



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 9 December 2015 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:02 P.M., 09 December 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 **90000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Apprentices: Taxation

Nigel Adams:

[\[18522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what assessment he has made of the potential overlap between contributors to the construction industry training levy and the proposed employer apprenticeship levy; and what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the construction industry of that proposed levy in drawing up those proposals.

Nick Boles:

All employers with a pay bill greater than £3,000,000 will be in scope of the apprenticeships levy, including those in the construction and engineering construction sectors. We are working with the Industry Training Boards to understand how their existing arrangements will be affected. They will be consulting with their members in advance of the introduction of the apprenticeships levy on whether they should continue to pay the industry levy and if so, how it should be combined with the national apprenticeship levy. We are also working with other sectors, where there are existing collective training arrangements about what the apprenticeships levy means to them.

■ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: Labour Mobility

Louise Haigh:

[\[18333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many civil servants in his Department are in the redeployment pool.

Joseph Johnson:

The Department does not operate a redeployment pool.

■ Employment Tribunals Service: Costs

Caroline Lucas:

[\[12634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, pursuant to the Answer of 16 October 2015 to Question 10626, what estimate his Department has made of the average cost to a claimant, including tribunal fees, time spent on case, travel and communication, and advice and representation, of issuing and pursuing an employment tribunal claim.

Nick Boles:

For those on low incomes a remissions scheme exists allowing for partial or full remission fees paid.

	TYPE A CLAIMS (£)	TYPE B CLAIMS (£)
Issue fee	160	250
Hearing fee	230	950

The total cost to a claimant will vary depending on the length, complexity and outcome of the claim, and whether the claim goes to a tribunal hearing.

■ Further Education

Alex Cunningham: [\[17719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2015 to Question 16786, what estimate he has made of the (a) total, (b) staffing and (c) resources cost of conducting area-based reviews of post-16 education and training institutions.

Nick Boles:

The Departments and their agencies will undertake this work with no additional staffing. Additional costs will be minimal. The Departments and agencies have re-prioritised from within existing resources to accommodate the additional work, including providing access to additional advice and support from further education and six form colleges Advisers.

■ Higher Education: Admissions

Peter Kyle: [\[18779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what assessment he has made of the effect of recent changes to the student opportunity fund on the number of people from disadvantaged backgrounds entering higher education.

Peter Kyle: [\[18813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress his Department is making on doubling the proportion of people from disadvantaged backgrounds entering higher education by 2020.

Joseph Johnson:

We have taken significant steps to widen participation in higher education. In particular, from 2015/16, we have removed the cap on student numbers, enabling more people than ever before to benefit from higher education. We have also established a stronger framework with increased responsibility placed on providers to widen access. The Director of Fair Access has agreed 183 Access Agreements for 2016/17 containing an estimated £745m to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds – up from £404m in 2009/10.

The Green Paper *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, CM 9141 sets out additional steps the Government plans to take to increase the proportion of students from disadvantaged background entering higher

education including through the new guidance that we plan to issue to the Director of Fair Access, and through the social mobility taskforce being set up by Universities UK.

We will work with the Higher Education Funding Council for England to target the Student Opportunity Fund in the most effective way and with the Director of Fair Access to ensure that universities take more responsibility for widening access, prioritising activities that demonstrate the greatest value for money.

■ Investment: Treaties

Caroline Lucas:

[\[18402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, with reference to the statement by the EU Commission of 18 June 2015 on the termination of intra-EU bilateral investment treaties, to which such treaties the UK is a party; what steps the UK is taking to terminate such treaties to which it is a party; and if he will make a statement.

Anna Soubry:

The UK has bilateral investment treaties in force with twelve EU Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The UK is participating in discussions with the Commission and other Member States on possible options and approaches towards handling the Commission's request, regarding the termination of these treaties. These discussions are at an early stage and no consensus has been reached among Member States.

■ Iron and Steel: Redcar

Tom Blenkinsop:

[\[13273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, from what part of his Department's budget the support package for Redcar steelworkers will be funded.

Anna Soubry:

The support package will be funded through central budgets.

As part of this, we have agreed over £40 million of support following proposals put forward by the Task Force chaired by Amanda Skelton, including:

- £2.42 safety net fund, to support workers with short-term financial challenges;
- £2.65m skills funding to plug any gaps in skills provision not available via the Further Education Offer;
- £1.7m to help ensure that the fifty apprentices who were with SSI can continue their apprenticeships with alternative employers;
- £16.5m Jobs and Skills Fund to help local firms employ former SSI workers or their spouses in full-time or part-time jobs for a minimum of three years;
- £16m support for firms in the SSI supply chain and wider Tees Valley impacted by the Redcar steelworks closure, to safeguard jobs, provide the stimulus to create new posts and provide expert assistance to help them expand their business; and

- £750,000 to fund advice and grants to start up a new business.

All of the requests for spend in 2015/16 have been transferred from Government to the SSI Task Force, which is beginning to implement its planned programme of interventions. This is on top of the up to £3m that has been made available to four Further Education colleges in the region to support re-training activity, and redundancy and final salary payments of former SSI employees.

■ Iron and Steel: Redundancy

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[14187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what material and financial support his Department is providing to people made redundant in the steel industry; and if he will make a statement.

Anna Soubry:

In relation to SSI's closure in Redcar, I expect the majority of the fund announced on 2 October to go towards supporting training of former SSI workers and those in the supply chain, helping businesses to grow and create jobs, and the future of the Tees Valley economy more broadly. We are working with the local Task Force, chaired by Amanda Skelton, to shape these proposals and in total, we have agreed over £40 million of support aimed at skills and jobs creation:

- £3 million has been made available to four Further Education colleges in the region to support re-training activity, as well as a further £2.65m skills funding to plug any gaps in skills provision not available via the Further Education Offer;
- £1.7 million to ensure that the fifty apprentices who were with SSI can continue their apprenticeships with alternative employers;
- A £16.5 million Jobs and Skills Fund to help local firms employ former SSI workers or their spouses in full-time or part-time jobs for a minimum of three years;
- £16 million support for firms in the SSI supply chain and wider Tees Valley impacted by the Redcar steelworks closure, to safeguard jobs, provide the stimulus to create new posts and provide expert assistance to help them expand their business
- £750,000 to fund advice and grants to start up a new business.

In addition, we have announced a package, worth up to £9 million, jointly with Tata, to support Scunthorpe steelworkers, the local economy and supply chain. We are working closely with a local Task Force, chaired by my noble Friend Baroness Liz Redfern, to deliver this support.

■ Prisons: Education

Craig Whittaker: [\[18179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how much his Department spent on educational materials for prisons in 2014-15.

Nick Boles:

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills funds the Skills Funding Agency to administer and deliver education in the majority of adult prisons in England via the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS).

The OLASS budget for 2014-15 was £145.6m. This figure includes funding for the National Careers Service in custody. It excludes a number of private prisons where the operator is responsible for providing education under their contract with the National Offender Management Service.

The OLASS budget includes funding to cover the provision of educational materials. The costs of those materials are not collected separately.

■ Redundancy

Christian Matheson: [\[14280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what meetings he has had with (a) business and (b) trade union representatives on job losses in the (i) steel and (ii) energy efficiency, solar and low carbon heating industries since his appointment to his current position.

Anna Soubry:

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Ministers have held a number of discussions with UK steel companies, industry representatives and trade unions about the current challenges facing the sector.

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (DECC), her Ministers, and DECC officials have had a number of regular meetings and roundtables with external organisations within the energy sector, and will continue to do so, on a wide range of subjects including jobs and growth across different sectors.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[18495\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, on how many occasions a special adviser in his Department accompanied a Minister on an overseas trip since May 2015.

Matthew Hancock:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, civil servants, including special advisers, may routinely accompany their Ministers on official visits.

Information relating to Ministers' overseas visits are published on my Department's website, as part of the Government's wider transparency agenda.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the Ministerial Code.

■ Charities

Bob Blackman: [\[902473\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has to support charities during this Parliament.

Mr Rob Wilson:

In the last five years the number of registered charities has increased by over 2,000, and the sector's annual income has grown by over £10bn.

Looking ahead, the Government's priority is supporting a strong, independent, transparent and accountable voluntary sector. Plans will include a focus on outcomes based commissioning, restoring public trust in fundraising and strengthening the Charity Commission to protect charities from abuse through the Charities Bill.

■ Civil Servants

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[902481\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to improve the morale of staff within the civil service.

Matthew Hancock:

It should be a source of pride that the Civil Service has successfully changed the way it operates and become more efficient - it is now delivering far more, for less, than it did before 2010. It is a tribute to the dedication and work of individual Civil Servants that job satisfaction remains high and wellbeing has increased.

■ Civil Service: Industrial Relations

Callum McCaig: [\[902480\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the provisions in the Trade Union Bill on industrial relations within the civil service.

Matthew Hancock:

Modernising the law governing Trade Unions will improve industrial relations. We have already seen the benefits in the Civil Service of reforming facility time, where we have delivered a saving to the taxpayer of over £52million, and the majority of departments have removed the outdated system of collecting union dues by check off. These benefits will now be delivered across the public sector.

■ Freedom of Information

Margaret Ferrier: [\[902477\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has to bring forward legislative proposals to amend the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Matthew Hancock:

We are committed to the Freedom of Information Act. An independent commission was established to review the workings of the Act. The Government will consider the Commission's report when it is received.

■ Government Departments: Cost Effectiveness

Sir Simon Burns: [\[902475\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to implement efficiency savings across government departments.

Matthew Hancock:

In May 2010 the deficit between government revenue and public spending was the largest percentage of GDP of any developed country. As part of our long-term economic plan to ensure the country lives within its means, we took action to drive efficiency from day one.

By 2014/15 the Government had saved £18.6 billion through efficiency and reform, and tackling fraud, error and uncollected debt (against a 2009/10 baseline). At a very conservative estimate this is equivalent to £850 for each working household across Britain.

The £18.6 billion saving includes £6.1 billion by improving how government buys goods and services and £1.5 billion by transforming how government works, including putting services and transactions online and rationalising the government's property portfolio - releasing government land, by moving to shared property and using less office space, enables land to be released which can be put to better economic use.

■ Voluntary Work: Young People

Sir Oliver Heald: [\[902479\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that all young people who wish to participate in the National Citizen Service are able to do so.

Mr Rob Wilson:

We are committed to expanding NCS, which is why the Chancellor announced our ambition that 300,000 young people participate in NCS every year by 2019/20 so that they can learn new skills and give back to their communities.

We take great care to ensure that all young people, regardless of background, can take part, providing bursaries and additional support where necessary.

Martin Vickers:

[\[902482\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that all young people who wish to participate in the National Citizen Service are able to do so.

Mr Rob Wilson:

We are committed to expanding NCS, which is why the Chancellor announced our ambition that 300,000 young people participate in NCS every year by 2019/20 so that they can learn new skills and give back to their communities.

We take great care to ensure that all young people, regardless of background, can take part, providing bursaries and additional support where necessary.

■ Welsh Language

Glyn Davies:

[\[902478\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to ensure that the Welsh language is taken into account in his Department's policy development processes.

Matthew Hancock:

We expect all policy making to take account of the needs of all parts of the UK, including Wales, and continue to build up our policy making capability to do so. The government fully recognises the importance of the Welsh language in providing services to citizens. For Cabinet Office, the priority is to make sure that GOV.UK carries high quality Welsh content and to provide the tools for other parts of government to publish in both languages.

TREASURY

■ Civil Servants: Recruitment

Bill Wiggin:

[\[18697\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reasons HM Revenue and Customs co-ordinates the Fast Stream scheme for civil servants; and what role the Cabinet Office has in the development for future civil servants.

Bill Wiggin:

[\[18765\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many fast stream civil servants work for HM Revenue and Customs.

Mr David Gauke:

Civil Service Resourcing coordinates the Fast Stream for the Civil Service and manages all Fast Streamers on the central corporate schemes. Civil Service Resourcing is currently hosted by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), and reports to the Minister for the Cabinet Office on talent matters.

161 Fast Streamers currently work in HMRC.

■ Energy: Investment

Caroline Lucas:

[\[18272\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the Government's policy is on the appropriate percentage rate of return on investment for (a) schools and community groups investing in on-site solar power and (b) foreign state owned companies investing in new nuclear power in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

We want to attract cost-effective investment in infrastructure. Investors rightly expect a market rate of return and value for money is achieved through competition and careful negotiation. Individual project rates of return will differ to reflect, among other things, the risk profiles involved.

The Feed-in-Tariff scheme, for which schools and community groups are eligible to apply, aims to offer rates of return for solar installations between 4% and 8%. Returns for each installation will vary according to their individual costs and the amount of electricity generated and used on site. The Government's recently closed consultation on the scheme includes a review to ensure that tariffs are within this range, given the fall in costs of solar panels in recent years. It will detail its response to the consultation shortly.

We are unable to disclose the anticipated rate of return for new nuclear transactions as these are commercially sensitive.

■ Financial Services: City of London

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[18443\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to ensure that the status of the City of London as a world financial centre is explicitly protected during the renegotiations on the UK's membership of the EU.

Mr David Gauke:

As part of the European reform agenda the Government is negotiating ensure competitiveness is embedded in the DNA of the EU, so that the UK financial sector can continue to thrive as the global centre of European finance. The Government is also negotiating to ensure that the UK remains able to effectively safeguard the stability and integrity of the UK's financial system. This means ensuring that UK regulators have responsibility for financial stability and supervision in the UK.

The City of London does not, however, get special treatment in the Government's reform agenda. A special protection for the UK financial sector would not be in the interests of the single market in financial services, from which the UK benefits. Instead, we are demanding that the single market works in the interest of all 28 Member States.

Local Government: Urban Areas

John Pugh: [\[18403\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2015, whether the £30 million allocated to the City regions take the form of a cash grant from HM Treasury.

Greg Hands:

Investment fund allocations agreed as part of devolution deals will be paid out annually by the Department for Communities and Local Government as a cash grant, via Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003.

Motor Vehicles: Insurance

Andy Slaughter: [\[18274\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 1.143 of the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, if he will publish an impact assessment on his policy to lower motor insurance costs.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Justice will launch a public consultation in the New Year on the details of the policy.

Revenue and Customs: Staff

Chris Law: [\[18305\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of HM Revenue and Customs staff are employed to collect tax on small and medium-sized enterprises.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) allocates resources in a flexible manner to ensure that it meets individual business needs.

Information on the structure and organisation of HMRC is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmrcs-annual-report-and-accounts>

Revenue and Customs: West Yorkshire

Craig Whittaker: [\[18718\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on the local economy of the potential closure of HM Revenue and Customs offices in West Yorkshire.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has announced its plans to create a new regional centre in West Yorkshire, investing in up to 4,400 full time posts in the region. HMRC will be offering career opportunities to those from across the county in a range of the Department's professions and intends to partner with local colleges and universities to provide a pipeline of staff to work in its new centre. The Department's proposed changes will also save money for the taxpayers of West Yorkshire as HMRC's national estates costs will reduce by around £100 million a year by 2025.

Welfare Tax Credits**Rebecca Long Bailey:**[\[18553\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 1.122 of the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, what estimate his Department has made of the effect of reducing the income disregard on the household income of a tax credit claimant family with (a) two earners and two children, (b) one earner and two children, (c) two earners and one child and (d) one earner and one child whose income rose by £5,000 during the year.

Damian Hinds:

Reducing the income rise disregard to £2,500 brings forward some of the benefits of Universal Credit, so that tax credit entitlement reflects claimant's recent earnings. It makes the system fairer so claimants on similar incomes will receive similar awards. The effect of reducing the income rise disregard on a family claiming tax credits will depend on the household's income level before it increased.

Rebecca Long Bailey:[\[18558\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many tax credit claimant households benefited from the income rise disregard in each of the last five financial years.

Damian Hinds:

The number of families in receipt of Tax Credits who benefited from the income rise disregard for each of the last 5 financial years are available at the following publication locations:

- 2013/14: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-and-working-tax-credits-statistics-finalised-annual-awards-2012-to-2013>
- 2011/12: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-and-working-tax-credits-statistics-finalised-annual-awards-2011-to-2012>
- 2010/11 and 2009/10: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121103084242/http://hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/final-award-main.htm> Within each publication, the requested information is available on Table 3.7, shown by the total number of in-work recipient families with income increasing by up to the income disregard limit. When summing figures, totals may not align with those presented due to rounding.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Communities and Local Government: Ministerial Policy Advisers**

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[18496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, on how many occasions a special adviser in his Department accompanied a Minister on an overseas trip since May 2015.

Brandon Lewis:

Special Advisers have not undertaken any overseas trips with Ministers since May 2015.

■ EU Grants and Loans: Burnley

Julie Cooper: [\[18275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much Burnley received from the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund in each year from 2010 to 2015.

James Wharton:

The European Regional Development Fund during 2010 – 2015 has provided over £5 million in funding for Burnley.

The breakdown of European Regional Development Fund projects in Burnley are as follows;

- £3.8 million invested into Burnley Bridge Business Park. The Fund undertook activity to remediate the brownfield site, provide infrastructure and deliver a first phase of commercial development totalling 9,309 sqm.
- £940,000 invested into Weavers Triangle. The funding was allocated to support high quality civic and infrastructure work in a strategic area of Burnley.
- £500,000 invested into Princess Way Gateway for civic improvements linked to the Burnley Education and Enterprise Park.

In addition to the above direct capital investments, small and medium enterprises in Burnley have also benefitted from a number of business support projects operating at county and regional level. Not least the £7.8 million BOOST Lancashire Growth Hub of which the Fund has invested £3.4 million.

The European Social Fund was managed as a national programme by the Department for Work and Pensions over that period.

■ Fracking: Lancashire

Mark Menzies: [\[18301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, for what reasons he has decided to recover the planning appeals by Caudrilla Resources to build shale gas wells at Roseacre and Preston New Road.

James Wharton:

The reasons for the Secretary of State's decision are set out in his letter to parties. This makes clear that the drilling appeals involve proposals for exploring and developing shale gas which amount to proposals for development of major importance having more than local significance and proposals which raise important or novel issues of development control, and/ or legal difficulties.

■ Fracking: Planning Permission**Mark Menzies:**[\[18624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what his policy is on pausing planning applications to build shale gas wells until after the Environment Agency has completed its consultation and published guidance for onshore oil and gas operations in the UK.

James Wharton:

There is no policy to delay the determination of shale gas planning proposals pending the completion of the Environment Agency's consultation on their updated Onshore Oil and Gas Sector Guidance issued on 26 November.

The Government has in place a comprehensive regulatory framework for shale gas development. As part of this, the Environment Agency's views on schemes can be taken into account by local planning authorities, or by the Secretary of State where relevant, in the determination of planning proposals for shale gas development.

■ Planning Permission: Rural Areas**Seema Malhotra:**[\[18831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to the publication, Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting rural productivity, published in August 2015, when he plans that the fast-track planning certificate process will be available.

Brandon Lewis:

Our intention is to deliver an application route for permission in principle as soon as possible after receiving Royal Assent to the enabling powers in the Housing and Planning Bill and laying the associated secondary legislation on the detailed procedures.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Welsh Language****Nia Griffith:**[\[18756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what proportion of the forms on his Department's website is available in Welsh.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Department no longer has its own website. DCMS content can be accessed via GOV.UK. On GOV.UK you can carry out many actions in Welsh that are important to people in their day to day life, such as apply for car tax, register to vote, book driving theory and practical tests, access state pension details online and apply for a Blue Badge. It also gives government departments and other organisations which publish material on GOV.UK the ability to publish Welsh-language content in line with the requirements of their individual Welsh-speaking users.

■ **Digital Broadcasting**

Chi Onwurah: [\[18664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, for what reasons DTT platforms were excluded from the scope of his Department's balance of payments consultation.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government consulted on issues related to the must offer provision in the Communications Act in its consultation – 'The balance of payments between television platforms and public service broadcasters'. Analysis of responses is ongoing and the Government will publish a response in due course.

■ **FIFA**

Jim Shannon: [\[18218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will take steps to recover from Fifa the costs of England's 2018 World Cup bid.

Tracey Crouch:

It is a matter for the FA and local authorities to decide whether they have grounds to claim back any investment they made towards the cost of bidding for the Fifa 2018 World Cup.

■ **Public Service Broadcasting**

Chi Onwurah: [\[18665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of whether the must offer provision of the Communications Act 2003 is sufficient to ensure access to public service broadcast channels on non-discriminatory terms for all TV platforms.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government's consultation 'the balance of payments between television platforms and public service broadcasters' examined how the public service broadcasters' business models for the distribution for television content work. The focus of this consultation was on the commercial arrangements between broadcasters and PSB platforms - not subscription-free DTT platforms.

■ West Ham United Football Club

Tom Brake: [\[18941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has had discussions with the (a) London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) and (b) Mayor of London on releasing the LLDC West Ham United Football Club contract.

Tracey Crouch:

The contract relating to West Ham United Football Club's use of the Olympic Stadium is between the West Ham and the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC). Any decision regarding whether to release contract details is a matter for the LLDC.

DEFENCE

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[18228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many RAF fast jets were (a) operational and (b) being repaired in each month in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information is not available in the format requested. The number of aircraft available varies day-to-day according to normal fleet management activities.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[18229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 26 November 2015 to Question 17275, what estimate his Department has made of the number of qualified fast jet pilots that will be employed by the RAF in each of the next five years.

Penny Mordaunt:

The number of qualified fast jet pilots forecast to be in the Royal Air Force in each of the next five years is shown below, and includes both Regular and Reserve personnel.

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
640	620	600	570	560

■ Royal Fleet Auxiliary

Ian Mearns: [\[18692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 1.17 of the UK National Strategy for Maritime Security, published in May 2014, how many policy decisions in relation to the Royal Fleet Auxiliary have been taken to date by the ministerial working group on maritime security.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Ministerial Working Group has not made any policy decisions on the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA). The role of the RFA in providing logistic support to the Royal Navy (RN) is implicit within the support that the RN provides in delivering the National Strategy for Maritime Security.

Ian Mearns:[\[18695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will take steps to update the National Maritime Security Strategy to 2019 to include the Government's policy on the role of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Penny Mordaunt:

The National Strategy for Maritime Security was published in May 2014 and remains relevant to today's challenges in the maritime domain. However, as we implement the outcomes of the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, we will consider whether the strategy should be reviewed.

■ Syria: Military Intervention**Paul Flynn:**[\[18800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether it is planned that RAF pilots will rely upon information provided by personnel on the ground to identify and attack targets territory in Syria occupied by ISIS.

Penny Mordaunt:

The information used to identify and strike targets is derived from a number of different sources and assessed rigorously for compliance with UK rules of engagement, UK law and international law. It is not our practice to comment in detail on how specific operational targets are derived, as to do so would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

EDUCATION**■ Academies: Finance****Nic Dakin:**[\[18679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many academies in each local authority area were in deficit in each year since 2009-10; and what the total deficit was in academies in each such area in each of those years.

Nic Dakin:[\[18680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many academies were in deficit in each year since 2009-10; and what the total deficit was in academies in each such year.

Edward Timpson:

[Holding answer 8 December 2015]: The Department does not hold this information in the form requested. Academies are operated by the legal entity of academy trusts, many of which operate multiple academies across multiple local authorities. As such, it is not possible to give local authority figures.

■ Academies: Rural Areas

Seema Malhotra: [\[18643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools in rural areas rated by Ofsted as inadequate became academies in 2014-15.

Edward Timpson:

[Holding answer 8 December 2015]: In the academic year 2014/15, 33 academies were opened in rural locations, whose predecessor schools had been deemed 'inadequate' in Ofsted inspections prior to conversion.

■ Department for Education: Labour Mobility

Louise Haigh: [\[18337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many civil servants in her Department are in the redeployment pool.

Nick Gibb:

There are nine civil servants in the redeployment pool.

■ Faith Schools: Admissions

Heidi Allen: [\[18302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate her Department has made of the number of children who are refused admission to a state funded faith school on the grounds of differing faith or belief; and if she will work with schools and faith groups to facilitate inclusive admission policies in all state funded schools.

Edward Timpson:

The department does not collect data on the reasons why individual applicants are refused a place to particular schools.

It is for the relevant admission authority of a school designated with a religious character to decide whether or not to adopt faith-based oversubscription criteria. Not all schools with a faith designation choose to allocate places by faith. Some choose to allocate only a proportion of their places on the basis of faith. Where they have places available, schools with a faith designation must admit all children who apply, without reference to faith.

The government is committed to ensuring that new faith-designated academies and free schools provide additional places not just for pupils of their own faith, but also for other local children regardless of their faith. New provision academies and free schools with a faith designation must give priority to at least 50 per cent of their intake without reference to faith, where they are oversubscribed.

■ GCE A-level: GCE AS-level

Daniel Zeichner: [\[18452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information she holds on the proportion of A Level students who have chosen to take an AS Level in 2015-16 under the reformed AS Level and A Level system.

Nick Gibb:

The information requested will not be held by the Department for Education until autumn 2016. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) will publish information on AS level exam entries and results in August 2016. The department will publish this information for the first time in the provisional "A level and other level 3 results" statistical first release in autumn 2016.

■ Regional School Commissioners

Lucy Powell: [\[18684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, who the Regional School Commissioners are; how many schools are located in each of the regions for which they are responsible; and how many schools in their area each commissioner has not visited since taking up that role.

Edward Timpson:

[Holding answer 8 December 2015]: There are eight Regional Schools Commissioners. Profiles on each commissioner are published online:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/schools-commissioners-group/about/our-governance>.

Regional Schools Commissioners have responsibility for a region. The commissioners are: Sir David Carter (South West England); Dominic Herrington (South England and South East London); Martin Post (South Central England and North West London); Dr Tim Coulson (East of England and North East London); Pank Patel (West Midlands); Jennifer Bexon-Smith (East Midlands and the Humber); Victoria Beer (Lancashire and West Yorkshire); and Janet Renou (North of England).

The number of schools in each region is listed in the table below. This number is the number of free schools, studio schools, University Technical Colleges, academies and local authority maintained schools.

REGION	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
South West England	2331
South England and South East London	3297
South Central England and North West London	2982
East of England and North East London	2376
West Midlands	2671
East Midlands and the Humber	2667
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	3389
North of England	1816

We do not hold data on the number of schools in each region which have not been visited by the Regional Schools Commissioner. Regional Schools Commissioners are responsible for approving new academies, intervening in underperforming academies and free schools in their area, and matching underperforming maintained schools with a strong academy sponsor.

■ Schools: Religion

Mr Mark Hendrick:

[18688]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance her Department has issued to schools on meetings for prayer or religious instruction for pupils during break times.

Edward Timpson:

Collective worship plays an important role in schools. It encourages children to reflect on belief, and helps shape fundamental British values of tolerance, respect and understanding for others. Parents can choose to withdraw their children from all or any part of collective worship.

The Department does not issue guidance to schools specifically on the provision of meetings for prayer or religious instruction for pupils during break times.

The Department does publish guidance on collective worship; it is for governing bodies to decide how best to meet the requirements of that guidance and the relevant legislation, which can be found online at GOV.UK:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281929/Collective_worship_in_schools.pdf

■ Schools: West Sussex

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[17714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the cost of backlog maintenance in the school estate in West Sussex; and if she will make a statement

Edward Timpson:

The department has collected information on the condition of the school estate through the Property Data Survey (PDS). It provides a relative view of the issues in addressing different types of condition need.

A PDS Programme summary report was produced in January 2015 and is available to view on GOV.UK. The report summarises the condition need for the school estate regionally, by phase and building type.

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[17824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools in West Sussex were built (a) prior to 1870, (b) between 1870 and 1914, (c) between 1919 and 1939 and (d) post-1945.

Edward Timpson:

Information on the age of school blocks was collected through the Property Data Survey (PDS) and the categories used to define the age of blocks were Pre 1919, Inter War, 1945 to 1966, 1967 to 1976, post 1976 and temporary premises.

The PDS collected data on 244 schools in West Sussex and in response to the question we can confirm:

(a) and (b) The PDS did not identify blocks built prior to 1870 or between 1870 and 1914 therefore we do not have this information. However we did identify buildings built prior to 1919 and can confirm that there are 21 schools in West Sussex in which all blocks on site were constructed before 1919.

(c) The PDS collected information on blocks constructed between 1919 and 1939 and we can confirm that there are 4 schools in West Sussex in which all blocks were constructed during this time.

(d) The PDS collected information on blocks built since 1945 and we can confirm that there are 163 schools in which all blocks have been constructed since then.

Of the remaining 56 schools that were surveyed through the PDS, these schools comprise of blocks of mixed age across each of the categories listed within (a) and (b), (c) and (d).

The PDS excluded all schools that were deemed to be modernised (rebuilt or refurbished since 2004), part of a PFI agreement or planned to be renewed or rebuilt under central capital programmes, therefore the above data excludes schools within these categories in West Sussex.

■ Spanish Language

Graham Stuart: [\[18795\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans the Government has to increase the number of students studying Spanish in schools.

Nick Gibb:

Since September 2014, maintained primary schools in England must teach a modern or ancient foreign language to pupils at key stage 2 (ages 7 to 11). According to the annual language trends surveys conducted by the Centre for British Teachers, 20 per cent of primary schools taught Spanish in 2014, up from 16 per cent in 2012. In order to support the new curriculum, the government is funding nine projects across the country providing continued professional development for primary and secondary teachers, including training and resources for the teaching of Spanish.

The government took action in 2010 to halt the decline in the number of school children taking language GCSEs by introducing the English Baccalaureate. This has had a positive effect on the take up of languages in schools. The proportion of the cohort in state funded schools entered for a modern foreign language has risen from 40 per cent in 2010 to 49 per cent in 2015. Over the same period, there has been a 46 per cent rise in the number of entries for Spanish GCSE in schools in England.

The government's goal is that, in time, at least 90 per cent of pupils enter GCSEs in the EBacc subjects of English, maths, science, humanities and languages.

■ Spanish Language: GCSE

Graham Stuart: [\[18794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many pupils took a GCSE in Spanish in each of the last 10 years.

Nick Gibb:

Information on the total entries for GCSEs in Spanish is published at national level as part of the "GCSE and equivalent results in England" statistical first release [1],[2],[3],[4],[5]

[1] 2014/15 provisional table can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/467610/SFR37_2015_Subject_Timeseries.xls. (Years: 2009/10 - 2014/15)

[2] 2008/09 revised table 8 can be found at:

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151655/http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/statistics/allstatistics/a00196306/ks4-results-in-england-2008-09-\(revised\)](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151655/http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/statistics/allstatistics/a00196306/ks4-results-in-england-2008-09-(revised)). (Year: 2008/09)

[3] 2007/08 revised table 10 can be found at:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151655/http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/statistics/allstatistics/a00195931/gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england>. (Year: 2007/08)

[4] 2006/07 revised table 10 can be found at:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151655/http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/statistics/allstatistics/a00195692/dcsf-gcse-and-equivalent-examination-results-in-en>. (Year: 2006/07)

[5] 2005/06 revised table 10 can be found at:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151655/http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/statistics/allstatistics/a00195387/gcse-and-equivalent-examination-results-in-england>. (Year: 2005/06)

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ Climate Change Convention: Paris

Paul Flynn:

[18545]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform Communiqué presented by the New Zealand Prime Minister John Key on behalf of the Prince of Wales' Corporate Leaders' Group to Christina Figueres, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, at COP 21 in Paris on 30 November 2015.

Andrea Leadsom:

The UK is a co-signatory to the Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform Communiqué. As that document covers, significant subsidy reform can help deliver major reform of global energy usage which limits global temperature rises.

The fall in the oil price over the last eighteen months creates a moment of opportunity for action around the world to reduce subsidies. The communiqué calls for clear communication and increased ambition. We support those goals. We will continue to lobby Governments overseas and support activity to make the most of this opportunity to implement meaningful reform. Doing so will enhance both UK and wider energy security, reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, and free up funds that Governments could use to tackle other challenges.

■ Climate Change: International Cooperation

Caroline Lucas:

[18468]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what information she holds on the number of countries calling for a commitment to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees; what the Government's policy is on limiting the long-term global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

A number of countries are calling for a commitment to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees, most notably through a new group called the Climate Vulnerables

Forum. The Government supports the 'below 2 degrees' objective, and recognises the need to keep the temperature rise as low as possible below 2C, including the possibility of staying below 1.5 degrees. We are pushing for the highest possible mitigation ambition in the new agreement.

■ **Department of Energy and Climate Change: Ministerial Policy Advisers**

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[18500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, on how many occasions a special adviser in her Department accompanied a Minister on an overseas trip since May 2015.

Andrea Leadsom:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has been accompanied by special advisers on three overseas trips since May 2015.

■ **Energy: India**

Andrew Bingham: [\[18450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if she will make representations to the Indian government on ways in which the UK can assist India in moving to use cleaner sources of energy.

Andrea Leadsom:

The UK and India have a strong collaboration in clean energy and this was reflected in our recent joint statement on energy and climate change released during PM Modi's visit to the UK (12-14 November):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-india-joint-statement-on-energy-and-climate-change>.

DECC, along with other government departments, will be working closely with the Government of India to implement the large number of initiatives detailed in the statement along with ongoing collaboration in clean energy, as well as following up on initiatives announced at the Paris Conference on climate change (COP21) such as Mission Innovation and the International Solar Alliance.

■ **Environment Protection: Taxation**

Paul Flynn: [\[18546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies on climate change of the recently published report by the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition, entitled Executive Guide to Carbon Pricing Leadership.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government welcomes the report produced by the World Bank's Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition and its aim to encourage businesses to take up carbon pricing initiatives. The UK is strongly committed to carbon pricing as a policy tool to allow carbon emissions to be reduced at least cost. The Government has encouraged

businesses to recognise the cost of carbon in decision-making by pressing for reforms to strengthen the EU Emissions Trading System as well as pursuing other market-based policy approaches. We also support other countries to develop pricing models through our international outreach and projects.

■ Fossil Fuels

Caroline Lucas:

[18270]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what estimate she has made of the proportion of existing fossil fuel reserves that are (a) unburnable under a scenario of keeping temperature increases to below two degrees C and (b) unburnable; and what her policy is on the proportion of primary energy supply (i) in the UK, (ii) globally that should come from oil and gas in (A) 2030 and (B) 2050; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

The International Energy Agency has suggested that around a third of global fossil fuel reserves are burnable under a 2°C scenario.

In the UK, we are committed to implementing the Wood Review recommendations to maximise economic recovery of oil and gas in a way that is compatible with our climate change targets. Maximising recovery both in terms of increasing efficiency of production, as well as increasing levels of production of the UK's oil and gas, will help maintain security of supply as well as boost growth and jobs.

This Government remains committed to the Climate Change Act and to meeting our climate change target of an 80% emissions reduction by 2050. This will mean reducing the amount of fossil fuels we use – through improved energy efficiency and increased supplies of low carbon energy - as well as reducing other sources of emissions. As part of our efforts to reduce emissions I have already announced that the Government will consult on proposals to end coal power generation by 2025 and restrict its use from 2023.

■ Renewable Energy: Foreign Companies

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[18517]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, which energy companies have received public funding for renewable contracts and have contracted supply chain work to overseas companies.

Andrea Leadsom:

Energy companies accredited under the Renewables Obligation are recorded in Ofgem's Renewables and CHP register:

<https://www.renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk/>.

Whilst the award of supply chain contracts is a matter of commercial negotiation for the companies in question, UK content in the supply chain is important to this Government, and my Department takes steps to maximise it. For example, DECC, together with UKTI and BIS, works closely with each offshore wind farm developer to ensure that UK companies are able to bid for contracts in an open and fair competition process.

■ Renewable Energy: Heating

Callum McCaig:

[18821]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what forecast her Department has made of the level of potential underspend on the (a) domestic and (b) non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive in 2015-16.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) does not operate under separate budgets for the domestic and non-domestic schemes. For 2015/16 it has a single budget limit of £430m for both schemes combined. This is a spending limit, not a central forecast; and the scheme is not deemed to have 'underspent' if expenditure is below that limit. The central spend forecast for 2015/16 that was set out at the time the £430m budget limit was agreed (as part of the 2013 Spending Round) was £365m.

DECC does not regularly publish forecast expenditure for financial years; instead publishing monthly data on 'committed expenditure' – the estimated costs of supporting all plants applied to the scheme for a rolling 12-month cycle.

However, as part of the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review, the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) have published a forecast of £420m for 15/16:

<http://budgetresponsibility.org.uk/supplementary-forecast-information/>.

This is still subject to considerable uncertainty, as the scheme is largely paid on metered heat; and so final expenditure will be determined by the level of heat generation this winter, as well as rates of new applications.

■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Huw Irranca-Davies:

[18670]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when she plans to publish details of how her Department plans to reform the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme to make the savings announced in the Autumn Statement 2015.

Andrea Leadsom:

Officials have begun discussions with stakeholders, and we plan to consult on the changes in the New Year.

Huw Irranca-Davies: [\[18671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, whether it is her policy that anaerobic digestion will continue to be supported under the reformed Renewable Heat Incentive scheme.

Andrea Leadsom:

We are still at an early stage in the process of reforming the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI). Therefore, I am unable to make specific commitments as to the future shape of the scheme at this point.

However, Ofgem will continue to run the RHI under the current rules, while we consider reform of the scheme.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Dr Liam Fox: [\[18780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of single farm payment and basic payment claims to the Rural Payments Agency are outstanding.

Dr Liam Fox: [\[18781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the payment window for the single farm payment and basic payment will open.

George Eustice:

The payment window for the Basic Payment Scheme 2015 runs between 1st December 2015 and 30th June 2016.

We received around 88,000 Basic Payment Scheme applications for 2015. On the 1st December, the opening of the Basic Payment Scheme 2015 payment window, we paid around 33,000 claims. This means that, as a proportion, around 62% of claims are still being processed.

■ Antibiotics

Crispin Blunt: [\[18673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with veterinary experts on the use of colistin and colistin resistance in animals, food and humans.

George Eustice:

I discussed the issue of colistin resistance on 1 December with the Chief Executive of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate following the publication of a report on the issue in relation to China.

In November, the UK Government attended an EU workshop on the impact on public health and animal health of the use of antibiotics in animals, which included the use of

colistin. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate has also held initial discussions on the use of colistin and colistin resistance with other experts across government, including the Food Standards Agency, Department of Health and Public Health England, and key industry bodies.

■ Birds: Conservation

Alex Cunningham:

[\[18457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what financial support her Department has provided to (a) the Convention on Migratory Species and (b) the Preventing Poisoning Working Group of the Convention on Migratory Species in the last five years; and what her policy is on continuing financial support to these organisations.

Rory Stewart:

The UK has paid £1,261,317 in subscriptions to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) between 2011 and 2015.

The UK provided £25,000 towards the Preventing Poisoning Working Group in 2012.

With the Spending Review concluded, Defra is now looking at what this settlement means in terms of the detailed allocation of its budgets, including the future funding of the CMS.

■ Climate Change

Caroline Lucas:

[\[18280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what projection she has made of a global temperature increases by (a) 2050 and (b) 2100 caused by greenhouse gas emissions trajectories (i) under current trends and (ii) if all Intended Nationally Determined Contributions are delivered; what the implications of such temperature rises are in the UK for (A) coastal towns and cities, (B) extreme weather events and (C) food security; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

The Department of Energy and Climate Change and Defra have supported the AVOID Research Programme to project long-term climate change scenarios to understand how emissions reductions translate to global average surface temperature change. Based on a snapshot of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) pledged by 1 October 2015, with an assumed continuation of comparable global emissions reduction to the end of the century, this analysis projects:

(a) (i) by 2050, with continued rise in global greenhouse gas emissions, warming of between 2.3°C and 2.6 °C;

(ii) by 2050, if all INDCs are delivered and continued, warming of 2°C;

(b) (i) by 2100, with continued rise in global greenhouse gas emissions, warming of between 4.2°C and 5.2 °C;

(ii) by 2100, if all Intended Nationally Determined Contributions are delivered and continued, warming of 3°C.

All of these estimates are temperature changes relative to pre-industrial global average surface temperature and best estimates of the climate's sensitivity to increasing greenhouse gas concentrations.

Under the Climate Change Act 2008, the Government has a statutory role to produce, on a five-yearly cycle, an assessment of the risks and opportunities for the UK arising from climate change. The first Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) was published in 2012. It included consideration of impacts on our coastlines, on the frequency and severity of extreme weather, and on our food production. The CCRA used the 2009 UK Climate Change Projections to assess risks under different emissions scenarios up to the 2100s.

The National Adaptation Programme report which Defra published in July 2013 sets out how we are preparing for the impacts of climate change. This sets out more than 370 actions across key sectors involving government, business, councils, civil society and academia.

Work is underway on the second CCRA, which will include an up-to-date review of evidence on the effects of climate change. The CCRA Government Report and the associated evidence report will be published in January 2017. These will inform the next National Adaptation Programme due around 2018.

The Global Food Security programme recently launched a joint research council five-year £15 million research call on resilience of the food supply chain, in partnership with Defra and the Food Standards Agency.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[18501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on how many occasions a special adviser in her Department accompanied a Minister on an overseas trip since May 2015.

George Eustice:

Special Advisers have accompanied Ministers on two overseas trips since May 2015.

■ Food Supply

Dr Liam Fox: [\[18807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether food security is part of the Government's agricultural planning; and what assessment her Department has made of the amount of farmland required to guarantee food supplies in a time of crisis.

George Eustice:

The Government sees the contribution of UK agriculture as vital to our food security. A detailed analysis of the global and domestic factors affecting UK food security, the UK Food Security Assessment, was published in 2010 and refreshed in 2012. Its main

conclusion was that UK food security depends on a combination of a strong domestic food production base and access to a wide variety of world markets. The assessment also analysed the impact of extreme scenarios and concluded that if necessary the UK could feed itself from domestic resources.

The Government is working on a 25 Year Plan for Food and Farming which will set out ways our domestic food production base can be further strengthened, building on the Great British brand.

■ Lead: Ammunition

Alex Cunningham: [\[18456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the number of infractions of the Environmental Protection (Restriction of the Use of Lead Shot) (England) Regulations 1999 in the last 15 years.

Alex Cunningham: [\[18465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to Resolution 11.15 adopted by the Eleventh Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals in November 2014, what (a) assessment she has made of and (b) information her Department has received on the extent and type of poisoning risk from lead ammunition in the UK in the last 12 months.

Rory Stewart:

The Ministry of Justice has confirmed that no defendants were proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under the Environmental Protection (Restriction of the Use of Lead Shot) (England) Regulations 1999 in England between 2011 and 2014.

This return relates to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. Up to and including 2010, these regulations were part of a miscellaneous grouping, which could only be separately analysed at disproportionate cost. Data for 2015 is not yet available.

In the last 12 months Defra has received:

- the Lead Ammunition Group report,
- a report submitted by those that resigned from the Lead Ammunition Group, and
- papers from the Oxford Lead Symposium.

The Government is considering this information and will respond as soon as possible.

■ Meat Products: Scotland

Richard Arkless: [\[18636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent progress has been made with the US and Scottish Governments on lifting the US import ban on haggis.

George Eustice:

The United States does not accept imports of haggis containing sheep lungs. Former Secretary of State for Defra, Owen Paterson, lobbied US authorities during his visit in 2014 and the Government continues to encourage the US to adjust its ban on UK haggis. Scottish haggis producers are developing a US-specific recipe to allow them to access the market once the wider EU negotiations on lifting the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy restrictions on EU lamb are concluded.

■ **National Wildlife Crime Unit: Finance**

Sammy Wilson:[\[18733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much funding her Department has allocated to the National Wildlife Crime Unit in each of the last five years.

Rory Stewart:

The information is in the table below:

DEFRA FUNDING ALLOCATED TO THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE CRIME UNIT

2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
£144,000	£136,000	£136,000	£136,000	£136,000

■ **Pet Travel Scheme**

Mr Nigel Dodds:[\[18292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Pet Travel Scheme in tackling pet smuggling.

George Eustice:

The carriers which carry out checks to ensure pets animals are compliant with Pet Travel Scheme rules and are audited by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and the results show that they are performing satisfactorily. In 2014, APHA audited close to 6,000 pets. Of these only 0.9% of the pets were found not to comply with the entry rules. These pets were either detained until their compliance could be established, re-exported or placed into quarantine.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE■ **Egypt: Travel Information**

Mike Weir: [\[18802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he plans to issue revised travel advice for visitors from the UK with bookings for package holidays in Egypt departing in the next six weeks which use (a) the airport and (b) the resort at Sharm el Sheikh.

Mike Weir: [\[18803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will extend the validity period of travel advice applying to Sharm el Sheikh to provide certainty on the right to penalty-free cancellation (a) six weeks and (b) four weeks prior to departure.

Mike Weir: [\[18804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect on travellers with bookings to (a) Sharm el Sheikh and (b) other destinations in the Middle East of the period within which the right to penalty-free cancellation can be ascertained being within 14 days of travel.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

On 4 November 2015, we amended our Travel Advice to advise against all but essential travel by air to Sharm el-Sheikh. We have not changed our Travel Advice for the resort itself.

The FCO Travel Advice, available at www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice, provides objective information and advice to help individuals make better-informed decisions about their travel. The Egypt page has been regularly updated to reflect developing events since the crash of the Russian airliner on 31 October. We regularly review our Travel Advice and all changes are made after careful analysis. Our only consideration is the safety of British Nationals.

The FCO is working with DfT and Egyptian counterparts to put in place permanent and sustainable measures to allow British flights to Sharm el-Sheikh to resume as soon as possible.

Refunds and cancellation penalties are a matter for the airlines. We are liaising closely with airlines to share information about the progress of our discussions with Egypt.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[18502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, on how many occasions a special adviser in his Department accompanied a Minister on an overseas trip since May 2015.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

It is usual practice for a Special Adviser to accompany the Foreign Secretary on overseas visits.

Islamic State: Oil

Alan Brown: [\[18414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of how many barrels of oil Daesh sells through Turkey on a daily basis.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

There are no reliable statistics available on how much oil, and related products, are smuggled over the border to Turkey. However, last year the Turkish government greatly increased the number of border guards to tackle oil smuggling across its border with Syria and captured 79 million litres of smuggled oil.

We work closely with Turkey and there is no evidence to suggest that the Turkish government has been involved in the oil trade.

Middle East: Travel Information

Mike Weir: [\[18806\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will assess the expected cost to UK consumers who elect to cancel booked package holidays to Sharm el Sheikh and other destinations in the Middle East scheduled to depart during the months of December 2015 and January 2016 where such cancellation is not penalty-free; and if he will make it his Department's policy to issue travel advice which will allow penalty-free cancellation for travel booked to depart during those months.

James Duddridge:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice provides information and advice so that British nationals can make their own better informed decisions about foreign travel. The Department for Business Innovation and Skills is responsible for regulation of the travel industry and it is not the role of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to intervene in the regulation of this market. British nationals who have booked package holidays should contact their travel company if they wish to cancel their booking. These holidays will be subject to the terms and conditions of the booking and the provisions of the Package Travel Regulations, which cover among other things changes between the time of booking and the time of travel. Where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has advised against travel since a holiday has been booked, such as Sharm el Sheikh, it is unlikely that a penalty will be incurred.

■ Travel Information

Mike Weir:

[\[18805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will meet representatives of the Association of British Travel Agents and consumer groups to discuss changes to rules applying to penalty-free cancellation during periods of regional airstrikes by British forces.

James Duddridge:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office issues travel advice to help British nationals make their own informed decisions about foreign travel. We keep our travel advice under constant review and will update it according to any changes in our assessment of the threat to British nationals around the world. Although the Foreign and Commonwealth Office maintains a dialogue with Association of British Travel Agents about how the travel advice affects their members' business, it is not the role of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to intervene in the regulation of the market by discussing changes to the rules applying to penalty-free cancellation.

HEALTH

■ Action on Smoking and Health

Philip Davies:

[\[18365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 10 November 2015 to Question 14762, if he will place in the Library the additional information received in respect of the application.

Jane Ellison:

Some amendments are being made to the outputs in the grant application from Action on Smoking and Health and the final version of the application will be placed in the Library when it is available.

■ Care Homes: Finance

Mr Henry Bellingham:

[\[18363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he next expects to meet representatives of the care home industry to discuss local authority funding of care homes; and if he will make a statement.

Alistair Burt:

I regularly meet with representatives of the care home industry to discuss topics including local authority funding of care homes, and will continue to do so.

The Government has shown clear commitment to the adult social care sector, as evidenced during the Spending Review in which local authorities have been given access to £3.5 billion of new support for social care by 2019/20.

■ Colorectal Cancer: Screening

Andrew Percy: [\[18808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme; and what steps he is taking to increase uptake of such screening among (a) men, (b) people living in deprived areas, (c) ethnic minorities and (d) all people.

Jane Ellison:

The UK National Screening Committee recently consulted on the use of Faecal Immunochemical testing (FIT) as an alternative screen test for bowel cancer. Initial results of the FIT pilot, indicates that this test is more acceptable to the screened population with a significant increase in participation (10%). This is particularly marked amongst men and disadvantaged groups.

At the end of January 2015, 25 million faecal occult blood test kits had been sent out to men and women aged 60-74 to self-sample at home. Over 15 million kits have been returned by post to one of five regional laboratories (programme hubs). Over 21,000 cancers have been detected and over 122,000 patients have been managed for polyps, including polyp removal.

Public Health England (PHE) Screening held a national workshop engaging various organisations to discuss inequalities in accessing screening programmes.

The national workshop was attended by colleagues from local authorities, the Department of Health, PHE, National Health Service and cancer research UK. The day looked at current knowledge about the extent of inequitable access, what works to improve access for those in deprived and protected groups, how existing levers might best be used and by whom.

■ Department of Health: Grants

Philip Davies: [\[18364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 2 November 2015 to Question 13136, what consideration he has given to such representation made by the hon. Member for Shipley.

Alistair Burt:

We have noted the hon. Member's representations on this matter and will continue to take them into account.

■ Diseases

Mr Graham Brady: [\[18550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the (a) target, (b) average and (c) longest time taken to approve individual funding requests are for diseases in the last 12 months for which data is available.

George Freeman:

NHS England has advised that its standard operating procedures published target to process individual funding requests is 40 days. This is for all cases no matter what their outcome.

In the last 12 months for which data is available, NHS England has advised that the average approval time was 20 days, with the longest approval time being 66 days and the shortest being two days.

■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People**Luciana Berger:**[\[18769\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what system is in place to record and publish statistics on child and adolescent deaths in psychiatric in-patient units.

Alistair Burt:

The number of inpatient deaths in child and adolescent mental health services is not collected centrally by the Department of Health.

However, deaths of all patients detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 are notified to the Care Quality Commission (CQC). There were no such deaths reported in 2010/11. They reported that in 2011/12 one person aged 19 or under had died of unnatural causes and none had died of natural causes. In 2012/13 the CQC reported no deaths from unnatural causes and one from natural causes in detained patients aged 19 or under. Their report for 2013/14 (the most recent in the public domain) did not provide a breakdown by age of the deaths of detained patients. [\[1\]](#)

The Department for Education collect and publish data on the number of child deaths reviewed each year, including those where the death occurred in a mental health inpatient unit. These can be found in table 6 of the Statistical First Release 'Child Death Reviews – year ending 31 March 2015', available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-death-reviews-year-ending-31-march-2015>

However, it is possible that the year in which the review took place, was later than the year in which the death occurred.

The number of reviews of deaths occurring in a mental health inpatient unit have been suppressed in this table (shown with a 'x'), indicating that there were 5 or fewer, and the actual figure is not shown in order to protect confidentiality. The number of reviews of deaths occurring in a mental health unit from 2010 to 2014 was nil.

[\[1\]](#) Care Quality Commission: "Monitoring the Mental Health Act" (annual publications for 2012/13 and 2013/14)

Luciana Berger:[\[18770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many in-patients in child and adolescent psychiatric in-patient units have died in each year since 2010.

Alistair Burt:

The number of inpatient deaths in child and adolescent mental health services is not collected centrally by the Department of Health.

However, deaths of all patients detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 are notified to the Care Quality Commission (CQC). There were no such deaths reported in 2010/11. They reported that in 2011/12 one person aged 19 or under had died of unnatural causes and none had died of natural causes. In 2012/13 the CQC reported no deaths from unnatural causes and one from natural causes in detained patients aged 19 or under. Their report for 2013/14 (the most recent in the public domain) did not provide a breakdown by age of the deaths of detained patients. [1]

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[1] Care Quality Commission: Monitoring the Mental Health Act" (annual publications for 2012/13 and 2013/14)

Luciana Berger:[\[18771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what systems and controls are in place for the recording, monitoring and oversight of the use of force and restraint on children and adolescents receiving psychiatric in-patient care.

Alistair Burt:

From 1 January 2016 mental health providers will be required to record all incidents of restraint involving children and young people in their returns to the Health and Social Care Information Centre. As with other health and care services, the Care Quality Commission is responsible for monitoring practice in inpatient children and adolescent psychiatric services.

Luciana Berger:[\[18772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of publicly-funded child and adolescent mental health in-patient services are provided by private providers; what the names of those providers are; how many and what types of services each such provider provides; and what proportion of all privately-provided services such services represent.

Alistair Burt:

Approximately 47% of in-patient Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are provided by independent providers.

The table below contains a list of the specialised commissioned CAMHS and the names of the independent providers who provided these services in 2014/15.

ACUTE - ADOLESCENT INPATIENT

Alpha Hospitals

Cambian Healthcare

Oak View

Riverdale Grange

Acute - Adolescent Inpatient

Priory

Acute - Adolescent Inpatient (High Dependency Unit)

Priory

Acute - Child Inpatient

Cygnnet Healthcare

Plymouth Community Healthcare

Eating Disorder - Adolescent Inpatients

Newbridge

Eating Disorders - Adolescent Inpatient

CareUK

Ellern Mede Centre For Eating Disorders

Priory

The Huntercombe Group

Eating Disorders - Adolescent Inpatient High Dependency

CareUK

Eating Disorders - Adolescent Short term Intensive

CareUK

Low Secure - CAMHS

ACUTE - ADOLESCENT INPATIENT

The Huntercombe Group

Low Secure Female and Male

Priory

Low Secure Learning Disabled

Oak View

Low Secure Male MI

Alpha Hospitals

Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit

The Huntercombe Group

Alpha Hospitals

Priory

Secure and Specialised Mental Health Services (Child)

Low Secure Female Autistic Spectrum Disorder

St Andrews

Low Secure Female Learning Disabled

St Andrews

Low Secure Female Mental Illness

St Andrews

Low Secure Male Autistic Spectrum Disorder

St Andrews

Low Secure Male Learning Disabled

St Andrews

Low Secure Male Mental Illness

St Andrews

The proportion of CAMHS spend with these independent providers represents approximately 23% of the total mental health spend on independent providers (based on 2014/15 figures).

■ NHS

Andrew Bingham: [\[18482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department took to promote awareness of the NHS consultation paper on the Government's Mandate to NHS England to 2020 published in October 2015.

George Freeman:

The consultation was announced in a Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament on 29 October 2015 ([HCWS274](#)), published online, tweeted by the Department, briefed to the Health Service Journal and circulated through a number of Departmental and NHS bulletins. They included the Health and Care Partnerships e-bulletin which is sent to over 300 health and care sector organisations, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) bulletin which goes to all CCGs, and HealthWatch England's bulletin which goes to all local HealthWatch organisations.

■ Nurses: Training

Mr Henry Bellingham: [\[18279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to amend the annual limit set on nurse educational places; and if he will make a statement.

Ben Gummer:

From 2017 we are removing the limit on the number of students that can study nursing. This reform is expected to enable universities to provide up to 10,000 additional nursing and other health professional training places over this Parliament. This will open up opportunities for applicants which universities have previously been forced to turn down.

■ Pharmacy

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[18425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2015 to Question 16575, if he will review the adequacy of the number and accessibility of pharmacy facilities; and if he will make a statement.

Alistair Burt:

NHS England is responsible for ensuring the adequate provision of pharmaceutical services. Local authority Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) assess the need for pharmaceutical services for the relevant area and describe this in the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA). Each HWB was required to publish its first PNA by April 2015 following a full local consultation. NHS England determine applications from a prospective contractor to provide NHS pharmaceutical services by reference to the most recent PNA and whether there is a need identified in the PNA.

The National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 (as amended) require the Secretary of State to carry out a review of the Regulations and publish the report before the end of August 2017.

■ Primary Health Care: Finance**Anne Marie Morris:** [\[17884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much of the Primary Care Infrastructure Fund he plans to disburse in each of the next five years.

Alistair Burt:

The Primary Care Transformation Fund (formerly the Infrastructure Fund) was announced in December 2014 and is a £1 billion fund over four years. As such we are planning to disburse £250 million in each of the next three years 2016/17 – 2018/19.

■ Prisons: Mental Health Services**Luciana Berger:** [\[18773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure the efficient and timely transfer of prisoners to hospitals under the Mental Health Act 1983; and how many prisoners have waited for more than 14 days for such a transfer in each of the last five years.

Ben Gummer:

NHS England has revised good practice guidance on transferring adult prisoners to secure hospitals under sections 47 and 48 of the Mental Health Act 1983. This guidance includes the expectation that a transfer will take place within 14 days, when the need for hospital admission is urgent, and that longer transfer periods should be reported to NHS commissioners, so that steps can be taken to improve. The guidance will be published shortly.

Between April to September 2015, 343 prisoners waited more than 14 days for a transfer. Data on prisoner transfer waiting times was not held centrally prior to April 2015. Since then, NHS England has collected data from Health and Justice Indicators of Performance (HJIPs) at a national level.

HJIPs include data on waiting times for transfers between prisons and secure hospitals in England since April 2015 and available information is shown in the attached table, Health & Justice Indicators of Performance - Mental Health Secure Assessment and Transfer. NHS England intends to publish future HJIP data online from April 2016.

Attachments:

1. Waiting times-secure hospitals and prisons [Health & Justice Indicators of Performance - Mental Health Secure Assessment and Transfer..xlsx]

HOME OFFICE**■ Asylum: Syria****Stephen Timms:** [\[18811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 3 December 2015 to Question 18221, what estimate she has made of the time taken to process a family from Syria onto the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme before they are housed in the UK.

Richard Harrington:

The time taken to process a family from Syria onto the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme varies depending on the individual circumstances of that family.

■ **Emergency Services: Mobile Radios**

Chris Evans:[\[18304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which parliamentary constituencies do not fall entirely within the 90 per cent coverage of the 4G replacement system being considered as sole bidder for Emergency Services as part of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme.

Mike Penning:

The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) will provide geographic coverage to 97% of the country (including the 90% required by the Regulator) by requiring the Mobile Services supplier to infill commercial coverage area and extend their network over sites provided by ESMCP's Extended Area Services (EAS) project.

Listed below are the Parliamentary Constituencies that do not fall entirely within the 90% coverage (as required by the Regulator), and those that do not fall entirely within the 97% coverage (with a further 7% provided by ESN) are:

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY	NOT MET 90%	NOT MET 97%
Aberavon Co Const	*	*
Aberconwy Co Const	*	
Angus Co Const	*	*
Arfon Co Const	*	
Barrow and Furness Co Const	*	
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk Co Const	*	*
Bishop Auckland Co Const	*	
Brecon and Radnorshire Co Const	*	*
Bridgwater and West Somerset Co Const	*	*
Carmarthen East and Dinefwr Co Const	*	*
Central Devon Co Const	*	

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY	NOT MET 90%	NOT MET 97%
Clwyd South Co Const	*	*
Clwyd West Co Const	*	*
Copeland Co Const	*	*
Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale Co Const	*	*
East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow Co Const	*	
Hexham Co Const	*	*
High Peak Co Const	*	
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey Co Const	*	*
Kilmarnock and Loudoun Co Const	*	
Lancaster and Fleetwood Co Const	*	
Ludlow Co Const	*	*
Montgomeryshire Co Const	*	*
North Devon Co Const	*	
Ochil and South Perthshire Co Const	*	*
Penrith and The Border Co Const	*	
Perth and North Perthshire Co Const	*	*
Ribble Valley Co Const	*	*
Richmond (Yorks) Co Const	*	*
Scarborough and Whitby Co Const	*	
Skipton and Ripon Co Const	*	*
South West Wiltshire Co Const	*	

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY	NOT MET 90%	NOT MET 97%
Stirling Co Const	*	*
Thirsk and Malton Co Const	*	*
Totnes Co Const	*	
Westmorland and Lonsdale Co Const	*	
West Dunbartonshire Co Const	*	
Dwyfor Meirionnydd Co Const	*	*
Ceredigion Co Const	*	*
Torridge and West Devon Co Const	*	
North Cornwall Co Const	*	
Berwick-upon-Tweed Co Const	*	*
South East Cornwall Co Const	*	
South West Devon Co Const	*	
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross Co Const	*	*
Ross, Skye and Lochaber Co Const	*	*
Moray Co Const	*	*
Na h-Eileanan an Iar Co Const	*	*
Argyll and Bute Co Const	*	*
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine Co Const	*	*
Gordon Co Const	*	
East Lothian Co Const	*	
North Ayrshire and Arran Co Const	*	*
Dumfries and Galloway Co Const	*	*

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY	NOT MET 90%	NOT MET 97%
Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire Co Const	*	
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock Co Const	*	*
Preseli Pembrokeshire Co Const	*	

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[18787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress her Department has made on the emergency services mobile communications programme.

Mike Penning:

The purpose of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) is to deliver a mobile communications network for use principally by the Emergency Services - the Emergency Services Network (ESN). The ESN will deliver integrated critical voice and broadband data services to all three emergency services (3ES) and other users throughout England, Wales and Scotland. The aim is to provide a mobile communications network capable of providing the full coverage, resilience, security and public safety functionality required by the 3ES.

The procurement of the ESN is divided in 3 main procurement lots supplemented by a number of related projects. The contract for Lot 1 - Delivery Partner was awarded to Kellogg Brown and Root in August 2015. The Home Office announced its intention to award contracts to Motorola - Lot 2 User Services and EE Lot 3 Mobile Services on 13th November 2015. The procurement process was halted following a legal challenge by Airwave Solutions Limited, the incumbent supplier, on 23 November 2015, the last day of the 10 day standstill period. The Home Office submitted an application to lift the automatic suspension of the procurement and had been working with Counsel preparing for a hearing in the High Court on 8th and 9th Dec.

On Saturday 5th December, the Home Office was informed that ASL would no longer contest the Home Office application to lift the suspension and that subject to the consent order being agreed by the Court today, the Home Office will seek to sign contracts with Motorola and EE on 8th December. This will then start the Mobilisation phase of the programme during which the network will be designed, built and tested over a 21 month period. The 3ES will start to use the network from late 2017 following extensive tests and trials.

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[18788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will place in the Library a copy of the timetable for transition of the emergency services from Airwave to the emergency services network, for each (a) service and (b) region.

Mike Penning:

The supporting transition plan attached is a provisional plan and, therefore, subject to change.

Note:

- This is for the 3 Emergency Services only and does not include British Transport Police (BTP), Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC), Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) and National Crime Agency (NCA)
- Dates are shown in months from Effective Date (ED)
- Kent Constabulary is shown in East of England transition group as per ESMCP Programme Board decision; Kent Fire and Rescue Service is still in South East

Attachments:

1. Timetable for transition [Table 18788.pdf]

■ Police Custody: Lancashire

Mr Mark Hendrick:

[\[18687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) boys and (b) girls aged (i) 11, (ii) 12, (iii) 13, (iv) 14, (v) 15, (vi) 16 and (vii) 17 were held overnight in police cells in each police station in Lancashire in each month between 1 January 2014 and 30 November 2015.

Mike Penning:

The Home Office does not hold this information centrally. It may be held by the individual police force.

■ Police: Finance

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[18573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to paragraph 1.81 of the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, whether the protection of overall police spending includes (a) British Transport Police, (b) the Civil Nuclear Constabulary and (c) the Ministry of Defence Police.

Mike Penning:

[Holding answer 7 December 2015]: Section 1.81 of the Spending Review document refers to the 43 police forces for which the Home Office provides funding. The Home Office does not hold information on the impact of the Spending Review on the British Transport Police, Civil Nuclear Constabulary or the Ministry of Defence Police. This information will be available from the Department for Transport, Department for Energy and Climate Change and Ministry of Defence respectively.

■ Refugees: Sri Lanka

James Berry: [18308]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Sri Lankans have been granted refugee status after having previously been removed to Sri Lanka following a refused application for asylum in the UK in each quarter since January 2012.

James Brokenshire:

Since January 2012, there have been a total of eight Sri Lankan nationals who have been granted refugee status in the UK after having previously been removed to Sri Lanka following a refused application for asylum.

■ Vetting: Waiting Lists

Catherine West: [18427]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average waiting time is for a standard Disclosure and Barring Service check.

Karen Bradley:

The average time taken to process a standard disclosure and barring service check over the last 12 months for which figures are available (November 2014 - October 2015) is 5.97 calendar days.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Climate Change**

Caroline Lucas: [18469]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effect of (a) 1.5, (b) 2, (c) 4 and (d) 6 degrees of global warming on (i) countries belonging to the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the Alliance of Small Island States and (ii) the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has produced detailed assessments of the effect of global warming. Its study on Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability contained in the 2014 Fifth Assessment Report (available here: <http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg2/>) makes clear how the impacts of climate change are expected to slow down economic growth, erode food security and make poverty reduction more difficult. The report notes that higher levels of warming increase the chance of severe and pervasive impacts.

The poorest and most vulnerable will be hit first and hardest by climate change and the World Bank has estimated that without action to address climate change it could result in an additional 100 million people living in extreme poverty by 2030. The UK Government is committed to tackling poverty and climate change through its International Climate Fund, which the Prime Minister has announced will increase by 50% over the next five years.

■ Department for International Development: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[18505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, on how many occasions a special adviser in her Department accompanied a Minister on an overseas trip since May 2015.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

Special advisers have accompanied a DFID Minister on an overseas visit 9 times since May 2015.

■ Developing Countries: Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships

Mike Kane:

[\[18640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the potential role for the private sector in increasing birth registration in fragile contexts.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

Accurately recording births, deaths, adoptions, marriages and divorces will be critical in achieving the newly agreed Global Goals. In fragile contexts, registration is essential to enable refugees to obtain humanitarian services and protection under international law.

Although globally, the births of nearly 230 million children under age five have never been recorded and almost two thirds of deaths are not counted at all, some progress is being made, largely in Latin America and Asia. The increasing use of technology and the private sector have played important enabling roles in building this momentum and will continue to be crucial to further progress.

DFID supports statistical capacity building and implementation of national statistical plans in a number of countries through global programmes such as the Statistics for Results Facility Catalytic Fund (SRF-CF), implemented in eight countries. In Nigeria, for example, SRF-CF supported eight outreach birth/death registration centres. DFID also provides bilateral support to countries' national statistical systems.

At a policy level, DFID supports the Commission for Information and Accountability (COIA) where CRVS is one of ten priority areas. DFID also provides support to the UNHCR, the mandated UN agency to advocate for the protection and promotion of the rights of refugees, which plays a crucial role in assisting refugees in with documentation. To date, DFID has allocated over £44 million to UNHCR's operations in Jordan and in Lebanon, of which a proportion will go to funding the registration and issuing of birth certificates for refugees.

■ Developing Countries: Sustainable Development

Mike Kane:

[\[18639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the Prime Minister's speech at the UN Sustainable Development Goals Summit on 27 September 2015, what steps the Government is taking to leave no one behind.

Justine Greening:

The Prime Minister's promise that 'no one will be left behind' is clearly referenced in the new UK Aid strategy at paragraph 3.17, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-aid-tackling-global-challenges-in-the-national-interest>. My department is currently laying out what this means for all DFID and wider government investments overseas, and supporting the international system to ensure no one is left behind. We will support countries and development partners to increase their capacity to better identify and reach the extreme poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

JUSTICE**■ County Courts: Bow****Jim Fitzpatrick:**[\[18618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the proposed closure of Bow County Court on access to justice for the residents of Poplar and Limehouse constituency.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The consultation closed on 8 October. HM Courts & Tribunals Service is currently evaluating all responses submitted, and will take into account any potential impacts identified from the responses received.

No decision has been taken to close any court and an announcement on the outcome of the consultation will be made in due course.

■ Criminal Proceedings**Philip Davies:**[\[18368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of offenders of each offence type pleaded guilty to an offence during (a) the latest period for which information is available after 13 April 2015 and (b) the equivalent period of time before 13 April 2015 in (i) Magistrates Courts and (ii) Crown Courts.

Mike Penning:

The proportion of defendants who were tried at the Crown Court and who pleaded guilty, by offence group, in England and Wales in 2014 can be viewed in the table.

Centrally held information does not include the plea of defendants proceeded against and handled entirely within the magistrates' courts. This is held on individual court records, which could only be examined at disproportionate cost.

Final data for defendants tried at the Crown Court is only available up to the end of 2014.

Attachments:

1. proportion of defendants at the Crown Court - 2014 [18368 - Table.xls]

Philip Davies:

[\[18369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of offenders of each offence type who pleaded guilty in the latest year for which information is available had committed (a) no other offences, (b) one to five previous offences, (c) six to 15 previous offences, (d) 16 to 50 previous offences, (e) 51 to 100 previous offences and (f) over 100 previous offences.

Andrew Selous:

Whilst crime is falling, offenders committing serious offences are more likely to go to prison and for longer. Sentencing is a matter for our independent courts, taking into account all the facts of each case. Where the offender has recent and relevant previous convictions this is a statutory aggravating factor which should increase the severity of the sentence.

We want to cut reoffending, cut crime and make our streets safer. That is why we need a new emphasis in prisons on rehabilitation and redemption. Prisons should be places of hard work, rigorous education and high ambition so offenders get the skills to make a success of life on the outside.

The data available are found attached, in Table 1, referring to the 12 months ending June 2015.

Attachments:

1. Table 1, refers to the 12 months ending June 2015 [18369 - Table.doc]

■ **Environment Protection: Civil Proceedings**

Andy Slaughter:

[\[18827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the likely effect of proposals to revise the costs capping scheme for environmental legal challenges on ease of access to redress through the courts.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The proposals to revise the costs capping scheme for environmental legal challenges in England and Wales do not seek to make environmental justice less accessible. The Ministry of Justice will continue to keep their impact under review as part of its consideration of the consultation responses. We will also carry out a full impact assessment and this will be published as part of the government's response paper. The Ministry of Justice has due regard to its duties under the Equalities Act 2010, and has carried out an initial equality impact assessment prior to publishing the consultation document. This will be reviewed as part of the response paper.

■ **HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Redundancy**

Mr Mark Hendrick:

[\[18689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people have been made redundant by HM Courts and Tribunals Service since 31 May 2014; and what the cost to the public purse of such redundancies has been.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

There have been no compulsory redundancies in HMCTS since 31 May 2014. There have been voluntary departures agreed in HMCTS, as detailed in the HMCTS Financial Statement of Accounts. Since 31 May 2014 there have been 231 voluntary departures at a combined cost of £8,696,728.

■ Ministry of Justice: Labour Mobility

Louise Haigh: [\[18344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many civil servants in his Department are in the redeployment pool.

Mike Penning:

As at 30 September 2015, 210 members of staff within the Department were listed on the redeployment pool. This includes Ministry of Justice HQ, Legal Aid Agency, HM Courts and Tribunals Service, Office of the Public Guardian and National Offender Management Service.

■ Politics and Government: Sark

Andrew Rosindell: [\[18263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what representations he has received about the current political situation in Sark and the island of Brecqhou.

Dominic Raab:

The department is engaged in frequent discussions with Chief Pleas and a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in the jurisdiction of Sark (which includes the island of Brecqhou). The UK Government has urged all with an interest in Sark's future to engage positively with its elected government, which is responsible for the island's economic strategy, and we encourage the government of Sark to make the best possible use of the practical help and support which continues to be offered by the UK Government and other 'Friends of Sark' (which includes Alderney, Guernsey, the Isle of Man and Jersey).

■ Prisons: Staff

Philip Davies: [\[18366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average ratio of prison officers to prisoners is in (a) male and (b) female prisons.

Andrew Selous:

Staff to prisoner ratios in public sector Prison Service establishments are reported as the number of prisoners held in an establishment divided by the number of prison officers (including specialists) employed. The figure does not reflect the number of officers on duty at any particular moment.

The ratio of staff to prisoners varies by category of prison and according to specific local circumstances related to the design and operation of the particular establishment.

Differences in the profile of the male and female populations mean that the ratios are not directly comparable.

The ratio of prisoner to prison officers (including specialist) as at 30 September 2015 was 4.8 at male establishments and 3.5 at female establishments.

■ Terrorism: Sentencing

Philip Davies:

[\[18367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what sentences were handed down to offenders convicted of offences involving inciting terrorism in each of the last three years.

Andrew Selous:

All the offenders convicted of the specified offences below involving inciting terrorism received immediate custodial sentences. The number of offenders found guilty and sentenced, with sentencing outcomes, for offences related to inciting terrorism, in all courts in England and Wales, from 2012 to 2014, can be viewed in the tables, as follows:

- Table 1 includes data on Section 59 of the Terrorism Act 2000
- Table 2 includes data on Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006.
- Table 3 includes data on Sections 15 to 19 of the Terrorism Act 2000
- Table 4 includes data on Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006.

Attachments:

1. Offenders - guilty and sentenced under Section 59 [18367 - Table.xls]

TRANSPORT

■ A1(M): Hertfordshire

Sir Oliver Heald:

[\[18426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2015 to Question 2065, what progress has been made on the design and planning of the A1 (M) widening scheme; when that process is expected to be completed; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Jones:

The Department for Transport published the Roads Investment Strategy in December 2014, which set out plans to invest £15 billion in England's motorways and major A roads between 2015/16 and 2020/21. Highways England subsequently published a Delivery Plan in March 2015, which outlined how this investment would be delivered across various projects. The Delivery Plan includes the introduction of Smart Motorways on the A1(M) between Junctions 6 and 8 will provide improved capacity and better access, and should unlock much of the growth potential around Stevenage.

The scheme is expected to start design development works early in 2016 and to commence construction by March 2020 at the latest, subject to determining the right operational solution and achieving a solution that is value for money.

■ Airports: South East

Mr Nigel Dodds: [18362]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with business and tourism representatives in Northern Ireland on the Davies Commission and increased airport capacity in the south east of England.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

There have been no discussions with business and tourism representatives in Northern Ireland on the Davies Commission and increased airport capacity in the south east of England.

■ Blue Badge Scheme

Daniel Zeichner: [18354]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the reasons for changes in the number of Blue Badges held in England since 2014.

Andrew Jones:

No assessment has been made. The number of valid Blue Badges held in England is published in table DIS0101, available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/478972/dis0101.xls.

■ Department for Transport: Labour Mobility

Louise Haigh: [18345]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many civil servants in his Department are in the redeployment pool.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

There are currently 14 people in the Departmental redeployment pool.

■ Motor Vehicles

Daniel Zeichner: [18357]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to develop (a) a hydrogen vehicle refuelling network and (b) an electric vehicle network.

Andrew Jones:

The Government recognises that having joined up refuelling and charging infrastructure is a prerequisite for the mass take up of hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles together with battery electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles.

In October last year, the previous Government announced £11m for the Hydrogen for Transport Advancement Programme to support the roll-out of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles

(FCEVs) and associated refuelling infrastructure. In March 2015 the successful bidders for funding to support an initial network of 12 hydrogen refuelling stations were announced – a significant first step towards the initial national network of 65 identified by the joint Government-industry UKH2Mobility project.

We are helping both motorists and local authorities with the upfront cost of purchasing and installing electric vehicle chargepoints with grant funding through our Electric Vehicle Homecharge and On Street Residential Schemes. As well as this, the Government is currently refreshing its strategy on how best to support the development of the wider public charging network which is now benefitting from significant levels of private sector investment. The UK now has one of the best rapid charging networks in Europe and £15m was committed in the 2014 Autumn Statement for Highways England to ensure drivers are never more than 20 miles from a chargepoint on the Strategic Road Network.

■ Motor Vehicles: Carbon Emissions

Daniel Zeichner:

[18356]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and electric vehicles to help the UK meet the 2050 carbon budget.

Andrew Jones:

This Government is committed to the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles, recognizing the economic and environmental benefits this will bring. We believe that both hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles together with battery electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles will play an important part in the ongoing decarbonisation of our road transport.

The Government's vision, as set out in the Carbon Plan is that by 2050 almost every car and van on the road will be an ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV). We announced at the Spending Review that we will spend more than £600 million between 2015-16 and 2020-21 to support uptake and manufacturing of ultra-low emission vehicles in the UK, maintaining the global leadership that has seen 1 in 4 of all European electric vehicles built here and keep the UK on track for all new cars to be effectively zero emission by 2040. This investment will save 65million tonnes of carbon and help deliver the long term answer on urban air quality.

■ Railways: Fares

Henry Smith:

[18288]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the average saving to passengers of capping regulated rail fare rises to RPI+0 until 2020; and if he will make a statement.

Claire Perry:

This Government is investing record amounts in transforming the UK rail network, improving journeys for everyone. At the same time, we are committed to ensuring the

economic security of hard-working families. Fares continue to play a role in this, and we recognise that no one likes to see the cost of their rail travel rise.

That is why the Government has put a stop to above inflation (RPI) fare increases on regulated rail fares until 2020. This extends the cap on regulated rail fares put in place for 2014 and 2015. This means people's earnings will, on average, rise more quickly than regulated rail fares for the first time since 2003 and an average saving of £425 to annual season ticket holders over the next five years.

This is a vital part of our long-term economic plan for Britain's railways: delivering a bigger, better network with improved services – all while getting more out of every taxpayer's pound we spend.

■ Roads: Police

Daniel Zeichner: [\[18355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the Home Secretary on including road policing as a strategic policing requirement.

Andrew Jones:

Department for Transport and Home Office Ministers have an ongoing dialogue about the importance of road safety and its enforcement. Road Safety does not fall under the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) as this advises what, in strategic terms, needs to be achieved in tackling major national threats such as terrorism and organised crime. It is the role of the police to decide how the Requirement is met and if road policing capabilities are appropriate to tackle Strategic Policing Requirement national threats.

■ Roads: Safety

Jim Fitzpatrick: [\[18265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect on his Department's policies of the recommendations of the Second Global Conference on Road Safety organised by the UN/WHO in Brasilia between 17 and 19 November 2015.

Andrew Jones:

The themes of the recommendations from the Second Global Conference on Road Safety in Brasilia are broadly in line with our approach to road safety, with an emphasis on education, enforcement and infrastructure with particular regard to vulnerable road users.

The Government has a Manifesto commitment to reduce road deaths and injuries amongst cyclists and other road users every year. We are working with road safety groups and other stakeholders to determine what more can be done to meet this commitment.

WALES■ **Income Tax: Wales**

David T. C. Davies: [\[18647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether he plans to amend the draft Wales Bill to enable the National Assembly for Wales to vary income tax without a referendum.

Stephen Crabb:

At Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, my Rt hon Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the Government will remove the need for a referendum to introduce the Welsh Rates of Income Tax. This will be done in the Wales Bill, which will be introduced into Parliament in the New Year.

■ **Wales Office: Domestic Visits**

Nia Griffith: [\[18755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how many times he has visited each parliamentary constituency in Wales in an official capacity in the 2015-16 session of Parliament.

Stephen Crabb:

[Holding answer 8 December 2015]: Wales Office Ministers regularly visit Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales. In each instance, the respective honourable Member is notified of the visit.

Details of Ministerial visits and meetings are published on the Wales Office website, and in Quarterly Ministerial Transparency Returns. In addition, visits and meetings conducted in support of the Wales Office Business Plan are published in the Wales Office Annual Report and Accounts.

Wales Office Ministers are always keen to receive invitation requests from honourable Members.

WORK AND PENSIONS■ **Benefits Rules: Children**

Emily Thornberry: [\[18287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he plans to bring into force section 31 of the Welfare Reform Act 2009.

Priti Patel:

There are no current plans to bring into force Section 31 of the Welfare Reform Act 2009.

The claimant commitment, which Work Coaches put together with claimants, sets requirements that are tailored for a broad range of circumstances, including for matters relating to the wellbeing of children. These reasonable requirements are recorded within the jobseeker's agreement or action plan.

■ Local Housing Allowance

Emily Thornberry:

[\[18295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many local housing allowance rates were set (a) at the 30th percentile, (b) within five per cent of the 30th percentile, (c) between five per cent and 10 per cent of the 30th percentile and (d) more than 10 per cent below the 30th percentile of market rents in the relevant broad market rental area in (i) 2011-12, (ii) 2012-13, (iii) 2013-14 and (iv) 2014-15.

Justin Tomlinson:

In 2011-12, LHA rates were updated on a monthly basis. Of the 960 LHA rates in Great Britain, in April 2011, 949 LHA rates were set at the 30th percentile and by March 2012, 943 LHA rates were set at the 30th percentile. The remaining LHA rates were set at the level of the caps.

From 2012-13 LHA rates were set annually. For the years 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15, the following table gives the number of LHA rates set (a) at the 30th percentile, (b) within five per cent of the 30th percentile, (c) between five per cent and 10 per cent below the 30th percentile and (d) more than 10 per cent below the 30th percentile of market rents in the relevant Broad Rental Market Area.

So for example, if the 30th percentile for a Broad Rental Market Area and property size is £200 per week (pw), the corresponding LHA rate would be included in (b) if it is greater than £190pw and less than £200pw, in (c) if it is between £180pw and £190pw, and in (d) if it is less than £180pw.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
(a) 30 th percentile	943	695	475
(b) less than five per cent below the 30 th percentile	6	228	416
(c) between five per cent and 10 per cent below the 30 th percentile	2	26	42
(d) more than 10 per cent below the 30 th percentile	9	11	27

■ Universal Credit: Children

Emily Thornberry:

[18294]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what statutory provision exists to ensure that the claimant commitments of universal credit claimants with dependent children include adequate protections for the wellbeing of the children.

Priti Patel:

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 and Universal Credit Regulations 2013 set out the types of requirements which may be imposed depending on the circumstances and characteristics of the claimant. Regulations also make clear the circumstances in which requirements should be limited or even lifted entirely for a temporary period. For example, Regulations 98 and 99, which provide provisions for suspension of requirements where children are in distress.

All claimant commitments are tailored to the individual and through a discussion between the Work Coach and the claimant, requirements are tailored for a broad range of circumstances - including for matters relating to the wellbeing of children. These reasonable requirements, including any limiting or lifting and the reasons, are recorded within the claimant commitment.

■ Vacancies: Internet

Emily Thornberry:

[18282]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of vacancies in each region and nation of the UK which were advertised on Universal Jobmatch in the most recent month for which figures are available were for part-time jobs.

Priti Patel:

Official statistics on Universal Jobmatch (UJ) vacancies by region and type of job are not available. This reflects that UJ is an online aggregator of job adverts, and adverts can be posted on the system from more than one source.

Real-time information on Universal Jobmatch is available at

<https://jobsearch.direct.gov.uk/register.aspx?redirect=http%3a%2f%2fjobsearch.direct.gov.uk%2fhome.aspx>.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

TREASURY

■ Annual European Union Finances Statement

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): [\[HCWS375\]](#)

I am today laying before Parliament, “ *European Union Finances 2015: statement on the 2015 EU Budget and measures to counter fraud and financial mismanagement*” (Cm 9167). This is a routine annual publication. It is the thirty fifth in the series. The Statement gives details of revenue and expenditure in the 2015 European Union (EU) Budget, recent developments in EU financial management and measures to counter fraud against the EU Budget. It also includes an annex on the use of EU funds in the UK.

■ Publication of draft Finance Bill 2016 legislation

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): [\[HCWS374\]](#)

The Government has consulted on a number of tax policies following announcement at Summer Budget and previously. Today, the Government is publishing responses to these consultations alongside draft legislation to be included in Finance Bill 2016. This fulfils our objective to consult, where possible, on draft clauses for the Finance Bill, at least three months in advance of the introduction of the Bill.

The Government is publishing draft legislation on policies announced at Autumn Statement 2015 and earlier, including:

A new personal savings allowance to remove tax on up to £1,000 of savings income for basic rate taxpayers and up to £500 for higher rate taxpayers;

Reforms to dividend taxation by replacing the dividend tax credit with a tax-free dividend allowance of £5,000 and setting new dividends tax rates;

Establishing the Office of Tax Simplification on a statutory basis;

A new tax relief for orchestras at a rate of 25% on qualifying expenditure.

New measures for those who persistently enter into tax avoidance schemes that are defeated by HMRC, such as a special reporting requirement and a surcharge on those whose latest return is inaccurate due to use of a defeated scheme;

A new penalty of 60% tax due to be charged in all cases successfully tackled by the General Anti-Abuse Rule.

Detail of the clauses published today can be found in the Overview of Legislation in Draft, which includes Tax Information and Impact Notes for each measure. All publications will be available on the gov.uk website.

■ The Office of Tax Simplification

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): [\[HCWS373\]](#)

The Chancellor has appointed Angela Knight CBE to chair the Office of Tax Simplification (OTS). She succeeds The Rt. Hon. Michael Jack CBE who having served a full parliament has stood down with the Chancellor's thanks.

The OTS was established as a temporary office of the Treasury in 2010 to advise the Chancellor on options for addressing complexity in the tax system. As announced at Summer Budget 2015 it will be made permanent and put on a statutory basis in Finance Bill 2016.

DEFENCE

■ Call-Out Order to Support UN Operations in Cyprus

Minister of State for the Armed Forces (Penny Mordaunt): [\[HCWS371\]](#)

A new call-out order has been made under section 56(1B) of the Reserve Forces Act 1996 to enable Reservists to continue to be called into permanent service in support of the United Kingdom's contribution to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Over 100 Reservists have been called out for UN operations in Cyprus over the last 12 months. Over the period this new order will be in force we anticipate calling out around 150 Reservists, who will be fully integrated with their Regular colleagues. The use of Reserves in Cyprus is now considered routine business and is fully in line with our policy of having more capable, usable, integrated and relevant Reserve Forces. It provides Reservists with an excellent opportunity to fully integrate with their paired Regular unit, providing a worthwhile, rewarding and valuable contribution to the UN peacekeeping effort.

Currently, we plan on calling out only willing and available Reservists who have the support of their employer.

The order takes effect from 11 December 2015 and ceases to have effect on 10 December 2016.

■ War Pensions Scheme - Uprating 2016

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Ministry of Defence) (Mark Lancaster): [\[HCWS372\]](#)

The new rates of pensions and allowances payable under the War Pensions Scheme proposed from April 2016 are set out in the following tables. The annual uprating of awards and allowances for 2016 will take place from the week beginning 11th April. Rates for 2016 are unchanged in line with the September 2015 Consumer Prices Index of negative (at - 0.1%).

War Pensions Rates

	RATES(£)	RATES(£)
(Weekly rates unless otherwise shown)	2015	2016
WAR PENSIONS		
Disablement Pension (100% rates)		
officer (£ per annum)	9,298.00	9,298.00
other ranks (weekly amount)	178.20	178.20
Age allowances payable from age 65		
40%-50%	11.95	11.95
over 50% but not over 70%	18.35	18.35
over 70% but not over 90%	26.10	26.10
over 90%	36.70	36.70
Disablement gratuity (one-off payment)		
specified minor injury (min.)	1,136.00	1,136.00
specified minor injury (max.)	8,474.00	8,474.00
1 – 5% gratuity	2,834.00	2,834.00
6 – 14% gratuity	6,300.00	6,300.00
15 – 19% gratuity	11,018.00	11,018.00
SUPPLEMENTARY ALLOWANCES (WEEKLY)		
Unemployability Allowance		
Personal	110.10	110.10
adult dependency increase	61.20	61.20
increase for first child	14.20	14.20

	RATES(£)	RATES(£)
increase for subsequent children	16.75	16.75
Invalidity Allowance		
higher rate	21.80	21.80
middle rate	14.20	14.20
lower rate	7.10	7.10
Constant Attendance Allowance		
exceptional rate	134.40	134.40
intermediate rate	100.80	100.80
full day rate	67.20	67.20
Part-day rate	33.60	33.60
Comforts Allowance		
higher rate	28.90	28.90
lower rate	14.45	14.45
Mobility Supplement	64.15	64.15
Allowance for lowered standard of occupation (maximum)	67.20	67.20
Therapeutic Earnings Limit (annual rate)	5,408.00	5,590.00
Exceptionally Severe Disablement Allowance	67.20	67.20
Severe Disablement Occupational Allowance	33.60	33.60
Clothing Allowance (annual rate)	230.00	230.00

	RATES(£)	RATES(£)
Education Allowance (annual rate) (max)	120.00	120.00
WIDOW(ER)S BENEFITS		
Widow(ers)' - other ranks (basic with children) (weekly amount)	135.15	135.15
Widow(er) - Officer higher rate both wars (basic with children) (£ per annum)	7,187.00	7,187.00
Childless widow(ers)' u-40 (other ranks) (weekly amount)	32.37	32.37
Widow(er) – Officer lower rate both wars (£ per annum)	2,496.00	2,496.00
Supplementary Pension	90.41	90.41
Age Allowance		
(a) age 65 to 69	15.40	15.40
(b) age 70 to 79	29.60	29.60
(c) age 80 and over	43.90	43.90
Children's Allowance		
Increase for first child	21.20	21.20
Increase for subsequent children	23.75	23.75
Orphan's pension		
Increase for first child	24.25	24.25
Increase for subsequent children	26.55	26.55
Unmarried dependant living as spouse (max)	132.80	132.80
Rent Allowance (maximum)	50.90	50.90

	RATES(£)	RATES(£)
Adult orphan's pension (maximum)	103.85	103.85

TRANSPORT

■ EU Transport Council

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Robert Goodwill): [\[HCWS370\]](#)

I will attend the final Transport Council under the Luxembourg Presidency (the Presidency), taking place in Brussels, on Thursday 10 December.

The Presidency is planning a policy debate on social aspects of road transport ahead of the EU road initiatives that we expect to be published by the Commission in 2016. The debate is likely to focus on whether existing legislation should be clarified in order to reach a uniform interpretation of the rules in all Member States, and the challenges in the enforcement of existing rules.

There will be a lunchtime debate on Road Safety at the request of the Presidency. I welcome the opportunity to share expertise and best practice on road safety in the light of the UK's excellent track record in this area. I look forward to hearing about the work done by EU colleagues to improve road safety amongst vulnerable road users in other Member States.

Under Any Other Business, there will be presentations on:

- The State of the Energy Union by the Commission;
- The MH17 crash following a report from the Dutch Accident & Investigation Branch;
- An Aviation Strategy for Europe by the Commission following publication of its Aviation Package on 7 December;
- State of ratification of the Luxembourg Protocol to the rail rolling stock Convention, which Luxembourg will encourage other Member States to ratify;
- Nominations to the ICAO Council; and
- The Netherlands' priorities for their Presidency which begins on 1 st January 2016.

■ Rail Franchising

Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Patrick McLoughlin): [\[HCWS369\]](#)

I am pleased to inform the House of the award of two new passenger rail franchises. Following separate, rigorous competitions I intend to award the Northern franchise to Arriva, and the TransPennine Express (TPE) franchise to First. These awards will be confirmed subject to successful completion of a standstill period of at least 10 days.

Both franchises are due to start on 1 April 2016. The Northern franchise will run for nine years, until 31 March 2025, with an extension of one year callable at my discretion. The TPE franchise will run for seven years, until 31 March 2023, with an extension of two years callable at my discretion.

My Department set out ambitious plans for the new franchises in our Invitations to Tender earlier this year and both Arriva and First have gone well beyond them; exceeding our requirements. This means that these franchises will oversee the biggest transformation of rail journeys in the north of England in decades, with an unprecedented package of improvements for passengers.

Together, these operators will oversee a massive £1.2 billion boost to rail services with brand-new modern trains, more seats, more services and a host of improvements to deliver a modern, 21st century passenger experience. This one nation government is committed to closing the economic gap between north and south, and these new franchises will help to bring the Northern Powerhouse to life. They will play key roles in rebalancing the economy, creating jobs, opportunity and growth, and will provide significantly better journeys across the region. Crucially, in a key step towards full devolution, these contracts will be managed in Leeds by a joint team from the Department for Transport and Rail North, which represents the region's 29 local transport authorities.

Across both franchises, Arriva and First will provide much needed new-build trains, with the introduction of more than 500 brand-new carriages. They will also remove the outdated and unpopular Pacer trains from across the North. These plans will create space for more than 40,000 extra passengers at the busiest times across the north and bring in thousands of extra services a week for passengers. Alongside these investments the franchises performance will be improved to meet challenging targets to reduce cancellations and short-formations.

There will also be significant improvements for passengers' experience, with the roll out of free Wi-Fi on trains and at stations and the installation of on-board media servers providing on-train entertainment and real-time passenger information to smartphones and tablets. Automatic delay compensation for season and advance purchase ticket-holders will be introduced across the region. First and Arriva will also invest more than £55 million in improving stations and bring them into the 21st century.

The new franchises will also mean significant returns to the government and better value for the taxpayer. On TransPennine Express First will pay premium to the government of around £400 million over the life of the new franchise, taking the franchise out of subsidy for the first time. On the Northern franchise, Arriva will reduce the amount of annual government subsidy required by around £140 million over nine years.

The award of these franchises is a hugely positive story for rail in the North of England. They are further proof that private sector competition is good for passengers, local communities and taxpayers. This Government promised passengers we would give them the premium-quality rail services that a Northern Powerhouse deserves. I am delighted that these awards will deliver exactly that.