Budget £2.2m £16.7m £27.7m

Spend £1.5m £11.4m £22.3m (forecast)

Since 2011 Employer Ownership Pilot Apprenticeship starts have been:

12-13 13-14

1200 1,500 (**provisional)

** Full figures for 2013/14 academic year not published until November 2014 – this figure covers the first 9 months of the year academic (August – April).

CABINET OFFICE

■ Driving: Regulation

Jason McCartney:

[\[210033\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on the safety of passengers in taxis and private hire vehicles of implementation of the provision in Clause 8 of the Deregulation Bill currently before Parliament that unlicensed drivers will be able to drive a licensed vehicle when it is not being used for work purposes.

Mr Oliver Letwin:

The Government's view is that Clause 10 (previously Clause 8) of the Deregulation Bill is a common-sense measure with adequate safeguards. However, after listening to concerns about this proposal during the passage of the Bill, the Government has concluded that a better course of action would be for this measure to be considered as part of the package of measures recommended by the Law Commission to reform taxi and private hire vehicle licensing which the Government is considering.

The Government will withdraw clause 10 from the Bill when clauses 10-12 are debated at Lords Committee Stage on 21 October.

Jason McCartney:

[\[210034\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what representations have been made to his Department from local authorities on Clauses 8, 9 and 10 of the Deregulation Bill currently before Parliament.

Mr Oliver Letwin:

The Cabinet Office has received representations on behalf of Trafford, Oldham and Kirklees councils in relation to provisions in the Deregulation Bill on taxis and private hire

vehicles. The Department for Transport, which has policy responsibility for taxi and private hire vehicles, has also received representations on behalf of St Helens and South Ribble councils, and from the Local Government Association.

These representations raised issues relating to safety and to the Law Commission report on taxis and private hire vehicle licensing which the Government is currently considering.

The Government will withdraw clause 10, which would have allowed anyone with an ordinary driving licence to drive a private hire vehicle when it is 'off-duty', from the Bill when clauses 10-12 are debated at Lords Committee Stage on 21 October.

The remaining clauses in the Deregulation Bill are:

- clause 11 which will standardise the duration for all taxi and private hire vehicle driver licences at three years; and five years for all private hire vehicle operator licences. Shorter durations will only be granted on a case by case basis, where it is justifiable for a particular reason. This will reduce the financial and administrative burden of more frequent licence renewals; and
- clause 12 which will allow private hire operators to sub-contract bookings to operators licensed in a different district.

■ Electronic Government: Sign Language

Chi Onwurah:

[210276]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment the Government Digital Service has made of the viability of the British Sign Language interface for online services.

Mr Francis Maude:

The Government Digital Service is planning to trial Video Relay System (VRS) technology on GOV.UK.

■ Private Finance Initiative

Simon Kirby:

[210082]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the total private finance initiative liabilities of his Department are for the next 20 years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Francis Maude:

Information on the Cabinet Office's expenditure under Private Finance Initiative contracts is available in the department's Annual Report and Accounts 2013-14 (pages 156 to 157), available in the Library of the House and on the GOV.UK website below at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/cabinet-office-annual-reports-and-accounts>

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Housing: Construction

Hilary Benn: [\[210274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what proportion of new houses completed in the last 12 months in England have been built on sites of (a) less than one ha, (b) one to two ha, (c) two to four ha, (d) four to six ha, (e) six to eight ha, (f) eight to 10 ha and (g) above 10 ha.

Brandon Lewis:

The requested information is not available centrally.

■ Housing: South Yorkshire

Michael Dugher: [\[209810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much land his Department has released for the purpose of building new homes in (a) Barnsley East constituency and (b) South Yorkshire since May 2010.

Brandon Lewis:

At the end of June 2014, the Government had sold surplus land capable of delivering over 80,000 homes in England, including land for 725 homes in South Yorkshire. This Department, through the Homes and Communities Agency, has disposed of land for 558 of those homes. Information on land is not collected on a constituency basis.

■ Right to Buy Scheme

Michael Dugher: [\[209812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many council home tenants in (a) Barnsley East constituency, (b) South Yorkshire and (c) England bought their council property under the right to buy scheme in each of the last 10 years.

Brandon Lewis:

Right to Buy sales are not available by constituency but are published by local authority in Table 685 here <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>. Figures for South Yorkshire and England can also be found in Table 685. It should be noted that these are local authority sales and do not include sales through private registered providers (also known as housing associations).

■ Road Signs and Markings

Richard Burden: [\[209982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the effects of the Special Events Order administrative process on community-based events.

Stephen Williams:

[holding answer 15 October 2014]: My officials have worked with colleagues across Government, including in the Department for Transport, to make it easier for people to plan and organise local events and street parties. In January we produced simple guidance with clear explanations about the procedures for road closures - attacking the myths that such procedures need to be lengthy, costly or confusing.

Street parties guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/your-guide-to-organising-a-street-party>

Can do guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/can-do-guide-for-organisers-of-voluntary-events>

■ Social Rented Housing: Natural Gas

Graham Jones: [\[210160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the average time taken to grant access for housing associations to properties to undertake statutory gas safety checks.

Graham Jones: [\[210161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the costs to housing associations of implementing the legal power to enter a property to undertake a statutory gas safety check.

Brandon Lewis:

My Department has made no estimate of the average time taken to grant access to properties, or of the costs involved, for housing associations to undertake statutory gas safety checks or the costs involved .

One of the standard conditions of rented tenancy agreements is to allow reasonable access, following advance notice, for gas servicing and safety checks.

■ Welfare Assistance Schemes

Mr Laurence Robertson: [\[210187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to change the Local Welfare Assistance scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Kris Hopkins:

I refer my hon. Friend to the consultation paper on local welfare provision published by HM Government on 10 October 2014. I attach a copy of the paper.

Attachments:

1. Consultation Paper on Local Welfare Provision [210187 Robertson.pdf]

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts: East Midlands

Sir Edward Leigh: [\[905470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what representations he has received on funding for culture in the East Midlands.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Arts Council's announcements on their 2015-2018 portfolio continue a trend in the reduction of the share of funding that is going to organisations in London, and includes investment in retaining talent and boosting production capacity outside of London. This includes the East Midlands which I will be visiting later this month.

■ Arts: Government Assistance

Fiona Bruce: [\[905477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his department is taking to support theatre and the arts in the provinces.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Funding decisions for the arts are made independently of Ministers by Arts Council England. Earlier this year the Arts Council announced an increase in the proportion of spend on regional arts and major partner museums and the Government is committed to achieving a better balance from public funding and Lottery investment across the country.

■ Mobile Phones

Helen Goodman: [\[209842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what progress he has made on the Mobile Infrastructure Project.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Mobile Infrastructure Project currently has 135 sites in acquisition stage, with options for site locations under investigation. There are 15 sites where planning applications have been submitted, 2 sites are being built, and to date 2 sites have gone live in Weaverthorpe, North Yorkshire, and North Molton in Devon, providing coverage to over 200 premises each.

■ Music: Noise

Kerry McCarthy: [\[210213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effectiveness of an Agent of Change law to protect music venues and cultural centres from noise complaints.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

DCMS is in regular contact with the Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and the Department for Communities and Local Government on how the Licensing Act 2003, the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and the planning system inter-relate with one another for entertainment premises.

■ Television: Licensing

Karl McCartney:

[\[905458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to review the rules relating to non-payment of the TV licence fee.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The government supported amendments in the Deregulation Bill and has committed to a thorough, independent review of how the licence fee is enforced. The Secretary of State announced last month that the Review will begin shortly and will conclude early in the next parliament.

■ Video Games

Jim McGovern:

[\[905475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what amount the Government has allocated to the Creative Skillset Skills Investment Fund; how much of that funding has been allocated to the video games industry; and what assessment he has made of the effects of that funding.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

DCMS is investing up to £8 million each year in 13/14 and 14/15 through the Skills Investment Fund. With industry match funding, this will support skills development in the film, TV, and video games sectors. By March 2015, Creative Skillset estimate that in total, over £4,300,000 of SIF funding will have been spent on training for the games sector. One element of this Fund, the Trainee Finder scheme, has so far placed 122 trainees in 67 games companies.

DEFENCE

■ Air Training Corps

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[209255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what Air Training Corps squadrons are in operation.

Anna Soubry:

There are currently 952 Air Training Corps Squadrons in operation. A copy of this list will be placed in the Library of the House.

Attachments:

1. Air Training Corps Squadrons in operation. [Copy of 20140929-PQ-05157-Sir-Nicholas-Soames-MP-ATC_Units[1].pdf]

■ Arctic

Angus Robertson: [\[209765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many officials in his Department work exclusively on Arctic issues; and what the (a) title of position and (b) grade is of each such official.

Mr Mark Francois:

No single Ministry of Defence official works exclusively on Arctic issues, but defence advice is provided as necessary to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office which leads on the UK's approach to them.

Angus Robertson: [\[209767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the UK's role is in Arctic security; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Francois:

As the UK has no sovereignty rights within the Arctic our role in regional security is delivered through our active membership of the various multilateral fora which contribute to underpinning security within the Arctic region. Furthermore, the UK is a long standing observer to the Arctic Council and is one of only four sub-Arctic nations invited to take part in the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable (ASFR). The Government, including the Ministry of Defence, holds a number of security interests in the region in high regard (Freedom of Navigation, Maritime security, energy security) and we use our global influence and ASFR membership to promote compliance with international law and norms.

■ Armed Forces: Cadets

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[209256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will list all Sea Cadets units.

Anna Soubry:

There are currently 388 Sea Cadet Units across the UK. I will place details of these locations in the Library of the House.

Attachments:

1. Sea Cadet units across the UK [PQO5153.doc]

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[209258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what Army Cadet Force detachments are in operation.

Anna Soubry:

As at 1 September 2014 there were 1,946 Army Cadet Force Detachments across the UK, and 242 Combined Cadet Forces Army contingents.

I will place details of these detachments and contingents in the Library of the House.

Attachments:

1. Detachments and contingents List [Number of ACF Detachments - CCF (Army) Contingents.xls]

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[209259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department spent on (a) Sea Cadets, (b) Army Cadet Force, (c) Air Training Corps and (d) Combined Cadet Force in the financial years 2005-06 to 2013-14.

Anna Soubry:

This information is not held, however, the 2011 Defence Youth Engagement Review estimated the cost of Cadet Forces in financial year 2009-10 to be £154.4 million. Of this total, the breakdown was as follows:

SEA CADET CORPS	ARMY CADET FORCE	AIR TRAINING CORPS	COMBINED CADET FORCE
£11.3 million	£80.4 million	£36.7 million	£26 million

■ Armed Forces: Crimes of Violence

Emily Thornberry:

[\[201980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many cases of (a) rape, (b) sexual assault and (c) domestic violence were investigated by each branch of the Armed Forces Police where the alleged offending took place in the UK in each year from 2009 to 2013; and of these, how many were (i) not referred to a prosecutor, (ii) referred to the Crown Prosecution Service and (iii) referred to the Services Prosecution Authority.

Anna Soubry:

[holding answer 2 July 2014]: All allegations of rape, sexual assaults and domestic violence made by members of the Armed Forces are thoroughly investigated by either the civil or Service police, depending upon who has jurisdiction. The tables below show the number of alleged cases of rape and sexual assault (including assault by penetration) that were investigated by each branch of the Service police where the alleged offence took place in the UK in each year from 2009 to 2013; the number not referred to a prosecutor; the number referred to the Service Prosecuting Authority (SPA); and the number still under investigation. The Service police do not refer investigations to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Rape- investigations by the Royal Navy Police (RNP)

YEAR	TOTAL INVESTIGATED BY RNP	TOTAL REFERRED TO SPA	TOTAL NOT REFERRED TO SPA	STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION
2009 (from 1 Nov)	0	0	0	0

YEAR	TOTAL INVESTIGATED BY RNP	TOTAL REFERRED TO SPA	TOTAL NOT REFERRED TO SPA	STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION
2010	2	1	1	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	1	1	0	0

Sexual Assault (including assault by penetration) Investigations by RNP

YEAR	TOTAL INVESTIGATED BY RNP	TOTAL REFERRED TO SPA	TOTAL NOT REFERRED TO SPA	STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION
2009 (from 1 Nov)	3	2	1	0
2010	1	1	0	0
2011	1	0	1	0
2012	2	0	2	0
2013	7	5	2	0

Rape- investigations by the Royal Military Police (RMP)

YEAR	TOTAL INVESTIGATED BY RMP	TOTAL REFERRED TO SPA	TOTAL NOT REFERRED TO SPA	STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION
2009 (from 1 Nov)	0	0	0	0
2010	2	0	2	0
2011	7	6	1	0
2012	6	4	2	0
2013	9	2	1	6

Sexual Assault (including assault by penetration) Investigations by RMP

YEAR	TOTAL INVESTIGATED BY RMP	TOTAL REFERRED TO SPA	TOTAL NOT REFERRED TO SPA	STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION
2009	2	1	1	0

YEAR	TOTAL INVESTIGATED BY RMP	TOTAL REFERRED TO SPA	TOTAL NOT REFERRED TO SPA	STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION
(from 1 Nov)				
2010	26	24	2	0
2011	18	13	5	0
2012	15	10	5	0
2013	25	19	3	3

Rape- investigations by the Royal Air Force Police (RAFP)

YEAR	TOTAL INVESTIGATED BY RAFP	TOTAL REFERRED TO SPA	TOTAL NOT REFERRED TO SPA	STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION
2009 (from 1 Nov)	0	0	0	0
2010	3	1	2	0
2011	3	2	1	0
2012	2	2	0	0
2013	2	1	1	0

Sexual Assault (including assault by penetration) Investigations by RAFP

YEAR	TOTAL INVESTIGATED BY RAFP	TOTAL REFERRED TO SPA	TOTAL NOT REFERRED TO SPA	STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION
2009 (from 1 Nov)	2	0	2	0
2010	8	5	3	0
2011	5	4	1	0
2012	3	3	0	0
2013	3	1	2	0

Note: These tables only detail investigations where the appropriate Service police retained jurisdiction and investigative lead.

Figures relating to Domestic Violence could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

■ Armed Forces: Deployment

Paul Flynn: [\[207379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any British military personnel have been deployed to (a) Northern Iraq, (b) Iraqi Kurdistan and (c) Northern Syria since June 2014.

Mr Mark Francois:

[holding answer 5 September 2014]: As a member of the US coalition, the UK is committed to countering ISIL in Iraq and Syria. British personnel have been providing logistical, liaison and surveillance support in Iraq and will continue to do so. From 27 September 2014, following the parliamentary vote, the RAF began flying strike missions over Iraq. We have also recently sent a small team to provide short term training to Kurdish forces. These troops are not deployed in a ground combat role.

Additionally, as part of our preparations for a potential humanitarian airlift from the Sinjar Mountains in August, we deployed military personnel to Erbil. These troops were recovered to Cyprus when it became clear that the operation would not go ahead.

■ AWE Burghfield

Angus Robertson: [\[209764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 22 January 2014, Official Report, column 222W, on the Atomic Weapons Establishment, what the conclusions and recommendations are of the investigation into shortfalls in policing standards and neglect of duties at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Burghfield; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the report of the investigation.

Anna Soubry:

The Misconduct process in respect of allegations that a number of Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) officers failed to complete their duties correctly at the Atomic Weapons Establishment Burghfield continues. Any immediate issues of concern identified have now been addressed by the MDP and further matters picked up during the ongoing disciplinary process will be actioned. A report will be prepared by the Chief Constable when the disciplinary process has completed.

■ Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Stephen Doughty: [\[209903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation; and at what intervals the performance of that organisation is reviewed at ministerial level.

Anna Soubry:

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation's (DIO) contract with its Strategic Business Partner commenced on 3 September 2014. No formal assessment of the effectiveness of these new arrangements has been made at this early stage.

Monthly reports outlining the DIO's performance are reviewed by the Defence Board which has Ministerial attendance. Annual reviews also form an integral part of contract throughout the term.

■ HMS Defender

Angus Robertson: [\[209756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the current mission tasking is for HMS Defender; and how long she has been assigned to this task.

Mr Mark Francois:

HMS Defender deployed in June 2014 and is part of a multinational operation to provide maritime security to the Gulf region. She is currently part of an integrated carrier strike group protecting the USS George H W Bush.

■ Home Start

Sir Bob Russell: [\[207738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much funding his Department provides to support the charity Homestart in (a) Germany, (b) Cyprus, (c) elsewhere abroad and (d) the UK.

Anna Soubry:

[holding answer 8 September 2014]: Home-Start has received payments totalling £40,335 from the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme for two projects in the UK. No funding has been awarded to the charity for any projects in Germany, Cyprus or elsewhere abroad.

The Community Covenant Grant Scheme (CCGS) is a fund of £30 million designed to support projects at the local level that strengthen ties between members of the Armed Forces community and the wider community.

An application for funding can be submitted by any part of the community (e.g. volunteer groups, charities and public bodies such as schools) firstly through the Community Covenant partnership and if endorsed at that level, to the regional panels up and down the country. Although this is the last year of the CCGS, from 2015 the Armed Forces Covenant fund will launch with £10 million per year made available to fund projects supporting the Armed Forces.

■ Intelligence Services

Mr Tom Watson: [\[R\] \[209540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 14 July 2014, Official Report, column 525W, on intelligence services, whether the principles published in the Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel 2011 are applied to assessment of the risk that shared data may be used for targeted killing by foreign states.

Mr Mark Francois:

[holding answer 15 October 2014]: I reiterate to the hon. Member that intelligence shared with foreign partners by the Ministry of Defence is undertaken within clear policy and legal frameworks, with Parliamentary and, where applicable, judicial oversight. This includes the application of the principles of the Consolidated Guidance.

■ Iraq

Angus Robertson:

[207732]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) Chinook helicopters, (b) personnel and (c) other assets were involved in Operation Safe Haven; and when that operation finished.

Mr Mark Francois:

[holding answer 8 September 2014]: UK forces were deployed to Northern Iraq in 1991 in support of Operation Safe Haven. These forces included:

Twelve Chinook helicopters based at Diyarbakir Air Base in Turkey and at its peak, approximately, 4,000 UK service personnel in Turkey and Northern Iraq.

3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines was deployed. In addition to helicopter support, three RAF C-130 aircraft were also deployed. The last Coalition land forces related to this operation withdrew from Northern Iraq on 16 July 1991.

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[209981]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps the Government plans to take to minimise civilian casualties in air strikes on Iraq.

Mr Mark Francois:

[holding answer 15 October 2014]: The UK seeks to avoid civilian casualties whilst undertaking air strikes against ISIL targets. All air strikes are conducted in accordance with Rules of Engagement and the law. Careful selection, approval and close observation of targets prior to a strike and the use of precision guided munitions, such as Brimstone and Paveway IV, minimises collateral damage and the potential for civilian casualties.

■ Military Aircraft

Mr Tom Watson:

[R] [209531]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July 2014, Official Report, column 687W, on Afghanistan, whether his Department has undertaken any comparative research on the civilian casualty rates of remotely piloted air systems, fast jet and rotary wing platforms.

Mr Mark Francois:

[holding answer 15 October 2014]: No.

■ MOD St Athan

David T. C. Davies:

[\[210185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether it is his policy to encourage his Department to work with private companies based at MOD St Athan.

Mr Philip Dunne:

I have taken the hon. Member's questions to refer to the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) transition work with the Welsh Government initiative for the development of an Air Business Park at MOD St Athan.

The MOD fully understands the importance of this development in Wales, and will continue to support the Welsh Government in its transition to a wholly civil operation by 2019. Whilst the Department is supportive of this initiative, private companies based at MOD St Athan are clients of the Welsh Government; other than dealing with direct routine operational or safety enquires, the Department does not liaise directly with these companies.

■ NATO

Simon Kirby:

[\[209917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to encourage all other NATO member states to spend two per cent of their GDP on defence; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Julian Brazier:

At the Wales Summit, the UK proposed that all Allies sign up publicly for the first time ever to the NATO target of spending 2% of GDP on defence, and to a range of other metrics including ensuring that 20% of that figure is spent on new capabilities. We secured this objective along with agreement that Allies would review national progress annually and that this would be discussed at future Defence Ministerial meetings and reviewed by Heads of State and Government at future Summits. Between now and the next formal Defence Ministerial in June 2015 we will be engaging with Allies and NATO to ensure the commitments we all agreed at Newport are put in place and reported against. Despite the deficit this Government inherited, we have consistently met and indeed exceeded the target and will continue to do so until the end of the spending review period.

■ Pay

Mr Frank Field:

[\[209465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) direct employees, (b) outsourced workers and (c) workers in agencies which report to his Department are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Anna Soubry:

The table shows the number of civilian staff employed by the Ministry of Defence and its Agencies who are paid less than the rate defined by the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) as a living wage.

DEPARTMENT/AGENCY	NUMBERS WORKING IN LONDON	
	PAID LESS THAN LWF LONDON RATE OF £8.80 PER HOUR	NUMBERS PAID LESS THAN LWF NATIONAL RATE OF £7.65 PER HOUR
Ministry of Defence	10	900
United Kingdom Hydrographic Office	0	30
Defence Support Group	0	40
Defence Science & Technology Laboratory	0	60

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Figures are as at 3 October 2014.

Contracted workers' rates of pay, where paid by their parent company or recruitment agency, are not visible to the Department.

■ Reserve Forces

Mr Charles Kennedy:

[\[209553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Service Complaints have been made in the Royal Navy Reserve in the last three years; and how long it has taken to investigate each case.

Anna Soubry:

There have been 12 Service Complaints recorded on the Joint Personnel Administration Service and submitted to Commanding Officers of Royal Naval Reserve Units in the last three years.

It is not possible to determine how much time has been spent investigating each case; investigations can be conducted at any phase of the Service Complaint management process, and some of these cases are ongoing.

■ RFA Argus

Thomas Docherty:

[\[210159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Statement on 13 October 2014 by the Secretary of State for Health, from which departmental budget the costs associated with deploying RFA Argus to West Africa will be recovered.

Mr Mark Francois:

The Department for International Development will be funding the net additional cost of deploying RFA ARGUS.

■ Torpedoes

Vernon Coaker:

[\[208467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects to make a decision on the Royal Navy's long-term heavyweight torpedo requirement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

[holding answer 13 October 2014]: BAE Systems has successfully supplied the Ministry of Defence (MOD) with the Spearfish, heavyweight torpedo for a number of years. There is, however, a requirement to upgrade the capability. The MOD and BAE Systems remain engaged to resolve commercial issues. On current plans it is expected that a contract will be awarded within the next few months.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

■ Voting Rights: Young People

Iain McKenzie:

[\[210077\]](#)

To ask the Deputy Prime Minister, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to extend the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds for the next UK General Election.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

There is no consensus across Government on this issue and there are no plans to legislate to extend the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds before the next UK General Election.

EDUCATION

■ Schools: Essex

Steve McCabe:

[\[209825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to prevent those banned from working with children or adults in Essex following the recent investigation by Essex County Council into child sexual exploitation from working in other maintained educational institutions.

Mr David Laws:

All schools and colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All schools are required to carry out mandatory 'safer recruitment' checks that help to identify individuals who are not suitable to work with pupils. The Department for Education's statutory guidance on 'Keeping children safe in education' [1] makes clear that when appointing staff, schools must check police records, police intelligence and

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) barring lists. Furthermore, anyone who is appointed to teach must not have been prohibited from being so appointed by the Secretary of State.

These checks ensure that individuals who are barred from working in regulated activity by the DBS are not employed to work with pupils in schools. They also allow schools to identify any additional risks to children and make informed decisions about an individual's suitability to work in a school environment.

[1] www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education

■ Schools: Kent

Gareth Johnson: [209882]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many new (a) primary and (b) secondary school places have been created in (i) Dartford constituency and (ii) Kent in the last 12 months.

Mr David Laws:

The Department for Education collects information from local authorities on the number of school places (school capacity) in state-funded primary and secondary schools (except special schools) as part of the annual School Capacity Collection. The most recent data available relates to the position in May 2013 and can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-capacity-academic-year-2012-to-2013.

In Kent, between May 2012 and May 2013, the number of places in schools deemed as primary schools increased by 960 and the number of places in schools deemed as secondary schools increased by 2,011. Schools that cross phases, for example middle schools, are deemed as either primary or secondary.

Data on the number of school places for the past 12 months is not yet available as this information is currently being collected from local authorities and will be published in due course. Information about the number of school places is not available at constituency level.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ Energy Companies Obligation

David Morris: [210283]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what proportion of households in rural areas have participated in Carbon Saving Communities Obligation measures; and what proportion of the funding of such measures is contributed by such households through their fuel bills.

Amber Rudd:

The monthly Green Deal/Energy Company Obligation (ECO) statistical release published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change presents the number of measures

installed under the rural sub-obligation of the Carbon Saving Communities Obligation (CSCO) strand of ECO. The latest release was published on 23 September:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/green-deal-and-energy-company-obligation-eco-monthly-statistics-september-2014>.

A further 13,068 rural sub-obligation measures up to July 2014 were reported by energy companies in anticipation of amendments to the ECO Order, giving a total of 14,341. Please note that these are provisional figures for measures not yet notified but installed since 1 April.

We do not collect information as to what proportion of total households in rural areas have benefitted from CSCO measures as we do not have data on the total populations in those areas. Nor do we have information on the proportion of funding contributed by households in rural areas via their fuel bills.

David Morris:

[210284]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many installations under the Rural Safeguard Scheme there have been to date; and what proportion such installations form of (a) Energy Company Obligation measures and (b) Carbon Saving Communities Obligation measures.

Amber Rudd:

I believe that the "Rural Safeguard Scheme" to which the Hon. Member refers may be the rural sub-obligation which forms part of the Carbon Saving Communities (CSCO) strand of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and I am answering on that basis.

The latest statistics have been published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change on 23 September:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/green-deal-and-energy-company-obligation-eco-monthly-statistics-september-2014>.

■ Performance Appraisal

John Healey:

[209480]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many officials in his Department of each (a) gender, (b) ethnicity and (c) age received the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System's (i) exceeded, (ii) met and (iii) must improve performance mark in 2013-14.

Amber Rudd:

DECC uses the following three performance ratings:

- Exceptional performance
- Effective performance
- Need for improvement/ developing

Table 1 summarises 2013/14 performance ratings by gender. Figures are for staff headcount.

Table 1

	EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE	EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE	NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPING	TOTAL
Male	185	546	54	785
Female	174	431	38	643
Total	359	977	92	1428

Table 2 summarises 2013/14 performance ratings by ethnicity. Figures are for staff headcount.

Table 2

	EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE	EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE	NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPING	TOTAL
White	240	610	53	903
BME	38	88	20	146
Unknown	81	279	19	379
Total	359	977	92	1428

Table 3 summarises 2013/14 performance ratings by age. Figures are for staff headcount.

Table 3

	EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE	EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE	NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPING	TOTAL
16-39	240	511	27	778
40-49	65	269	30	364
50+	54	197	35	286
Total	359	977	92	1428

John Healey:

[\[209627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many officials in his Department who received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark under the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System (i) had a disability, (ii) worked full-time and (iii) worked part-time in 2013-14.

Amber Rudd:

DECC uses the following three performance ratings:

- Exceptional performance
- Effective performance
- Need for improvement/ developing

Table 1 summarises 2013/14 performance ratings for staff who declared that they had a disability. Figures are for staff headcount.

Table 1

EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE	10
Effective performance	58
Need for improvement/developing	14
Total	82

Table 2 below provides additional data in relation to the performance ratings of staff who declared that they didn't have a disability, and for those who didn't declare their disability status.

Table 2

	EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE	EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE	NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPING	TOTAL
Declared that they had a disability	10	58	14	82
Declared that they didn't have a disability	273	680	55	1008
Disability status not declared	76	239	23	338
Total	359	977	92	1428

Table 3 below summarises 2013/14 performance ratings for full- and part-time staff. Figures are for staff headcount.

Table 3

	EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE	EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE	NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPING	TOTAL
Full-time	333	898	87	1318
Part-time	26	79	5	110
Total	359	977	92	1428

John Healey:

[\[209649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many officials in his Department completed the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System in 2013-14; how many and what proportion of those officials received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark; and how many and what proportion (i) did and (ii) did not qualify for a bonus under that process.

Amber Rudd:

DECC uses the following three performance ratings:

- Exceptional performance
- Effective performance
- Need for improvement/ developing

Table 1 summarises the performance ratings for 2013-14.

Table 1

	HEADCOUNT	%
Exceptional performance	359	25.1
Effective performance	977	68.4
Need for improving/developing	92	6.4
Total	1428	100

All staff with an Exceptional Performance rating were eligible for a performance related payment, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

	HEADCOUNT	%
Eligible for performance related payment	359	25.1
Not eligible for performance related payment	1069	74.9

	HEADCOUNT	%
Total	1428	100

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Food and Environment Research Agency

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[209250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which companies responded to the Food and Environment Research Agency market sounding exercise.

Dan Rogerson:

This is subject to a commercial confidentiality restriction and all companies have signed a confidentiality agreement. Therefore, we are not in the position to disclose publicly the names of the companies until after the procurement is completed. We are in the middle of a public procurement under EU regulations.

■ Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[210078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress has been made so far by the agricultural sector towards meeting its Greenhouse Gas Action Plan; what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of that initiative; and what the relationship is of the Plan to international emission comparisons.

George Eustice:

Defra carried out a review of the industry's Greenhouse Gas Action Plan in 2012. The review concluded that progress was sufficient for industry to meet their overall ambition to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from agriculture by 3 MtCO₂ by 2022 compared to a 2007 baseline.

A further review will take place in 2016. To support this Defra has developed a set of indicators to track progress on agricultural mitigation. The results are published in our annual Agricultural and Climate Change Statistics and show an increased uptake in certain farm practices that reduce GHGs. These emissions have also been reduced whilst maintaining levels of agricultural production.

The Plan is focused on our domestic agricultural sector and meeting the targets set by the Committee for Climate Change. Our investment in the Greenhouse Gas Research and Development platform will provide a more detailed and accurate inventory of GHGs which will also enable international emission comparisons.

■ Nature Conservation: British Overseas Territories

Zac Goldsmith: [\[209783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many of the species in the UK's Overseas Territories have had their conservation status assessed.

George Eustice:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office recently funded a project led by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) to carry out the first ever stocktake of species in the UK's Overseas Territories (UKOTs). The study, completed between January 2013 and March 2014, brought together all known species records and conservation assessments. It found that there are at least 1,500 endemic species in the UKOTs and that 145 (9%) of these have had their global conservation status assessed.

The report of the study's findings, 'The UK's Wildlife Overseas: A stocktake of nature in our Overseas Territories', was published on 5 June 2014 and can be found on the RSPB's website at:

www.rspb.org.uk/whatwedo/projects/details.aspx?id=369443

■ Pay

Mr Frank Field: [\[209467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many (a) direct employees, (b) outsourced workers and (c) workers in agencies which report to her Department are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Dan Rogerson:

There are no direct employees paid less than the Living Wage in core Defra, AHVLA, VMD and RPA.

In FERA there are 11 and in CEFAS 7 directly employed members of staff on apprenticeship schemes who are paid below the Living Wage.

207 people are known to be employed on contracts in Defra and the executive agencies where the contractors pay less than the Living Wage.

■ Slaughterhouses

Huw Irranca-Davies: [\[209694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 3 September 2014 to Question 193828, what steps she has taken to ensure the accuracy of data collected by the Food Standards Agency on mis-stunning of animals for slaughter.

George Eustice:

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is due to complete a review into its monitoring and reporting of breaches of welfare legislation by the end of October.

Previously, only major and critical breaches were recorded, along with the actions taken to correct these. The FSA review is now also looking to strengthen recording of minor

breaches. These minor breaches include where back-up stunning equipment is used or a second stun is carried out without the intervention of the Official Veterinarian and where there has been no injury, avoidable pain, distress or suffering to an animal. As with major and critical breaches, information on minor breaches would be collated centrally and reported to Defra, Welsh and Scottish Government on a monthly basis.

■ Telephone Services

Valerie Vaz:

[\[209954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what timetable is in place for the phase-out of her Department's telephone lines with the prefix (a) 0845, (b) 0844 and (c) 0843.

Dan Rogerson:

Core Defra operates a dual numbering system for all 0845 prefix telephone lines with the prefix 03 used as the primary number. 0845 prefix numbers have been retained to allow callers a choice based on their call package arrangements. There is no timetable to phase out the 0845 prefixed numbers but a review of the dual numbering policy will conclude in November.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Baltic States

Simon Kirby:

[\[209916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has given assurances to the Baltic States about the UK's commitment to (a) the NATO alliance and (b) their territorial integrity; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Lidington:

At the Wales Summit the Alliance reaffirmed its commitment to meet treaty obligations to any member under threat. A key UK objective for the Wales Summit was to provide greater reassurance to Eastern Allies as part of a robust response to Russia. The Summit launched a "Readiness Action Plan" which includes a continuous pattern activity in the air, on land and at sea, on a rotational basis. The Summit also agreed a new "spearhead unit" within the NATO Response Force, which will be able to deploy at very short notice. At the Summit, the Prime Minister, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), announced that the UK offer would be a Battle Group and a Brigade HQ. In addition to this, the UK deployed RAF Typhoons to NATO's standing peacetime Baltic Air Policing Mission in May 2014 and provided E3-D support and 3500 troops for exercises in Eastern Europe before the end of 2015. These actions demonstrate the UK's continuing commitment to our eastern Allies, including the Baltic States, as we safeguard the freedom and security of all Allies by political and military means. I underlined the UK's strong support when I met Foreign Ministers Linas Linkevičius and Urmas Paet at the Wales Summit.

■ China

Simon Kirby: [\[209364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has received from groups in the People's Republic of China about human rights in that country; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We monitor the human rights situation in China closely and engage with a wide range of stakeholders. We have ongoing concerns about restrictions to civil and political rights in China which we raise regularly with Chinese counterparts. We last held the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue on 19-20 May 2014, allowing us to raise concerns directly with Chinese authorities. We also raise our concerns publicly through the Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy and updates to it. Our Embassy in Beijing has contact with a range of civil society groups in China.

Ministers regularly raise our concerns with counterparts, including during high-level bilateral exchanges.

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[209774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions officials in his Department have had with the Chinese government on upholding the religious freedom of Christians in the Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We have concerns about all restrictions placed on freedom of religion and belief in China, including those placed on Christians in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province. We regularly raise our concerns with Chinese counterparts and did so most recently during the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue on 19-20 May 2014. We also raise our concerns publicly through our Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy, last published on 10 April 2014 and updated on 30 June 2014.

Valerie Vaz: [\[210079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on the detention of Gao Zhisheng in China; and what representations he has made to his Chinese counterpart on Mr Gao Zhisheng's behalf.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We have followed Gao's case closely and welcomed his release from prison on 7 August 2014. We are concerned by reports that he has been in ill health since his release, and that his movement is restricted. We urge the Chinese authorities to allow him access to adequate medical care, and to ensure that his rights to freedom of movement and communication are duly protected.

UK officials have repeatedly raised Gao's case with the Chinese government, including during the most recent UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in May 2014, and again prior to his release. We highlight our range of human rights concerns in the Foreign and

Commonwealth Office's Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy, and the quarterly updates to it.

■ China: Taiwan

Simon Kirby:

[[209360](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to promote dialogue between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Hugo Swire:

The UK considers that the issue of cross-Strait relations should be settled peacefully by the people on both sides of the Strait. Her Majesty's Government welcomes recent improvements in relations.

■ Cyprus

Mr Mark Williams:

[[209956](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many UK nationals have been affected by the Cypriot government's decision to withdraw funds from bank accounts belonging to foreigners in 2013; how many such people were banking with Laiki Bank; and what steps the Government is taking to recover the funds of such citizens.

Mr David Lidington:

We do not hold any figures relating to the number of UK nationals affected. Deposits in Cypriot banks are subject to the laws and regulations of the Republic of Cyprus, and we have no authority to intervene in individual cases. We recommend that British Nationals consider seeking independent professional advice regarding their assets overseas.

■ Detainees

Mr Tom Watson:

[R] [[209539](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the principles published in the Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel 2011 are applied to assessment of the risk that shared data may be used for targeted killing by foreign states.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

It is a long standing policy not to comment on intelligence matters. I would reiterate to the Hon. Member that all of the UK's intelligence sharing with Foreign States is undertaken within a robust legal framework, and is subject to rigorous ministerial, parliamentary and judicial oversight, including through the Consolidated Guidance.

■ Hong Kong

Simon Kirby: [\[209362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has received from pro-democracy groups in Hong Kong; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Hugo Swire:

UK Ministers and Government Officials maintain a regular dialogue with key figures from all sides of the constitutional reform debate in Hong Kong, including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, the Central People's Government, and representatives of pro-democracy groups. The Deputy Prime Minister, the right hon Member for Sheffield, Hallam (Mr Clegg) and I met separately with two representatives of pro-democracy groups during their visit to London in July.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office issued statements on the situation in Hong Kong on both 29 September and 2 October.

■ India

David Mowat: [\[209335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the government of India about the trial of Mr Richard de Wit.

Mr Hugo Swire:

The Government has not made any representations about the trial as we do not offer consular support to non-British nationals and it would not be appropriate to interfere in the legal proceedings of the Indian government.

■ Iran

Simon Kirby: [\[209365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations his Department has made to the Iranian government on its approach to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; what recent representations he has received on the treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Iran; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK is concerned by the continued persecution of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Iran. In May 2013, the upper house of the Iranian Parliament adopted a new Islamic Penal Code, which continues to criminalise sex between adults of the same sex. The punishments can range from 100 lashes to the death penalty for both men and women. It is also against Iranian law for same sex people to touch and kiss, and for people to cross dress.

The UK has repeatedly called on Iran to fulfil its international and domestic obligations to protect the human rights of all Iranians.

Simon Kirby:

[\[209366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of UN sanctions in deterring Iran's nuclear programme; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

UN sanctions on Iran restrict the supply of nuclear-related materials, freeze the assets of key individuals and companies related to nuclear proliferation-sensitive activities, and apply to all states. They have therefore played an important role in international efforts to halt Iran's nuclear programme. The UK is firmly committed to ensuring compliance with UN sanctions. They can only be lifted as part of a comprehensive agreement on Iran's nuclear programme.

Bob Blackman:

[\[209697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if his Department will make recommendations to the UN Universal Periodic Review of the human rights record of Iran to encourage that state to cease its policies of persecution of members of the Bahá'í community; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK will fully engage in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Iran's human rights record, which is due to be considered by the Human Rights Council on 31 October 2014. As at the last UPR, the UK will make a statement and table recommendations on how Iran could improve its approach to human rights. This will include minority religious rights - the UK has repeatedly expressed concern at the persecution of the Baha'i community in Iran, and we will continue to encourage Iran to ensure all its citizens are able to exercise their right to freedom of religion, free from persecution and harassment.

Bob Blackman:

[\[209698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what contribution the UK plans to make to the Universal Periodic Review of Iran's human rights record due to be considered by the UN Human Rights Council on 27 October 2014; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK will fully engage in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Iran's human rights record, which is due to be considered by the Human Rights Council on 31 October 2014. As at the last UPR, the UK will make a statement and table recommendations on how Iran could improve its approach to human rights. This will include minority religious rights - the UK has repeatedly expressed concern at the persecution of the Baha'i community in Iran, and we will continue to encourage Iran to ensure all its citizens are able to exercise their right to freedom of religion, free from persecution and harassment.

■ Israel

Chi Onwurah: [\[210278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received about discrimination faced by British Muslims on entering and exiting Israel.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have received one recent report on British Muslims facing discrimination on entering and exiting from Israel.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is unable to interfere in the immigration policies or procedures of another country, but does raise cases of grave concern with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

■ Kashmir

David Mowat: [\[209336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether staff from his Department have attended the trial of Mr Richard de Wit in Kashmir.

Mr Hugo Swire:

Consular staff have provided full consular support to the family of Sarah Groves who was tragically murdered in Kashmir. Given the exceptional nature of this case, this has included accompanying them to court in Kashmir and attending key stages in the trial of Richard De Witt, the Dutch national accused of her murder.

■ Nigeria

Chi Onwurah: [\[210275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on whether adequate preparations are being made in Nigeria for holding free, fair, timely and national elections in February 2015.

James Duddridge:

British ministers have engaged regularly with their Nigerian counterparts to convey our expectation that Nigeria's presidential elections will be free, fair and peaceful. When I met the Nigerian Foreign Minister in September I spoke of the need to strengthen institutions in Nigeria to enhance the democratic process. The UK government continues to support Nigeria in ensuring adequate electoral mechanisms and observation are put in place. This includes through DFID's Deepening Democracy in Nigeria 2 programme. At £35m over four years, this is the largest bilateral programme supporting democratisation in Nigeria. It has a major focus on working with Nigerian partners to deliver credible and peaceful elections.

■ North Korea

Mr Nigel Dodds:

[209778]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to raise the issue of forced repatriations to North Korea with the Chinese government.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We have made it clear to the Chinese government that people who have escaped from North Korea are entitled to protection under the International Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967). We have also made clear we believe the Chinese government should allow people from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea safe passage to resettlement in third countries; and we encourage the Chinese government to work with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to facilitate this. The then Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon Friend the Member for Richmond Yorks (Mr Hague), raised human rights during his meeting with State Counsellor Yang Jiechi in February 2014, including the specific issue of non-refoulement of North Korean refugees. I also raised these issues with the Chinese Permanent Representative in Geneva in June 2014.

■ North Korea and Iran

Simon Kirby:

[209368]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the range of the ballistic missiles possessed by (a) North Korea and (b) Iran; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The DPRK has successfully flown the No Dong medium range ballistic missile with an approximate range of 1,500km. Additionally the DPRK has paraded intercontinental ballistic missiles with claimed ranges up to 13,000km, but these have not been flight tested yet. We assess that Iran's longest-range ballistic missiles are the Ashura and Shahab III, both medium-range ballistic missiles with a range of approximately 2,000km. We continue to call on both countries to refrain from conducting further ballistic missile testing in violation of UNSCRs prohibiting such testing.

Simon Kirby:

[209369]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the nuclear weapons capability of (a) North Korea and (b) Iran.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) conducted its third nuclear test in February 2013, following earlier tests in 2006 and 2009. We note with concern reports suggesting the Yongbyon nuclear reactor has been restarted, that the nearby uranium enrichment facility has apparently been expanded, as well as DPRK's statements reiterating its 'right' to conduct further nuclear tests. We continue to urge DPRK to comply with its obligations under relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, to refrain

from any further provocations to abide by its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and permit full access by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In the event of any further test, we have made clear to DPRK that they should expect a robust response.

Iran does not have a nuclear weapons capability, but we are concerned about the goals of Iran's nuclear programme, the associated proliferation risks and Iran's history of concealing its nuclear activities. The most concerning elements of Iran's nuclear programme were frozen or rolled back under the Geneva Joint Plan of Action, which will expire on 24 November. A comprehensive agreement between the E3+3 and Iran is the best way to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. We urge Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA to address international concerns about the possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme.

■ Pay

Mr Frank Field:

[\[209468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many (a) direct employees, (b) outsourced workers and (c) workers in agencies which report to his Department are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

None of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's, or its agencies, direct employees or agency staff are paid below the living wage. We do not hold information on the earnings of outsourced workers.

■ Performance Appraisal

John Healey:

[\[209482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many officials in his Department of each (a) gender, (b) ethnicity and (c) age received the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System's (i) exceeded, (ii) met and (iii) must improve performance mark in 2013-14.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The new Civil Service Employee Policy Performance Management system applies to UK-based staff in the delegated grades (Band A (AA-AO) to Band D (G6/7). Senior Civil Servants (SCS) follow Cabinet Office guidance on performance management. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) adopted the new Performance Management System in April 2013. The Department operates a split appraisal cycle with Bands C (HEO/SEO) and D using the financial year and Bands A and B (AA/AO/EO) using the calendar year. Bands C and D used the new policy for appraisal year 2013/2014, with Band D appraisals being subject to performance validation. Bands A and B only started to use the new system from 1 January 2014 and will complete their cycle in December. The FCO uses the third box marking of "Partially Met" rather than "Must Improve". We also have a guided distribution in place across the ratings as follows: Exceeded – 25% Met – 60% Partially Met – 15% The FCO takes seriously its obligations to collect

diversity data as required by the Equality Act 2010. Information about the diversity and makeup of our staff is listed in the FCO's Diversity and Equality Report. We will complete an analysis of the appraisal and performance related pay (PRP) data for diversity purposes early in 2015 once all staff have completed one full year on the new system.

John Healey:

[209629]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many officials in his Department who received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark under the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System (i) had a disability, (ii) worked full-time and (iii) worked part-time in 2013-14.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The new Civil Service Employee Policy Performance Management system applies to UK-based staff in the delegated grades (Band A (AA-AO) to Band D (G6/7). Senior Civil Servants (SCS) follow Cabinet Office guidance on performance management. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) adopted the new Performance Management System in April 2013. The Department operates a split appraisal cycle with Bands C (HEO/SEO) and D using the financial year and Bands A and B (AA/AO/EO) using the calendar year. Bands C and D used the new policy for appraisal year 2013/2014, with Band D appraisals being subject to performance validation. Bands A and B only started to use the new system from 1 January 2014 and will complete their cycle in December. The FCO uses the third box marking of "Partially Met" rather than "Must Improve". We also have a guided distribution in place across the ratings as follows: Exceeded – 25% Met – 60% Partially Met – 15% The FCO takes seriously its obligations to collect diversity data as required by the Equality Act 2010. Information about the diversity and makeup of our staff is listed in the FCO's Diversity and Equality Report. We will complete an analysis of the appraisal and performance related pay (PRP) data for diversity purposes early in 2015 once all staff have completed one full year on the new system.

John Healey:

[209651]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many officials in his Department completed the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System in 2013-14; how many and what proportion of those officials received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark; and how many and what proportion (i) did and (ii) did not qualify for a bonus under that process.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The new Civil Service Employee Policy Performance Management system applies to UK-based staff in the delegated grades (Band A (AA-AO) to Band D (G6/7). Senior Civil Servants (SCS) follow Cabinet Office guidance on performance management

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) adopted the new Performance Management System in April 2013. The Department operates a split appraisal cycle with Bands C (HEO/SEO) and D using the financial year and Bands A and B (AA/AO/EO) using the calendar year. Bands C and D used the new policy for appraisal year 2013/2014, with Band D appraisals being subject to performance validation. Bands A and B only started to use the new system from 1 January 2014 and will complete their cycle in

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■ Senkaku Islands

Simon Kirby: [\[209363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has participated in discussions on resolving tensions between the People's Republic of China and Japan over the Senkaku Islands; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Hugo Swire:

Whilst the UK does not take a position on the underlying question of sovereignty, we have a clear interest in maintaining regional peace and stability. We have urged both China and Japan to resolve the matter peacefully and in accordance with international law.

■ Tibet

Simon Kirby: [\[209361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has received from groups representing the Tibetan people; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We receive frequent correspondence regarding Tibet. Our officials maintain a regular dialogue with a range of Tibetan interest groups, and I met with a number of such groups in June.

We monitor the situation in Tibetan areas closely. We have ongoing concerns about restrictions on ethnic minority rights which we raise regularly with Chinese counterparts, most recently during the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue on 19-20 May 2014. We report on the situation in our Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy, and in updates to it.

■ Wildlife: Smuggling

Mr John Spellar: [\[209107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the extent of the role of terrorist organisations in the illegal ivory and wildlife smuggling trade.

James Duddridge:

The Government recognises that the multi-billion pound illegal wildlife trade not only has a devastating effect on affected species.

The Government hosted a major conference of global leaders in London in February 2014 to help eradicate the illegal wildlife trade and better protect affected species from the threat of extinction. 25 practical commitments to action were agreed in a Declaration by the participating states. One of those commitments was to undertake further assessment of the markets and dynamics of the illegal wildlife trade and progress made to combat it, including exploring links to terrorism.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office commissioned a review of the Global Impacts of the Illegal Wildlife Trade: The Costs of Crime, Insecurity and Institutional Erosion, which was published in February this year. This Review found that armed non-state actors are involved with poaching. Progress on all commitments in the London Declaration will be assessed at a follow-up Conference in Kasane, Botswana, in March 2015.

HEALTH

■ Antidepressants

Zac Goldsmith:

[\[209345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many incidents have been recorded by the NHS of Citalopram leading to the deterioration of a patient's health in the last five years.

George Freeman:

Reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are collected by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Commission for Human Medicines (CHM) through the spontaneous reporting scheme, the Yellow Card Scheme.

The Yellow Card Scheme collects information relating to suspected adverse drug reactions, which include both serious and non-serious effects which a doctor or patient suspects may have been due to a medicine. The MHRA has received a total of 1207 suspected ADR reports in association with citalopram between 1 January 2009 and 31 August 2014. This number includes reports received directly from healthcare professionals, patients and indirectly through pharmaceutical companies which have a legal obligation to report suspected ADRs. The number of reports received directly from the NHS cannot be determined.

The inclusion of a particular ADR in a report does not necessarily mean it has been caused by the drug, only that the reporter had a suspicion it may have, or it had a close temporal relationship to the administration of the suspect drug. The fact that symptoms occur after a treatment does not necessarily mean that they have been caused by the drug itself, as underlying illnesses and other conditions may be responsible.

■ Childbirth

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[209103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that all mothers who give birth to a premature baby receive the necessary psychological support.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

As set out in NHS England's NHS Standard Contract for Neonatal Critical Care each unit must deliver a family-centred care approach, with sufficient emotional and practical support for parents and families, enabling them to make informed choices and play an active part in their babies' care.

Delivering care in a family-centred way helps minimise the physical and psychological impact of neonatal care on the baby and their family, for example by improving psychological outcomes.

Family centred care puts the physical, psychological and social needs of both the baby and their family at the heart of all care given. The Department awarded Bliss, the National charity for the Newborn, a grant for Family Centred Care: A Guide for Parents project, which aims to improve parents' experience of neonatal care and help them to establish their role as parents.

■ Children: Protection

Steve McCabe: [\[209338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to his Department's Child Protection Information Sharing project, what guidance will be given to NHS staff on sharing information with relevant local authorities, police forces and care homes.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Child Protection – Information Sharing (CP-IS) project will allow the sharing of child protection information between NHS unscheduled care settings and local authority children's services staff only. The information will not be shared with care homes or the police.

CP-IS will hold child protection information only for children in England who are subject to a child protection plan or are looked after by a local authority.

When NHS staff interrogate the CP-IS service, the system will share electronically the following information with the local authority responsible for the child: the time and date of the query, the name of the NHS healthcare worker who made the query, and the NHS organisation from within which the query was generated.

CP-IS will not introduce information sharing over and beyond what is currently shared by NHS staff and local authorities.

The Health & Social Care Information Centre has published guidance on its website for NHS and local authority staff on how to use the CP-IS system.

■ Ebola

Iain McKenzie: [\[210075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to screen all visitors entering the UK from West Africa for Ebola.

Jane Ellison:

The World Health Organization recommends exit screening remains in place at airports in affected countries, which will identify anyone who is symptomatic before they leave the country. This is an important measure employed to minimise the spread to other countries.

The Secretary of State laid out the steps the Government is taking to screen visitors to the United Kingdom in relation to Ebola during his statement to the House on 13 October 2014, Official Report , columns 38-56.

■ Electronic Cigarettes

David T. C. Davies: [\[210193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the implications are for his policy of the statement by the Chief Medical Officer that e-cigarettes represent one of the three major health threats to the UK.

Jane Ellison:

The Government's policy on e-cigarettes is to enable the availability of products which meet appropriate standards of safety, quality and efficacy to support smoking cessation and to reduce the harm of smoking to smokers and those around them.

Beyond licenced medicinal products, the Government is working to transpose the provision of the Tobacco Products Directive (Directive 2014/40/EU) which will provide a framework for e-cigarettes which are not licensed as medicines. In addition to the safeguards the Tobacco Products Directive will introduce, the Government is committed to banning the sale of e-cigarettes to under 18s to protect children from the potential for nicotine addiction and the unknown risks of using e-cigarettes to developing lungs.

The Government's policy will remain evidence based and we will continue to closely monitor all emerging research.

■ Genetically Modified Organisms

Mr Laurence Robertson: [\[210149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what requirements exist for genetically modified food to be labelled as such; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Ellison:

The Food Standards Agency advise that European Union Regulation 1829/2003 on genetically modified (GM) food and feed, requires that food derived from GM sources

must be labelled, regardless of the presence of detectable GM material in the final product or of the quantity of intentionally used GM ingredients.

■ Health Services

Luciana Berger: [\[209124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans the Government has to align the NHS Outcomes Framework with the Public Health Outcomes Framework.

Jane Ellison:

The NHS, Public Health and Adult Social Care Outcomes Frameworks work together with the same overarching aim of improving outcomes that matter to people, and increasing the alignment between the frameworks is an important part of this.

The Government has been reviewing the NHS Outcomes Framework this year. A part of this work has involved assessing how the framework can be further aligned with the Public Health Outcomes Framework. The refreshed NHS Outcomes Framework will reflect this work, and is due to be published alongside the Mandate in the autumn.

Currently, eight out of the 64 indicators in the NHS Outcomes Framework are shared or complementary with the Public Health Outcomes Framework, with proposals for a further three such indicators going to stakeholders in the summer as part of this review.

In 2016, the Public Health Outcomes Framework is due to be refreshed for the first time, which will be a further opportunity to increase alignment between the Frameworks.

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[209452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had in the last six months with NHS England's Executive Team on the review of specialised commissioning.

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[209453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the NHS England internal taskforce currently reviewing specialised commissioning plans to seek input from internal stakeholders.

Jane Ellison:

NHS England created a Specialised Commissioning Taskforce which aims to improve ways of working and to ensure that specialised commissioning is undertaken in the most efficient and effective way possible.

My Rt. hon. friend the Secretary of State meets regularly with NHS England to discuss a wide variety of issues. Specialised commissioning was on the agenda at the July NHS Accountability Meeting between NHS England and the Secretary of State.

The work of the Taskforce is being carried out with input from key internal and external stakeholders. Within the Taskforce work programme there are specific projects which will need wider engagement and may necessitate public consultation.

Sir Alan Beith:

[210196]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department provides to clinical commissioning groups about commissioning services on treatments from hospitals (a) in Scotland and (b) outside their own area.

Norman Lamb:

Clinical commissioning groups' (CCGs) commissioning responsibilities are set out in the NHS Act 2006, The National Health Service Commissioning Board and Clinical Commissioning Groups (Responsibilities and Standing Rules) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/2996) and The National Health Service (Clinical Commissioning Groups—Disapplication of Responsibility) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/350), as amended.

NHS England have published the document 'Who Pays? Determining responsibility for payments to providers' which provides guidance for CCGs on commissioning services from hospitals in Scotland and outside their own area.

A copy is attached.

Attachments:

1. Who Pays? NHS England August 2013 [who-pays.pdf]

■ Health: Finance

Luciana Berger:

[210189]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2014 to Question 208590, how many local authorities have (a) submitted satisfactory, (b) submitted unsatisfactory and (c) failed to submit final statements of assurance for the Public Health Grant for 2013-14.

Jane Ellison:

Public Health England (PHE) has received to date letters of assurance from 144 out of 152 local authorities. As part of its overall assurance process, PHE has been reconciling these letters to the draft local authority revenue outturn statements. All of the letters received have provided the necessary assurance, save for minor points of clarification over signatories. PHE is actively in contact with eight local authorities to facilitate the completion of the remaining returns.

■ Hepatitis

Luciana Berger:

[209122]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will introduce national standards for hepatitis C treatment.

Jane Ellison:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has been asked to develop a clinical guideline on the diagnosis and management of hepatitis C that may form the basis for a future NICE quality standard on hepatitis C.

NHS England is responsible for the direct commissioning of some services and all drug based treatments for individuals with hepatitis C. This includes the publication and implementation of national specifications and clinical commissioning policies, providing consistent standards of care for patients within England. National specialised commissioning policies and specifications are kept under regular review, and are updated, if required, following the publication of new NICE technical appraisal guidance. NHS England is continuing to work with other commissioning bodies to improve the co-ordination of care for this group of patients.

■ Leeds General Infirmary

Hilary Benn: [\[210271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he expects the third stage review report into the closure of children's heart surgery at the Leeds General Infirmary in 2013 to be published.

Jane Ellison:

Publication of the Verita reports about the Leeds children's cardiac surgery unit is a matter for NHS England. A date for publication will be confirmed shortly and interested parties, including Members of Parliament, will be advised. Once published, copies of the reports will be placed on the NHS England website.

■ Mental Health Services: Young People

Helen Jones: [\[210279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting time is for a child and adolescent mental health services appointment for people who have experienced sexual abuse in (a) England, (b) the North West and (c) Warrington.

Norman Lamb:

Data is not collected centrally on average waiting times for child and adolescent mental health services appointments in England, the North West and Warrington.

■ NHS: Managers

Luciana Berger: [\[210190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department provides to public health directors on the Lobbying Act 2014.

Jane Ellison:

The Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014 only applies to organisations whose activities "can reasonably be regarded as intended to promote or procure the electoral success of parties or candidates". It does not apply to local authorities and Directors of Public Health in carrying out their official functions, and therefore the Department has issued no such guidance.

■ Parkinson's Disease: Osteoporosis

Glyn Davies: [\[209095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department issues about early diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis among people with Parkinson's disease.

Glyn Davies: [\[209096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of possible links between Parkinson's disease and osteoporosis.

Norman Lamb:

The Department has made no assessment of the possible links between Parkinson's disease and osteoporosis. However, we are aware of a number of studies citing such a link, the most recent being published in the *Journal of Neurology Neurosurgery and Psychiatry* in March this year, which suggested that patients with Parkinson's disease were at a higher risk of developing osteoporosis. A number of possible risk factors are identified, such as instability and a deteriorating physical condition.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence clinical guideline, Osteoporosis: assessing the risk of fragility fracture, sets out best practice for clinicians in the assessment of fragility fracture risk in patients. The guideline highlights a set of patients who are at risk of developing secondary osteoporosis, which includes those with, 'immobility (due for example to neurological injury or disease)'. The guidance can be found at following link:

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg146/resources/guidance-osteoporosis-assessing-the-risk-of-fragility-fracture-pdf

Glyn Davies: [\[209097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what support his Department provides for research into better diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis among people with Parkinson's.

George Freeman:

The Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is not currently funding any research on this specific topic. The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including osteoporosis and Parkinson's disease. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

■ Pay

Mr Frank Field: [\[209469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) direct employees, (b) outsourced workers and (c) workers in agencies which report to his Department are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

All staff directly employed by the core Department and its Executive Agencies are paid the Living Wage or above.

The Department and its Executive Agencies do not routinely collect information on the numbers or salaries of employees working for outsourced service providers on their premises. All service providers comply with the law in respect of the National Minimum Wage, but in line with Cabinet Office advice the Department and its Executive Agencies do not require their suppliers to pay their employees the local Living Wage. Public Health England are actively working with their supply base to ensure that staff such as cleaners etc., working on their leased and/or shared premises are paid in accordance with the Living Wage.

All agency staff in the Department's Executive Agencies are paid at or above the living wage. The core Department currently has four agency staff on less than the living wage. In accordance with the Agency Worker Regulation 2010 (as amended) these four agency workers, on the completion of the 12 week qualifying period, will be paid the equivalent of a permanent member of staff on the starting point of the pay scale for their equivalent grade which are all above the Living Wage.

■ Pregnancy: Sodium Valproate

Luciana Berger: [\[210191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he expects the European Medicines Agency's review of valproate and related substances and their use by pregnant women to report; and if he will make a statement.

George Freeman:

The European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC) completed its review of the risk of neurodevelopmental disorders in children exposed to valproate in the womb. PRAC has recommended strengthening the restrictions on the use of valproate. In particular PRAC has recommended that valproate should not be used to treat epilepsy and bipolar disorder in girls, women who can become pregnant or pregnant women unless other treatments are ineffective or not tolerated and that the need for continued treatment should be reviewed regularly. The PRAC recommendations will now be sent to the Member States' Co-ordination Group for Mutual Recognition and Decentralised Procedures – Human (CMDh) for a final opinion in November. Healthcare professionals and patients will be informed of the new advice once the CMDh has reached a final opinion.

■ Prescription Drugs

Robert Neill:

[209346]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost-per-quality adjusted life year threshold used by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and its predecessor bodies to determine the cost-effectiveness of medicines has been in each year since 1999; and what that threshold has been in each year in real terms (a) using the gross domestic product deflator, (b) adjusting for health pay and price inflation and (c) adjusting for the health component of the consumer price index.

George Freeman:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) does not operate a fixed cost per Quality Adjusted Life Year (QALY) in the development of its technology appraisal guidance. NICE's *Guide to the Methods of Technology Appraisal* explains that, for most technology appraisals, it uses a cost per QALY range of £20,000 to £30,000 in its decision-making that enables other factors to be taken into account. This range has remained unchanged since NICE was established in 1999.

NICE's technology appraisal methods guide contains further information on the way in which NICE takes the cost per QALY into account in the development of its guidance and is available at:

www.nice.org.uk/article/pmg9/

■ Social Services

Pat Glass:

[209126]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the number of private equity owned firms which are commissioned by local authorities to provide social care services; and if he will make a statement.

Norman Lamb:

The information requested is not collected centrally. Local authorities are free to commission social care services to suit local need. The Department does not specify which providers local authorities should commission services from.

■ Social Workers: Training

Steve McCabe:

[209350]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the number of professional social work placements required in 2013-14, excluding the Step Up programme, in order to meet the needs of social workers in training.

Steve McCabe:

[209547]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the number of professional social work placements required to meet the needs of social workers in training, other than in the Step Up programme, in 2014-15.

Steve McCabe: [\[209548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many professional social work placements were provided by (a) local authorities, (b) third sector organisations and (c) other bodies in 2013-14.

Steve McCabe: [\[209550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the number of professional social work placements provided by (a) local authorities, (b) third sector organisations and (c) other bodies in 2014-15.

Norman Lamb:

The number of placement days and number of social work practice placements for the 2012-13 academic year are shown in the following table.

Universities will submit their final returns on social work practice placements to the NHS Business Services Authority for the 2013-14 academic year in November 2014.

The Department estimates that a similar number of placements and placement days to 2013-14 will be required in the 2014-15 academic year.

Social Work Practice Placements in the 2012-13 academic year

	NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS	NUMBER OF PLACEMENT DAYS
Local Authorities	637	57,393
Third Sector Organisations	3,687	287,050
Other	9,098	777,548
Total	13,422	1,121,991

Source: NHS Business Services Authority

■ Sunbeds

Luciana Berger: [\[210188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he plans to bring forward delegated legislation under the Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010; and what the reason is for the time taken to bring forward such regulations.

Jane Ellison:

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Skin issued a report following their inquiry into the regulation of sunbeds in England.

The Department will respond to this report shortly, setting out its position.

■ Viral Haemorrhagic Disease

Luciana Berger: [\[210192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to his Statement of 13 October 2014 on Ebola, how long it takes for the results from blood tests administered by the Public Health England laboratory to be communicated to the patient; and where that laboratory is located.

Jane Ellison:

A provisional Ebola test result takes about four hours from the time the sample arrives at the Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory, Public Health England, Porton Down, Wiltshire. The results are telephoned to the patient's clinician as soon as they are available.

HOME OFFICE

■ Alcoholic Drinks: Chocolate

Jim Shannon: [\[210249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what representations she has received from medical bodies about proposals to allow the sale of liqueur chocolates to children under the age of 16.

Norman Baker:

The Home Office engages regularly with health bodies and groups concerned about alcohol-related harm. The Home Office has not received direct representations from medical bodies about proposals to abolish the offence of selling liqueur confectionery to those under the age of 16.

■ Drugs: Misuse

Caroline Dinenage: [\[209170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has any plans to introduce legislative proposals to criminalise the legal high known as gocaine.

Norman Baker:

I refer to the Written Ministerial Statement of 12 December 2013, Official Report, column 58WS, in which I announced that the Coalition Government would conduct a review into new psychoactive substances led by a panel of experts. I have now considered the expert panel's report on the review. The Government will respond to the expert panel's report and its recommendations shortly.

The Coalition Government has already banned over three hundred and fifty new psychoactive substances. We work closely with law enforcement to tackle this reckless trade.

"Gocaine" is a brand name used for compounds advertised as new psychoactive substances. "Gocaine" samples analysed through the Home Office Forensic Early Warning System (FEWS) suggest the brand is usually associated with a mixture of

compounds, including methiopropamine (MPA) and methylenedioxy-2-aminiondane (MDAI).

Neither of these substances is currently controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. However, we continue to update our drug controls under that Act in response to the availability and harms of new psychoactive substances. Such controls are informed by independent expert advice through a system of regular reviews by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) which monitors the situation in the UK, including MPA and MDAI.

Mr Jeremy Browne:

[209220]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to bring forward legislative proposals to introduce new powers to close shops selling legal highs.

Norman Baker:

I refer to the Written Ministerial Statement of 12 December 2013, Official Report, column 58WS, in which I announced that the Coalition Government would conduct a review into new psychoactive substances led by a panel of experts.

I have now considered the expert panel's report on the new psychoactive substances review including consideration of possible responses to the existence of "head shops". The Government will respond to the expert panel's report and its recommendations shortly.

The Coalition Government has already banned hundreds of new psychoactive substances. We have published guidance to support local authorities and continue to work closely with law enforcement to tackle this reckless trade.

Diana Johnson:

[210214]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason the New Psychoactive Substances review was not published on 25 September 2014 as scheduled; and when she expects to publish that review.

Norman Baker:

The New Psychoactive Substances Expert Panel's report will be published shortly, alongside the Government's response. There was no Government commitment to publish the report on 25 September 2014.

■ Entry Clearances

Paul Blomfield:

[209962]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many sponsors of Tier 2 general visas in each region and constituent part of the UK have been issued with such visas in each year since 2009.

James Brokenshire:

The table below shows the number of Tier 2 General sponsors by region that have used a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) to sponsor a Tier 2 General migrant worker since 2009.

Number of Sponsors by region associated with migrants who have used Tier 2 General CoS by calendar year since 2009

REGION	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
London & South East	3,435	3,565	3,594	4,805	6,836
Midlands & East of England	1,016	1,143	1,036	1,192	1,726
Wales & South West	427	532	392	460	635
Scotland & Northern Ireland	506	517	387	449	672
North East, Yorkshire & the Humber	330	366	316	359	495
North West	310	344	258	347	495

Note: Full data for the calendar year 2014 is not yet available.

■ Entry Clearances: Graduates

Paul Blomfield: [\[209961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Tier 2 visas were granted to people who were previously students in the UK in each year since 2009.

James Brokenshire:

The available published information relates to Tier 2 grants of an extension of stay in the UK to people who were previously students, 2011 to 2013 and is given in the table below:

TIER 2 GRANTS OF AN EXTENSION OF STAY BY PREVIOUS CATEGORY, EXCLUDING DEPENDANTS

Year	Broad previous category	Current category
		Total PBS - Tier 2 Sponsored with a job
2011	Study	1,730
2012	Study	2,614

TIER 2 GRANTS OF AN EXTENSION OF STAY BY PREVIOUS CATEGORY, EXCLUDING DEPENDANTS

2013	Study	4,175
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Source: Extensions data table expc_01_w Immigration Statistics April-June 2014

Table notes

1. Data for 2013 are provisional figures.
2. Excludes EEA and Swiss nationals.
3. Includes reconsideration cases and the outcome of appeals.

The Home Office publishes annual statistics on grants of an extension by previous category in tables expc_01 to expc_01_o within the 'Immigration Statistics' release

A copy of the latest release, 'Immigration Statistics April - June 2014' is available from the Library of the House and from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

Information on the previous immigration status of those issued an entry clearance visa (applications made outside the UK) is not available.

■ Entry Clearances: Overseas Students

Paul Blomfield: [210012]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on the effect of the closure of the Post Study Work visa route on start-up companies.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office works closely at Ministerial and official level with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and other interested Departments on significant changes to economic migration policy, including the closure of the Tier 1 (Post-Study Work) route in 2012. This closure was also the subject of a full public consultation from December 2010 to January 2011.

Start-up companies can benefit from the new provisions for graduates the Government has introduced, including easier switching into the Tier 2 skilled work route as well as the new Graduate Entrepreneur route, which permits working for start-up companies.

■ False Imprisonment

Andrew Stephenson: [209942]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people in (a) England, (b) the North West and (c) Lancashire were wrongfully arrested in each of the last three years.

Norman Baker:

The requested information is not collected centrally by the Home Office.

■ Human Trafficking: Children

Steve McCabe: [209897]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many British children were recorded as having been trafficked for sex and labour in each year since 2010.

Norman Baker:

The National Referral Mechanism was established in 2009 and is managed by the National Crime Agency's UK Human Trafficking Centre. The Centre uses the mechanism to collect data on potential victims of trafficking, including a breakdown of child referrals by type of exploitation

Published data from this source show a total of 22 referrals of UK national children for sexual exploitation in 2012, and 56 in 2013.

The published data for sexual exploitation of UK national children prior to 2012 and for labour exploitation for the period requested are not broken down by UK national/non-UK national.

Statistics are published on the National Crime Agency website:

<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>

Archived statistics are published on the National Archives website:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130703102353/http://www.soca.gov.uk/about-soca/about-the-ukhtc/national-referral-mechanism/statistics>

■ Immigration Controls

Paul Blomfield: [209948]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 October 2014, Official Report, column 464W, on creative industries, how many employers in (a) advertising, (b) architecture, (c) the art and antiques market, (d) crafts, (e) design, (f) designer fashion, (g) film and video, (h) interactive leisure software, (i) music, (j) performing arts, (k) publishing, (l) software and computer services and (m) television and radio currently hold a Tier 2 general sponsor license.

James Brokenshire:

Pursuant to the answer of 8 October 2014, the following table provides the industry sector of the 272 Tier 2 General sponsor licence holders that are associated with the

creative industry, by having sponsored a Tier 2 General migrant worker under the Tier 2 General creative and sporting category.

Attachments:

1. Tier 2 General sponsor [PQ209948 - Table.docx]

■ Police: Football

Jacob Rees-Mogg: [210180]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the full jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice on how the UK deals with information received from other EU Member States about the policing of international football matches if the UK opts back in to Council Decision 2002/348/JHA.

Jacob Rees-Mogg: [210181]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 5 September 2014, Official Report, column 466W, for what reason the relevant authorities of other EU Member States would not act on information pertinent to policing international football matches that was passed on by UK authorities in the event that the UK ceased to be bound by Council Decision 2002/348/JHA; and whether the UK ceasing to be bound by this Decision would be a material cause of such lack of action.

Jacob Rees-Mogg: [210182]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the likelihood of the UK concluding memoranda of understanding or other similar agreements with other EU Member States to formalise the exchange of information about policing football matches with an international dimension in the event that the UK ceases to be bound by Council Decision 2002/348/JHA.

Karen Bradley:

A full impact assessment has been conducted on Council Decision 2002/348/JHA.

Details of this assessment can be found in Command Paper 8897

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/326698/41670_Cm_8897_Accessible.pdf, published on 3 July 2014. The Government has considered the potential impacts of the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice very carefully and believes it is in the best interests of the UK to opt back in to Council Decision 2002/348/JHA.

The measure provides an established and functioning network that reduces the safety risks to UK supporters travelling to overseas matches. If the UK did not seek to rejoin Council Decision 2002/348/JHA it would be significantly more difficult for UK law enforcement agencies to share information with other Member States. The lack of structure and organisation could lead to difficulty in identifying the correct law enforcement agencies in Member States, thus resulting in other Member States failing to act upon information the UK has sought to provide. As stated in Command Paper 8897, Ukraine and Russia are prime examples of non-EU countries in which the UK has had more difficulty in sharing information.

The Government believes that Council Decision 2002/348/JHA provides the best means by which to share information relating to football matches with an international dimension. Details and an assessment of the alternatives are set out in Command Paper 8897.

■ Police: Pensions

Cathy Jamieson: [\[210101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many widows of police officers ceased to be entitled to a continued dependant's pension following remarriage in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available.

Cathy Jamieson: [\[210102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent representations she has received from widows of police officers on continuing entitlement to dependants' pensions on remarriage.

Cathy Jamieson: [\[210103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to allow police widows and widowers in England and Scotland in receipt of dependants' pensions to continue to receive such pensions in the event of remarriage.

Cathy Jamieson: [\[210104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will estimate the cost to the public purse of treating pensions for police widows and widowers in England and Scotland in the same way as those in Northern Ireland in respect of remarriage.

Mike Penning:

Information is not available for each of the last 10 years. Data collected for the police pension scheme valuation recorded 131 cessations of spouse pensions due to remarriages over the period 2008-12.

A small number of letters have been received in the Home Office from widows of police officers on this issue.

Under the 1987 Police Pension Scheme, in common with most other public service pension schemes of that time, benefits cease to be payable where a widow or widower remarries or cohabits with another partner. The rules were changed in 2006 for the 2006 Police Pension Scheme which was costed to allow for these benefits, and there are no proposals to apply these changes to the 1987 scheme in England and Wales. The police pension scheme in Scotland is a matter for the Scottish Government.

As part of the police pension scheme valuation as at 2012 the scheme actuary estimated that ignoring cessation on remarriage for current and future widows would increase the schemes' liabilities in England and Wales by around £50 million based on recent rates of remarriage, not including the cost of reinstating pensions of widows who have already remarried.

■ Sexual Offences: Barnsley

Michael Dugher: [\[209813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many arrests for sexual offences have been made in Barnsley East constituency in each of the last five years.

Norman Baker:

Available data on arrests relate to the South Yorkshire police force area only, and are provided in the table. Data on arrests in the Barnsley East constituency area are not reported centrally.

Data for 2013/14 will be published in spring 2015.

NUMBER OF ARRESTS FOR SEXUAL OFFENCES IN

South Yorkshire police force area

2008/09-2012/13

Year	Number of arrests
2008/09	739
2009/10	810
2010/11	794
2011/12	761
2012/13	631

■ Thomas Orchard

Caroline Lucas: [\[210288\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will discuss with the (a) Attorney General, (b) Crown Prosecution Service, (c) Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and (d) Health and Safety Executive the reasons for the time taken by the Independent Police Complaints Commission to conclude its further investigation into the death of Thomas Orchard on 3 October 2012; and if she will make a statement.

Mike Penning:

The investigation is ongoing and it would be inappropriate to comment further.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Argentina

Henry Smith:

[209517]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what information her Department holds on a proposed lending programme to Argentina from the World Bank.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The World Bank Group has a Country Programme Strategy for Argentina which sets out planned areas for cooperation from 2015 to 2018. No new loan proposals for Argentina have been presented to the World Bank Board since 2012. We are keeping the situation under close review.

The UK does not currently support any new World Bank lending to the Government of Argentina.

■ Conflict Pool

Alison McGovern:

[210197]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will place in the Library the annual reports of the Conflict Pool for 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The Building Stability Overseas Strategy (BSOS), published by the Coalition Government in 2011, set out a new strategic framework and multi-year funding model for the Conflict Pool. Progress on the implementation of BSOS – including through the Conflict Pool – has been reported to Parliament annually since 2011.

Once the Conflict Pool comes to a close at the end of FY14/15 the FCO, MOD and DFID will commission an external review of the Conflict Pool, covering the three-year Conflict Pool results framework. This report will be published once completed.

■ Mining: Disclosure of Information

Catherine McKinnell:

[209515]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department is taking steps to ensure that extractive industry transparency is a key component of the forthcoming G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID is lobbying partners bilaterally and in multilateral fora to promote progress towards common global standards of extractive industry transparency, including through continuing efforts in the G20 Anti-corruption Working Group which is preparing its Action Plan for 2015-16. The UK would like to see the G20 commit to high standards of transparency in the extractive industries.

Transparency in the extractive industries provides information for citizens in countries with oil, gas and minerals to hold their governments to account for how natural resources revenues are managed. This helps to tackle corruption, to promote poverty

reduction, and offers companies a more open, and stable investment environment in which to operate.

■ North Korea

Simon Kirby: [\[209690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effect of persistent malnutrition on the population of the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

A 2012 nutrition survey of mothers and children under 5 conducted by Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) authorities (with support from the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF and the World Health Organisation) showed that average nutrition levels were improved from a 2009 survey, but that in some provinces stunting rates remained above acceptable levels. A joint Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and (WFP) Crop and Food Security Assessment in 2013 estimated an improved aggregate food security situation for the marketing year 2013/14, but noted that the household food security levels and lack of diet diversity continued to pose a threat to the most vulnerable children, elderly, sick and pregnant and breastfeeding women.

■ Palestinians

Alex Cunningham: [\[209153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions her Department has had with the co-hosts of the Gaza donor conference.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The UK pledged at the conference to contribute £20 million, however, we made it clear that reconstruction in Gaza will require a durable ceasefire, an agreed approach on security, predictable and sustained access for people and goods in and out of Gaza, and good governance arrangements.

Alex Cunningham: [\[209154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what aid commitments her Department intends to make at the Gaza donor conference.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The UK pledged at the conference to contribute £20 million. We are clear, however, that reconstruction in Gaza will require a durable ceasefire, an agreed approach on security, predictable and sustained access for people and goods in and out of Gaza, and good governance arrangements.

Alex Cunningham: [\[209180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department's provision of humanitarian aid to Gaza is contingent on progress in the peace process between Israelis and the Palestinians.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID's provision of humanitarian aid to Gaza is based on need, not on progress in the Middle East Peace Process. The UK has been one of the biggest donors to the Gaza crisis, providing more than £17 million of emergency assistance, and has pledged to provide a further £20million towards the cost of reconstruction.

■ Pay

Mr Frank Field:

[\[209470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many (a) direct employees, (b) outsourced workers and (c) workers in agencies which report to her Department are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

Direct employees

There are no staff directly employed by DFID who are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Outsourced workers

DFID considers the rate of pay for outsourced workers to be an issue for contractors. We encourage outsource partners to pay the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. None of our contracted workers are paid less than the National Living Wage and London Living Wage.

Workers in agencies which report to DFID

There are no staff in agencies which report to DFID who are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

■ Performance Appraisal

John Healey:

[\[209486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many officials in her Department of what (a) gender, (b) ethnicity and (c) age received the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System's (i) exceeded, (ii) met and (iii) must improve performance mark in 2013-14.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

PERFORMANCE							
	RATING	GENDER	ETHNICITY	AGE BANDS			
Male	Female	Black and Ethnic Minority (BME)	Non- BME and undeclared under	34 and under	35-44	45-54	55 and over

	PERFORMANCE RATING	GENDER	ETHNICITY	AGE BANDS				
Exceeded	225	261	37	449	185	167	117	17
Met	569	624	138	1055	318	388	354	13 3
Must improve	73	70	23	120	31	34	54	24
Totals	867	955	198	1624	534	589	525	17 4

Data provided on ethnicity is based on those employees who have chosen to make a declaration of their diversity information on DFID's HR system.

John Healey:

[\[209633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many officials in her Department who received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark under the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System (i) had a disability, (ii) worked full-time and (iii) worked part-time in 2013-14.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

PERFORMANCE RATING	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE DECLARED A DISABILITY	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WHO WORK FULL TIME	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WHO WORKS PART- TIME/REDUCED HOURS
Exceeded	13	448	38
Met	49	1080	113
Must improve	6	132	11

Data provided on disability is based on those employees who have chosen to make a declaration of their diversity information on DFID's HR system.

John Healey:

[\[209655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many officials in her Department completed the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System in 2013-14; how many and what proportion of those officials received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark; and how many and what proportion (i) did and (ii) did not qualify for a bonus under that process.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

1822 officials in my Department completed the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System in 2013-14.

- 27% received an 'Exceeded' marking
- 65% received a 'Met' marking
- 8% received a 'Must improve' marking

1679 (92%) of officials qualified for an Individual Performance Award. This was paid at two rates depending on the level of performance. 143 (8%) did not qualify for an Individual Performance Award.

■ Public Records

Sir Alan Beith: [\[209613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what targets have been set for the release of her Department's material to the National Archives; what progress has been made in meeting those targets; and how many staff in her Department are engaged in reviewing records for that purpose.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID's target is to transfer records selected for permanent preservation to The National Archives in accordance with the transitional timetable for the implementation of the 20 year rule.

All 1076 records remaining from 1985/1986 have been reviewed in the current calendar year with 426 selected for transfer. It is expected that only a very small number of these will not be transferred by the end of the year due to the sensitivity of the contents.

Three members of DFID staff are involved in the review process.

■ Venezuela

Simon Kirby: [\[209688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she plans to begin providing foreign aid to Venezuela; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID has no plans to establish a foreign aid programme with Venezuela.

JUSTICE

■ Aiding and Abetting

Steve Rotheram: [\[210143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans he has to bring forward proposals to reform joint enterprise legislation in the 2010-15 Parliament.

Steve Rotheram:

[\[210215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will meet the Joint Enterprise: Not Guilty by Association campaigners.

Mike Penning:

The law on joint enterprise means that if two or more people share an intention to commit an offence and the offence is subsequently committed, all parties involved can be prosecuted for that offence. They may also be liable for any collateral offences which they foresaw might be committed by other members of the group in the course of putting their plan into effect. But they would not be liable for any offences that were fundamentally different from anything they foresaw or if they had taken steps to withdraw from the enterprise before the plan was carried out.

The law serves a useful purpose in bringing to justice all those who have been involved in the commission of an offence. We therefore have no plans to review or amend it during the life time of this Parliament or to meet with representatives of the campaign group Joint Enterprise: Not Guilty by Association.

SCOTLAND

■ Business

Iain McKenzie:

[\[210074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will meet the Scottish CBI to discuss the implications for business in Scotland of the outcome of the recent referendum; and if he will make a statement.

David Mundell:

My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland is in frequent contact with CBI Scotland and discusses many topics, covering the wide range of business issues. He wrote to them following the Scottish independence referendum and he will be hosting the annual CBI Scotland reception in Dover House later this month.

■ Performance Appraisal

John Healey:

[\[209490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many officials in his Department of what (a) gender, (b) ethnicity and (c) age received the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System's (i) exceeded, (ii) met and (iii) must improve performance mark in 2013-14.

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

The Scotland Office does not employ staff directly. All staff join on assignment from other Government bodies, principally the Scottish Government and Ministry of Justice, which remain the employers. Detailed information in relation to the classification of staff and their performance management is held by the employers.

John Healey:

[[209637](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many officials in his Department who received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark under the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System (i) had a disability, (ii) worked full-time and (iii) worked part-time in 2013-14.

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

The Scotland Office does not employ staff directly. All staff join on assignment from other Government bodies, principally the Scottish Government and Ministry of Justice, which remain their employers. Detailed information in relation to the classification of staff and their performance management is held by the employers.

John Healey:

[[209659](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many officials in his Department completed the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System in 2013-14; how many and what proportion of those officials received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark; and how many and what proportion (i) did and (ii) did not qualify for a bonus under that process.

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

The Scotland Office does not employ staff directly. All staff join on assignment from other Government bodies, principally the Scottish Government and Ministry of Justice, which remain their employers. All permanent civil servants are appraised and evaluated under the performance management arrangements of their parent Department. Detailed information in relation to performance management markings and satisfying bonus criteria is a matter for those employers.

■ Private Finance Initiative

Simon Kirby:

[[210094](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what the total private finance initiative liabilities of his Department are for the next 20 years; and if he will make a statement.

David Mundell:

The Scotland Office has no private finance initiative liabilities.

■ Public Records

Sir Alan Beith:

[[209616](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what targets have been set for the release of his Department's material to the National Archives; what progress has been made in meeting those targets; and how many staff in his Department are engaged in reviewing records for that purpose.

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

The Scotland Office's records date from its establishment in 1999. Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that its records are assessed for long term preservation in accordance with the prevailing practice in other departments.

TRANSPORT

■ Cycling: Accidents

Annette Brooke:

[\[209090\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many accidents in England resulting in serious head injuries involved (a) cyclists and (b) cyclists under 16 in each of the last three years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The number of reported personal injury road accidents in England involving (a) at least one seriously injured pedal cyclist and (b) at least one seriously injured pedal cyclist aged under 16 for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013 is given in the tables below.

Reported personal injury road accidents involving at least one seriously injured pedal cyclist: England, 2011-2013

2011	2,814
2012	2,960
2013	2,884

Reported personal injury road accidents involving at least one seriously injured pedal cyclist aged under 16: England, 2011-2013

2011	349
2012	275
2013	248

Information on the pedal cyclists who suffered serious head injuries as a result of an accident is not available from the STATS19 data that the department collects.

However, information on the medical consequences of pedal cycle casualties in road accidents in England can be obtained from hospital inpatient data. The most recent analysis for 2001-2010 suggests that 40 per cent of pedal cycle admissions were the result of head injuries.

■ Driving Tests: Ayrshire

Cathy Jamieson:

[\[210106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of people who undertook driving tests at the test centre in (a) Irvine and (b) Cumnock since the closure of the Kilmarnock driving test centre ordinarily reside in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency.

Claire Perry:

The proportion of people ordinarily residing in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituencies who undertook driving tests at the test centre in (a) Irvine and (b) Cumnock since the closure of the Kilmarnock driving test centre is reflected in the appended table. The proportion for Irvine is 28.5%. The proportion for Cumnock is 45%.

Attachments:

1. Driving Test Table [210106 - table.xls]

Cathy Jamieson:

[\[210107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many people normally resident in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency undertook driving tests in (a) Irvine and (b) Cumnock test centres in each month since the closure of the Kilmarnock driving test centre.

Claire Perry:

The number of people normally resident in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituencies who undertook driving tests in (a) Irvine and (b) Cumnock test centres in each month since the closure of the Kilmarnock driving test centre is reflected in the appended table. The total number for Irvine is 1,771. The total number for Cumnock is 729.

Attachments:

1. Test Centres Table [210107 - table.xls]

Cathy Jamieson:

[\[210108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will assess the merits of establishing a driving test centre at the site of the current HGV testing centre in Kilmarnock.

Claire Perry:

Practical driving test candidates in Kilmarnock currently have access to a test centre at Irvine 6.5 miles or 12 minutes away. Adding an additional test centre location at Kilmarnock Goods Vehicle Testing Station would not provide any significant improvement in service delivery but would create additional operating costs which would ultimately be passed on to DVSA customers.

Cathy Jamieson:

[\[210109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will assess the effects of the closure of the driving test centre in Kilmarnock on (a) costs incurred by driving instructors, (b) costs incurred by candidates and (c) traffic in the vicinity of nearby test centres.

Claire Perry:

There is no requirement to undertake driving tuition exclusively on test routes and instructors are encouraged to teach on a range of roads with varying traffic conditions. Whilst candidates will no doubt wish to be familiar with the test environment, the vast majority of tuition may be undertaken locally in Kilmarnock with no significant increase in cost to the instructor.

Approved Driving Instructors will charge what they feel is an appropriate rate for tuition. Since there is no significant increase in costs to instructors arising from the relocation to

Irvine, there is no anticipated increase in cost for individual learner drivers. During any journey to the test centre location for the purposes of familiarisation, the pupil will be receiving tuition. This is not, therefore, unproductive time or an additional cost but a valuable part of the learning process.

Beyond day-to-day operational issues, there have been no reports of any adverse impact on traffic in the vicinity of nearby driving test centres.

■ GoVia

Teresa Pearce:

[209333]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the written Statement of 11 September 2014, by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport, Official Report, column 42WS, on rail franchising (Southeastern), what contractual guarantees have been secured from Govia on (a) on-station, (b) on-train and (c) ticket office staffing levels during the term of the directly awarded franchise.

Claire Perry:

The franchise agreement does have *contractual guarantees* with regard to (a) *on-station staffing*, and (b) *on-train staffing*. We will publish the Franchise Agreement in due course at;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-register-of-rail-passenger-franchise-agreements>.

With regard to (c) ticket office staffing, these are the responsibility of the station operator, which is required to comply with the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement.

■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Working Hours

Mrs Anne McGuire:

[209957]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on fatigue in long distance coach and lorry drivers.

Claire Perry:

Transport Ministers have not had any recent discussions with EU counterparts about fatigue in long distance coach and lorry drivers.

The passenger and freight industries are highly regulated at European level. For example, the EU drivers' hours rules and the sector specific working time rules limit the time drivers spend at the wheel and on other duties, thus helping reduce fatigue-related accidents. We will continue to work with the European Commission and other Member States to try to reduce the incidence of fatigue related road accidents.

■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties

Catherine McKinnell:

[209514]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of changes to the requirement to display a tax disc in a vehicle on (a) enforcement activities, (b)

the number of untaxed cars on the road and (c) the level of vehicle tax evasion in the UK in 2014-15.

Claire Perry:

Her Majesty's Treasury carried out an assessment of the effects of the changes to the requirement to display a tax disc in a vehicle. This assessment was published alongside Finance Act 2014 and concluded that removing the requirement was not expected to have an impact on income from vehicle excise duty.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has not relied on the paper tax disc in the enforcement of vehicle excise duty for some time. The DVLA and the police largely rely on the DVLA's electronic vehicle register and tools like Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras to ensure that payments have been made.

The DVLA operates a comprehensive package of measures to tackle vehicle excise duty evasion, from reminder letters and penalties through to court prosecutions and the wheel clamping and/or removal of unlicensed vehicles.

These measures have helped to improve compliance. Vehicle Excise Duty evasion is at a historic low of 0.6%. The DVLA does not expect the abolition of the paper tax disc to result in an increase in vehicle excise duty evasion.

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[209529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure motorists are aware of changes to the requirements to display a tax disc in a vehicle from 1 October 2014.

Claire Perry:

Customer insight research carried out last month showed that 87% were aware that the tax disc was to be abolished on 1 October.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) issued various communications on this issue. These included updates on GOV.UK, Twitter and Facebook. The DVLA engaged with over 6000 stakeholders and commercial customers. Since 5 September 2014 all vehicle tax renewal reminders issued explain the changes. These will continue to be issued every month to individual customers at the time at which it is most relevant.

There has been widespread national and regional print and media coverage in the build up to raise awareness of abolition before 1 October. The DVLA's campaign was based on a low cost approach in order to protect the public purse. The DVLA produced in-house videos at no cost, which have been viewed around 80,000 times on its YouTube channel.

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[209530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of motorists who will be unaware of changes to the requirement to display a tax disc in a vehicle after 1 October 2014.

Claire Perry:

Customer insight research carried out in September by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) showed that 87% of customers were aware that the tax disc was being abolished on 1 October 2014.

This research was conducted through social media, face to face focus groups, direct mailings and paper surveys.

The DVLA will continue to issue a renewal reminder to vehicle keepers before the vehicle excise duty is due to expire.

■ Network Rail

John Mann:

[\[210268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reasons retention bonuses have been paid to Network Rail executives; and what his policy is on the further payment of such bonuses.

Claire Perry:

In the latter half of Control Period 4 (2009-14) it became clear that Network Rail faced serious Executive retention risks which threatened leadership continuity. Accordingly, at the company's 2012 Annual General Meeting, Network Rail's members agreed one-off performance related retention payments for three Executive Directors if they remained in post for the entirety of the Control Period. These retention payments were implemented when Network Rail was a private sector company limited by guarantee.

On 1 September Network Rail was reclassified to the public sector. As an arm's-length public sector body, it must use public money proportionately and with probity and ensure that reward and remuneration do not go beyond what is needed to ensure sustained high performance. As part of new governance arrangements, Executive Director remuneration will be set by Network Rail's Remuneration Committee but must be approved by the Secretary of State and the Chief Secretary to HM Treasury. Under the company's remuneration policy for Control Period 5 (2014-19), no further retention payments can be awarded to serving Directors.

■ Public Records

Sir Alan Beith:

[\[209617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what targets have been set for the release of his Department's material to the National Archives; what progress has been made in meeting those targets; and how many staff in his Department are engaged in reviewing records for that purpose.

Claire Perry:

The target for the release of the Department's material to The National Archives is set in connection with the 10-year transition to the 20 Year Rule. This means that in each year up to 2023 we need to transfer at least two years' worth of the material. As part of the process all material is reviewed to identify those records that hold enduring historical

value and should therefore be transferred. The department does not have targets relating to the volume of material to be transferred.

This transition period started in 2013 with material from 1983 and 1984, and to date we have met our statutory responsibility. This progress has resulted in the transfer of 404 records to The National Archives in 2013/14, increased from 272 records in 2012/13. We have the resources in place to continue to achieve compliance with the 20 Year Rule.

There are one and a half full-time equivalent staff engaged in reviewing records to determine, in agreement with The National Archives, what should be transferred to them.

■ Roads: Safety

Richard Burden:

[\[210201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2014 to Question 208875, on road safety regulations to metric mixers, what specific concerns are raised in the 14 pieces of correspondence; what assessment he has made of the road safety risk posed by the current regulations; whether that issue is part of the review into exemptions on safety regulations for HGVs; and when the conclusions of that review will be published.

Claire Perry:

The views raised in correspondence on volumetric concrete mixers have ranged from opposing the removal of the current annual roadworthiness test exemption to being supportive of that exemption's removal. Concerns raised by those opposing the removal of the exemption have centred on the potential impacts in terms of efficiency of operations as they believe they will be unnecessarily limited to operate at lower weight limits than they currently do. Correspondence from those who support the removal of the current exemption are concerned at the impacts these vehicles have on road safety. The Department plans to consult later this year about reviewing exemptions. A consultation stage impact assessment has been drafted to accompany the consultation document. Whilst this impact assessment does cover concerns about road safety, we have not been able to monetise the expected benefits, as data is not available.

■ Southeastern

Teresa Pearce:

[\[209405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the all day public performance measure (PPM) of punctuality was for London and South East Railway Limited's franchised rail passenger services in each month since March 2010; and what the national average PPM was in each such month.

Claire Perry:

This information is published by Network Rail. Since March 2010, the monthly PPM for the London and South East Railway, and the national average per month can be seen below

Attachments:

1. 209405 - Table [209405 - table.xls]

Teresa Pearce:

[209407]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the levels of (a) total public subsidy, (b) premium payments to his Department from the train operator, (c) Network Grant, (d) passenger revenue and (e) revenue support during the life of the contract directly awarded by his Department to London and South East Railway Limited for rail passenger services on the South Eastern line to June 2018.

Claire Perry:

The estimates made with regard to the levels of (a) total public subsidy can be seen in the tables below. The yearly figures have been rounded, hence the Total Period estimate appears greater than the sum of yearly figures.

Actual figures for (a) total public subsidy during the life of the contract directly awarded by his Department to London and South East Railway Limited for rail passenger services on the South Eastern line to June 2018 will be published on the Office of Rail Regulation's ('ORR') website at <http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/browsereports/1> at a later date.

The estimate of (b) premium payments to his Department from the train operator during the life of the contract directly awarded by his Department to London and South East Railway Limited for rail passenger services on the South Eastern line to June 2018 is nil.

Within the Franchise agreement there are 3 bands of profit sharing. Should LSER reach the 1st band and each subsequent band, monies are paid to the DfT; each band reached results in an increase in payment to the DfT.

With regard to (c) Network Grant, this is paid directly to Network Rail, not the train operators.

The estimate of (d) passenger revenue during the life of the contract directly awarded by his Department to London and South East Railway Limited for rail passenger services on the South Eastern line to June 2018 is commercially sensitive and cannot be published.

The ORR have recently started to publish actual passenger income by Train Operator, and this can be found on their website, <http://orr.gov.uk/publications/publications-a-z?search=G>, titled 'GB Rail Industry Financial Information', and is published by year.

The estimate made with regard to the levels of (e) revenue support during the life of the contract directly awarded by his Department to London and South East Railway Limited is nil.

Attachments:

1. 209407 - table [209407 - table.xls]

■ Taxis: Licensing

Richard Burden: [\[905449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effects of the Government's reforms of taxi and minicab licensing on the safety of women passengers.

Mr John Hayes:

Local authorities have a statutory duty to determine whether someone is fit and proper to hold a driver's licence and as part of this process they can request an enhanced criminal records check.

After careful consideration, the Government has decided not to pursue clause 10 of the Deregulation Bill which would have allowed leisure use of private hire vehicles. We consider this measure is now better considered as part of the proposals in the Law Commission's review of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing.

TREASURY

■ Business: Government Assistance

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[210154\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the total funds provided by Government for (a) corporate welfare grants and support schemes and (b) tax forgone.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[210155\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the effectiveness of government financial support to business through grants and tax foregone.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[210157\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the cost to the Exchequer of tax relief to businesses since 2010.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[210158\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how often he reviews the cost effectiveness of corporate welfare schemes; and what the criteria are for such schemes to be continued.

Mr David Gauke:

Tax reliefs are administrated as part of the tax system and are subject to different rules to public expenditure.

HM Treasury and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) keep all aspects of the tax system under review to ensure the effectiveness of tax reliefs and to prevent abuse. HMRC has responsibility for administering and monitoring tax reliefs for abuse and, with HM Treasury, is responsible for appraising and evaluating any aspects of the tax system.

The introduction of all tax reliefs or changes to their design and scope are subject to Parliamentary spending scrutiny during the Finance Bill process.

■ Corporation Tax: Barnsley

Michael Dugher: [\[209388\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much was paid in corporation tax by businesses registered in Barnsley East constituency in each of the last five years; and what proportion of that tax was paid by small and medium-sized enterprises.

Mr David Gauke:

Since 2010 the Government has cut the main rate of corporation tax from 28% to 21%. It will fall further to 20% in April 2015. The Small Profits Rate was cut to 20% in April 2011. These corporation tax cuts will be worth around £9.5 bn per year to businesses by 2016-17.

The table below sets out the amount of Corporation Tax liable for payment by businesses with a registered address in the Barnsley East parliamentary constituency for accounting periods ending in the past five years. The latest year for which figures are available is 2012-13.

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Corporation Tax liability (£m)	10	6	6	7	8

The increase in tax liability in 2011-12 and 2012-13 reflects an increase in the number of businesses.

This Government is backing businesses with its long term economic plan. An increase in corporation tax would endanger the recovery and cost jobs.

Figures on the amount of tax paid, broken down by company size, are not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Financial Services: Taxation

Caroline Lucas: [\[208809\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much the Government spent on bringing a legal challenge against the European Council on the decision to establish enhanced cooperation to implement a Financial Transaction Tax; what proportion of the total cost is (a) costs the UK will have to pay as a result of having lost the legal challenge, (b) staff time, (c) transport to and from Brussels, (d) legal fees and (e) other costs; what the names are of any external lawyers employed on this case; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Gauke:

By convention, Institutions and Member States do not seek to enforce costs against each other, and therefore the UK will not pay any Court costs. There were no travel costs to and from Brussels related to the legal challenge. On legal fees, the UK has paid £67,808

for external legal counsel. Information on staff time and other costs is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Income Tax: Northern Ireland

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[209593]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what change there has been in the number of people paying income tax at the (a) basic and (b) higher rate in each constituency in Northern Ireland between January 2009 and January 2014.

Mr David Gauke:

Estimates of the number of individuals by Northern Ireland parliamentary constituency whose highest marginal rate of income tax was the basic rate or the higher rate for the 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 tax years are provided in the following table.

Reliable estimates for later years are not available at the parliamentary constituency level due to greater uncertainties in making projections for smaller geographical areas.

By April this year this Government's increases in the personal allowance (for those born after 5 April 1948) are estimated to have taken 83,000 people in NI out of the income tax system altogether. The income tax cuts have benefitted 680,000 people who live in Northern Ireland.

These estimates are based on the 2011-12 Survey of Personal Incomes, projected to 2014-15 using economic assumptions consistent with the Office for Budget Responsibility's March 2014 economic and fiscal outlook.

The cash increases in the personal allowance since 2010-11 are worth £705 to a typical basic rate payer.

Attachments:

1. Northern Ireland Tax Payers [Northern Ireland taxpayers.docx]

■ Income Tax: Tax Rates and Bands

Stephen Hammond:

[210040]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of revising the starting threshold for (a) basic-rate and (b) top-rate income taxpayers for each £500 the threshold is raised.

Mr David Gauke:

The cost of raising the income tax limits may be approximated using the "Direct effects of illustrative tax changes" table as published on the internet at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direct-effects-of-illustrative-tax-changes>

■ Public Expenditure: Northern Ireland

Ms Margaret Ritchie: [\[209998\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, on how many occasions (a) he and (b) officials in his Department have met the First or Deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland or officials from their department to discuss budgetary measures.

Danny Alexander:

Treasury Ministers and officials have regular discussions with the Northern Ireland Executive Ministers and officials on a variety of topics.

■ Public Sector Debt: UN Resolutions

Alison McGovern: [\[210225\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reason the UK voted against UN Resolution A/68/L.57/Rev.1, entitled Towards the establishment of a multilateral legal framework for sovereign debt restructuring processes, on 9 September 2014.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government is actively engaged in ongoing discussions in a number of international fora, to reform the framework for sovereign debt restructurings. As outlined in the joint-EU Explanation of Vote on this Resolution, as with a number of other Governments, the UK Government was not in a position to support this UN resolution given concerns over the lack of time afforded to members to discuss the complex issues it raised.

■ RBS Capital Resolution

Steve Rotheram: [\[210140\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the total amount is of commercial loan values that have been transferred to RBS Capital Resolution since its inception.

Steve Rotheram: [\[210141\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many businesses with commercial loans transferred to RBS Capital Resolution have been taken out of that division of the bank and restored to the good bank.

Steve Rotheram: [\[210142\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he has taken to ensure that businesses in the RBS Capital Resolution bank are restored to the good bank within RBS.

Andrea Leadsom:

In November 2013, RBS established RBS Capital Resolution (RCR), an internal bad bank, in order to separate and wind down RBS's poorly-performing and high-risk assets. RBS transferred £38 billion of 'high-risk' legacy assets to RCR. RCR is managed separately from the main bank, and the aim is to wind down these assets in full within three years. As a result, there is not any intention to transfer additional assets in or out of RCR.

Further details on the operations, objectives and composition of loans in RCR can be found in the Government's Bad Bank Review available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rbs-and-the-case-for-a-bad-bank-the-governments-review>

RBS also produces detailed reporting updates on the progress of RCR alongside its financial results, which are available on the RBS website.

■ Rent a Room Scheme

Mark Pritchard: [\[209933\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans his Department has to change the tax-free threshold for the Rent a Room scheme.

Mr David Gauke:

The Rent a Room relief ensures that those who are letting out a room in a main residence for residential purposes can receive up to £4,250 tax free. This is in addition to the personal allowance, which is £10,000 in the current tax year.

There are no plans to change the threshold for the Rent a Room scheme. The Government keeps all reliefs and allowances under review.

■ Revenue and Customs: Irvine

Katy Clark: [\[209301\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the compliance yield of HM Revenue and Customs' Irvine tax office was in each of the last four confirmed tax years.

Katy Clark: [\[209302\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the operating costs for staff engaged in compliance work for HM Revenue and Customs' Irvine tax office were in each of the last four confirmed tax years.

Mr David Gauke:

I refer the hon Member to the answer that I gave on 9 July.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2014-07-02/203796/>

■ Royal Bank of Scotland

Jim Shannon: [\[210243\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the value is of sold RBS assets overseas; and how much of that value has been returned to his Department.

Andrea Leadsom:

HM Treasury does not hold information relating to the value of assets overseas that have been sold by RBS.

HM Treasury does not directly receive proceeds from the disposal of RBS assets, rather it retains value through its shareholdings in the company.

RBS is run on a fully commercial basis, at arm's length from HM Treasury. It retains its own board of directors who are responsible for the commercial decisions of RBS. HM Treasury is not involved in the disposal decisions or execution process for individual assets.

■ Social Security Benefits: Immigrants

Rachel Reeves: [209325]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the value of benefits claimed by migrants residing in the UK who claim benefits on behalf of children living in each other foreign country of residence.

Rachel Reeves: [209326]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of migrants residing in the UK who claim benefits on behalf of children living in each other foreign country of residence.

Priti Patel:

I refer the hon member to the answer that I gave on 22 July 2014 to the hon member for Daventry (Mr Chris Heaton-Harris).

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm140722/text/140722w0003.htm#14072281003349>

■ Tobacco: Smuggling

Chris Ruane: [209891]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of the sale of illegal tobacco on the trade of legitimate tobacconists and newsagents.

Priti Patel:

No specific assessment is made into the effect that the sale of illegal tobacco has on legitimate tobacconists and newsagents.

WALES

■ Energy: Prices

Owen Smith: [208870]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent representations he has made to his Cabinet colleagues about the cost of gas and electricity in Wales.

Stephen Crabb:

I have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a range of topics, including matters relating to the energy sector.

The UK Government is committed to tackling people's energy costs which spiralled out of control under the last Government. We have legislated to ensure that energy companies put customers onto the lowest tariff that meets their preference, and we

have provided £540 million in funding over three years to support and encourage energy efficiency across Great Britain.

■ Performance Appraisal

John Healey:

[\[209493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how many officials in his Department of what (a) gender, (b) ethnicity and (c) age received the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System's (i) exceeded, (ii) met and (iii) must improve performance mark in 2013-14.

Alun Cairns:

The breakdown requested for Wales Office staff's performance marks is shown below. As some of the data relates to fewer than five staff, breaking the numbers down would risk the identification of individuals and so only percentages are provided. Data on the Must Improvement marking broken down by age has been withheld as it could lead to direct identification.

(a)Gender

	FEMALE	MALE
(i)Exceeded	83%	17%
(ii)Met	53%	47%
(iii)Must Improve	33%	67%

(b)Ethnicity

	WHITE	OTHER ETHNIC BACKGROUND	NOT DECLARED OR NOT KNOWN
(i)Exceeded	0%	0%	100%
(ii)Met	53%	3%	44%
(iii)Must Improve	67%	0%	33%

(c)Age

	(i)EXCEEDED	(ii)MET
16-19	0%	3%
20-24	0%	3%
25-29	17%	19%
30-34	17%	25%

	(i) EXCEEDED	(ii) MET
35-39	0%	9.5%
40-44	0%	9.5%
45-49	0%	6%
50-54	0%	6%
55-59	0%	9.5%
Unknown	66%	9.5%

John Healey:

[\[209640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how many officials in his Department who received the (a) exceeded, (b) met and (c) must improve performance mark under the Civil Service Employment Policy Performance Management System (i) had a disability, (ii) worked full-time and (iii) worked part-time in 2013-14.

Alun Cairns:

The breakdown requested for Wales Office staff's performance marks is shown below. As some of the data relates to fewer than five staff, breaking the numbers down would risk the identification of individuals and so only percentages are provided. Data for part-time staff is withheld as it would lead to direct identification.

	(A) EXCEEDED	(B) MET	(C) MUST IMPROVE	NOT DECLARED OR NOT STATED
(i) Percentage of staff who declared themselves disabled	0%	0%	0%	46%
(ii) Worked Full-time	10%	82%	8%	

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Human Rights: Females

Stephen Mosley:

[\[905451\]](#)

To ask the Ministers for Women and Equalities, what recent discussions she has had with her ministerial colleagues on protecting the rights of women and girls overseas.

Jo Swinson:

I regularly discuss with ministerial colleagues the Government's commitment to the protection and advancement of women's rights both domestically and overseas. In the summer we hosted two global events – a summit with a focus on preventing sexual violence in conflict which generated strong international support; and a girl summit. The Girl Summit brought together a range of international stakeholders to accelerate momentum in tackling child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation and to rally a global movement to end the practices everywhere within a generation.

We are also strong supporters of a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment in the post-2015 development framework.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Funeral Payments

Jon Trickett:

[\[209862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department has taken to monitor the average costs of funerals; and what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of funeral payments to meet the average cost of a funeral.

Steve Webb:

My department does not collect data to monitor the average cost of funerals.

The Social Fund Funeral Payment scheme provides help towards the necessary costs of a simple, respectful, low-cost funeral and is not intended to meet all costs that could be associated with the day. The average award made in 2012/13 was £1,225.

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr David Winnick:

[\[210199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will arrange for the hon. Member for Walsall North to receive a reply to his email to Capita-PIP of 4 September 2014 and subsequent email of 18 September 2014 on the same case, ref PIP10036052/101.

Steve Webb:

The Minister of State for Disabled People, my hon. Friend the Member for Forest of Dean (Mr Mark Harper), replied to the hon. Member on 14 October 2014.

■ Natural Gas: Safety

Graham Jones:

[\[210162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions he has held with the Association of Gas Safety Managers about access to properties to undertake statutory gas safety checks.

Mr Mark Harper:

Neither myself nor the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions have held any discussions with the Association of Gas Safety Managers about access to properties to undertake statutory gas safety checks.

The Health and Safety Executive provides guidance to landlords on what to do if a tenant prevents access for a gas safety check:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/faqlandlord.htm>

■ Personal Independence Payment

Hilary Benn: [\[210270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the most recent average waiting time is for (a) an assessment and (b) a decision on applications for personal independence payments.

Mr Mark Harper:

Departmental statisticians are continuing to develop measures around clearance times and waiting times to ensure they provide a rounded and representative picture of Personal Independence Payment system performance, improvement activity and the claimants' experience. These statistics will be published when they are ready, with the release pre-announced in line with United Kingdom Statistics Authority release protocols.

■ Post Office Card Account

Fiona O'Donnell: [\[210269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many balance checks for Post Office card accounts were undertaken in each of the last five years at (a) ATMs and (b) Post Office counters.

Steve Webb:

Balance enquiry figures for Post Office card accounts in the last five years are:

	ATM BALANCE ENQUIRY'S	COUNTER BALANCE ENQUIRY'S
2009/10	No ATM service	1,130,724
2010/11	No ATM service	12,721,201
2011/12	4,467,817	11,471,310
2012/13	15,427,714	11,095,061
2013/14	15,994,130	9,897,175
2014/15	8,253,153	4,569,642

Fiona O'Donnell: [210280]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Post Office card account holders there are who also hold another bank account in the UK, broken down by (a) age profile, (b) constituent part of the UK and (c) parliamentary constituency.

Steve Webb:

Customers using the Post Office card account as a method of payment to receive their benefit or pensions are not obliged to inform the Department that they hold another bank account. For this reason, the information requested is not available.

Fiona O'Donnell: [210281]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Post Office card account holders there are in the UK (a) in total and (b) by age profile, broken down by (i) constituent part of the UK and (ii) by parliamentary constituency.

Steve Webb:

The latest figures are:

- a) There are 2,856,386 Post office card account customers in total.
- b) The information is not available in the format requested.

Information for Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Department for Social Development. Northern Ireland statistics can be found at:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research/benefit_publications.htm

Fiona O'Donnell: [210282]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the sum of withdrawals from Post Office card accounts has been in each of the last five years from (a) ATMs and (b) Post Office counters.

Steve Webb:

The sum of withdrawals from Post Office card accounts using either counter services or ATM in each of the last five years is detailed below:

	ATM WITHDRAWALS	COUNTER WITHDRAWALS
2009/10	No ATM service	84,591,882
2010/11	No ATM service	157,136,419
2011/12	4,871,428	144,266,088
2012/13	16,643,172	133,030,619
2013/14	17,654,482	121,115,527
2014/15	932,543	56,190,911

Fiona O'Donnell:

[\[210286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what research his Department has undertaken in the last 10 years to examine the needs of Post Office card account holders; and if he will make a statement.

Steve Webb:

DWP has not commissioned any research within the last 10 years. However, DWP has worked closely with Post Office Limited implementing service improvements to address changing customer needs. In addition to this, we are currently undertaking small-scale qualitative customer insight sessions to further understand the needs of Universal Credit customers.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Stephen Timms:

[\[209266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason a benefit sanction was imposed on Mr David Clapson in June 2014; and if he will make a statement.

Esther McVey:

Although the Data Protection Act does not apply to deceased persons' personal data, rules of confidentiality continue to apply. DWP's policy is that if someone enquires about a deceased person only the date of death may be disclosed unless the written consent of the executor or administrator, or a close relative if of no executor or administrator exists, has been obtained.

Section 123 of the Social Security Act 1992 makes it a criminal offence to disclose social security information (including information relating to deceased customers) without lawful authority.

■ Thomas Orchard

Caroline Lucas:

[\[210287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will discuss with the (a) Attorney General, (b) Crown Prosecution Service, (c) Secretary of State for the Home Department and (d) Independent Police Complaints Commission the reasons for the time taken by the Health and Safety Executive to conclude its further investigation into the death of Thomas Orchard on 3 October 2012; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Harper:

Primacy for the investigation into the death of Thomas Orchard rests with the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The Health and Safety Executive has assisted the investigation by examining the role of corporate bodies.

The investigation is on going, therefore it would not be appropriate to comment further at this stage.

■ Universal Credit

John Woodcock: [\[210195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people who will be claiming universal credit in April 2015.

Mr Mark Harper:

The Department published its strategy for releasing official statistics on Universal Credit in September 2013 which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics>

■ Work Capability Assessment

Jon Trickett: [\[209857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what limit his Department has set on waiting times for work capability assessments; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure this limit is not exceeded.

Mr Mark Harper:

We do not have a limit for waiting times for work capability assessments. We are working with the existing supplier to improve processing times and reduce waiting times and are currently seeking a replacement supplier to undertake work capability assessments from early next year.