



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 12 January 2015 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:35 P.M., 12 January 2015). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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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

■ Service Prosecuting Authority

Karl Turner:

[\[219886\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many times the Law Officers met the Director of the Services Prosecution Authority in (a) 2010, (b) 2011, (c) 2012, (d) 2013 and (e) 2014.

Mr Robert Buckland:

The Law Officers have met the Directors of the Service Prosecuting Authority regularly since 2010. However, as has been the case with successive administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

■ Travel

Lucy Powell:

[\[218467\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how much the Law Officers' Departments has spent on (a) taxis, (b) first class train tickets and (c) business class air travel in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Buckland:

The following tables contains details of the expenditure on taxis, first class rail travel and business class air during the last five financial years. The figures only cover expenditure recorded as being made through central framework travel contracts. In addition to this some journeys may have been paid for directly by staff and reimbursed via departmental expenses systems, however verifying such expenditure would involve reviewing all claims made over the past five years which would incur a disproportionate cost.

RECORDED TAXI EXPENDITURE

Year	Treasury Solicitor's Department (1)	Attorney General's Office (1)	Serious Fraud Office
2009-10	£26,209	£3,460	£30,164
2010-11	£18,791	£498	£25,931
2011-12	£21,067	£218	£14,360
2012-13	£27,243	£263	£12,139
2013-14	£29,567	£247	£8,628

(1) Additionally, the cost of other taxi journeys taken by TSol, AGO and HMCPSI staff would be reimbursed to staff via the expenses system. To identify the cost of these journeys would require a detailed exercise to review all expenses claims made over the last five years and this cannot be achieved without disproportionate cost.

CPS do not hold any central records on expenditure incurred on taxis. To calculate this would involve checking large numbers of paper records at a disproportionate cost.

RECORDED FIRST CLASS RAIL TRAVEL

Year	AGO	HMCPST	TSOL	CPS	SFO
2009-10	£7,051	£0	£170,736	£975,154	£9,352
2010-11	£746	£0	£27,613	£87,334	£22,347
2011-12	£200	£0	£2,022	£20,790	£2,273
2012-13	£395	£0	£720	£25,241	£868
2013-14	£0	£0	£2,641	£21,564	£1,448

RECORDED BUSINESS CLASS AIR TRAVEL

Year	AGO	HMCPST	TSOL	CPS	SFO
2009-10	£23,690	£2,016	0.00	£29,929	£118,834
2010-11	£4,811	£285	£1,117	£20,810	£44,769
2011-12	£7,793	£0	£8,920	£34,794	£34,866
2012-13	£8,793	£0	£29,032	£71,616	£28,383
2013-14	£14,456	£0	£8,822	£39,022	£5,463

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Aerospace Industry

Mr Iain Wright:

[\[219843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what assessment he has made of the ability of the Aerospace Growth Partnership to help companies in the UK aerospace supply chain to bring products to market (a) faster and (b) more efficiently; and if he will make a statement.

Matthew Hancock:

The Aerospace Growth Partnership is helping companies to bring products to market faster and more efficiently through a range of action and support initiatives. These include the £2billion joint funding from industry and Government, supported by the Aerospace Technology Institute, for research into new product technology and manufacturing processes. Over £400m of projects have already been announced.

In addition, the £40m National Aerospace Technology Exploitation Programme (NATEP) is supporting small and medium sized businesses, through high calibre technical and management resource, to help them accelerate technology efficiently and bring products to market faster. NATEP is already supporting 68 companies.

We are also investing £120m, jointly with industry, in the Sharing in Growth initiative. This is an intensive intervention aimed at ensuring that UK supply chain companies build and maintain world class levels of competitiveness.

Mr Iain Wright:

[\[219844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress has been made by the Aerospace Growth Partnership Manufacturing Working Group on introducing a Manufacturing Accelerator Programme; and if he will make a statement.

Matthew Hancock:

The Aerospace Growth Partnership (AGP) update published in July 2014 set out some of the steps being taken to maintain the UK's competitive position through enhancements in supply chain competitiveness and manufacturing capability.

The Manufacturing Accelerator Programme (MAP) is one element of the work in the AGP to support this. The MAP proposal is being developed as part of the engagement between Government, industry and academia who are all represented at the AGP Manufacturing Working Group. As part of this effort we have already announced significant investments in expanding the capacity for aerospace projects within the High Value Manufacturing Catapult as well as further funding within the ATI programme for extensions to the SAMULET programme (Strategic Affordable Manufacturing in the UK through Leading Environmental Technologies) and other projects focussing on manufacturing.

These activities link with the work being carried out to support supply chain companies in the Sharing in Growth Programme as well as the National Aerospace Technology Exploitation Programme. As these programmes develop we are jointly reviewing the next steps within the Manufacturing Working Group and will be looking at the MAP as part of this.

■ Apprentices

Charlie Elphicke:

[\[220063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the average full course cost to the public purse was of apprenticeships at each level in the most recent academic year for which figures are available.

Nick Boles:

The average estimated apprenticeship programme costs to government of learners who completed (or left) in the 2013/14 academic year is shown in Table 1. Please note that this is the Government contribution only and does not include any employer contributions.

Table 1. Average estimated apprenticeship programme costs to government (2013/14)

AGE GROUP	LEVEL	AVERAGE COST TO GOVERNMENT
	16-18	Intermediate £4,600 Level (L2)
Advanced Level (L3)	£7,000	
Higher Levels (L4+)	£5,000	
All Levels	£5,300	
	19+	Intermediate £1,800 Level (L2)
Advanced Level (L3)	£2,300	
Higher Levels (L4+)	£2,000	
All Levels	£2,000	

Notes.

- 1) The average apprenticeship programme costs to government have been calculated by the Skills Funding Agency from the final Individualised Learner Record data return (R14) for the 2013/14 academic year. It is based on all government-funded apprenticeship programmes that ended in the 2013/14 academic year (including both completers and early leavers)
- 2) The age group refers to the age of learners at start of the programme
- 3) The average costs to government are rounded to the nearest £100.
- 4) The costs of different apprenticeship frameworks are highly variable.
- 5) The funding of apprenticeships is currently under review and costs could change considerably in the near future.

■ Apprentices: Folkestone

Damian Collins:

[\[220030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many people were registered on an apprenticeship training scheme in Folkestone and Hythe constituency in each year since 2010.

Nick Boles:

Information on the number of learners participating on an apprenticeship between 2009/10 and 2013/14 across constituencies is published in a supplementary table to a Statistical First Release (SFR):

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/378732/apprenticeships-participation-by-constituency-and-local-authority.xls

■ Business: Regulation

Kevin Brennan: [\[219616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will commission a review of the unregulated trades referral industry; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Swinson:

The trades referral industry can help consumers to identify reliable tradespersons. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills currently has no plans to carry out a review of the trades referral industry. With regard to repair, maintenance and improvement of homes my Department licenses the TrustMark scheme which enables consumers to select with confidence tradespersons who have been vetted against 'Government Endorsed Standards' for both trade competence and good trading practice.

■ City Link

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[219930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what support the Government plans to provide to the City Link employees made redundant on 31 December 2014.

Matthew Hancock:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: The Department for Work and Pension's rapid response teams will support individuals to find alternative employment. The service is delivered with local skills and employment partners and tailored to an individual's needs. It includes some or all of the following elements:

- o Information, advice and guidance
- o Help with job searches including CV writing, interview skills, where to find jobs and how to apply for them
- o Help to identify transferable skills and skills gaps (linked to the local labour market)
- o Training to update skills, learn new ones and gain industry recognised certification that will improve employability
- o Help to overcome barriers to attending training or securing a job or self-employment such as child care costs, necessary tools, work clothes, travel costs etc.

■ EU External Trade: USA

Mr David Anderson: [\[219385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what his policy is on signing the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership agreement in circumstances where EU and UK food safety standards were undermined in that Treaty.

Mr David Anderson: [\[219386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps he is taking to ensure that EU and UK food safety regulations are not undermined in the negotiations on the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Treaty.

Matthew Hancock:

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is not about lowering standards. All parties involved in the negotiations – including President Obama and President Juncker – have made this clear. EU negotiators have specified that TTIP will not affect the way the EU legislates on food safety. The following link explains more: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2014/may/tradoc_152462.pdf

■ **New Businesses: Kent**

Damian Collins: [\[219992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many start-up loans have been granted to businesses in the Shepway local authority area since that initiative began.

Matthew Hancock:

Since the Start-Up Loans scheme launched in June 2012, a total of 33 loans have been issued in the Shepway local authority area, with a drawn down value of £123,350.

■ **Publications: Visual Impairment**

Jim Dowd: [\[219395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, when the Government plans to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty of June 2013.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government supports the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.

As indicated by its signature of the Marrakesh Treaty on 28 June 2013, the Government intends to ratify the Treaty and hopes to see its entry into force at the earliest opportunity. The Government is currently in preliminary discussions with other European countries regarding the extent to which common action is required to ensure a coherent ratification of the Treaty across Europe. Following these discussions, the Government intends to take the necessary steps towards rapid implementation of the Treaty.

■ **Staff**

Mike Wood: [\[219588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many (a) external and (b) Civil Service appointees have worked in ministerial offices in his Department (i) since May 2010 and (ii) between May 2005 and May 2010.

Jo Swinson:

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) currently has 9 Ministers, 7 of whom share offices with other Government Departments. There are no external appointees currently working in BIS ministerial offices. The total number of civil service appointed Private Office staff as at 6 January 2015 is 33.

BIS is unable to provide any historic data due to changes to the HR systems.

Video Games**Chris White:**[\[219378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will estimate the contribution that the video games industry made to UK exports as a proportion of GDP in (a) 2010 and (b) 2013.

Matthew Hancock:

There are many difficulties in calculating the contribution that the video games industry makes to UK exports but the latest available DCMS Economic Estimates published in January 2014 show that exports of services from the group 'IT, Software and Computer Services' contributed less than 1% to UK GDP in 2010 and 2011 (approximately 0.42% in 2010 and 0.45% in 2011). It is not possible to disaggregate exports of computer services from the wider group. Estimates for exports of services from the Creative Industries in 2013 will not be available for some time but 2012 data are expected to be published early in the New Year.

Chris White:[\[219380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will estimate the contribution made by the video games industry to UK exports in cash terms in (a) 2010 and (b) 2013.

Matthew Hancock:

The DCMS Economic Estimates of the Creative Industries provides estimates of value of service exports from the Creative Industries. Service exports from computer games' industries are included within the group 'IT, Software and Computer Services'.

It is not possible to disaggregate exports of computer games from the wider group. 2010 data for the group 'IT, Software and Computer Services' show exports valued at £6,286m (2011 data, latest available, shows £7,210m). These figures cover only service exports for the group (goods exports are currently not calculated). DCMS will publish 2013 data once it becomes available.

Wind**Tom Greatrex:**[\[219685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what estimate she has made of the mean wind speed in each constituent part of the UK in each month of 2014.

Matthew Hancock:

[Holding answer 8 January 2015]:

Based on data from its network of wind observing stations, the Met Office's estimate of mean wind speed in each of the constituent parts of the UK in each month of 2014 is shown in the following table:

Month (2014)	MEAN WIND SPEED (KNOTS)				
	UK	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
January	11.0	10.2	12.2	12.2	10.3
February	13.7	12.9	16.4	14.5	13.0
March	10.5	8.9	10.3	13.4	10.1
April	9.1	7.9	8.4	11.1	8.8
May	8.0	7.7	8.5	8.4	7.4
June	6.6	6.1	6.6	7.4	6.5
July	7.4	7.0	7.3	8.1	6.9
August	9.2	8.4	9.6	10.4	8.6
September	6.2	5.5	5.8	7.6	5.3
October	10.6	9.1	11.9	12.6	9.9
November	8.2	7.5	8.9	9.3	7.8
December	11.3	10.1	12.5	13.3	10.1

■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans

Mr Iain Wright:

[\[219838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will make it his policy that there should be a widening of eligibility for UK Export Finance support to include companies in the offshore wind supply chain.

Matthew Hancock:

UK Export Finance (UKEF) can support exports by UK companies in the offshore wind sector.

In addition, to allow as many exporters and potential exporters as possible to be able to benefit directly from UKEF support, the Government is taking forward proposals in the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill to widen UKEF's powers so it is able to provide support to companies in the supply chains of UK exporters, as well as UK exporters themselves.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Civil Servants****Meg Munn:**[\[220057\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Oral Answer of 7 January 2015 to the hon. Member for Southport, by what proportion the Government has reduced the size of the Civil Service before adjusting for machinery of government changes.

Mr Francis Maude:

As part of this Government's long-term economic plan to pay down the deficit and help the country live within its means, we have reduced the size of the Civil Service. It has shrunk by 16% since the 2010 General Election, or 21% once adjusted for Machinery of Government changes that moved staff into the Civil Service since the last General Election. This represents a significant increase in efficiency and productivity, and has helped save taxpayers £2.4bn last year alone, compared to spending in the year before the 2010 General Election.

■ **Community Development****Lisa Nandy:**[\[220099\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, on what criteria the locations for the Community Organiser programme were chosen.

Mr Rob Wilson:

Senior Community Organisers are hosted by locally rooted community organisations. These organisations had to apply to Locality (who deliver the programme on behalf of government) to host a community organiser. The application process included questions on how the organisation would support the community organiser, their understanding of community organising and the case for a community organiser in their particular area. Applications were then assessed by a panel which included representation from the Office for Civil Society and Locality.

■ **Emergency Planning College****Miss Anne McIntosh:**[\[220144\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when he last visited the Emergency Contingencies Planning College, The Hawkhill, Easingwold; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Francis Maude:

I last visited the Emergency Planning College on 12 July 2013.

The College and its partnership contract continue to serve as excellent examples of what can be achieved by the application of innovation, energy and commercial skill in the delivery of an important public service.

I am pleased to report that the College was profitable in 2014 and will pay a dividend.

■ Government Departments: Procurement

Iain McKenzie: [\[220098\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of steps he has taken to facilitate small and medium-sized enterprises winning government contracts; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Francis Maude:

The Government is on track to deliver its aspiration of awarding 25% of central government business to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), directly and through the supply chain. We have already substantially reformed the public procurement landscape to level the playing field for suppliers of different sizes and make things easier for all. Further measures that come into force in early 2015 to make public sector business more accessible to SMEs include:

- Ensuring all new contract opportunities are accessible in one place;
- Removing burdensome Pre-Qualification (PQQs) for low value procurements and standardising PQQs for higher value contracts; and
- Ensuring all suppliers in public sector supply chains are paid promptly.

■ Independent Commissions

Chris Heaton-Harris: [\[219919\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the (a) names and (b) annual cost is of each ongoing independent commission set up by the Government.

Mr Francis Maude:

Information on the wider public bodies landscape is published in the publication Public Bodies. The latest version, Public Bodies 2014, sets out that, as at 31 March 2014, there were 450 non departmental public bodies, 41 executive agencies and 24 non ministerial departments. Further data, including on their expenditure and Government funding can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-bodies-2014>.

Comprehensive information relating to ongoing independent commissions across government, other than those referenced in this document, is not held centrally.

■ Welsh Language

Kevin Brennan: [\[220150\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what consideration he has given to adopting a Welsh language policy for his Department.

Mr Francis Maude:

The Cabinet Office manages the GOV.UK website, through which UK citizens can access government information and digital services. We are working closely with the Wales Office to ensure that the Welsh language content on GOV.UK is underpinned by high quality user research that provides a simpler, clearer and faster service for users.

GOV.UK links to all Welsh-language government transactions (via <https://www.gov.uk/cymraeg>), and has Welsh-language content for a number of commonly-used services, such as information on car tax and bank holidays. The site also gives government departments the ability to publish Welsh-language content in line with the requirements of their individual Welsh Language Schemes.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Change of Use

Nick de Bois:

[219656]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will bring forward proposals to prevent businesses from being evicted by office-to-home conversions in (a) mixed business and residential areas and (b) areas not deemed as requiring regeneration.

Brandon Lewis:

Permitted development rights that allow the change of offices to residential use were introduced in May 2013. These rights are contributing to a more efficient use of our existing building stock, and are providing badly needed new homes such as studios and one-bedroom flats for young people, using brownfield land. This market-led approach reflects that business patterns are changing with new technology: as a whole, while there is increasing demand for new housing due to a growing population, modern firms need less physical office space than they used to.

My Department is considering responses to the technical consultation on planning that was published on 31 July. We will publish the Government's response in due course.

■ Planning Permission: Appeals

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:

[219907]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what his policy is on planning appeal costs being awarded against a district council when that appeal has been dismissed.

Brandon Lewis:

All parties in planning appeals normally meet their own expenses. They are expected to behave reasonably to support an efficient and timely process, for example in providing all the required evidence and ensuring that timetables are met. Where a party has behaved unreasonably, and this has directly caused another party to incur unnecessary or wasted expense in the appeal process, they may be subject to an award of costs. A party applying for costs may have costs awarded against them, if they themselves have behaved unreasonably. It is a matter for the Planning Inspector, or the Secretary of State if a recovered decision, to determine applications for costs on a case-by-case basis.

■ Private Rented Housing

Mark Field: [\[219700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 October 2014 to Question 209508, when he plans to publish his Department's response to the consultation on the Review of Property Conditions in the Private Rented Sector.

Brandon Lewis:

We aim to publish the Government's response in due course.

■ Repossession Orders

Mr Robin Walker: [\[219885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what information his Department holds on the number of properties repossessed in (a) Worcester, (b) Worcestershire and (c) England in each of the last 10 years.

Brandon Lewis:

The Council of Mortgage Lenders collects data on the number of properties that have been repossessed, and provide this to the Ministry of Justice who publish the data and it can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mortgage-and-landlord-possession-statistics>

The data are for the United Kingdom as a whole. No further geographical breakdown is available. Data for 2005-14 is shown in the attached Table 1.

The Ministry of Justice collects and publishes mortgage and landlord possession statistics, which include mortgage and landlord possession claim actions in county courts in England and Wales. Data is available at county and local authority level and can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/375809/mortgage-and-landlord-statistical-data-june-to-september-2014.zip

Data for Worcester, Worcestershire and England, 2005-14, is shown in the attached Table 2.

According to the Council of Mortgage Lenders, the number of mortgage possessions is at its lowest annual figure since 2007.

Moreover, Bank of England statistics published on 9 December 2014 state that the number of new mortgage arrears cases is at its lowest quarterly level since the statistical series began in 2007.

The action that this Government has taken to tackle the deficit left by the last Administration has kept interest rates down and helped reduce the number of repossessions.

Attachments:

1. tables 1 and 2 for PQ UIN:219885 [150112 tables 1and2 PQ643713 (UIN219885) Walker.docx]

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Mobile Phones**

Mr Angus Brendan MacNeil: [\[220123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to promote roaming and mast sharing in areas without comprehensive mobile telephone coverage on all networks.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

On December 17 Government announced a landmark deal that locks in £5bn of investment by MNOs and will deliver 90% geographic coverage from each mobile operator by 2017. The agreement will be made legally binding through amended licence conditions and will improve mobile coverage across the UK. This will halve partial not-spots (where some but not all mobile network operators provide coverage) and reduce complete not-spots by almost two-thirds.

Details of the agreement are available online at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-secures-landmark-deal-for-uk-mobile-phone-users>. It is now for MNOs to determine how best to deliver the agreed coverage improvements.

Mr Angus Brendan MacNeil: [\[220134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to ensure that mobile coverage up to 4G levels is provided in rural areas to ensure communication resilience in the event for lightning.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

It is for mobile network operators (MNOs) to plan their networks to provide the best service for their customers, including appropriate measures to provide resilience in a variety of scenarios.

The issue of mobile coverage is a key concern for Government and on December 17 Government announced a landmark deal that locks in £5bn of investment by MNOs and will deliver 90% geographic coverage from each mobile operator by 2017. The agreement will be made legally binding through amended licence conditions and will improve mobile coverage across the UK. Details of the agreement are available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-secures-landmark-deal-for-uk-mobile-phone-users>.

■ Science Museum Group

Katy Clark: [\[219847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make an assessment of the performance of the management of the Science Museum Group in relation to the restoration of the Flying Scotsman.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Flying Scotsman has experienced past problems. Before embarking on the current stage of work, the management of the Science Museum Group commissioned an independent report from Bob Meanley, an expert in heritage railway engineering, which outlines how these problems arose and plans for future avoidance. I am confident that the project is now managed effectively. The report can be accessed on the Science Museum website

<http://www.nrm.org.uk/~media/Files/NRM/PDF/NRM%20Flying%20Scotsman%20Final%20Report.pdf> . I have asked the Science Museum Group to make contact with the Hon. Member regarding this query.

■ Telephone Preference Service

Sir Greg Knight: [\[219202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to review the effectiveness of the Telephone Preference Service.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The regulators carried out a review this year. The Office of Communications (Ofcom) and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) reviewed the effectiveness of the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) and published their findings on 23 July 2014. This showed that TPS registration reduced the volume of live unsolicited marketing calls by about a third and had a wider benefit, as it also reduced other types of nuisance calls by an average of a third.

Consent and lead generation issues can also impact TPS registered consumers. In its report on this subject (published 8 December 2014), the consumer group Which? acknowledged the benefits of the TPS, as a tool for consumers looking to prevent or reduce nuisance calls. Which? also put forward recommendations to the regulators on how to improve the benefits of the TPS and create greater awareness of the service.

Tackling unsolicited marketing nuisance calls remains a priority for DCMS and we published the first ever Nuisance Calls Action Plan on 30 March 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nuisance-calls-action-plan-unveiled>. This set out our achievements to date, work underway and proposed actions for the future, which included both legislative and non-legislative proposals. Taken together these measures will greatly benefit consumers now and in the future.

DEFENCE■ **Afghanistan**

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [[220012](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any personnel from the UK Reaper Squadron 39 will be deployed in Afghanistan in 2015.

Mr Mark Francois:

There are currently no plans to deploy any 39 Squadron personnel to Afghanistan in 2015.

■ **Air Training Corps and University Air Squadrons**

Michael Fabricant: [[906914](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to support air training corps and university air squadrons; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Julian Brazier:

The Ministry of Defence provides support to the Air Training Corps and University Air Squadrons through, for example, the provision of high quality flying training, and supporting other activities, including access to defence training areas and ranges.

■ **Armed Forces Covenant**

Mr David Ruffley: [[906912](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent progress he has made on strengthening the Armed Forces Covenant.

Anna Soubry:

In addition to what the Government has done, for example on making life long widows' pensions, now we need to make sure there is delivery locally, which is why by this evening I will have written to all Local Authority Chief Executives and Leaders in Great Britain. Then I will write to every Clinical Commissioning Group and Hospital Trust to make sure the National Health Service delivers on the Covenant, no disadvantage and in certain circumstances priority treatment.

■ **Armed Forces: Crimes of Violence**

Karl Turner: [[219608](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the reporting protocols are for allegations of (a) rape, (b) sexual assault and (c) domestic violence in the armed forces.

Anna Soubry:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: The Ministry of Defence takes any allegation of rape, sexual assault or domestic violence seriously. Allegations of rape, sexual assault or domestic violence in the Armed Forces can be reported to either the Service or the civilian Police Forces.

If a Commanding Officer is made aware of an allegation against a person subject to Service law or a civilian subject to Service discipline, or circumstances contained within the Armed Forces Act 2006, Schedule 2 (which includes the offences under Section 1 and 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (rape and assault by penetration)), he must as soon as reasonably practicable ensure that the Service Police are made aware of the matter.

If the allegation does not fall within Schedule 2, the Commanding Officer is still under a statutory obligation to ensure that the matter is investigated in such a way and to such an extent as is appropriate or ensure that, as soon as practicable, the Service Police are aware of the matter.

■ Armed Forces: Offences against Children

Karl Turner:

[\[219605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the reporting protocols are for allegations of child abuse in the armed forces.

Anna Soubry:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: This Government is determined to tackle child abuse in whatever form it occurs, including in the Armed Forces. If a Commanding Officer (CO) is made aware of an allegation against a person subject to Service law or a civilian subject to Service discipline, or circumstances contained within the Armed Forces Act 2006, Schedule 2 (which includes the offence under Section 1 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and child sex offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003) he must as soon as reasonably practicable ensure that the Service Police are made aware of the matter.

If an allegation does not fall within Schedule 2, the Commanding Officer is still under a statutory obligation to ensure that the matter is investigated in such a way and to such an extent as is appropriate or to ensure that, as soon as practicable, the Service Police are aware of the matter.

Any individual who is concerned about the safety of a child should contact either the Service or Civilian Police Forces.

■ Armoured Fighting Vehicles

Vernon Coaker:

[\[220065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the number of jobs that will be created in the UK as a result of the Scout specialist vehicle programme.

Mr Philip Dunne:

General Dynamics UK (GDUK) continues to award contracts to tier one suppliers for manufacture of the Scout Specialist Vehicle. GDUK currently estimates the amount of UK jobs involved in this work to be approximately 1,400 in the first tier of the supply chain across over 160 companies.

Vernon Coaker: [\[220066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress he has made on the Scout specialist vehicle programme; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Scout Specialist Vehicle (SV) programme passed its second Main Gate approval in August 2014, resulting in a contract signature and announcement with General Dynamics UK in September 2014 for 589 vehicles, plus training systems, applique armour and the first two years initial in-service support. The programme continues to progress in the demonstration and manufacture phase.

The Scout SV fleet has a planned initial operating capability of July 2020 following delivery of the first vehicles to the Army in 2017 and once training and unit conversion is complete. The first brigade will be fully equipped with Scout SV from the end of 2020. The full operating capability is expected in 2025 when three brigades are planned to be equipped with the vehicles.

■ Army Reserve: Recruitment

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[220116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department's target date of April 2019 for achieving an Army Reserve force of 30,000 remains in force; and what plans his Department has to review that date.

Mr Julian Brazier:

The Army is committed to achieving a trained Army Reserve of 30,000 by April 2019.

■ Army: Recruitment

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[220095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many personnel were recruited to the regular Army between April 2013 and April 2014; and what his Department's recruitment target was for that period.

Mr Julian Brazier:

The recruiting target for regular Army personnel for 2013-14 was 10,060, against which a total of 6,805 were recruited (6,198 soldiers and 607 officers) was achieved.

■ Bahrain

Vernon Coaker: [\[218440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the running costs of the UK's naval base in Bahrain in each year to 2020.

Vernon Coaker: [\[218442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much of the projected cost of the new UK naval base in Bahrain will be funded by his Department; and from which section of his Department's budget these funds will come.

Jeremy Corbyn: [\[219565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the costs to the public purse of (a) establishing and (b) operating the proposed British military base in Bahrain; and what contribution to those costs will be made by the government of Bahrain.

Mr Mark Francois:

[Holding answer 12 January 2015]: The costs of naval and logistics facilities in Bahrain to support operations in the Gulf region will depend on the outcome of continuing negotiations with the government of Bahrain over how best to enhance and improve the existing facilities, and on the extent of the operations we undertake. The running costs are likely to be comparable to current expenditure, although in any event we expect the enhanced facilities to provide a more cost-effective use of Defence resources. Costs funded from the Defence budget will be borne by the appropriate Top Level Budgets.

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[219745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment his Department has made of the strategic need for a British military presence in Bahrain.

Mr Mark Francois:

[Holding answer 8 January 2015]: The Ministry of Defence has had a Naval Base in Bahrain since the 1950s; UK mine-hunters are based there and British destroyers and frigates in the Gulf are supported from there. Under the new arrangement, signed at the Manama Dialogue, the UK and Bahrain committed to working together to enhance the existing facilities at the port. The agreement reaffirms the UK's and Bahrain's joint determination to maintain regional security and stability in the face of long-standing and emerging regional challenges.

■ Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Alison Sebeck: [\[219910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the timetable is for the roll-out of the Infrastructure Management System and the linked capability releases.

Anna Soubry:

The timetable for the rollout of the four releases of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation's Management System is set out below:

RELEASE	PLANNED COMPLETION
0	Completed
1	Summer 2015
2	Quarter 1 2016-17
3	Quarter 4 2016-17

■ Defence: Procurement

Karl McCartney: [\[906910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he has taken to invest in next generation equipment for the armed forces.

Stephen Mosley: [\[906911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent investment he has made in equipment for the armed forces.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Of the £160 billion ten year investment that will be detailed in the Equipment Plan, £70 billion is investment in new equipment, funding cutting edge capabilities such as the new aircraft carriers, Astute class submarines, the Type 26 Frigates, the F35 Joint Strike Fighter, the A400M Atlas transport aircraft and the Scout armoured vehicle.

■ ICT

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[220110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what functions are undertaken by each of his Department's ICT systems and databases; and what the cost was of each such system in 2013-14.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ Libya

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [\[219664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department's internal review of Libyan general purpose training has been completed; whether he plans to place in the Library a copy of that review when it is completed; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Francois:

[Holding answer 8 January 2015]: The report requested by the Prime Minister on 5 November 2014 is complete and a summary of the conclusions and recommendations has been placed in the Library of the House.

■ Military Decorations

John Glen: [\[219705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what proportion of the total of MBE (military) and BEM (military) awards announced in (a) 1992, (b) 1999, (c) 2006 and (d) 2014 was awarded to members of the armed forces in the equivalent ranks of (i) Chief Petty Officer, (ii) Staff Sergeant and (iii) Flight Sergeant and below.

Anna Soubry:

The requested information is not held by the Ministry of Defence. However, details relating to military awards are in the public domain and can be searched in the 'awards and accreditation' section of the official public record at the following website:
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/>

■ **Military Medals Review****Sir Hugh Robertson:**[\[219982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to Sir John Holmes' Military Medals Review, published in July 2012, what progress his Department has made in implementing the recommendations in paragraphs 50, 51 and 52 of that review.

Anna Soubry:

The Ministry of Defence accepted Sir John Holmes's recommendations. The Cabinet Office subsequently published guidance in October 2014, which has been agreed by the Honours and Decorations Committee and endorsed by HM The Queen, in relation to the principle of double-medalling and the acceptance of awards by foreign governments. The acceptance and wear of a foreign award by a British citizen is subject to approval by the Sovereign. Decisions of this kind are for the Foreign Secretary in the first instance.

This guidance can be found on the Government website at
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-military-campaign-medals-guidance>.

■ **NATO****Mr Tom Watson:**[\[R\] \[219725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 5 December 2014 to Question 216827, whether the NATO Reaper MQ-9 User Group meeting in January 2015 will cover asset-sharing between members of the Group.

Mr Tom Watson:[\[R\] \[220027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 5 December 2014 to Question 216827, whether it is planned that options for asset-sharing between members of the NATO MQ-9 Users Group will be discussed at the Paris meeting scheduled to take place in January 2015.

Mr Mark Francois:

This first formal meeting of the MQ-9 Users Group will focus on setting the Terms of Reference of the group and scoping potential areas of collaborative working. It is not expected to discuss in any detail, asset-sharing between its members.

■ NATO: Military Decorations

Sir Hugh Robertson:

[\[219980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what rules govern the wearing of a NATO medal for service in former Yugoslavia by UK service personnel who served in Bosnia during the UN mandate but while NATO was providing air cover.

Anna Soubry:

Between 1992 and 2002, members of the UK Armed Forces served in the former Yugoslavia under the command of the UN Protection Force or NATO. UK personnel who served within this period and met the eligibility criteria were entitled to receive either the UN Medal or NATO Service Medal. Eligibility for the UN Medal commenced on 1 March 1992 and ran until 31 December 1995. Eligibility for the NATO Service Medal commenced on 1 July 1992 and ended on 31 December 2002.

UK personnel serving between 1992 and 1995 were not permitted to receive both awards for the same period of service. This would have contravened a central principle of the UK honours system of no double-medalling, which states that only one form of medallic recognition is acceptable for a single period of service. Therefore, personnel serving between 1992 and 1995 received either the UN Medal or the NATO Service Medal, depending on whether they were under UN or NATO command. Personnel serving from 1996 onwards would be entitled only to the NATO Service Medal.

Both medals were approved by Her Majesty to be accepted and worn.

Sir Hugh Robertson:

[\[219983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had on allowing the UK service personnel who served in Iraq or Afghanistan to wear the respective NATO medals; and if he will make a statement.

Anna Soubry:

No such discussions have been held. One of the central principles of the UK honours system is that only one form of medallic recognition is acceptable for a single period of service (no double-medalling). UK awards take precedence over those presented by multinational forces and awards have already been instituted to recognise the service of British personnel in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Therefore UK personnel are not permitted to wear the NATO awards.

■ Navy

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[219371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Royal Navy officers have participated in the Royal Navy/Merchant Navy Voyage Scheme in each of the last 15 years for which figures are available.

Mr Mark Francois:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: Records for Royal Navy participation in the Merchant Navy Liaison Scheme are held only from 2004. From January 2004 until December 2014, a total of 508 Royal Navy officers have participated in this scheme.

■ Nigeria

Richard Fuller: [\[906917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to strengthen military co-operation with Nigeria.

Mr Mark Francois:

The UK along with other international partners, is providing military, intelligence and development support to assist Nigeria in its efforts to tackle the terrorist activities of Boko Haram and address the root causes of instability. The substantial package of UK assistance includes increased training and capacity building for the Nigerian Armed Forces, and surveillance and intelligence support.

■ RAF Biggin Hill

Nia Griffith: [\[219658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many offers his Department has received from external bodies to take over the upkeep and associated costs of St George's Chapel at Biggin Hill in the last five years.

Anna Soubry:

While no formal proposals have been received, we have been in discussion with Bromley Council for 18 months on the Chapel's future and are pleased that the Council wants to create a heritage centre on the site. Subject to the agreement of suitable terms to secure the future of the Chapel, the site will be leased on a long term basis to the Council for a peppercorn rent. A number of parties have come forward offering support and we will be working with Bromley Council to identify how these generous offers can be incorporated into the final heritage proposal.

■ Shipping

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[219365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the contribution of the Merchant Navy to the aims and objectives of his Department; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Francois:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: A review of the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) strategic sealift requirement conducted in 2011 concluded that, for the movement of cargo by sea, strategic support should be primarily provided through the private finance initiative Strategic Sealift Service. This service comprises four British flagged roll-on/roll-off vessels manned by British mercantile marine officers and crews.

Should additional requirements arise, the MOD may charter suitable merchant ships from the commercial market through the appropriate competition and contractual processes.

■ Tornado Aircraft

Angus Robertson: [\[219523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 26 November 2014 to Question 215200, how the overall tolerability level was calculated; and how the figure of 0.84 per 1,000 was arrived at for the Tornado when the level for one primary accident set, mid-air collision, was 0.86 per 1,000.

Mr Philip Dunne:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: The figure of 0.86 per 1,000 is derived from a 2012 Defence Science and Technology Laboratory report. This modelled an estimate of the expected future level of Tornado Mid-Air Collisions from 2011 through the remaining service life of Tornado GR4.

The figure of 0.84 per 1,000 uses a different metric, in accordance with the Military Aviation Authority Regulatory Article (RA) 1210 Annex A. This metric is the Rate of Death for Tornado GR4 aircrew based on actual historic fatalities covering all accident sets over a defined period, and is now used as the starting position for tolerability judgements.

■ United Nations: Military Decorations

Sir Hugh Robertson: [\[219981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the procedure is for UK servicemen and women to apply for the UN Special Service Medal for the Sarajevo Airlift; and how many service personnel have been awarded that medal.

Anna Soubry:

The Sarajevo airlift began in July 1992 and ran until January 1996. Members of the UK Armed Forces who took part in the airlift and met the eligibility criteria were entitled to be awarded the UN Special Service Medal. UN medals are usually awarded in theatre by the UN Commanding Officer. The information on the number of medals awarded in this case could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

UK personnel could also apply to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Medal Office within one year of their return to the UK for the UN Special Service Medal. The MOD Medal Office has issued 67 such medals to UK personnel.

■ Unmanned Air Vehicles

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [\[219724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many UK Reapers have been relocated to the UK to date.

Mr Mark Francois:

I am withholding the exact number of UK Reapers that have relocated to the UK for reasons of safeguarding operational security.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER■ **Electoral Register**

Toby Perkins: [\[219714\]](#)

To ask the Deputy Prime Minister, what equalities impact assessment was made before the introduction of the new online voter registration system.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The equalities impact assessment for Individual Electoral Registration, which includes the new online voter registration system, is available in the Library of the House as Command Paper 8109.

Toby Perkins: [\[219750\]](#)

To ask the Deputy Prime Minister, whether transgendered people, confirming that they have previously had a different name when completing the new online voter registration form, will have this information protected under the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Information provided when registering to vote is handled in compliance with the relevant legislation, which includes the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

EDUCATION■ **Academies**

Mr Christopher Chope: [\[219260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether and how the timetable for the creation of academies and sponsored academies will be affected by rules for purdah preceding the 2015 General Election.

Mr Edward Timpson:

[Holding answer 5 January 2015]: Guidance on the operation of Government during the pre-election purdah period will be issued in due course and will reflect practice under previous administrations. Until then, and in line with the practice of previous administrations, the normal business of Government will continue.

■ **Foster Care**

Steve McCabe: [\[220173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 219314, whether her Department holds figures for the countries of origin of children who are reported to be in private fostering arrangements born outside the UK.

Steve McCabe: [\[220174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 219314, what information her Department holds on when children born outside the UK who are then reported to be in private fostering arrangements entered the UK.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The table below shows the number of new private fostering arrangements by place of birth.

	2013- 2014
All Children	2,880
UK	1,090
Europe (other)	890
Africa	130
Asia	540
Other	240

Where a child has been reported as having more than one private fostering arrangement during the year, each arrangement has been counted (numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10, therefore components may not sum to totals).

This information is published in table 3b of the Notifications of private fostering arrangements in England: 2014: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/notifications-of-private-fostering-arrangements-in-england-2014

The Department for Education does not collect information on when children born outside the UK, who are reported to be in private fostering arrangements, enter the UK.

■ Pupils: Disadvantaged**Sir Nick Harvey:**[\[219804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to release statistics on pupil premium take-up since September 2014.

Mr David Laws:

For financial year 2014-15, the Department for Education has already published the number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and illustrative allocations for schools in December 2013, based on free school meal figures gathered up to and including the January 2013 school census. This information is published online at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-2013-to-2014-final-allocation-tables

The final allocations for 2015-16 based on the January 2015 school census figures will then be published towards the end of 2015 or early 2016.

■ Teachers: Surveys

Kevin Brennan: [\[220100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average response rate of Initial Teacher Training students trained in universities was to the (a) National College for Teaching and Leadership survey and (b) National Student Survey.

Mr David Laws:

In Spring 2014, the annual survey of newly qualified teachers, carried out by National College for Teaching and Leadership, received a response from 20% of university trainees gaining Qualified Teacher Status in 2013 following Initial Teacher Training in higher educational institutions.

Information on the response rate of Initial Teacher Training students to the National Student Survey is not held by the Department for Education.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Graham Stringer: [\[219697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what estimate he has made of (a) the total carbon savings and (b) the resulting value for money of the non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive subsidy scheme since it began operation.

Amber Rudd:

The December 2013 Impact Assessment (IA) provided estimates of net carbon savings from the non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) expected over carbon budget periods, and estimated savings of between 2.1 and 3.2 MtCO₂ over the second carbon budget period (2013-2017).¹ This was based on take-up assumptions prior to scheme launch.

Estimated carbon savings have not been revised according to current take-up. Real world carbon savings will be affected by multiple factors including identifying the replacement technology, in-situ performance of the technology, and changes to heat use patterns. In order to address the complexity, a programme of benefits realisation is being developed to estimate carbon savings from the scheme.

Other sources which have been set-up to collect evidence that will allow us to calculate carbon savings in the long run, as well as to offer continued improvement in the performance of the scheme, include:

- A metering and monitoring programme - to measure the performance of technologies in everyday situations;
- The introduction of Biomass Sustainability criteria - to ensure a minimum level of carbon saving by restricting emissions to 34.8g of CO₂ equiv. per MJ of heat generated.

In terms of value for money, the RHI policy has been designed to provide renewable heat, which contributes towards the UK's Renewable Energy Directive target, in the

most cost effective way. As such we calculate value for money for the scheme in units of pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) of support, and look at comparative costs of producing renewable energy from other renewable sources.

The following table shows the value for money in p/kWh for biomass systems, non-biomass systems and all systems in the scheme as a whole. This is based on all payments received since the start of the scheme to the end of November 2014.

TECHNOLOGY	VALUE FOR MONEY (P/KWH)
Biomass	4.8
Non biomass systems	6.7
All systems	4.9

[1] Table 18, IA available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/renewable-heat-incentive-expanding-the-non-domestic-scheme>

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Floods: Folkestone

Damian Collins:

[\[220015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the value of the investment by the Environment Agency in flood defences in Folkestone and Hythe constituency has been from May 2010 to date; and how much has been budgeted for further future works by that agency in that constituency.

Dan Rogerson:

The table below details the value of the investment by the Environment Agency in flood defences in Folkestone and Hythe constituency from May 2010 to date:

SCHEME LOCATION	OUTLINE OF WORKS	APPROXIMATE COST	TIME SCALE
Hythe to Folkestone	Shepway District Council manage the beach frontage and maintain shingle defences	£950,000.	May 2010 to present and for the next 5 years.
Dymchurch	2.2km new defences at Dymchurch	£60,000,000	Completed in 2011
Combined Hythe and Horn Street Modelling	Detailed modelling of the Hythe Streams area in conjunction with Kent County Council	Approximately £45,000	Commenced in November 2014 and due to be completed in 2015-16.

SCHEME LOCATION	OUTLINE OF WORKS	APPROXIMATE COST	TIME SCALE
Mill Leese Flood Storage Reservoir	Major improvements and refurbishment of embankment and control structure	£1,700,000	Completed in 2012.
Greatstone	A rock groyne constructed on the beach at Greatstone to hold material that drifts along the beach from Littlestone	£298,000	Summer 2014.
Greatstone	Maintenance of the Sand Dunes	£75,000	Since 2010.
Littlestone	Beach Recharge	£1,300,000	Due to complete by April 2015.
Seabrook	Outfall Improvements	£120,000	Summer 2014.

On 2 December 2014, the Government published its programme of capital flood and coastal erosion risk management improvement works for the coming six years, up to 2021. This includes indicative allocations to the following schemes in the Folkestone and Hythe constituency:

SCHEME	ALLOCATION
Hythe Ranges	£21,000,000
Lydd Ranges	£40,000,000
Romney Sands Coastal Defences	£1,400,000
Denge Secondary Defence	£2,050,000
Denge Beach Management	£3,000,000
TOTAL	£67,450,000

NB. The two Denge projects cross the constituency boundary.

■ Pet Travel Scheme

Sir Greg Knight: [\[219199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Pet Travel scheme in allowing owners to take dogs and cats abroad; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

The EU pet travel scheme (Regulation (EU) No. 576/2013) has made it easier and cheaper for pet owners to travel with their pets and return to the UK. Under the scheme pet dogs, cats and ferrets can enter the UK from any country in the world without the need for quarantine provided they meet the strict requirements for entry from the part of the world from which they are travelling.

■ Reservoirs

Sir Greg Knight: [\[219200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many new reservoirs have been (a) built and (b) are in the planning or construction phase since 2005.

Dan Rogerson:

The Environment Agency keeps records of large raised reservoirs with a capacity of more than 25,000m³ of water above natural ground level. No relevant information is held centrally on reservoirs below this capacity.

Since 2005, 167 large raised reservoirs have been built in England, and 120 large raised reservoirs are currently being either altered or constructed. The Environment Agency does not hold records of large raised reservoirs in the planning stage.

■ Water Supply

Sir Greg Knight: [\[219198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the amount of water in the UK that is lost through leakage between source and consumer; and if she will take steps to end the current position where the consumer pays for such losses through price.

Dan Rogerson:

The most recently available figures estimate that across England and Wales around 3.1 billion litres of water leaks each day. The Government and Ofwat have worked with the water companies to reduce total leakage by one third since its peak in the mid-90s.

Ofwat, as the economic regulator, agrees leakage performance with water companies. In the last decade Ofwat has entered into legal agreements with those companies that have not met their leakage targets, committing them to investing more than £230 million of their shareholders' money in improvements on leakage.

In its current price review (PR14), Ofwat has agreed with water companies a commitment to save over 200 million litres a day through water efficiency and 144

million litres a day through reductions in leakage by 2020. This amounts to a 4.5% reduction in total leakage.

PR14 has seen companies consult with more of their customers than ever before, engaging directly with over a quarter of a million of them. Companies have worked with the independent customer challenge groups to deliver better quality plans that reflect their customers' priorities. This means that while companies must meet their obligations on leakage reduction, they can only pass the cost of additional leakage work on to their customers if there is a demonstrable willingness to pay.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Bahrain

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[220067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to encourage civil rights and democracy in Bahrain.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I co-chaired the UK-Bahrain Joint Working Group meeting on 4 December 2014 with the Undersecretary of the Bahraini Ministry of the Interior, H.E Abdullah Abdulatif Abdulla. We discussed progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry Report and UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review, and agreed that the UK would continue to provide assistance to Bahrain's reform programme, with a continuing focus on strengthening human rights and the rule of law, in 2015. The British Government will continue to encourage the Government of Bahrain to build on the success of the recent elections and move forward with further reform to advance the democratisation and human rights agenda.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[220068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of political prisoners in Bahrain; and what steps his Department has taken to encourage the release of those prisoners.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The British Government does not hold details on the cases and charges against prisoners in Bahrain. If we have specific concerns around convictions or sentencing we raise these with the Government of Bahrain as part of our wider dialogue on human rights and reform.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[220069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the government of Bahrain regarding the case of Dr Abduljalil Alsingace who is currently imprisoned in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Our Embassy in Bahrain has raised the issue of access to medical treatment for Dr Abduljalil Alsingace with the Ombudsman for the Ministry of Interior. We continue to encourage the Government of Bahrain to ensure that due legal process is followed in all legal cases and international norms of justice upheld.

■ Diplomatic Service**Chris Ruane:**[\[219670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether educational background is considered in the selection process for High Commissioners and Ambassadors.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The selection process for High Commissioners and Ambassadors is based on clear, transparent criteria, namely candidates' abilities, as demonstrated by prior performance, and their knowledge and skills. Candidates are not required to disclose their educational background, and academic qualifications are not a criterion for selection. Where candidates have completed a course of study in a field relevant to a post for which they are applying, they may choose to disclose this as part of demonstrating their relevant knowledge.

■ Intelligence Services**Mr Andrew Tyrie:**[\[219952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, for what reasons the Secret Intelligence Service did not seek assurances on Michael Adebolajo's treatment while in detention from the Kenyan authorities on the day it was notified of his arrest.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) arranged a meeting with a senior Kenyan police officer after being notified of Adebolajo's arrest, as reported in paragraph 62 on page 28 of the Intelligence and Security Committee's open report. During this meeting SIS asked for assurances about Adebolajo's treatment whilst in detention. The Kenyan police gave general assurances as to his treatment. It has been a longstanding policy of successive governments not to comment in detail on matters of intelligence operations.

Mr Andrew Tyrie:[\[219953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how his Department monitors the compliance of the intelligence and security agencies with the Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Compliance with the Consolidated Guidance is monitored by the Intelligence Services Commissioner, a former high court judge who has independent judicial oversight of the conduct of the Intelligence Agencies. On November 27 the Prime Minister, my right hon Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) gave direction under section 59A of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 placing the Commissioner's work on a

statutory footing. The Intelligence Services Commissioner reports annually to the Prime Minister and publishes a public report.

Mr Andrew Tyrie: [\[219954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the intelligence and security agencies have taken to improve their record keeping since the publication of the Intelligence and Security Committee Report on the intelligence relating to the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Security and Intelligence Agencies are continually reviewing their record-keeping processes to ensure that they meet the developing challenges of the digital age. The Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) committed to publishing a full response to the Intelligence and Security Committee's recommendations, including record keeping, in the New Year.

Mr Andrew Tyrie: [\[219955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, by what process improvements in the intelligence and security agencies' record keeping is monitored and evaluated by the Intelligence and Security Committee.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Security and Intelligence Agencies are continually reviewing their record-keeping processes to ensure that they meet the developing challenges of the digital age. The Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) committed to publishing a full response to the Intelligence and Security Committee's recommendations in the New Year (Hansard 25 Nov 2014 Col 751), including those recommendations related to record-keeping.

Mr Andrew Tyrie: [\[219956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what training his Department has provided to members of the intelligence and security agencies on the Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel; and if he will make the contents of that training publicly available insofar as is consistent with national security.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We do not comment on the training of Security and Intelligence Agency Officers.

Mr Andrew Tyrie: [\[220127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what protocol the intelligence and security agencies follow to investigate allegations of mistreatment of detainees held abroad in foreign custody.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The protocol the intelligence and security agencies follow to investigate allegations of mistreatment of detainees held abroad in foreign custody are set out in the Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel on the Detention

and Interviewing of Detainees Overseas, and on the Passing and Receipt of Intelligence Related to Detainees.

Mr Andrew Tyrie: [\[220128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has provided training to members of the intelligence and security agencies on investigating allegations of mistreatment of detainees.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer my honourable friend to the answer given on 12 January in PQ219956.

■ Israel

Mr David Jones: [\[219903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the government of Israel over its decision to freeze the transfer of tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Our Ambassador to Tel Aviv discussed the decision to freeze the transfer of tax revenues with the Israeli Deputy National Security Adviser and the Senior National Security Council Director Foreign Policy on 4 January. He urged them to reverse it.

Sir Bob Russell: [\[220006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the reasons were for the UK's abstention on a Resolution before the UN to require Israel to withdraw from the territory it has occupied since 1967.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have long believed that direct negotiations towards a two state-solution need to be on the basis of clear, internationally agreed, parameters. We therefore welcomed the idea of an United Nations Security Council Resolution on the Middle East Peace Process which sets these out. We supported much of the content of the resolution. However, there were important issues which required proper negotiation, including the inclusion of arbitrary deadlines. Regretfully, this did not happen, so we abstained.

■ Pakistan

Mr Laurence Robertson: [\[219807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the government of Pakistan about the case of Aasia Bibi; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

On 5 December my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), stressed our concerns about Pakistan's blasphemy law with Prime Minister Sharif. I also raised our concerns and Ms Bibi's case with the Pakistan High

Commissioner on 28 October. We hope the verdict will be overturned on appeal and will continue to raise our concerns about this and similar cases.

Mr John Denham:

[219957]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the government of Pakistan to encourage it to extend its recent military action against militants to include Lashkar-e-Janghevi.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK and Pakistan have a shared interest in the battle against terrorism and we will stand together to tackle terrorism and the extremism that sustains it. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) has discussed with Prime Minister Sharif on a number of occasions the Government of Pakistan's efforts to tackle terrorism. Prime Minister Sharif has pledged that his Government's counter terrorism activity is directed against all militant groups. The Pakistan authorities have publicly stated that that they intend to tackle terrorists of all hues without any discrimination. We continue to encourage Pakistan to ensure that it takes a comprehensive approach to dealing with terrorists. The UK effort on counter-terrorism is supported by intensive diplomatic work, both bilaterally and multilaterally in concert with key partners such as the United States and the European Union. Collectively, we are working to support the development of strong institutions and machinery of Government in Pakistan to deliver a sustainable approach to countering terrorism and tackling all forms of terrorism.

Mr John Denham:

[219958]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to multilateral institutions to encourage the government of Pakistan to extend its recent military action against militants to include Lashkar-e-Janghevi.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK and Pakistan have a shared interest in the battle against terrorism and we will stand together to tackle terrorism and the extremism that sustains it. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) has discussed with Prime Minister Sharif on a number of occasions the Government of Pakistan's efforts to tackle terrorism.

Prime Minister Sharif has pledged that his Government's counter terrorism activity is directed against all militant groups. The Pakistan authorities have publicly stated that that they intend to tackle terrorists of all hues without any discrimination. We continue to encourage Pakistan to ensure that it takes a comprehensive approach to dealing with terrorists.

The UK effort on counter-terrorism is supported by intensive diplomatic work, both bilaterally and multilaterally in concert with key partners such as the United States and the European Union. Collectively, we are working to support the development of strong

institutions and machinery of Government in Pakistan to deliver a sustainable approach to countering terrorism and tackling all forms of terrorism.

Mr John Denham:

[\[219959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the government of Pakistan on that country's strategy to prevent further attacks by Lashkar-e-Janghevi.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK and Pakistan have a shared interest in the battle against terrorism and we will stand together to tackle terrorism and the extremism that sustains it.

The Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) have discussed with Prime Minister Sharif on a number of occasions the Government of Pakistan's efforts to tackle terrorism.

Prime Minister Sharif has pledged that his Government's counter terrorism activity is directed against all militant groups. The Pakistan authorities have publicly stated that that they intend to tackle terrorists of all hues without any discrimination. We continue to encourage Pakistan to ensure that it takes a comprehensive approach to dealing with terrorists.

The UK effort on counter-terrorism is supported by intensive diplomatic work, both bilaterally and multilaterally in concert with key partners such as the United States and the European Union. Collectively, we are working to support the development of strong institutions and machinery of Government in Pakistan to deliver a sustainable approach to countering terrorism and tackling all forms of terrorism.

Mr Jeffrey M. Donaldson:

[\[220051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the government of Pakistan on its response to the murder of school children in Peshawar.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), made clear at the time of this horrific attack that the UK stands shoulder to shoulder with the government and people of Pakistan in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. The Foreign Secretary has conveyed to Prime Minister Sharif that the UK stands ready to assist where we can. We will continue to work in partnership with Pakistan to tackle these challenges.

■ Private Military and Security Companies

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[219718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will detail the (a) number and (b) cost of contacts with private military companies in each year since 2008; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Lidington:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not contract with Private Military Companies. For details of FCO contracts with Private Security Companies, I refer the honourable Member to the answer I gave on 15 December 2014 to question 218225.

■ **Shaker Aamer**

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[219707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to expedite the release of Shaker Aamer from Guantanamo Bay.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Mr Aamer's case remains a high priority for the UK Government. Senior Members of the Government, including the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) and the Secretary of State for Defence my right hon. Friend the Member for Sevenoaks (Mr Fallon) continue to make clear to the US Government that we want Mr Aamer released and returned to the UK as a matter of urgency. However, any decision regarding Mr Aamer's release ultimately remains in the hands of the United States Government.

Caroline Lucas: [\[220001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to his counterpart in the US for Shaker Aamer to be among the prisoners expected to be released from Guantánamo Bay within the next two weeks.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Shaker Aamer's case remains a high priority for the UK Government, and Ministers and officials continue to make clear to the US that we want him released and returned to the UK as a matter of urgency.

■ **Turkey**

Mr Laurence Robertson: [\[220078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 218909, whether he plans to negotiate restrictions to prevent uncontrolled immigration to the UK from Turkey in the event of that country's accession to the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Lidington:

The UK has long been a strong supporter of enlargement of the EU as a driver of peace, prosperity and reform across our continent.

This Government remains a strong supporter of enlargement, including to Turkey, provided that candidate countries only join the EU when they have met in full all the conditions and standards for doing so. At the same time, we recognise that many across Europe have been concerned by the large-scale movement of people that has followed the accession of new countries to the EU and this issue needs to be addressed before any more members join. That is why HMG is pursuing the reform of transitional

arrangements on freedom of movement from future new Member States and is determined to see these reforms put in place before any further members are admitted to the EU.

HEALTH

■ Abortion

Jim Shannon:

[\[220087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what measures his Department has in place to monitor the health of women who have undergone termination of pregnancy.

Jane Ellison:

Clinical guidance issued by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG): *The Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion (November 2011)* recommends that on discharge, all women should be given a letter providing information regarding symptoms they may experience, also sufficient information to allow another practitioner elsewhere to manage any complications following the procedure. The RCOG guidance also states that there is no medical need for routine follow-up after surgical or medical abortion if successful abortion has been confirmed at the time of the procedure.

■ Accident and Emergency Departments

Frank Dobson:

[\[220028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of callers to (a) NHS Direct and (b) NHS 111 were (i) referred to hospital accident and emergency departments and (ii) sent to such departments by ambulance in each year from 2005-06.

Jane Ellison:

This information is not available in the format requested.

Around a quarter of calls to NHS Direct over the period 2007/08 to 2011/12 resulted in an emergency or urgent referral.

For the period 2011/12 – 2013/14, the proportion of calls triaged by NHS 111 which resulted in an ambulance being dispatched or the caller being recommended to attend accident and emergency (A&E) was 18.3%.

However, the figures on NHS Direct from NHS Direct's Annual Reports contain the percentages of urgent and emergency onward referrals; these comprise not just calls referred to A&E, but also to 999, and urgent primary care referrals. In the NHS 111 data collection published by NHS England, referrals to primary care are separate from A&E referrals and from ambulance dispatches. Therefore, the percentages for the two services cannot be directly compared.

The following table lists the proportion of calls to NHS Direct which have resulted in emergency and urgent referrals for each financial year from 2007/08 to 2012/13 1 .

PERIOD	% OF EMERGENCY AND URGENT REFERRALS
2007/08	28%
2008/09	24%
2009/10	26.4%
2010/11	24.9%
2011/12	27%
2012/13	34.7%

Source : NHS Direct National Health Service Trust, Annual Report & Accounts for financial years 2007/08 to 2012/13

The table below shows counts of NHS 111 calls where (i) callers are recommended to attend hospital accident and emergency departments, and (ii) an ambulance is dispatched 2 , from August 2010 to November 2014. The figures are averages from published monthly data.

	2010-11 (AUGUST 2010 – MARCH 2011)	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15 (APRIL 2014 – NOVEMBER 2014)
Calls offered	187,630	616,155	1,894,057	8,785,341	8,150,979
Calls where person triaged	112,388	425,815	1,254,339	7,064,219	6,565,416
Calls where A&E recommended	7,444	28,560	80,232	526,520	515,593
Of calls triaged, 6.6% proportion where A&E recommended		6.7%	6.4%	7.5%	7.9%
Calls where ambulance dispatched	13,618	54,145	151,014	756,768	720,656
Of calls triaged, 12.1% proportion where Ambulance		12.7%	12.0%	10.7%	11.0%

2010-11 (AUGUST 2010 – MARCH 2011)	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15 (APRIL 2014 – NOVEMBER 2014)
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dispatched

Source : NHS England – NHS 111 Minimum Data Set (
www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/category/statistics/nhs-111-statistics)

Notes

1. The NHS Direct National Health Service Trust, Annual Report & Accounts reports list the following Key Performance Indicators in the Appendix in describing how the measure was calculated.

KPI NAME	PURPOSE	DATA SOURCE	DEFINITION	CALCULATION
% Urgent and Emergency Onward Referrals	Value to Patients and NHS	Clinical Assessment System (CAS)	% of emergency and urgent referrals for Core calls only	(The number of calls referred to 999, A&E or PCS Urgent / Number of calls with clinical dispositions) x 100
111 Calls Requiring Onward or Urgent Emergency Referral	Measure Value to NHS	Pathways	Proportion of symptomatic calls referred to urgent & emergency care dispositions	999 + A&E + PCS urgent ÷ symptomatic calls

2. The proportions of calls where an ambulance is dispatched, and where the caller is referred to A&E, are calculated out of the number of calls triaged. The total number of calls offered includes calls which are answered but not triaged (such as callers following up previous calls, or seeking contact details for specific health services, or not wanting or not able to give details about the specific health condition, or where the patient recovers); along with calls which are abandoned before being answered.

3. Both NHS Direct and NHS 111 percentages in this answer are calculated as proportions of all calls with clinical dispositions, or in other words, all calls that are triaged.

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[220055\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will investigate the adequacy of the major incident plans at NHS hospitals in England and Wales and the ability of these plans to cope with the increased demand of A&E services in England over the last two months.

Jane Ellison:

The National Health Service (NHS) organisations' plans for responding to incidents that could impact on health or patient care must be in line with NHS England's guidance. The NHS has planned earlier than ever for this winter, and has plans in place everywhere to meet rising demand.

Luciana Berger:

[\[220064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the (a) mean and (b) median time to (i) assessment, (ii) treatment and (iii) departure was in (A) type 1 and (B) all A&E departments in each quarter since April 2011.

Jane Ellison:

The NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Hospital Episode Statistics measure accident and emergency (A&E) waiting times from arrival to assessment, treatment and departure. This information is shown in the attached table.

Data for 2013-14 are not yet available.

Attachments:

1. Mean/Median time-Assessment, treatment & departure [Mean & Median time- Assessment, treatment & departure 2011-13.doc]

■ **Ambulance Services: Greater London**

Jeremy Corbyn:

[\[219556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average time was that a patient spent receiving treatment in an ambulance in London in (a) 2010-11, (b) 2011-12, (c) 2012-13, (d) 2013-14 and (e) 2014-15 to date.

Jane Ellison:

The information is not available in the format requested.

Nick de Bois:

[\[219691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the performance of the London Ambulance Service between 1 September and 30 November 2014 in relation to Category A response time targets in (a) London and (b) Enfield.

Nick de Bois:

[\[219692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the performance of the London Ambulance Service in the year to 1 November 2014 in relation to Category A response time targets in (a) London and (b) Enfield; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Ellison:

[Holding answer 8 January 2015]: The NHS Trust Development Authority advise that London Ambulance Service has seen increases in demand, including in Enfield, and that this has put pressure on services. To address this, the Trust is already taking forward a number of measures.

We are giving a record £700 million package of support for the National Health Service in winter, including £15 million to the London Ambulance Service.

Official ambulance data are routinely published at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/ambulance-quality-indicators/>

■ Bladder Cancer

Andrew Gwynne: [\[219727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the NHS spent on (a) treatment and (b) aftercare for bladder cancer in each year since 2010.

Jane Ellison:

This information is not held centrally.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[219728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding his Department has provided to (a) government organisations and (b) non-governmental organisations for research into bladder cancer in each year since 2010.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) has funded bladder cancer research in these years in National Health Service organisations and higher education institutions. Expenditure through research programmes, research centres and units, and research fellowships is shown in the following table.

£ million

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6

Total spend by the NIHR on bladder cancer research is higher than this because expenditure by the NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) on this topic cannot be disaggregated from total CRN expenditure. Studies hosted by the CRN are funded by non-commercial partners including medical research charities and by industry.

■ Breast Cancer: Drugs

Dan Jarvis: [\[220083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 18 December 2014 to Question 218687, when his Department expects NICE to report on the feedback it receives from its associates network about progress made in and challenges of implementing the 2013 guidance on prevention of familial breast cancer; and whether that feedback will be published.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

We expect the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to report on the feedback it has received from its associates network at the roundtable event involving key stakeholders we are planning.

■ **Cancer: Ethnic Groups**

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[219751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what outcomes are expected from the refreshed Equality Delivery System in relation to reductions in inequalities among BME communities disproportionately affected by cancer.

Jane Ellison:

The refreshed Equality Delivery System (EDS2) is a tool designed to support National Health Service organisations, in discussion with local partners, including local communities, to review and improve their equality performance for characteristics given protection under the Equality Act 2010, and to select equality objectives and priorities for the organisation's next business period.

The equality objectives selected focus upon the most urgent challenges for the local NHS organisation. Indeed, if access to and experience of cancer services for local black, minority and ethnic (BME) communities, or cancer outcomes for the local BME communities, are the identified challenges, then these are likely to be the focus of the organisation's equality objectives and their immediate plans.

EDS2 helps NHS organisations to recognise that every patient has different needs and circumstances, and that we can best meet those needs by delivering a personal form of care.

In helping to facilitate the development of local interventions and actions to tackle trends of health inequities, such as poorer cancer outcomes amongst some BME communities, EDS2 can contribute towards the reduction of health inequalities between diverse population groups.

■ **Dermatology**

Sir Paul Beresford:

[\[220033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to curb excessive disparities in the cost of dispensing (a) dermatology and (b) non-dermatology preferred unlicensed dermatological preparations; and what steps he is taking to ensure that all pharmacies in England obtain a whole-of-market quote from manufacturers of such preparations, as is the case in Scotland.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Drug Tariff sets out what National Health Service dispensing contractors will be paid for the products supplied as part of providing pharmaceutical services and the fees for providing those services in primary care.

The current arrangements for paying for unlicensed medicines were introduced in 2011. These arrangements, unlike the ones for Scotland, do not require pharmacy contractors to obtain a whole-of-market quote from manufacturers. However, the Drug Tariff sets the price that the NHS pays to dispensing contractors for dispensing many of the most popular specials. Setting a reimbursement price, applied to all contractors, stops disparity of payment for these products and encourages dispensing contractors to obtain best value for the NHS, while also ensuring patients receive the medicines they need, when they need them. Due to the number of unlicensed medicines that can potentially be prescribed, it is not possible to list a reimbursement price for all available specials.

Where the reimbursement price of a product has not been set, dispensing contractors are paid according to how the product is sourced. Where a dispensing contractor buys the product from a specials manufacturer or an importing company, they must claim the invoice price of the pack size used to dispense the product minus any discounts or rebates received.

NHS England is responsible for commissioning pharmaceutical services in primary care and it is for NHS England to consider whether dispensing contractors have acted appropriately, including excessive claims for payment made by contractors. In addition, the General Pharmaceutical Council is responsible for regulating the pharmacy professions should there be any concerns of professional misconduct.

■ Ebola

Mr David Blunkett:

[\[219990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to his Statement of 5 January 2015, Official Report, columns 38-40, on UK Ebola preparedness, whether the eligibility for full access to NHS care will be retained by UK citizens working with aid agencies and international relief organisations outside the UK.

Jane Ellison:

United Kingdom citizens working with aid agencies and international relief organisations outside the UK, who remain ordinarily resident in the UK, will retain full entitlement to free NHS hospital treatment. For those not ordinarily resident in the UK, they will become so if they take up or resume settled residence in the UK, and will consequently be fully entitled again.

■ General Practitioners

Natascha Engel:

[\[219906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the level of GP (a) recruitment and (b) retention was in (a) Derbyshire and (b) England in (i) 2010 and (ii) on the latest date for which figures are available.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The information requested is not available.

The annual National Health Service General and Personal Medical Services workforce census, published by the Health and Social Care Information Centre, shows there were

36,294 full time equivalent general practitioners (GP's) working and training in the NHS in England as at 30 September 2013. This is an increase of 1,051 compared to the position in September 2010, the most recent figures after the General Election. The next census, reflecting the position in September 2014 will be published in March 2015.

The Government's mandate to Health Education England requires them to ensure that 50% of trainee doctors (currently 3,250 based on current forecasts) enter GP training programmes by 2016. This will enable further increases in the GP workforce across England.

■ General Practitioners: Greater Manchester

Mr David Crausby: [\[219874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patients registered with GPs in Greater Manchester in each of the last five years.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

Data on the numbers of patients registered with a general practitioner (GP) are published by health area rather than administrative area. The closest health area to Greater Manchester is that covered by NHS England's Greater Manchester Area Team. Data for all area teams have been published quarterly since April 2013 and are available here:

<http://www.hscic.gov.uk/article/2021/Website-Search?q=title%3A%22number+of+patients+registered+at+a+gp+practice%22&area=both>

Data as at April 2013 and 2014 is provided below.

YEAR	GREATER MANCHESTER AREA TEAM - TOTAL PATIENTS REGISTERED WITH A GP
2013	2,881,190
2014	2,903,292

Source: GP Payments system, Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC).

Prior to the National Health Service restructure of April 2013, health areas were based on strategic health authorities (SHA) and primary care trusts. Greater Manchester was part of the North West SHA, which is too large an area to provide comparable data with that given.

■ Health Services: Swindon

Justin Tomlinson: [\[220037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much funding his Department has provided for NHS services in Swindon in each year since 2010.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The information is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is in the following table:

Total operating revenue, split by revenue from patient care activities and other operating revenue for the financial years 2010-11 to 2013-14

	2010-11 £000	2011-12 £000	2012-13 £000	2013-14 £000
Revenue from Patient Care Activities	575,985	660,155	674,492	689,709
Other Operating Revenue	31,539	38,908	44,943	41,448
Total Operating Revenue	607,524	699,063	719,435	731,157

Source: Audited summarisation schedules of NHS Trusts, 2010-11 to 2013-14; Individually published accounts of Foundation Trusts 2010-11 to 2013-14

Notes :

We have interpreted "how much funding his Department has provided for NHS services" to mean the total operating revenue for those NHS trusts and foundation trusts (FTs) that are located in Swindon. These are shown in the table above; however they may also serve a wider geographical area than Swindon alone. The table covers Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, Great Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust and South West Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust.

In contrast to primary care trusts until 31 March 2013, and now NHS England and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), NHS trusts and FTs are not funded directly by the Secretary of State from sums voted by Parliament.

NHS trusts and FTs are semi-autonomous organisations whose income derives from the provision of services to commissioners through what might be described as trading activity.

The NHS trust and FT regimes have similarities to the regime for Government Trading Funds, where expenditure for Government activity is met from income from third parties, rather than direct funding from resources voted to the Department.

■ **Health Services: West Midlands**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[220053]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will allocate additional resources to alleviate the demand for accident and emergency and NHS walk-in centres services in (a) Coventry and (b) the West Midlands.

Jane Ellison:

This Government has given the National Health Service a record £700 million this winter for more doctors, nurses and beds. The NHS has ensured there are plans in every area to manage the extra demand.

From this, Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has received almost £5.9 million of winter pressures money. The Coventry and Rugby System Resilience Group has used the winter pressures money on a number of schemes to alleviate demand including enhanced senior seven-day clinical cover in Emergency Departments and Acute Medicine, and additional beds.

Across the West Midlands, CCGs were allocated approximately £70 million from the winter pressures monies. The money has been used to fund a variety of schemes including additional weekend pharmacy services and increasing the number of general practitioners in the NHS 111 call centre.

■ In Vitro Fertilisation**Robert Ffello:**[\[220096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the experiments recommended by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's expert review panel in the publications, Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception, published in April 2011, and Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception: update, published in March 2013, on epigenetic modifications and gene expression with a range of makers for blastocyst cell types or embryos derived from the maternal spindle transfer or pronuclear transfer technique therapies have been concluded; and in which peer-reviewed journal his Department plans to publish the findings of those experiments.

Robert Ffello:[\[220103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the experiments recommended by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's expert review panel in the publications, Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception, published in April 2011, and Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception: update, published in March 2013, on karyotype analysis and comparative genomic hybridisation and copy number variation arrays of embryos derived from the maternal spindle transfer and pronuclear transfer technique therapies have been concluded; and in which peer-reviewed journal his Department plans to publish the findings of those experiments.

Jane Ellison:

We are advised that good progress is being made with the experiments recommended by the Expert Panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) and that the scientists involved hope to be able to provide an update shortly.

The HFEA has advised that the following research has been completed for the Maternal Spindle Transfer technique:

- karyotype analysis and comparative genomic hybridisation/copy number variation arrays of embryos derived from maternal spindle transfer; and
- detailed analysis of epigenetic modifications and gene expression, with a range of markers for blastocyst cell types or embryos derived from maternal spindle transfer.

The results were published in Nature in 2013 and further details were provided, in supplementary information from Mitalipov et al, to the Expert Panel convened by the Authority.

At the time of writing the 2014 report, to the Panel's knowledge the relevant results relating to Pronuclear Transfer technique had not been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Robert Flello:

[\[220101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the experiments recommended by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's expert review panel in the publication, Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception, published April in 2011, on the use of maternal spindle transfer therapy on unfertilised human oocytes that have abnormal mitochondrial DNA has been concluded; and in which peer-reviewed journal his Department plans to make findings of those experiments available.

Jane Ellison:

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority has advised that in its 2014 report the Expert Panel concluded that the scientific justification for this set of experiments does not outweigh the ethical concerns about performing them. The Panel's reasoning for this was:

"Whilst it might be argued that it is useful to perform such a study, especially if any evidence arises to suggest a specific mtDNA mutation may have a replicative advantage, the panel recognises that it may be impractical to obtain sufficient numbers of oocytes or zygotes with mutant mtDNA for research."

At the time of writing the 2014 report, to the Panel's knowledge, this work had not been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Robert Flello:

[\[220102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the experiments recommended by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's expert review panel in the publication, Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception, published in April 2011, on the removal of the spindle or pronuclei and placing it back into the oocyte to show the effect of the maternal spindle transfer and pronuclear manipulation techniques has been concluded; and in which peer-reviewed journal his Department plans to publish the findings of those experiments.

Jane Ellison:

We are advised that good progress is being made with the experiments recommended by the Expert Panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) and that the scientists involved hope to be able to provide an update shortly.

The HFEA has advised that in their 2013 and 2014 reports the expert panel convened by the HFEA deemed these experiments to no longer be necessary, given the successful development to blastocyst stages after both Maternal Spindle Transfer (MST) and Pronuclear Transfer (PNT) with human oocytes and zygotes.

The Department does not routinely publish scientific research conducted independently by others.

Publications relating to the successful development to blastocyst stages after both MST and PNT with human oocytes and zygotes can be found in Nature.

Fiona Bruce: [\[220104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Written Statement WS132 of 17 December 2014 on mitochondrial donation, for what reasons serial nuclear transfer is precluded by the proposed regulations 3(c) and 6(c) which prevent any further alterations in the nuclear or mitochondrial DNA.

Jane Ellison:

Regulations 3 and 6 of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology (Mitochondrial Donation) Regulations 2015 enable eggs and embryos created following the Maternal Spindle Transfer and the Pro-Nuclear Transfer techniques to be "permitted" for used in treatment subject to certain conditions (set out in regulations 4 and 7). Specifically, regulations 3 (c) and 6 (c) provide that no further alteration can be made to the egg or embryo that is created following mitochondrial donation. The intention is to ensure that mitochondrial donation, as allowed in the regulations, is a specifically defined process by which unhealthy mitochondria is replaced by healthy mitochondria.

Fiona Bruce: [\[220108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Written Statement WS132 of 17 December 2014, on mitochondrial donation, what concerns were raised by the expert panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority regarding the possibility of carryover of a small percentage of abnormal mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) from the affected oocyte or zygote due to close associations between mtDNA and the karyoplast.

Fiona Bruce: [\[220129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Written Statement WS132 of 17 December 2014 on mitochondrial donation, whether the expert panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority regarding mitochondrial transfer found that no females born following spindle-chromosomal complex transfer or pronuclear transfer would ever transmit the disease to subsequent generations.

Jane Ellison:

The principle behind the treatment is that the mitochondrial DNA that the child will inherit will be the disease-free mitochondrial DNA of the donor, not the faulty mitochondrial DNA of their mother. Although there is a small possibility that a low level of unhealthy mitochondria may be carried over when the patient's nuclear DNA is moved from her egg or embryo to the donor's, evidence continues to be reassuring that carry-over after mitochondrial replacement is very low and unlikely to be problematic. Therefore, the risks of mitochondrial disease being present in the subsequent generation will be low.

Jim Shannon:[\[220114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will place in the Library the journal articles reporting the results of all the experiments recommended by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority for testing the safety of the maternal spindle transfer technique and the pronuclear transfer technique in the publications Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception, published in April 2011, and Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception: update, published in March 2013.

Jane Ellison:

All of the publications which the Expert Panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) referred to in its 2011 and 2013 reviews are listed in the 'evidence reviewed' annexes of the reports. The non-confidential evidence submissions, where there are no copyright issues, are also available on the HFEA website: <http://www.hfea.gov.uk/6372.html>

We are advised by the HFEA that the Expert Panel's scientific reviews do refer to both unpublished and peer reviewed published research. This has allowed the panel to take into account the very latest research on a confidential basis.

Where unpublished research was referred to in earlier reports by the Panel, it has later been published. For example, much of the work of Dr Shoukhrat Mitalipov's group (Oregon Health & Science University) discussed with the panel in confidence was subsequently published in 2013 and 2014:

- Tachibana M et al. Towards germline gene therapy of inherited mitochondrial diseases. Nature. 2013 Jan 31;493(7434):627-31.
- Tachibana M, et al. Human embryonic stem cells derived by somatic cell nuclear transfer. Cell 2013 6;1228–1238
- Mitalipov S et al. Limitations of preimplantation genetic diagnosis for mitochondrial DNA diseases. Cell Rep. 2014 May 22;7(4):935-7.

Robert Ffello:[\[220135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the outcome of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's (HFEAs) comparisons between the development of embryos generated by pronuclear transfer using normally-fertilised human oocytes and that of normal ICSI-fertilised human oocytes was; when and for what reasons those experiments were

originally deemed by the HFEA's expert review panel in the publication Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception, published in April 2011, to be critical before the technique could be assessed as safe to use clinically; and in which open access journal the relevant findings of that research were available immediately on publication following peer-review.

Jane Ellison:

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised that the outcomes of the Expert Panel's comparison, based on unpublished findings made available to the Panel, are outlined at paragraph 2.2.5 of the Panel's 2013 report and paragraph 3.4.3 of the Panel's 2014 report, which are available on the HFEA's website at:

<http://www.hfea.gov.uk/8806.html>

and

<http://www.hfea.gov.uk/8807.html>

The reasons for deeming "pronuclear transfer using normally-fertilised human oocytes and development compared to normal ICSI (Intracytoplasmic sperm injection)-fertilised human oocytes" to be critical are outlined at paragraph 4.2.4 of the 2011 report, which are available on the HFEA's website at:

<http://www.hfea.gov.uk/6372.html>

The Expert Panel convened by the HFEA first deemed this to be critical in April 2011, when this, its first report, was written.

As stated in the Panel's 2014 report "Experiments comparing PNT using normally-fertilised human oocytes with normal ICSI fertilised human oocytes appear to be well underway, but their results will need assessing before they can be incorporated into future recommendations." At the time of writing, to the Panel's knowledge the findings had not been published in an open access journal.

Jim Shannon:

[220138]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the experiments to test for heteroplasmy on primordial germ cells created from human embryonic stem cells derived from blastocysts created through maternal spindle transfer and pronuclear transfer where the oocytes had a variant or abnormal mitochondrial DNA recommended by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's expert panel in its publication Scientific review of the safety and efficacy of methods to avoid mitochondrial disease through assisted conception: update, published in March 2013, have been concluded; and in which peer reviewed journal he plans to publish the findings of that review.

Jane Ellison:

We are advised that good progress is being made with the experiments recommended by the Expert Panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) and that the scientists involved hope to be able to provide an update shortly.

The specific experiments to test for heteroplasmy on primordial cells are not part of the additional tests recommended by the Expert Panel convened by the HFEA.

The Department does not routinely publish scientific research conducted independently by others.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Fiona Bruce:

[\[220130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health to Lord Alton of Liverpool of 30 October 2014, if he will place in the Library a full copy of the correspondence between members of the expert panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and the Zhang research group referred to in that letter.

Jane Ellison:

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised that neither its members or executive have been in correspondence with the authors of the abstract referred to. However, a member of the Expert Panel convened by the HFEA had an email exchange with one of the authors regarding this abstract, which confirmed that the research group did not publish any further detail or follow up to this study. It would not be appropriate for a copy of this private correspondence to be placed in the Library.

■ **Musculoskeletal Disorders**

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[219732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to evaluate new models of care for musculoskeletal conditions.

Norman Lamb:

NHS England's National Clinical Director for musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions, Peter Kay, is working in partnership with the Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance, to develop new MSK clinical networks across England.

The project to date has been very successful so far in capturing examples of best practice in MSK care across England, bringing together health professionals and commissioners and building a strong consensus on the way forward for models of care for MSK patients across the entire MSK community. Work is ongoing in this area and will continue to be supported.

■ **NHS: Finance**

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[219729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance he has issued on what level at which the new marginal tariff payments proposed by NHS England for specialised services activity above a certain level should be set.

Jane Ellison:

Such guidance has not been issued. On 26 November 2014 NHS England and Monitor published their proposals for the 2015/16 National Tariff Payment System for consultation. The consultation closed on 24 December and Monitor and NHS England are now reviewing the consultation responses.

■ NHS: Innovation

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[219701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress his Department made in 2014 on implementing the objectives of the Innovation, Health and Wealth: Accelerating Adoption and Diffusion in the NHS report; and if he will make a statement.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

We are starting to see very encouraging signs of improvement in the uptake and use of innovation in the National Health Service. Both the Department and NHS England remain committed to driving improvements in health through developing, testing and spreading innovation across the health system. Key developments in 2014 include:

- The NICE Implementation Collaborative has continued to support faster and more consistent access to National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommended medicines, treatments and technologies. Significant increases in appropriate usage of drugs covered by this initiative have been demonstrated at a national level.
- The Innovation Scorecard demonstrates that the rate of uptake and utility of new medicines recommended by NICE has significantly increased, particularly for innovative treatments such as Novel Oral Anti-Coagulants (NOACs).

The Five Year Forward View builds on this progress. Through its publication and implementation NHS England and its partners have committed to driving improvements in health through developing, testing and spreading innovation across the health system.

■ Nurses

Jim Shannon: [\[219785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that (a) matron and senior nurse posts are filled and (b) such posts are advertised in the UK.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The responsibility of recruiting for nursing or any other National Health Service (NHS) profession sits with local employers and NHS England.

The Department and NHS England's Compassion in Practice, nursing strategy published in December 2012, has a dedicated work stream, which is ensuring that we have the right staff, with the right skills in the right place. This national work stream has set clear guidance for NHS provider Boards and commissioners regarding appropriate staffing levels. NHS Boards are required to sign off and publish evidence based staffing levels at

least every six months, providing assurance regarding the impact on quality of care and patient experience and publishing these for patients and the public. This work includes the recruitment of matrons and senior nurses as well as all staff at the clinical front line who are just as pivotal to the delivery of the kind of care we aspire to provide in any care setting at any time of the day or night.

To support nursing workforce requirements, Health Education England is running a campaign to encourage registered nurses who have left to come back to work for the NHS, and ensure that they have the most up to date knowledge and skills to provide high quality care.

In addition, we are investing £40 million through the NHS Leadership Academy, in leadership training for ward sisters, senior nurses and midwives.

■ Nurses: Recruitment

Ian Swales:

[\[219713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many nurses have been recruited by the NHS in England from (a) the UK, (b) other EU member states and (c) outside the EU in each of the last five years.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Department does not hold information on the number of nurses recruited by the National Health Service in England from the United Kingdom and other EU member states and outside the European Union in each of the last five years.

It is the responsibility of each NHS organisation to determine how many nurses it employs and from where these nurses are recruited.

The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), holds data on the nationality of staff working in the NHS as at 30 September 2013, the latest published data available. September data for the years 2009 to 2014 inclusive will be published, for the first time, by the HSCIC on 23 January.

The information as at September 2013 is set out in the table below:

HOSPITAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES: QUALIFIED NURSING, MIDWIFERY AND HEALTH VISITING STAFF, BY NATIONALITY

England	Headcount
British	269,390
Other EU	12,347
Rest of the World	27,792
Unknown	38,415

HOSPITAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES: QUALIFIED NURSING, MIDWIFERY AND HEALTH VISITING STAFF, BY NATIONALITY

Total 347,944

Notes:

These statistics relate to the contracted positions within English NHS organisations and may include those where the person assigned to the position is temporarily absent, for example on maternity leave.

Data Quality:

It should be noted that well over 100,000 staff do not have a specified nationality in the whole data set which included all staff so the figures above do not show the exact numbers of each nationality, but rather an indication of the numbers with known nationalities.

Source: Health and Social Care Information Centre, Provisional NHS Hospital and Community Health Service (HCHS) monthly workforce statistics.

■ **Nurses: Training**

Ian Swales: [\[219748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many nurses are being trained by the NHS.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The number of pre-registration nursing places (degree and diploma courses) that were filled as at 31 March 2014 was 17,568.

In December 2014, Health Education England published their Workforce Plan for England which includes their planned Education and Training Commissions for 2015/16.

■ **Ovarian Cancer**

Mr George Howarth: [\[219719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions his Department has had with NHS England on the implementation of BRCA1/2 gene testing for women recently diagnosed with non-mucinous ovarian cancer.

Mr George Howarth: [\[219720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to ensure that all women diagnosed with non-mucinous ovarian cancer are offered BRCA1/2 gene testing at the point of diagnosis.

Jane Ellison:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's (NICE) clinical guideline on familial breast cancer, published in June 2013, recommends that women with breast or

ovarian cancer should be offered genetic testing if their combined BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutation carrier possibility is 10% or more.

NICE clinical guidelines represent best practice and we expect National Health Service organisations in England to take them fully into account in designing services to meet the needs of their local populations. Clinical guidelines are not subject to the same statutory funding regulation as NICE's technology appraisals.

NHS England advises that moving to routine testing at a 10% risk threshold in England would require a significant capacity and funding investment. This would be for the increase needed in genetic testing and associated counselling, and also in other services such as diagnostics - more mammography for example - and other support and preventative treatments such as surgery.

However, NHS England is considering moving to a lower threshold as part of the annual prioritisation process for funding in 2015-16.

Departmental officials have raised this issue with NHS England and it will also be raised at a forthcoming Ministerial meeting.

■ Perinatal Mortality

Fiona Bruce:

[\[220131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average incidence was of stillbirths and linked infant deaths in England and Wales in which all of the twins or triplets from the same pregnancy that remained after foetal reduction in either the first trimester or early in the second trimester subsequently died in infancy or were stillborn in each of the last 10 years.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

This information is not collected centrally.

■ Primary Health Care

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[219731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to (a) promote self-management by patients with long-term conditions and (b) support healthcare professionals in the promotion of patient self-management.

Norman Lamb:

Through the Mandate we have asked NHS England to make our health service among the best in Europe at supporting people with long term conditions (LTCs) to live healthily and independently, with much better control over the care they receive.

NHS England and its partners are working towards the implementation of the House of Care model, which is designed to support the delivery of person-centred, coordinated care. This enables individuals to make informed decisions about their treatment and

empowers them to self-manage their LTCs in partnership with health and care professionals.

NHS England has published a House of Care Toolkit that brings together national guidance, published evidence, local case studies as well as information for patients and their carers. It includes information on what tools and resources are required to achieve person-centred coordinated care and how these can be effectively commissioned. The toolkit can be used by anyone involved in commissioning, providing or receiving LTC care and can be found at the following link:

www.nhs.uk/improvement-programmes/long-term-conditions-and-integrated-care/long-term-conditions-improvement-programme/house-of-care-toolkit.aspx

■ University Hospital Coventry

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[220054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations he or his Department has received on an increase in waiting times at the University Hospital in Coventry in the last two months.

Jane Ellison:

A search of the Department's Ministerial correspondence database identified two written representations received between 1 November 2014 and 9 January 2015 about waiting times at the University Hospital in Coventry.

HOME OFFICE

■ Abortion

Jim Shannon: [\[220086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many arrests have taken place outside abortion clinics for harassment in the last 12 months.

Mike Penning:

The Home Office does not hold this information.

■ Asylum: Syria

Gordon Banks: [\[219676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will review the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme to ensure that it is responsive to need.

Gordon Banks: [\[219677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many of the Syrian refugees so far resettled in the UK through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme are (a) principal applicants and (b) family dependents.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 8 January 2015]: The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation (VPR) scheme is designed to complement our humanitarian aid efforts and is based on need rather than fulfilling a quota. The scheme is designed to help particularly vulnerable Syrian refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis who cannot be supported effectively in the region, particularly survivors of torture and violence, women and children at risk and those in need of medical care. We are working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to identify the most vulnerable people displaced by the conflict and UNHCR are best placed to ensure that the corresponding referrals are responsive to need.

Of the 90 people granted Humanitarian Protection under the VPR scheme up to the end of September 2014, 23 are Principal Applicants and 67 are dependant family members.

Statistics on arrivals are published through our official statistics at quarterly intervals and no further details on the number of arrivals will be available until the next publication on 26 February, which will include numbers to the year ending December 2014. These will be available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

■ British Nationality

Mike Crockart: [\[219526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what external agencies are carrying out character enquiries on behalf of UK Visas and Immigration as part of the application process for British Citizenship; and what the (a) mean, (b) median and (c) longest time taken to complete such enquiries by each such agency was in the last year for which information is available.

James Brokenshire:

No external agencies currently carry out specific character enquiries on behalf of UK Visas and Immigration as part of the application process. UK Visas and Immigration routinely completes robust checks itself to inform its assessment of character, accessing information collated by other Government departments and agencies for their own purposes. No information is aggregated in national reporting systems to enable reporting on the time taken for these checks to be returned.

■ Conditions of Employment

Jessica Morden: [\[219932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many seasonal staff on zero hour contracts that were extended in October 2014 until March 2015 this week were given four weeks' notice on 12 November 2014 that their contract would be terminated.

Karen Bradley:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: The Home Office does not employ staff on zero hour contracts.

Border Force uses a seasonal workforce of temporary workers to assist with coverage at peak times, such as summer and Christmas. On 12 November 2014 Home Office recruitment wrote to 191 workers giving four weeks' notice that their current contracts would be ended on 12 December 2014.

■ Crime Prevention

Mr Steve Reed: [\[220070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many police officers were employed as crime prevention officers in each police force in England and Wales in (a) 2010 and (b) 2014.

Mike Penning:

All police officers are involved in crime prevention and this Government has been clear that the police should focus on cutting crime. Crime has fallen by more than a fifth since 2010, according to the Crime Survey for England and Wales. Figures specifically on the number of crime prevention officers are not collected by the Home Office.

The table provided contains statistics on the number and proportion of police officers in the community safety/relations and neighbourhoods functions categories, as at 31 March 2010 to 2014.

These figures will not necessarily cover all police officers assigned to crime prevention roles, and will contain some officers who are not directly involved in crime prevention. However, the functions provided are considered to be the closest to those requested.

As can be seen in the figures, the number of crime prevention officers, under this definition, in England and Wales has risen from 20,926 in 2010 to 25,098 in 2014. This represents an increase from 14.6% to 19.6% of total officers.

Attachments:

1. Number and proportion of police officers [PQ table_220070.xlsx]

■ English Language: Education

Steve McCabe: [\[219241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has undertaken any work with the Department for Education on the teaching of English to students for whom English is not their first language.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office believe that it is important that individuals seeking to study in the UK speak English in order to follow their proposed course of study.

Before this Government, there were no immigration checks on the English language ability of students. Visa officers were tied by restrictive 'points-based' criteria and Border Force officers were forced to admit students who could not speak English.

We introduced a requirement that students be able to speak English in August 2010. We formalised this and raised the bar in April 2011, increasing the standard to ensure

students studying in English could actually follow their course. In 2011 the Home Office introduced Secure English Language Tests (SELTs) for certain immigration routes.

The Department for Education has responsibility for teaching and learning for children in the early years and in primary schools as well as the teaching and learning for young people under the age of 19 years in secondary schools and in further education. Those who seek to study under the Tier 4 (children) route are exempt from English language requirements.

Given this the Home Office have not undertaken any work with the Department for Education on the teaching of English for students whose first language is not English.

■ Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

Mr David Hanson: [\[219092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will set and publish a maximum time limit by which she will place in the Library reports received by her Department from the Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office intends to lay reports by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration within eight weeks of receipt, taking account of Parliamentary recess as both Houses must be sitting for reports to be laid.

■ Legal Costs

Diana Johnson: [\[217472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department spent on (a) external legal advice and counsel and (b) internal legal services in each of the last four years.

Karen Bradley:

[Holding answer 10 December 2014]: Home Office Legal Costs, by financial year

Year Total £000s 2013-14 80,591 2012-13 65,436 2011-12 44,048 2010-11 39,485

Note On 1 October 2013, the Home Office legal branch transferred to the Treasury Solicitor's Department (as part of a wider consolidation of government legal services). Thus, all historic spend on the Home Office legal branch has been treated as external legal costs, to ensure that year-on-year figures are comparable.

This government has been working to remove the opportunities for abusive litigation in the immigration system. The Immigration Act 2014 has replaced the old multiple decision points with a single decision notice, cutting out the multiple opportunities to bring a legal challenge under the previous legislation. It also reduces the number of immigration decisions that can be appealed from 17 to 4, whilst introducing a quick and cost-effective system of Administrative Review to correct case-working errors – keeping unnecessary litigation out of the courts. It also makes more appeals non-suspensive, allowing us to deport certain harmful individuals before their appeals are heard if there is no risk of serious irreversible harm.

■ Prisoners: Dogs

Mr John Spellar: [\[220046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the cost to Police Forces in England and Wales of looking after dogs owned by people in prison or other custody in each of the last three years.

Mike Penning:

This information is not held centrally.

■ Radicalism

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[219167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) people and (b) children have been referred to the Channel anti-radicalisation programme since its inception; and how much that programme has cost to date.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[219168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department last conducted a review of the effectiveness of the Channel anti-radicalisation programme; and what form that review took.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 5 January 2015]: Since Channel was rolled out nationally in 2012, over 2000 people have been referred to the programme, and hundreds have been offered support.

For national security reasons, we do not publically provide the breakdown of police counter-terrorism spend by individual projects, capabilities, work streams or police force areas.

We continue to monitor and evaluate the Channel programme to ensure that it is as effective as it can be and that good practice is shared across the country. Placing the programme on a statutory footing will enshrine this good practice in legislation to secure local cooperation and delivery in all areas.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Consultants**

Mary Creagh: [\[219988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on consultants in each of the last five years; and which contracts with consultants have been worth more than £5 million.

Justine Greening:

DFID expenditure on Consultancy in the financial years 2009/10 to 2013/14 is provided in the table below:

YEAR	CONSULTANCY SPENDING £
2009-10	19.1m
2010-11	1.4m
2011-12	0.7m
2012-13	0.2m
2013-14	0.2m

No individual contracts with consultants have been worth more than £5 million.

■ Developing Countries: Overseas Investment

Mary Creagh: [\[220121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what income her Department has received from financial investments in developing countries in each of the last five years.

Justine Greening:

The only income DFID has received from developing countries is in relation to interest on sovereign debt, which is transferred to HM Treasury once received in line with HM Treasury Guidance. DFID has not received any income from financial investments in the past five years.

■ Green Climate Fund

Mary Creagh: [\[220115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of the UK's funding for the Green Climate Fund is drawn from the UK's International Climate Fund.

Justine Greening:

UK contributions to the Green Climate Fund will come from within the existing budget of the International Climate Fund in the current spending review period.

Mary Creagh: [\[220133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the total value is of her Department's funding for the Green Climate Fund; and what proportion of that funding is non-fiscal.

Justine Greening:

The UK has pledged up to £720m to the Green Climate Fund, which will come from both DFID and DECC budgets. The level and nature of each Department's contribution remains subject to Ministerial approval.

■ Overseas Aid

Mary Creagh: [\[220016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 219268, if she will list expenditure on each project of more than £5 million from her Department's Economic Development Strategy.

Justine Greening:

This information is not available in the form requested.

Mr Frank Field: [\[220111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will make it her policy in decisions on funding overseas aid to consider its effect on reducing immigration to the UK.

Justine Greening:

Countries experiencing instability or conflict are a key driver of migration worldwide and DFID remains on track to meet the UK's target of spending 30% of the UK's official development assistance in fragile and conflict-affected states in 2015.

■ Pakistan

Mr John Denham: [\[219960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of UK aid in countering terrorism in Pakistan and strengthening the Pakistani judiciary.

Justine Greening:

UK aid to Pakistan addresses the conditions that might engender violent extremism by reducing poverty, meeting basic needs, increasing economic opportunities and promoting inclusion. It supports the government to build an effective state which is more able to respond to violent extremism through strengthening democratic processes and institutions, delivering better services and improving access to justice.

■ Palestinians

Dan Jarvis: [\[220071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent (a) financial and (b) other assistance her Department has given for children in Palestine.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID funds the two main providers of health and education services for children in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; the Palestinian Authority and the UN Relief and Works Agency. In response to the trauma suffered by children following the summer's Gaza conflict we are also funding a range of health and psychosocial support initiatives for children in Gaza.

■ Pitcairn Islands

Meg Munn:

[\[220056\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 12 May 2014 to Question 198148, how much of the £2,809,462 provided to the Pitcairn Islands was allocated to each of the categories listed in that Answer.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID provides funds to the Pitcairn Islands in the form of budget aid. In 2013/14 the breakdown of how this was allocated was:

Shipping service £1,330,000

Child safeguarding £500,000

The remaining £980,000 was spent on maintaining the island's basic services as well as the costs associated with the running of Pitcairn Islands Office (PIO) in Auckland, New Zealand.

■ Public Expenditure

Mary Creagh:

[\[220113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of her Department's expenditure was (a) capital and (b) non-capital spending in each of the last five years.

Justine Greening:

The proportion of the Department for International Development's expenditure that was capital and non-capital in each of the last five years is set out in the table below.

YEAR	% CAPITAL	% NON CAPITAL
2009/10	19%	81%
2010/11	20%	80%
2011/12	21%	79%
2012/13	21%	79%
2013/14	19%	81%

■ Sierra Leone

Mary Creagh:

[\[219985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much funding her Department has transferred to the Ministry of Defence for (a) the deployment of the RFA Argus in Sierra Leone and (b) anti-Ebola measures and deployments in Sierra Leone.

Justine Greening:

The Department for International Development has transferred £28.8 million to the Ministry of Defence. Approximately half of this figure covered the deployment of RFA Argus and three Merlin helicopters.

The remainder has funded the construction and operation of six Ebola Treatments Centres and three laboratories, supported the establishment of the Ebola Training Academy, as well as strengthening national and district level capacity to deal with the Ebola crisis.

JUSTICE■ **Buildings****Valerie Vaz:**[\[214221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many buildings his Department sold in (a) 2010, (b) 2011, (c) 2012, (d) 2013 and (e) 2014.

Andrew Selous:

The Ministry of Justice is committed to reducing the cost of its estate. Where surplus property assets have been identified, the MoJ will dispose of them expeditiously and will always seek the best value for the taxpayer.

The number of buildings sold by the MoJ in each year since 2010 is provided below.

YEAR	NUMBER OF BUILDINGS SOLD
2010	106
2011	29
2012	70
2013	38
2014	62
Total	305

Note: figures exclude sales of land sites and numerous garages at various former prison sites.

The MoJ is also rationalising its estate through exiting properties on lease expiry or break option if earlier in accordance with Cabinet Office National Property Controls. Since the start of the Spending Review (SR10) the size of the MoJ estate has reduced by over 600 properties to less than 1,500 properties. As a result, lower business as usual costs have been achieved.

■ Courts: Fees and Charges

Mr Andy Slaughter:

[\[220084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the (a) gross and (b) net amount likely to be collected through the criminal courts charge in each of the next five financial years.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The Government believes that convicted adult offenders should pay towards the costs of running the criminal courts. Recovering some of the costs of the criminal courts from convicted offenders will reduce the burden on taxpayers of funding the courts system.

The estimates are set out in tables below. The estimates are based on draft charge levels that were published in July 2014. The charge levels are currently being finalised and so the forecast of the amounts we expect to collect may change.

Gross cash inflow

SCENARIO:	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Based on current fine payment rates	£5m	£75m	£100m	£105m	£105m
Based on income-based payment model (high scenario)	£15m	£75m	£105m	£135m	£160m

Net cash inflows

SCENARIO:	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Based on current fine payment rates	-£20m	£50m	£75m	£80m	£80m
Based on income-based payment model (high scenario)	-£10m	£50m	£80m	£110m	£135m

Figures in both tables are rounded to the nearest £5 million and are in real terms. They include a 20% adjustment for optimism bias.

Two separate approaches have been adopted to estimate future revenues from the charge. One approach (the fines-based model) is based on the current repayment rates of fines by offenders, while the other approach (income-based model) is based on data

on offenders' means. The two approaches allow us to consider different aspects of the impact of the charge. We have used two discrete models to allow cross-validation of the different models' estimates, and to provide a range for the revenue forecasts.

■ Courts: Hearing Impairment

Rehman Chishti: [\[219711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans his Department has to install fixed or mobile hearing enhancement systems in courts without such systems.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

HM Courts & Tribunals Service will make reasonable adjustments to ensure access to information and services for customers with disabilities.

Customers are advised to contact courts if a reasonable adjustment is required. However, we are looking further at the alternative arrangements in place at courts with no hearing systems to identify whether any improvements in provision would be helpful.

■ Crime: Victims

Philip Davies: [\[214195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what guidance his Department gives court users on the use of the term victim at the pre-conviction stage of a court case.

Mike Penning:

The Ministry of Justice has not issued guidance to court users on the use of the term 'victim'.

■ Criminal Proceedings: Veterans

Dan Jarvis: [\[220085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 25 November 2014 to Question 215243, how many times all members of the Advisory Committee to the Phillips Review met to discuss the report (a) before and (b) after it was submitted to the Secretary of State.

Mike Penning:

The Chair of the independent review of veterans in the criminal justice system, Stephen Phillips MP, formally met the Advisors to the review four times. A number of the advisors attended two stakeholder visits. They were also consulted on the text of the report.

Stephen Phillips QC MP submitted his completed review to the Secretary of State on the 5 of November 2014, and the members of the advisory committee did not meet subsequent to this.

The government published the review, the government response and two supporting analytical reports on the 21 December 2014.

■ Employment Tribunals Service

Mr Andy Slaughter:

[\[220109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the target for collection of employment tribunal fees was in each quarter since the introduction of such fees; what sum was collected in such fees; what the costs of such collection were; what value in such fees was waived under remission; what the cost of setting up the remission scheme was; and what overall net sum was received in such fees.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

There has not been a target for the collection of employment tribunal fees since the introduction of such fees. The impact assessment for the introduction of fees estimated that £10m of fee income would be generated annually. With new claim volumes reducing in 2013/14, HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) estimates fee income will be approximately £9m in 2014/15.

The fee income collected in each quarter since July 2013 is:

		2013/14				2014/15	
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2		
£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m		
Fees Collected	0	0.5	1.6	2.4	2.1	2.3	

It is not possible to separate out many costs of collection from the wider costs of employment tribunals, which have fallen in 2013/14 and 2014/15. The estimated running and support costs for administering the fee collection process in Employment Tribunals are shown below:

		2013/14				2014/15	
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2		
£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m		
Additional ongoing BAU Costs	0	0.0	0.0	0.4 ¹	0.3	0.3	

¹ In practice staff costs in 2013/14 would have been incurred before quarter 4 with the figures shown representing costs recorded to the relevant cost centres for the fee collection teams. All IT costs in 2013/14 are included in the set up costs described below.

It is not possible to disaggregate the cost of establishing new (and revising existing) IT systems to handle remission applications in the employment tribunals system, from that

work in relation to the systems for collecting fees. The figure provided below is a combined total.

The capital investment made by HMCTS in respect of IT systems to support the collection of fee receipts and remission applications across the employment tribunals system was £4.4m. A further £0.6m resource was spent on the project to implement fees giving a total £5.0m project cost.

HMCTS estimates that £8.9m of fee income was collected from July 2013 to the end of June 2014. The full cost of operating the employment tribunals for 2013/14 was £76.3m gross expenditure and £71.8m net of fee income, a reduction of £14.9m from the £86.7m full cost of operating the employment tribunals for the year 2012 /13.

The sum collected in relation to employment tribunal fees for the period 2013-2014 is available from financial information relating to fees and charges, published by HMCTS in its Annual Report and Accounts. The HMCTS Annual Report and Accounts for 2013-14 was published in June 2014 on the Ministry of Justice website and can be found at: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/corporate-reports/hmcts>.

For the period from April 2014 to 30 November 2014 HMCTS has received a gross total of £5.8m in employment tribunal fees of which £1.4m has been forgone in fee remission, leaving £4.4m in net fees.

I expect to be in a position to publish more detailed data on the number of remission applications made, and awards made, for the employment tribunals and Employment Appeal Tribunal in the Tribunal and Gender Recognition Certificate Statistics quarterly bulletin by the end of this financial year.

■ Judicial Review

Mr Andy Slaughter: [\[220082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what amount his Department has spent on legal fees in judicial review cases in which it was found to have acted unlawfully since 2010.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The Department does not keep a central record of the legal spend and the outcome in every judicial review brought against it or its associated bodies.

To bring together the information sought would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Police Cautions

Nick de Bois: [\[219657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he has taken to reduce the number of cautions issued since 2010.

Mike Penning:

The use of cautions is at its lowest point for 30 years and nearly half the level seen in 2007. The total number of cautions has decreased by 11% in the year ending June 2014

as compared to the previous 12 months. However, the Government is not complacent and wants to ensure that serious offences are always brought to court.

The Ministry of Justice carried out a review of simple cautions in early 2013, to examine the way in which simple cautions were being used and consider the need for any changes to policy or practice.

Following this review, the Ministry of Justice issued updated guidance in November 2013 on the process to be followed by the police when administering simple cautions for adult offenders. This placed limits on the circumstances in which a simple caution should be issued, particularly for serious offences. We have banned the use of simple cautions for possession of any offensive weapon (including a knife), supplying Class A drugs and a range of sexual offences against children, including child prostitution and pornography.

The Government is legislating in the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill to place further restrictions on the use of cautions for certain serious offences which will be set out in secondary legislation, as well as stopping their use for indictable only offences and repeat offenders (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

In 2013 we consulted on whether there is a need for more radical change in the out of court disposal framework, which includes simple cautions. After this, the Government announced plans to simplify the current range of disposals into two tiers: a suspended prosecution (based around the conditional caution) and a new statutory community resolution.

This new framework would remove the option of a simple caution and move away from a system of warnings and reprimands. It would give the police the power to tackle offending behaviour in a more effective way. Offenders would be required to take action to comply with the new disposals and face meaningful consequences if they failed to do so.

The proposed framework is being piloted in three police forces before a decision is taken on whether to roll them out across England and Wales.

■ Prison Service

Ian Lavery:

[\[214921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for how long on average a prison officer lives following retirement from the prison service.

Andrew Selous:

The Ministry of Justice does not hold information on the life expectancy of Prison Officers following retirement.

■ Social Security Benefits: Motherwell

Mr Frank Roy:

[\[214354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of applicants for personal independence payments in Motherwell and Wishaw constituency appealed their

personal independence payment decision between June 2013 and June 2014; and how many appeals were submitted for disability living allowance between June 2012 and June 2013.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The First-tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support), administered by HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS), hears appeals against Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) decisions on a range of benefits, including a person's entitlement to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

The number of individuals living in the Motherwell and Wishaw constituency who applied for PIP and the outcomes of those applications, between April 2013 and July 2014, can be found in published DWP statistics available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-independence-payment-april-2013-to-july-2014>.

HMCTS does not keep data on the proportion of benefit claimants who choose to appeal the DWP's final decision. In the period June 2013 to June 2014, 61 PIP appeals were lodged in the Tribunal venue in Hamilton which serves appellants living in the Motherwell and Wishaw constituency and other nearby locations.

Between June 2012 and June 2013 966 appeals against decisions made by DWP on claims for DLA were lodged at the Hamilton venue.

■ **Staff: Newport**

Jessica Morden: [\[220031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether Ministry of Justice Shared Services staff in Newport who have recently been transferred to Shared Services Connected Ltd are eligible for Stage 2 surplus status for redeployment within the Civil Service.

Jessica Morden: [\[220032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when eligibility for Stage 2 surplus status for redeployment within the Civil Service ends for staff employed at the Ministry of Justice Shared Services centre in Newport.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has negotiated to give MoJ staff who transferred to Shared Services Connected Limited under TUPE arrangements eligibility to apply for Civil Service roles via Civil Service Recruitment at Stage 2, as long as the recruiting departments sign up to the arrangement.

This arrangement will come to an end in May 2015.

Following a competitive process last year Shared Services Connected Limited were awarded a contract to provide HR, payroll and other services to more than 65,000 of our staff. This is a crucial move to modernise our aging back office functions that is planned to save taxpayers more than £100m over the next seven years.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Northern Ireland Government

Mr Ivan Lewis: [\[219116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, when she next plans to report to the House on progress in the all-party talks.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

I updated the House on the outcome of the cross-party talks, the Stormont House Agreement, on 7 January 2015.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS AUTHORITY

■ Peers: Allowances

Chris Ruane: [\[219352\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, how much has been spent in total on allowances for members of the House of Lords in each year since 2010.

Mr Charles Walker:

The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority is not responsible for the allowances of members of the House of Lords. The information requested is available on the parliamentary website at www.parliament.uk/business/lords/whos-in-the-house-of-lords/house-of-lords-expenses/.

TRANSPORT

■ Blue Badge Scheme: Kent

Rehman Chishti: [\[219710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many Blue Badges were issued in Kent in each year since 2008-09.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The table below shows the total number of valid Blue Badges issued in Kent in each financial year between 2008/09 and 2012/13.

VALID BLUE BADGES ISSUED: KENT, 2008/09 TO 2012/13*

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Valid Blue Badges issued	26,300	27,144	28,558	24,902	26,492

VALID BLUE BADGES ISSUED: KENT, 2008/09 TO 2012/13*

in Kent

* Issued between 1 April and 31 March

These results are published in table DIS0108, available at:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/265895/dis0108.xls

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Austin Mitchell: [219921]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent estimate he has made of the cost of constructing the High Speed 2 line to (a) Birmingham, (b) Manchester and (c) Leeds.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Spending Round 2013 set out a long-term funding envelope for HS2 Phase 1 (London to Birmingham) of £21.4bn (in 2011 prices). For Phase 2 (Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds) the envelope is £21.2bn (in 2011 prices), with a further £7.5bn (in 2011 prices) for rolling stock. This provides long-term certainty to the project.

In the Development Agreement signed between DfT and HS2 Ltd on the 8 th December 2014 (

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389368/HS2_development_agreement_December_2014_.pdf), HS2 Ltd has been set a Target Price for delivering Phase 1 of £19.34bn, including £3bn for rolling stock.

There is no equivalent Target Price for Phase Two yet.

■ London Bridge Station

Sir Nicholas Soames: [220081]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what notification he received from Network Rail or Southern Rail of potential problems with the re-opening of London Bridge station after Christmas 2014.

Claire Perry:

Officials from the Department were in touch with the team at Network Rail managing the London Bridge blockade throughout the 16 day closure, including during the weekend of 3 and 4 January. Testing of the new infrastructure commenced on 3 January. This testing identified some issues but these were resolved during 4 January. The blockade of the terminating platforms at London Bridge ended as planned on the evening of 4 January. The issues seen during the week of 5 January only emerged after the station had reopened on Monday 5 January.

During 5 January – and especially in the evening peak - it became clear that the new timetable was not as robust as the operators had expected, which lead to delays in the

train service and crowding on the concourse as passengers waited for trains. Delays were increased by a number of infrastructure failures on the network.

In response to these issues Network Rail and Southern have taken the following actions including:

Providing additional information screens to reduce crowding

Increasing the staff presence at the station

■ Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Mr Gordon Marsden:

[\[220038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many shifts were staffed below risk-assessed levels at (a) Liverpool and (b) Holyhead Maritime Rescue Co-ordination centres in (i) June 2013, (ii) December 2013, (iii) June 2014 and (iv) December 2014.

Mr Gordon Marsden:

[\[220039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many hours of shift time were staffed below risk-assessed levels at (a) Liverpool and (b) Holyhead Maritime Rescue Co-ordination centres in (i) June 2013, (ii) December 2013, (iii) June 2014 and (iv) December 2014.

Mr John Hayes:

Holyhead Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) transitioned into the new National Network as a Coastguard Operations Centre (CGOC) at the start of December 2014. Due to the flexibility offered by the new National Network the National Maritime Operations Centre and CGOCs do not have fixed geographic boundaries. Minimum manning levels and workload are managed at the network rather than individual centre level as is the case with MRCCs. Therefore no specific Holyhead data is available for December 2014.

Where there are specific issues at a MRCC, Her Majesty's Coastguard uses the current long established pairing arrangements between MRCCs. This enables each MRCC to be connected to at least one other MRCC which is available to provide mutual support.

These historic risk assessed watch level assessments at MRCCs err strongly on the side of caution. As each MRCC joins the evolving national network the number of Coastguards at any of the individual centres becomes less significant. The flexibility of the new arrangements means that it is more important to consider the number of Coastguards available on the growing network.

That said, based on the risk assessment which characterises the previous model, the number of shifts and hours Liverpool and Holyhead MRCCs were staffed at below risk assessed levels for the dates asked were as follows:

	MRCC	JUNE 13		DECEMBER 13		JUNE 14		DECEMBER 14
Shifts *	Hours *	Shifts *	Hours *	Shifts *	Hours *	Shifts *	Hours *	

	MRCC	JUNE 13		DECEMBER 13		JUNE 14		DECEMBER 14
Liverpool	26	312	15	180	27	324	21	252
Holyhead	10	120	0	0	17	204	n/a	n/a

* HM Coastguard undertake two shifts per day, each last 12 hours.

I have asked for a fresh appraisal of the relationship between the available levels of resource and need in the light of the benefit of the new structure.

Mr Gordon Marsden: [\[220040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff were employed at (a) Liverpool and (b) Holyhead Maritime Rescue Co-ordination centres in (i) June 2013, (ii) December 2013, (iii) June 2014 and (iv) December 2014.

Mr John Hayes:

The number of staff employed at Liverpool and Holyhead Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCC) for the dates asked is as follows:

MRCC	JUNE 2013	DECEMBER 2013	JUNE 2014	DECEMBER 2014
Liverpool	20	20	21	18
Holyhead	20	21	23	22

Mr Gordon Marsden: [\[220041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff transferred from Liverpool Maritime Rescue Co-ordination centre to Holyhead Maritime Rescue Co-ordination centre between January 2012 and January 2015.

Mr John Hayes:

Between January 2012 and January 2015 no members of staff transferred from Liverpool Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) to Holyhead MRCC.

Mr Gordon Marsden: [\[220042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many hours of training Holyhead staff have received from staff at the Liverpool Maritime Rescue Co-ordination centre on knowledge of the coastline currently covered by Liverpool Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre.

Mr John Hayes:

The sharing of knowledge of the Liverpool Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) area of operation to staff at Holyhead MRCC has been an inherent aspect of the long standing pairing arrangements between the two MRCCs that has been in place since 2006.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has predominantly focused on utilising these established arrangements to facilitate knowledge transfer and therefore details on the number of hours of training provided by Liverpool staff has not been recorded.

In preparation for the Liverpool area joining the national network pairing activities have included:

- Numerous occasions during 2014 where Holyhead staff have remotely either assisted with, or had total control of Liverpool operations to gain operational experience of the area;
- Holyhead staff carrying out watch keeping duties at Liverpool MRCC; and
- Holyhead staff having access to the updated 'Local Knowledge' questions and answers for the Liverpool area.

Additional to these pairing activities the new Operational Managers at Holyhead Coastguard Operations Centre have liaised with colleagues at Liverpool MRCC and met with emergency services stakeholders in the Liverpool area.

■ Midland Main Railway Line

Chris Williamson:

[\[219649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the timescale is for the procurement of electric rolling stock for the Midland Main Line; and whether the electrified Midland Main Line will have new electric rolling stock from the day of its opening.

Claire Perry:

The rail industry is currently finalising the programme for electrification of the Midland Main Line between London and Sheffield and the Department plans to procure electric trains to run on this route as part of the franchising process.

■ Railways: North of England

Austin Mitchell:

[\[219931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent estimate he has made of the potential cost of constructing a High Speed 3 line between Leeds and Manchester.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department is working with Transport for the North, Network Rail and HS2 Ltd to consider improving transport connectivity between cities and regions in the North of England; and new rail links between Manchester and Leeds forms part of this work. I would expect to be able to comment on the scope and the scale of possible investments within the next few months. However, candidate schemes in supporting the future growth and wellbeing of Northern economies must be both affordable and offer acceptable value for money.

■ Road Signs and Markings

Sir Greg Knight: [\[219201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the extent of worn and faint road markings on (a) zebra crossings and (b) elsewhere; and what assessment he has made of the effect of such markings on road safety.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The assessment of the condition of road markings including those for zebra crossings is a matter for individual local highway authorities.

The Department for Transport provides guidance for traffic authorities on the installation and maintenance of road markings in the Traffic Signs Manual and in Departmental Standards. Compliance with the latter is mandatory on the trunk road network, and constitutes good practice elsewhere.

However, traffic authorities must balance competing demands on their resources. In particular, severe weather imposes a heavy burden and emergency repair works can divert resources from carrying out routine maintenance operations, no matter how desirable. It would not be appropriate for central Government to interfere in authorities' freedom to decide how best to discharge their statutory duty to maintain the highways under their control.

■ Roads: Accidents

Justin Tomlinson: [\[220008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many drivers under the age of 24 were injured in a road accident in each of the last five years.

Justin Tomlinson: [\[220009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many drivers under the age of 24 were killed in a road accident in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The total number of drivers and riders of motorised vehicles (including motorcycle riders) aged under 24 who were a) killed or b) injured in road traffic accidents that were reported to the police between 2009 and 2013 are given in the table below.

YEAR	KILLED	INJURED
2009	254	29,078
2010	213	25,342
2011	191	24,207
2012	188	22,328
2013	191	20,003

These figures do not include any pedal cyclist, horse rider, pedestrian or vehicle passenger casualties.

TREASURY

■ Legal Aid Scheme

Stephen Barclay: [\[218833\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the savings from legal aid reform and legal aid transformation in 2014-15.

Priti Patel:

The Impact Assessment published at the time of Royal Assent of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 estimated that the savings associated with the Legal Aid Reforms would be £320m in 2014/15 and £360m in 2015/16. The Impact Assessment for Legal Aid Transformation showed steady state savings estimates, rather than how savings built up each year over time. Savings are expected to reach £215M per year by 2018-19.

■ Offshore Industry: Taxation

Tom Greatrex: [\[219708\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the value to the Exchequer of tax receipts on oil and gas extracted from the North Sea in each year since 1990.

Priti Patel:

Government revenues from UK oil and gas production for all years to 2013-14 are published by HMRC as National Statistics on the GOV.UK website, in Table 11.11, at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/306225/140424_Table_11_11.pdf

■ Taxation

Tom Greatrex: [\[219709\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the value of tax revenues, excluding those from oil and gas extracted from the North Sea, (a) Scotland, (b) England, (c) Wales, (d) Northern Ireland and (e) the UK for each year since 1990.

Priti Patel:

HMRC Tax Revenues by different tax type since 1999-00 from (a) Scotland, (b) England, (c) Wales, (d) Northern Ireland and (e) the UK are available and published on the GOV.UK website at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disaggregation-of-hmrc-tax-receipts>

Estimates are not available for earlier years.

■ Welfare Tax Credits**Mr Mike Weir:**[\[216201\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the number of cases in which officials engaged in verifying the eligibility of applicants for tax credits where issues relating to their single status were an issue did not provide information advising how single status could be established in the last 12 months.

Priti Patel:

During 2013-14 the total number of interventions carried out on single person tax credit claims with a suspicion of an undeclared partner was 140,923. HMRC amended 28,516 awards as a result of these investigations. HMRC do not hold data on the number of applicants who failed to provide information relating to their single status.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Attendance Allowance****Kate Green:**[\[219672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average time between claim and decision for attendance allowance was in each of the last four quarters.

Mr Mark Harper:

We do not hold official statistics on the time between claim and decision for attendance allowance which meet the standard required in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice.

■ Carer's Allowance**Kate Green:**[\[219671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average time between claim and decision for carer's allowance was in each of the last four quarters.

Mr Mark Harper:

We do not hold official statistics on the time between claim and decision for carer's allowance which meet the standard required in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice.

■ Correspondence**Cathy Jamieson:**[\[220136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many full-time equivalent staff worked on his Department's ministerial correspondence in each year since 2010.

Steve Webb:

Many staff across the Department spend a proportion of their time working on ministerial correspondence.

■ Driving: Safety

Meg Munn:

[220106]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Logistics Strategy Forum of the Health and Safety Executive has discussed driver fatigue.

Mr Mark Harper:

No. However, the Logistics Strategy Forum's predecessor, the Road Distribution Action Group, which represented trade associations, trades unions and other stakeholders, expressed concerns about fatigue and sleep disorders among drivers. Their work was taken up by the Department for Transport, which leads on driver health-related issues such as driver hours, medical fitness to drive and rest facilities at the roadside.

■ Funeral Payments

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[219706]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason the amount granted in Social Fund funeral payments has not risen for more than 10 years.

Steve Webb:

We are conscious of the rise in burial and cremation fees. That is why the Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment covers specified necessary costs. As these have increased in time, so has that portion of the overall Social Fund Funeral Payment. As such, the Government has protected these payments. The Social Fund Funeral Payment scheme continues to provide help towards a simple, respectful, low-cost funeral and the average funeral expenses payment in 2002/03 was £929 rising in 2013/14 to £1,347.

This Government has also extended the Social Fund Budgeting Loans scheme so that these are also available to those on income related benefits to help towards the costs relating to funeral expenses.

■ Independent Living Fund

Graham Jones:

[220029]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many disability organisations which responded to his Department's consultation on the closure of the Independent Living Fund (a) supported and (b) opposed non-ring-fenced funding.

Mr Mark Harper:

The consultation on the Future of the Independent Living Fund did not ask any specific questions in relation to the ring-fencing of future funding.

A summary of the consultation responses is available in the Government's response to the consultation published on GOV.UK

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/184115/future-of-ilf-response.pdf

Graham Jones: [\[220112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many disability organisations stated in their responses to the consultation on the future of the Independent Living Fund in 2012 that they were (a) supportive of and (b) opposed to the closure of the fund.

Mr Mark Harper:

Due to the nature of both the consultation and the responses, DWP undertook a qualitative rather than quantitative assessment of the responses received; statistical information as requested is therefore not available.

A summary of the consultation responses is available in the Government's response to the consultation published on GOV.UK

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/184115/future-of-ilf-response.pdf

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Cathy Jamieson: [\[220010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his Department's guidance is on recommended response times to correspondence to Ministers from hon. Members.

Steve Webb:

The Department for Work and Pensions aims to reply to 90 per cent of correspondence to Ministers from hon. Members within 20 working days.

Cathy Jamieson: [\[220011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average response time has been for each Minister in his Department to correspondence from hon. Members in each month of the last two years.

Cathy Jamieson: [\[220014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of the Minister for Disabled People's replies to correspondence from hon. Members have taken longer than (a) five, (b) 10, (c) 15 and (d) 20 working days in each month of the last two years.

Steve Webb:

The Cabinet Office publishes information on the performance of Departments and agencies on handling correspondence from hon. Members and peers annually by way of a written statement.

The information for the last two years that is available, 2012 and 2013, is in the Official Report 13 May 2013: Column 23WS and 13 May 2014: Column 17WS

■ **Personal Independence Payment: Kilmarnock**

Cathy Jamieson: [\[220004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claims for personal independence payments by residents of Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency have not been resolved within a six month period.

Mr Mark Harper:

Information on personal independence payment cases registered and cleared below national level has been published and is available in the data tables which accompany the most recent release of statistics on 17 December 2014:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-independence-payment-april-2013-to-october-2014>

The Department intends to release PIP clearance times and waiting/outstanding times statistics for the first time in March 2015, with the release pre-announced in line with UK Statistics Authority release protocols.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disability**Stephen Timms:**[\[219987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to Labour Market Statistics, December 2014, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the rise in the number of claimants of employment and support allowance and other incapacity benefits.

Mr Mark Harper:

The Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) caseload increased by 1,618,580 between May 2010 and May 2014: http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/100pc/esa/ccdate/esa_phase/a_carate_r_ccdate_c_esa_phase.html.

During this period we have been reassessing Incapacity Benefit claimants for ESA.

■ Telephone Services**Mike Kane:**[\[219754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his Department's policy is on using 0845 business rate telephone numbers for benefits claimants.

Esther McVey:

Calls to claim benefit by telephone are free as the Department uses 0800 free phone numbers for these lines. The use of 0845 numbers were inherited from previous Government and this Department has since introduced 0345 numbers, but will retain the 0845 prefixes for the time being given it can still cost less to call these numbers from some operators' packages.

Any charges that apply to these calls will be set by the customer's telephone or mobile operator. Charge variations will occur due to operator packages and individual price plans. We are aware of possible concerns about call charges to our enquiry lines so we will offer to call a customer back if concerns are raised over the cost of the call.

■ Universal Credit**Stephen Timms:**[\[219986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people work for the Universal Credit Digital Service; whether the number of those workers is below the planned number; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Harper:

The number of people working on the Universal Credit digital service is tracking very close to recruitment plans. We currently have 160 people working on service and system development and plan to have a final number of 210 in place by April 2015.

■ **Winter Fuel Payments****Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[220107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the reasons are for the inclusion of French Overseas Departments in the calculation of average temperature for France for the purposes of determining eligibility for winter fuel payments to UK citizens.

Steve Webb:

The French Government treats its French Overseas Departments (*departments d'outre mer* or DOMs) as integral parts of the French State and so they are not subject to any separate rules relating to the application of EU social security co-ordination.

Winter Fuel Payments are currently available to those entitled in the DOMs, and are not restricted to UK citizens but are available to all EU residents who have an entitlement to a UK Winter Fuel Payment.

The calculation of the average winter temperatures for Spain and Portugal also includes these countries' respective, relevant overseas territories, where the same EU social security coordination rules apply.

■ **Work Programme****Stephen Timms:**[\[219991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason the staff in his Department responsible for the Work Programme are divided between those dealing with contracting and those dealing with performance; and what assessment he has made of the effect of that division on his Department's efficiency.

Esther McVey:

Staff responsible for commercial and performance aspects of the Work Programme are part of the Department's Finance Group. Commercial staff work closely alongside Performance staff who focus their activities on further driving up performance with those suppliers. This approach allows greater flexibility and efficiency in deploying staff across the Department's portfolio of contracts. This approach fits with best practice endorsed by Cabinet Office.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

TREASURY

■ Publication of the January update on the development of the Pension Guidance Service

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr George Osborne):

[\[HCWS182\]](#)

At Budget 2014, the government announced a fundamental change to how people can access their pension savings. From April 2015, everyone with defined contribution pension savings, who is aged 55 and over, will be entitled to access their defined contribution pension savings as they wish, subject to their marginal rate of income tax.

In order to help consumers make confident and informed decisions on how they use their pension savings, everyone approaching such a decision will be entitled to free, fair and impartial guidance.

In response to the 'Freedom and Choice in Pensions' consultation on the changes, a team was established within HM Treasury to lead the creation of this guidance service. The government also committed to publish a progress update on the service design and implementation strategy.

The progress update, *Delivering Pensions Guidance: January 2015 Update*, is available on the GOV.UK website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/delivering-pensions-guidance-january-2015-update>

It includes:

- an announcement of the brand name and logo of the new guidance service;
- details of how interested potential users can register their interest in early access to the service and be part of piloting activities;
- an explanation of the service design, and how this will be delivered; and
- the estimated cost of the service in FY 15/16 of £35m, to be raised through an FCA levy. Costs will be confirmed in March 2015.