



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 13 January 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:35 P.M., 13 January 2017). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Attorney General: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas:

[\[58444\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, whether the Law Officers' Departments permits its employees to join a credit union through payroll deductions; and if he will make a statement.

Jeremy Wright:

I can confirm my department does have a facility that allows staff to join a credit union through payroll deductions.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Carbon Emissions

Callum McCaig:

[\[58702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish a response to the report published by the Parliamentary Advisory Group on Carbon Capture and Storage prior to the publication of the Government's emissions reduction plan.

Jesse Norman:

The Government is considering the findings and recommendations made in the report 'Lowest Cost Decarbonisation for the UK: the critical role of carbon capture and storage', published by Parliamentary Advisory Group on Carbon Capture and Storage, and will set out its approach to carbon capture and storage in due course.

Caroline Flint:

[\[59094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help carbon-intensive industries to reduce emissions.

Jesse Norman:

[Holding answer 12 January 2017]: Government policies to support industrial greenhouse gas emissions reductions include Climate Change Agreements and financial incentives for energy efficiency technologies such as Combined Heat and Power; the Department is also working collaboratively with eight energy intensive sectors through the 2050 Industrial Roadmaps Programme on actions needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency, whilst improving competitiveness. In addition, the Government is looking ahead to our emissions reduction plan which will set out how the UK will reduce its emissions through the 2020s across all sectors.

■ Charity Research Support Fund

Jo Churchill: [\[59489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to ensure that the Government's investment in science supports research in universities by means of an increase in the Charity Research Support Fund in England.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government recognises the significant contribution made by charitable funders of research. The charity support element of Quality Related research funding, provided by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), recognises the public benefit arising from research funded by charities. Over the period 2011-17, HEFCE has protected support for institutions leveraging funding from the charitable sector and has provided £198m per annum for this through to 2016-17.

The "Allocation of Science and Research funding 2016 – 2020" confirmed the Government's expectation that throughout this period HEFCE should continue to incentivise Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) to work with businesses and charities, leveraging additional investment. It will be for the HEFCE Board to determine how much to provide for charity research support from within their overall research allocation for 2017-18, once they have received their annual Grant Letter from Ministers.

■ Green Investment Bank

Caroline Lucas: [\[59325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for what reason the Green Investment Bank established 10 new subsidiary companies between 22 November and 1 December 2016; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

These entities were established in order to facilitate the potential introduction of private capital into a number of the Green Investment Bank's offshore wind assets.

Caroline Lucas: [\[59424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's report to Parliament on the proposed disposal of shares in the UK Green Investment Bank plc, Cm 9214, published in March 2016, whether the assurances received from the Government's preferred bidders for that bank will apply to any future owner of that bank and its subsidiary companies.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government has set out its plans for the sale of the Green Investment Bank (GIB) in the document "Green Investment Bank: sale of shares" laid before Parliament on 3 March 2016. This includes the commitments we are asking potential bidders to make on GIB's green values and how they propose to protect them.

Details of negotiations with potential bidders are commercially confidential.

■ Green Investment Bank: Assets

Ian Murray: [\[59258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his most recent estimate is of the value of Green Investment Bank assets; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Green Investment Bank publishes a full annual report and accounts which includes detail of the value of its assets. The report can be found on the Green Investment Bank website.

■ Green Investment Bank: Edinburgh

Ian Murray: [\[59256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect on staffing levels at the Green Investment Bank premises in Edinburgh of the proposed privatisation of that bank; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

It is the Department's intention to sell the Green Investment Bank (GIB) as a going concern along with its business and staff. The GIB's commercial value lies in its unique green specialism, including its staff who are specialists in green investment.

Ian Murray: [\[59259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will estimate the potential effect on (a) the level of staffing at, (b) the level of expertise at and (c) relationships with the financial sector in Edinburgh of the Green Investment Bank headquarters in Edinburgh of the proposed privatisation of that Bank; and what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the areas in which that bank will invest of that privatisation.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Green Investment Bank's Chairman, the noble Lord Smith of Kelvin, is strongly committed to the Edinburgh office and the plans for privatisation. The Government sees no reason why levels of expertise or relationships would be compromised in the event of a sale.

By moving the Green Investment Bank (GIB) into the private sector and freeing it from the constraints of Government ownership, GIB will be able to increase in a wider range of green sectors, furthering its role in supporting the UK green economy.

■ Green Investment Bank: Privatisation

Ian Murray: [\[59255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of the proposed privatisation of the Green Investment Bank on its existing investment portfolio and strategy.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government is confident that by moving the Green Investment Bank into the private sector and freeing it from the constraints of Government ownership, the bank will be able to increase in a wider range of green sectors, furthering its role in supporting the UK green economy.

Ian Murray: [\[59257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of the proposed privatisation of the Green Investment Bank on future levels of investment in businesses by that bank.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government has set out its plans for the sale of the Green Investment Bank (GIB) in the document "Green Investment Bank: sale of shares" laid before Parliament on 3 March 2016.

Moving GIB into private ownership will enable the bank to have greater access to capital and be free of the constraints of Government ownership including state aid restrictions. This means GIB will be able to play more of a role in supporting green investment.

■ Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Barry Gardiner: [\[59435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the UK will submit its mid-century low greenhouse gas emission development strategy to the UN as required under Article 4, paragraph 19, of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK has committed to submit a mid-century low greenhouse gas emission strategy to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change well ahead of the 2020 deadline. We are currently working towards our emissions reduction plan, which will set out how the UK intends to remain on course for meeting its legally binding target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050.

■ Hinkley Point C Power Station

Grant Shapps: [\[58272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether a price has been agreed with the operators of Hinkley Point C to cover periods of low demand and oversupply in which the power station may have to stop generating.

Jesse Norman:

If a generator is curtailed by the National Electricity Transmission System Operator (NETSO – currently National Grid in England) compensation is provided to that generator under current market arrangements. The Hinkley Point C Contract for Difference provides protection if these market arrangements were to change and the generator is left worse off as a result of such curtailment.

■ Nuclear Power Stations: Construction**Grant Shapps:**[\[58262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the local community response to the pre-planning consultations for Bradwell B and Sizewell C Power Stations.

Jesse Norman:

It is the responsibility of developers to consult with local communities at the pre-application stage of proposals for nationally significant energy infrastructure which require development consent under the Planning Act 2008.

Applications for such projects are examined by the Planning Inspectorate which reports with its recommendation to my Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, who will then decide whether or not to grant development consent.

The Secretary of State will take into account the community consultations carried out by the developer in reaching his decisions on whether or not to grant development consent but it would not be appropriate for the Department to comment on those consultations at the pre-application stage in the process.

■ Post Offices**Gill Furniss:**[\[59466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment has been made of the sustainability of the Post Office network.

Margot James:

The purpose of the current investment programme is to make the network more sustainable, to reduce the funding burden on the taxpayer.

Due to the investment since 2010, the number of branches in the network have been the most stable for decades, with the Post Office reporting the number of branches in the network at end March 2016 at 11,643, an increase over the previous year.

Additionally the financial performance of the business has improved significantly, with losses being reduced by approximately £100m since 2012.

■ Post Offices: Retail Trade**Gill Furniss:** [\[59465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the profitability of Post Office services for retail businesses that host them; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy regularly engages with the Post Office and its stakeholders on the issues affecting the network including the issue of its overall profitability and thus sustainability. These discussions are commercially sensitive to both Post Office and the retailers who provide the network and are as such confidential.

■ Post Offices: Rural Areas**Gill Furniss:** [\[59497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment has been made of the level of provision of outreach Post Office services for rural communities; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy regularly reviews the state of the network including the provision of rural services through outreaches. Outreaches are provided so Post Office can maintain access to communities, most often in rural areas, where the old post office has closed. These provide a regular part time service, with hours tailored to the levels of business in the community. They provide a welcomed link to the network for many isolated communities.

■ Regional Planning and Development: North of England**Peter Kyle:** [\[59419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, by what competitive bidding process N8 was established as the delivery partner for the creation of urban transformation centres under the Northern Powerhouse Plan.

Peter Kyle: [\[59420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much has been committed to the North East's fund for small and medium-sized enterprises under the Northern Powerhouse Plan; and from which Government programme or agency such funds have been provided.

Joseph Johnson:

The government has not made any decisions on the N8 proposal to create a network of Urban Transformation Centres. The government will continue to work with the N8 universities to explore their proposals.

■ Sizewell C Power Station

Grant Shapps:

[\[58263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information his Department holds on plans to improve highway infrastructure around the construction sites of Sizewell C to facilitate additional construction traffic; and who will be responsible for funding such improvements.

Jesse Norman:

It is up to the developer to decide on what highway infrastructure improvements to facilitate construction traffic to the site it wishes to include in its application after giving proper consideration to the responses it receives to its pre-application consultation. The developer is currently consulting on a number of proposals linked to Sizewell C – with the consultation period running from 23rd November 2016 through to 3rd February 2017. Funding of highway infrastructure to be included in an application for development consent for Sizewell C would be a matter for the developer to consider.

■ Soil: Standards

Mr Charles Walker:

[\[59482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what soil moisture levels were in each month from October 2016 in (a) Kent, (b) Essex, (c) Hertfordshire, (d) Hampshire, (e) Bedfordshire, (f) Surrey, (g) East Sussex, (h) West Sussex, (i) Wiltshire, (j) Dorset and (k) Buckinghamshire; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Calculations for the Soil Moisture Deficit (SMD) on the last day of each month from October 2016 are set out in the table below in millimetres:

| COUNTY | 31 OCTOBER 2016 | 30 NOVEMBER 2016 | 31 DECEMBER 2016 |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| (a) Kent | 96.4 | 31.0 | 26.2 |
| (b) Essex | 96.8 | 42.1 | 38.2 |
| (c) Hertfordshire | 97.8 | 30.1 | 23.2 |
| (d) Hampshire | 98.9 | 33.2 | 23.9 |
| (e) Bedfordshire | 93.3 | 27.6 | 13.7 |
| (f) Surrey | 92.4 | 25.0 | 19.8 |
| (g) East Sussex | 112.5 | 26.2 | 15.7 |
| (h) West Sussex | 84.7 | 20.6 | 12.6 |

| COUNTY | 31 OCTOBER 2016 | 30 NOVEMBER 2016 | 31 DECEMBER 2016 |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| (i) Wiltshire | 70.2 | 11.4 | 6.3 |
| (j) Dorset | 65.5 | 9.4 | 2.6 |
| (k) Buckinghamshire | 100.7 | 29.3 | 18.7 |

The figures apply to real land use (e.g. proportions of urban, grass or crops) and for a soil with water holding capacity at the median level for the soils in each county. SMD is produced on 40km squares; for this purpose they have been weighted to produce a county average according to the percentage of each square that lies within each county. The data presented comes from the Met Office Rainfall and Evaporation Calculation System (MORECS).

■ Tidal Power: Bristol Channel

Stephen Doughty:

[\[59079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the viability of proposals for tidal lagoons in the Bristol Channel, including off Cardiff.

Jesse Norman:

[Holding answer 12 January 2017]: The Hendry Review has submitted its report on the strategic case for tidal lagoons to Government. We will now consider the recommendations and determine what is in the best interests of the UK energy consumer and taxpayers in the long term.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Civil Servants

Helen Goodman:

[\[59417\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many current civil servants, excluding special advisers, were formerly employed by (a) the Conservative Research Department, (b) Conservative Central Office, (c) Members of Parliament using Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority-provided funds and (d) Members of Parliament using private funds.

Ben Gummer:

The Cabinet Office does not hold this information centrally. The Cabinet Office complies with the Civil Service Recruitment Principles and the Civil Service Management Code with regard to recruitment practice and the rules around political activities for civil servants.

■ Electronic Warfare

Kelvin Hopkins:

[\[59402\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what contribution the Emerging Technology and Innovation Analysis Cell made to the National Cyber Security Strategy 2016-21.

Ben Gummer:

The Emerging Technology and Innovation Analysis Cell (ETIAC) launched as part of the Defence Innovation Initiative by the Secretary of State for Defence had not been established when evidence was drawn for the National Cyber Security Strategy, so it did not make a direct contribution. However, officials from the Ministry of Defence and Home Office (who currently staff ETIAC) did contribute to its conclusions on technology and innovation, as did a range of other stakeholders across Government, industry and academia.

TREASURY

■ Autumn Statement

Cat Smith:

[\[58464\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the Government plans to publish the equality impact analysis of the Autumn Statement 2016 to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Mr David Gauke:

In line with the Government's legal responsibilities and policy commitment to promote fairness, the Treasury and other Government departments fully comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), including with respect to all publication requirements.

When working on policy, including measures announced at the Autumn Statement 2016, Ministers are advised of the impact a decision has on protected groups, and this is taken into account when a policy decision is made. There is no statutory requirement to prepare this information in a particular form or to publish Equality Impact Assessments.

■ Bank Services

Sir David Crausby:

[\[58729\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to improve access to basic bank accounts.

Simon Kirby:

Since September 2016, the nine largest personal current account providers in the UK have been legally required to offer fee-free basic bank accounts to customers who do not have a bank account or who are ineligible for a bank's standard current account. The Financial Conduct Authority is the body responsible for monitoring and enforcing firms' compliance with these requirements.

The Government continues to monitor firms' wider commitments on basic bank accounts, including that the accounts should be visible to potential customers alongside other personal current accounts, and that applications for basic bank accounts can be accepted through the same channels the firm uses for other personal current accounts.

Firms also report data on basic bank accounts to the Treasury. The first publication of this data, in December 2016, showed that nearly half a million people had opened a new fee-free basic bank account in the first half of 2016. Subsequently, firms also committed to stop charging fees on basic bank accounts that were opened before the relevant standards came into force. The Government welcomes this development, and the efforts made across the industry to improve basic bank accounts for all.

The publication, and further information on basic bank accounts, is available online at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/576033/Basic_bank_account_2016_dec_final.pdf.

The Treasury will continue to collect and publish basic bank account data on an annual basis.

■ Employment

John Penrose: [\[58255\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the potential for further increases in the employment rate in the UK economy over the next (a) two, (b) four and (c) six years.

Simon Kirby:

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) publish forecasts for the employment rate for all those aged over 16. This differs from the main Office for National Statistics measure which looks at those aged between 16 and 64.

In the November 2016 *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, the OBR projected the 16+ employment rate to stand at the highest annual rate since 1974 in 2016, at 60.5%, before falling to 60.1% in 2018, 59.9% in 2020 and 59.7% by 2022Q1.

■ London Underground: Industrial Disputes

Andrew Rosindell: [\[59401\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the daily cost to the UK economy of a strike on the London Underground.

Simon Kirby:

HM Treasury has not made any estimate of the daily cost to the UK economy of a strike on the London Underground.

Estimates have been calculated by various business groups but these estimates vary significantly and their accuracy has not been verified.

■ Publications: VAT

Jeremy Lefroy: [59475]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he will support the European Commission Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 2006/112/EC, to enable platform-neutral application of the zero rate of VAT to books, newspapers, magazines and periodical publications in both print and digital forms.

Jane Ellison:

The Government believes it is appropriate for greater flexibility to be extended to Member States in respect of the ability to apply reduced and zero rates of VAT.

■ Revenue and Customs: Leeds

Louise Haigh: [59404]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish the evidential basis for the decision to establish the regional centre for HM Revenue and Customs in Leeds.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs has based the locations of its regional centres on a number of key principles that will enable it to deliver a better and more modern service at lower cost to the taxpayer. They include the quality of local transport links, the local labour market and future workforce supply and retention of staff and skills it needs to continue its transformation.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Housing Supply**

John Healey: [59423]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what progress his Department is making on the implementation of (a) the recommendations of the Elphicke House Report, published in January 2015 and (b) a Housing Finance Institute, as announced on 16 March 2015.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government welcomed the Elphicke House review report and subsequently confirmed our support for the Housing Finance Institute (HFI) at Budget 2015. That organisation is now established. Details of the HFI work can be found on their website at <http://thehfi.com/>

■ Housing: Disability

Mary Glendon: [59472]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to increase the number of wheelchair-accessible properties.

Gavin Barwell:

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that local planning authorities should consider the current and future needs of disabled people in setting their housing policies. In October 2015, new Building Regulations came into force which include an Optional Requirement for new homes to be wheelchair accessible or adaptable. This requirement can be applied by local authorities where justified by need and provided that the viability of new development is not compromised. Compliance with the requirement will be checked by a building control body.

Public Houses: Closures**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:**[\[59274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps to implement adequate permanent planning protections to help pubs to remain open; and if he will make a statement.

Gavin Barwell:

From 6 April 2015, the permitted development rights for the change of use or demolition are removed for those pubs the community has demonstrated that it values the most by having nominated them as an Asset of Community Value. Permitted development rights do not apply for as long as the pub is nominated or listed as an Asset of Community Value, and a planning application is required for the change of use or demolition of the building. Any pub can be nominated as an Asset of Community Value.

Right to Buy Scheme**Chi Onwurah:**[\[59398\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to ensure that local authorities that sell council houses use receipts to build replacement stock.

Gavin Barwell:

Local authorities should manage their stock efficiently, including reinvesting sales receipts in new housing. Where our policies directly relate to local authorities selling council housing, we think it is important that receipts are used to deliver replacement homes. For example, under the reinvigorated Right to Buy, we are committed to ensuring that for every additional home sold an additional one will be provided nationally.

Right to Buy Scheme: Newcastle upon Tyne**Chi Onwurah:**[\[59396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to ensure that Right to Buy does not reduce the supply of family and specialist council housing in Newcastle.

Gavin Barwell:

The Reinvigorated Right to Buy scheme increased maximum discounts to realistic levels in 2012 and, for the first time ever, introduced a requirement that for every additional sale, a new affordable home will be provided nationally through acquisition or new supply. Under the scheme there are exemptions for certain types of properties, including sheltered housing.

Under the terms of the voluntary agreement on extending Right to Buy discounts, housing associations have committed to provide an additional home for each property sold on a one-for-one basis, nationally. They will also have the discretion not to sell a tenant the home in which they live in particular circumstances, which could include specialist housing.

■ Right to Buy Scheme: Private Rented Housing**Chi Onwurah:**[\[59397\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what proportion of council homes sold under Right to Buy in the last five years are being let for private rental; and what proportion of those homes are let on a rate not exceeding one third of occupier income.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government does not collect this information. Under the Right to Buy there are financial restrictions in place for re-sale within 5 years, and mortgage providers and landlords may also place restrictions on letting in the terms of the sale.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ 5G****Grant Shapps:**[\[58265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the report of the National Infrastructure Commission, entitled Connected Future, published on 14 December 2016, what her Department's plans are for preparing the UK's mobile telephone infrastructure for universal geographical coverage of 5G.

Matt Hancock:

The Government recognises the importance of people having connectivity where they live, work and travel and is taking firm action to improve this right across the UK.

The legally binding agreement that we reached with industry in 2014 locked in over £5bn of investment in mobile infrastructure and will result in nearly at least 90% voice/SMS text coverage of the UK's landmass by the end of 2017

But we agree with NIC that there is still further to go. We want the UK to become a world leader in 5G, which is why we announced over £1bn of funding at the Autumn

Statement to support the deployment of the next generation of digital infrastructure, including an ambitious programme of 5G testbeds.

We will consider the NIC's recommendations carefully.

■ **Broadcasting: Employment**

Kevin Brennan: [\[59469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking to protect jobs in the commercial broadcasting industry prior to the triggering of Article 50.

Matt Hancock:

Since June 2016, both Ministers and officials have held a number of meetings, with industry bodies and representatives and others to understand the issues and concerns that face broadcasters prior to the triggering of Article 50.

■ **Horse Racing: Betting**

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[59408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when she plans to make a decision on new funding arrangements for the Horse Race Betting Levy.

Tracey Crouch:

The Government intends to introduce the replacement for the current Horserace Betting Levy in April 2017. We will make a further announcement shortly.

■ **Internet Service Providers: Email**

Chi Onwurah: [\[59400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with Ofcom on consumers' ability to transfer their email archive when they change service provider.

Matt Hancock:

There have been no discussions between the Secretary and State and Ofcom on consumers' ability to transfer their email archive when they change service provider. Ofcom do not have regulatory responsibility for the providers of such services, or powers to intervene.

■ **Medical Treatments Abroad: EU Countries**

Kevin Brennan: [\[59463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps she has taken to ensure the UK's continued participation in the European Health Insurance Card scheme after the UK exits the EU.

Tracey Crouch:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership, including the European

Health Insurance Card (EHIC), remain in force. The outcome of negotiations will determine what arrangements apply once the UK has left the EU, and the Government is working to ensure the best possible outcome for the British people.

■ Mobile Broadband

Grant Shapps: [\[58264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will undertake an impact assessment of macro not-spot roaming in order to improve mobile coverage.

Matt Hancock:

Improving mobile connectivity across the UK is a priority for the Government. Roaming was considered in 2014 and rejected as it risked discouraging investment and increasing complete not spots. The Government instead favoured legally binding licence obligations on each MNO to provide voice/SMS text coverage to at least 90% of the UK's landmass by end-2017. The licence obligations arising from the December 2014 agreement have locked in investment of £5 billion and are delivering improved coverage across the UK. Ofcom's 2016 Connected Nations Report shows that 99% of UK premises now have indoor voice coverage and 96% have indoor 4G data coverage. Our recent reforms to mobile planning laws and proposed reforms of the Electronic Communications Code, will support further investment and improvements in connectivity across the UK and reduce not spots.

■ Tourism

Kevin Brennan: [\[59464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the value to the UK economy of the outbound tourism industry.

Tracey Crouch:

UK residents spent £39.0 billion overseas in 2015, on 65.7 million visits. This is a 9.8 per cent increase in spend, and a 9.4 per cent increase in the number of visits, when compared to 2014. No assessment has been made on the contribution of outbound tour operators to the UK economy.

■ Tourism: Employment

Kevin Brennan: [\[59481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the importance of continued access to the EU employment market to the UK's tourism industry.

Tracey Crouch:

Officials are working closely with the tourism industry on this issue. EU nationals make 9% of the UK's tourism workforce and make a valuable contribution to its success. We want to make the most of their skills and experience; working with the

tourism industry to provide training opportunities and work places for the best workforce possible.

■ **Tourism: UK Trade with EU**

Kevin Brennan: [59462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the importance of the Customs Union to the UK's tourism industry.

Tracey Crouch:

The UK tourism industry is flourishing and we are determined to help to maintain and grow its success. We have made clear that we will pursue the right outcome that works for the unique circumstances of the UK. The Department is committed to working with the UK tourism industry to ensure that its needs and views are understood and considered as the UK develops its negotiating position. The Secretary of State and the Minister for Sport, Tourism & Heritage are both holding roundtable meetings in January with the tourism industry.

■ **Voluntary Work: Children**

Mr Steve Reed: [59441]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when she expects the National Citizen Service 2015 Evaluation report to be published.

Mr Rob Wilson:

Consecutive, independent evaluations have demonstrated the positive impacts that National Citizen Service (NCS) delivers to both its participants and their communities. NCS is delivering more confident, capable and engaged young people. Previous evaluations for NCS are available at: www.ncsyes.co.uk/our-story

Work is ongoing on the 2015 evaluation and we plan to publish it in the near future.

DEFENCE

■ **Defence**

Catherine West: [59422]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 25 February 2016 to Question 27212, if he will release a releasable version of the JSP 900 UK Targeting Policy.

Mike Penning:

While we are working to produce an updated version of JSP900 which is releasable to 5-eyes and NATO allies, it is now not the case that we are producing a version which would be releasable to all. It is judged that the necessary removal of information that would prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces would result in a version with insufficient detail to warrant publication.

■ Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

Conor McGinn:

[\[59473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his policy is on the future strength, structure and basing of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

Mike Penning:

The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment has a regimental headquarters and three battalions, two Regular (1st Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment and 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment) and one Reserve (4th Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment).

The regimental headquarters is based in Fulwood Barracks, Preston, which is planned for disposal under the Better Defence Estate Strategy in 2022. A future location for the regimental headquarters will be determined following a process of detailed assessment and planning.

The 1st Battalion will remain a Light Infantry battalion. It is currently planned that its regular liability will grow from around 560 to 630 by 2025. On return from Cyprus in 2018, it will be based in Dale Barracks, Chester before, on current plans rotating back to Cyprus in 2022.

As announced by written ministerial statement on 15 December 2016 (HCWS367), The 2nd Battalion will be assigned to the Army's new Specialist Infantry role and joins the Headquarters Specialist Infantry Group in 2019. Under current plans its liability will change from around 560 to 270, with the balance being reinvested in other areas. It will be based in Aldershot, from 2020.

The 4th Battalion will remain a Reserve Light Infantry battalion with its headquarters in Preston and other companies in Liverpool, Blackburn, Carlisle and Manchester. It is currently planned to grow this Reserve liability from around 400 to 500 by 2025.

■ Military Aircraft: Procurement

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[59407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what account he has taken of recent changes in the exchange rate in his decision to purchase (a) 50 Apache helicopters and (b) nine P-8A Patrol Aircraft and the F-35.

Harriett Baldwin:

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave on 17 October 2016 to Question 48369 to the hon. Member for Dunfermline and West Fife (Mr Chapman).

Attachments:

1. 48369 - WQnA extract on MOD Procurement [Hansard Extract 17 October 2016 HOC 48369.docx]

■ Ministry of Defence: Innovation

Kelvin Hopkins: [\[59499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the Emerging Technology and Innovation Analysis Cell was established; what the annual budget is of that Cell; where that Cell is based; and how many staff that Cell employs.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Emerging Technology and Innovation Analysis Cell has been renamed the Innovation and Research InSight Unit (IRIS). IRIS was established in summer 2016 and was launched as part of the Defence Innovation Initiative by the Secretary of State for Defence in September 2016. IRIS is based in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and consists of three full-time MOD employees who will be joined by staff from the Home Office. Formal funding is due to commence in Financial Year 2017-18.

■ Ministry of Defence: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[59457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether AEI Cables had been contracted by his Department to supply the Type 45 Destroyer Power Improvement Programme; and whether an alternative such supplier has now been sourced.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[59458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which current defence programmes have been supplied by AEI Cables.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[59459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the current value is of existing contracts between his Department and AEI Cables.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[59460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the closure of AEI Cables.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[59470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, where existing contracts between his Department and AEI Cables are in place, whether his Department and defence programme main contractors have identified UK-based suppliers for future UK defence programme cabling requirements.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence has no direct contracts with AEI Cables, however, the company is a subcontractor on some defence programmes, including the Queen Elizabeth Class Carriers and Type 45 destroyers. Our prime contractors are responsible for managing their supply chains and, as such, following the closure of any company, we would expect them to take any appropriate action to ensure continuity of supply and to make decisions about future suppliers.

■ RAF Tain

Dr Paul Monaghan: [\[58792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, at what rank and in which section of the armed forces is the officer who holds overall responsibility for management of RAF Tain Air Weapons Range.

Dr Paul Monaghan: [\[58793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, at what rank and in which section of the armed forces is the officer responsible for day-to-day management of RAF Tain Air Weapons Range.

Mark Lancaster:

Air Weapons Range Tain, formerly RAF Tain, is part of and managed by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), its day to day operation is supported by Landmarc Support Services.

The Principal Training Safety Officer (PTSO), an Army Lieutenant Colonel, has overall responsibility for Air Weapons Range Tain. The Training Safety Officer (TSO), a Ministry of Defence (MOD) civilian C2 grade, has delegated responsibility for the day to day management of Air Weapons Range Tain.

All air activity at Tain is managed through 1 Group RAF and all ground activity at the range is managed through the PTSO/TSO, users are also responsible for their specific exercises.

■ Syria: Military Intervention

Dan Jarvis: [\[59273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of using military surveillance capabilities to record potential war crimes in Aleppo.

Mike Penning:

The UK is committed to ensuring accountability in Syria. We are supporting international inquiries, including by the UN Independent Commission of Inquiry, and we are funding projects to train and equip Syrians to collect evidence of human rights violations and abuses. Where surveillance activity over Iraq and Syria is focused on protecting our national security and supporting Coalition airstrikes against Daesh targets, we would act on any evidence related to potential war crimes that might be observed during the RAF's intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance missions.

■ Unmanned Air Vehicles

Catherine West: [\[59421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the MQ-9 Reaper User Group next plans to meet.

Mike Penning:

No date has been set for the next MQ-9 Reaper User Group meeting.

Catherine West:[\[59496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 12 October 2016 to Question 46487, to which countries RAF Reaper drones have been deployed on intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance sorties since 20 September 2016.

Mike Penning:

Pursuant to my previous answer, since 20 September 2016 UK Reapers continue to operate in support of Operation SHADER in Iraq and Syria on intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance sorties.

EDUCATION■ **Maria Strizzolo****Helen Goodman:**[\[59416\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the process was for Ms Maria Strizzolo's appointment to the Skills Funding Agency.

Caroline Dinage:

The individual concerned was recruited to a temporary maternity cover role in the Skills Funding Agency on a one-year contract. The recruitment fell under Exception 1 of the Civil Service Commissioner's recruitment principles which covers temporary appointments to fulfil an urgent need for specific skills.

■ **Obesity: Children****Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**[\[58888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 23 December 2016 to Question 58805, on how many occasions (a) Ministers and (b) officials of her Department have met (i) Ofsted and (ii) the Department of Health on the Ofsted thematic review of obesity, healthy eating and physical activity since 18 August 2016.

Edward Timpson:

Ministers and officials have regular meetings and discussions with the Department for Health and Ofsted on a range of policy matters. Officials in the Department met with Ofsted and the Department for Health in November specifically to discuss the thematic review, and are due to meet again this month.

■ **Pre-school Education****Tulip Siddiq:**[\[59327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, further to her Department's £50 million funding announcement for early years capital projects of 10 January 2017, (a) how much each funded project will receive, (b) how much funding has been granted to projects in

each local authority area in England and (c) how many applications for funding were received to support projects in each local authority area.

Caroline Dinenege:

The Department has recently made £50m available through the Early Years Capital Fund, which was a bid round committed to creating new 30 hours places and was open to local authorities, working in partnership with providers (this included providers that currently offer, or plan to offer, provision for 3- and 4-year olds) in their area. This one-off bidding round closed at the end of August 2016 and we published outcomes in January 2017.

All local authorities were informed of the status of their projects in December 2016 and a full list of successful projects can be found at: www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-capital-fund-2017

We will publish individual project amounts in due course as to do so now would inhibit local authorities' negotiations with suppliers and their ability to secure value for money.

Also attached is a document containing a list of the 510 projects originally submitted by local authorities.

Attachments:

1. List of 510 projects submitted by local authorities [59327 attachment - 510 local authority submitted projects.xlsx]

■ **Pupil Exclusions**

Catherine West:

[\[58806\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 20 December 2016 to Question 57874, whether any agency or authority under the Department for Education holds data on the improper reporting of pupil exclusions.

Edward Timpson:

No agency or authority under the Department for Education holds data on the improper reporting of pupil exclusions.

■ **Schools: Food**

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[\[58889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 23 December 2016 to Question 58004, how many meetings (a) Ministers and (b) officials of her Department have had with Public Health England on updating the School Food Standards since 18 August 2016.

Edward Timpson:

Ministers and officials have regular meetings and discussions with the Department for Health on a range of policy matters.

Ministers have had no meetings with Public Health England. Departmental officials have met with them three times since 18 August.

■ Social Services: Children**Tom Brake:** [\[58780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many local authorities are rated good for children's services.

Edward Timpson:

29 local authorities are rated overall 'good' under the current Single Inspection Framework. However, not every local authority has been inspected under that framework.

Of the remainder, one is rated 'good' for overall effectiveness under the unannounced inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children framework and 18 are rated 'good' for safeguarding overall effectiveness under the safeguarding and looked after children inspection framework.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Historic Buildings****Mr Mark Hendrick:** [\[57818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much her Department has budgeted for historic building grants (HE2) in 2017-18; which buildings have been granted funds under HE2 in the last three years; how much of those funds have been paid out or agreed to be paid in each case; and what assessment she has made of the extend to which grant-funded restoration has (a) added to an area's landscape character, (b) provided or retained wildlife habitat or nest sites and (c) enabled public access.

George Eustice:

Grants for the restoration of historic buildings (HE2) form part of the new Countryside Stewardship scheme. Plans for the 2017 application round of Countryside Stewardship, including for HE2, will be announced in the New Year.

No historic building grants were offered under the first round of agreements under this new scheme, which started in 2016. Before applying for a historic building grant, applicants need to agree with Natural England a specification tailored to the particular circumstances of the site. Separate funding to develop specifications is available as part of the scheme.

We are already funding the maintenance of traditional farm buildings under Countryside Stewardship. The predecessor scheme, Environmental Stewardship, has already provided funding of over £48 million for the maintenance and restoration of historic farm buildings.

When assessing applications for restoring or maintaining historic buildings the contribution to other objectives including landscape and wildlife and educational access are taken into account.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION■ **Brexit****Mr Pat McFadden:**[\[58659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, which 57 areas of sectoral analysis will feature in the negotiations that the Government is undertaking on the UK leaving the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

DExEU officials, supported by officials across Government, are carrying out a programme of sectoral and regulatory analysis. We are conducting analysis on over 50 sectors within the areas of goods; services; financial services; network industries; and agriculture and fisheries. We are also carrying out analysis on cross-cutting regulations. Together with extensive stakeholder engagement all this analysis will be used to inform the Government's approach to, and during, the negotiations.

■ **British Nationals Abroad: EU Countries****Paul Blomfield:**[\[59446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of the implication for the Government's policies of changes to the residency rights of UK nationals living and working in other EU Member States.

Mr David Jones:

The Department for Exiting the European Union is working closely across government to assess the potential impact on UK nationals living and working in other EU Member States. We recognise their concerns.

The Prime Minister has been clear that the Government will seek an early agreement to protect the status of UK citizens living in EU Member States, in the same way that we want to protect the status of EU nationals already living in the UK.

Paul Blomfield:[\[59450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what representations he has received from other EU countries on the residency rights of UK Nationals living in other EU countries once the UK has left the EU.

Mr David Jones:

The Prime Minister has said on several occasions that the Government will seek an early agreement to protect the status of UK citizens living in EU Member States.

This remains a top priority for the UK once negotiations commence.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Credit Unions**Gareth Thomas:** [\[58451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether his Department permits its employees to join a credit union through payroll deductions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Jones:

I can confirm that the Department for Exiting the European Union currently does not have the facility to allow staff to join a credit union through payroll deductions. Staff can still make arrangements to contribute to a credit union via direct debit.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Equality**Paula Sherriff:** [\[58235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, who the diversity champion is on his departmental board.

Mr David Jones:

The Department has appointed Catherine Webb as the dedicated senior equalities champion who sits on the Department's Executive Board and provides an insight for all protected characteristics. The Department for Exiting the European Union is committed to the creation of a diverse and inclusive working environment to ensure staff do not face any barriers to success, and all staff feel supported at work. As such, the Department is committed to the steps established in the 2016 Talent Action Plan to help the Civil Service become the most inclusive employer in the UK. The department is also committed to working with a diverse range of external organisations, to ensure our work reflects a broad range of opinions across the UK.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Recruitment**Roger Mullin:** [\[58942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many staff with negotiation expertise his Department has recruited since June 2016.

Roger Mullin: [\[58943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many trade negotiators his Department has recruited since its creation.

Mr Robin Walker:

All departments are equipping themselves with the resources they need to get the best deal for the UK. Recruitment is ongoing and we will not be giving a running commentary on particular groups. The Department for Exiting the European Union now has over 300 staff, plus the expertise of over 120 officials in Brussels from the UK Permanent Representation to the EU, and is growing fast.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Resignations**Tim Farron:** [\[59134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many officials have resigned from his Department since it was established.

Mr David Jones:

As at the 11th January 2017 one official has resigned from the Department for Exiting the European Union. There continue to be movements of civil servants between other Government Departments and DExEU as recruitment remains ongoing.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Staff**Mr Pat McFadden:** [\[58470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many (a) EU nationals and (b) non-EU nationals are employed by his Department.

Mr David Jones:

The Department for Exiting the European Union does not hold this data. All Civil Service Departments are bound by Civil Service Nationality rules and security clearance requirements. There is no requirement for Civil Service Departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose.

■ Financial Services: UK Trade with EU**Stephen Timms:** [\[59453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what estimate his Department has made of the number of jobs in the UK dependent on UK financial services passporting to the EU single market.

Mr Robin Walker:

DExEU, supported by other departments across Government, is carrying out a programme of sectoral and regulatory analysis. We are conducting analysis on over 50 sectors within the areas of goods; services; financial services; network industries; and agriculture and fisheries. We are also carrying out analysis on cross-cutting regulations. Together with extensive stakeholder engagement, all this analysis will be used to inform the Government's approach to, and during, the negotiations.

There are a range of factors affecting the financial services sector, of which passporting is one. In negotiating our future relationship with Europe we are determined to maintain this country's position as a global leader in financial services.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE■ **Abdulwahab Hussain**

Tom Brake: [\[58522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what (a) reports he has received and (b) representations he has made to his Bahrainian counterpart on the reported denial of adequate medical treatment to Husain Abdulwahab at Jau prison in Bahrain.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Officials at the British Embassy in Bahrain continue to monitor the case of Husain Abdulwahab and where we have concerns they continue to be raised with the appropriate authorities. We encourage any claims of mistreatment whilst in detention to be reported to the Ministry of Interior's Ombudsman, whose duty it is to carry out a thorough and impartial investigation.

■ **Armed Conflict: Civilians**

Tom Brake: [\[58516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his policy is on whether designating whole cities with civilian populations as military targets is a contravention of international humanitarian law.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) provides that civilians shall not be the object of attack, and prohibits indiscriminate attacks that fail to distinguish between legitimate military targets and civilians or civilian objects. IHL also provides that attacks should not be carried out if they would cause disproportionate harm to civilians.

The UK is a strong supporter of the standards set out in IHL, including the principles of distinction and proportionality, and considers that attacks that deliberately target civilians or that fail to distinguish between civilians and legitimate military targets violate IHL.

Whether or not there has been a violation of IHL in any particular instance depends on all of the circumstances. If designation of a whole city with a civilian population as a military target leads to prohibited attacks on civilians and civilian objects this would be a violation of international law.

■ **Bahrain: International Institute for Strategic Studies**

Tom Brake: [\[58528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what issues he raised to whom which related to human rights at the Manama Dialogue 2016.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

During my visit to Bahrain for the Manama Dialogue I had meetings with delegations from a number of different states covering a wide range of topics.

■ Egypt: Human Rights**Dr Paul Monaghan:**[\[58350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the government of Egypt on recent UN reports of human rights abuses in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are aware of recent statements by UN special rapporteurs expressing concern at restrictions placed on human rights defenders and civil society in Egypt. In December, the spokesperson for the then UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, expressed concern over the arrest of prominent Egyptian human rights defender Azza Soliman.

We are concerned about the decreasing space for civil society to operate in Egypt. Ministers and senior officials regularly raise our concerns with the Egyptian authorities in both London and Cairo. During my meeting with the Egyptian Ambassador on 8 December, I raised our concerns about the arrest of human rights defender Azza Soliman. In the same meeting I reiterated concerns, outlined in my statement from 1 December, about a proposed new law on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

We have also raised our concerns about human rights at the UN. During the most recent session of the UN's Human Rights Council in September we raised concerns about restrictions on civil society in both our national statement and through the EU statement.

We will continue to monitor the human rights situation in Egypt closely, and to urge the Egyptian government to ensure full implementation of the provisions for the free operation of civil society, contained in the constitution, including through a revised NGO law that conforms to international standards and protects freedom of expression.

■ Eritrea: British Nationals Abroad**Rebecca Long Bailey:**[\[58203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of UK nationals who have visited Eritrea in the last five years.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold records of the numbers of British nationals who visit Eritrea.

■ Eritrea: Diplomatic Relations**Patrick Grady:**[\[58657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, on what dates (a) he, (b) ministers from his Department and (c) predecessors met the Eritrean Ambassador

to the UK in each year since 2010; and when (i) he or (ii) Ministers from his Department plan to meet that Ambassador.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Neither I nor Ministers within my Department have held meetings with the Eritrean Ambassador to London. There is no record of any such meetings since 2010. Eritrea had limited engagement with the international community between 2011 and 2014. Since 2014, officials from Africa Directorate have met with the Eritrean Ambassador on a number of occasions to discuss areas of mutual interest.

■ **Eritrea: Human Rights**

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[58206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment the Government has made of the human rights situation in Eritrea.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government continues to have concerns about human rights in Eritrea, in particular shortcomings in the rule of law, indefinite national service, freedom of expression and religion, and level of cooperation with international human rights bodies such as the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Eritrea. Eritrea remains listed as a Human Rights Priority Country in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Human Rights Report 2015.

The Government is clear in our engagement with Eritrea about the tangible improvements in its human rights record we want to see. We urge Eritrea to implement the recommendations from its 2014 Universal Periodic Review and welcome Eritrea's recent agreement to work with the UN Development Programme to take forward these recommendations.

■ **Football: China**

Justin Madders:

[\[59261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the outcome of the £3 million funding for a grassroots football programme in China announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 23 September 2015.

Alok Sharma:

As this programme is in its early stages, no assessment has yet been made, but its impact will be evaluated during and after execution to ensure impact and value for money. The British Council manages the allocation of our funding for grassroots football in China, which aims to position the UK as China's priority partner for sport.

■ Hezbollah: Weapons

Ian Paisley: [\[58175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on the size of Hezbollah's weapons arsenal.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the Hon. Member to my previous response of 15 November 2016 (PQ 52043).

■ Israel and West Bank: Violence

Ian Paisley: [\[58173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on recent violence in Israel and the West Bank.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We receive regular updates from our posts in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem regarding the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We welcome the recent period of relative calm which stands in contrast to the upsurge in terrorist violence seen during the past year.

■ Israel: Palestinians

Ian Paisley: [\[58174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on renewed tunnel building into Israel by Hamas in Gaza.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer to my answer of 07 December 2016 (written PQ 55458).

Mr Ivan Lewis: [\[58555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to support projects that foster co-operation and co-existence between Israelis and Palestinians.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is not providing any funding for coexistence projects during the current financial year (2016/17).

Mr Ivan Lewis: [\[58563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effect that projects fostering co-operation and co-existence have on the potential development of long-term peaceful relations between the Israel and Palestinian people.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Projects that foster cooperation and coexistence can help to build understanding between Israelis and Palestinians, and maintain a constituency of support for peace.

While the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is not providing any funding for these type of projects during this financial year (2016/17), the UK has previously supported a number of coexistence projects, aimed at building people-to-people links across Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The majority of this work has been supported through the Conflict Pool, or its successor the Conflict Security and Stability Fund, with funding allocated on a yearly basis. Ministers from the Department for International Development are assessing options for how the UK can do more to support work in this area.

Mr Ivan Lewis: [\[58564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support the creation of an International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have not taken steps to support this specific fund.

■ **Israel: Security**

Mr Ivan Lewis: [\[58553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the security situation in Israeli cities in range of Hamas terrorist attacks.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have not had any discussions with the Israeli authorities on this issue.

■ **Israel: UN Resolutions**

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[59409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of Israeli compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) on urging an end to Israeli settlements.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

It has long been our position that Israeli settlement activity is illegal and undermines the viability of two states for two peoples, but it is far from the only obstacle to peace. UN Security Council Resolution 2334 addresses settlements while also calling for an end to incitement and terror. The resolution passed on 23 December and asks the Secretary-General to report to the Council every three months on the implementation of its provisions. We will monitor the situation closely.

■ **Kamal Foroughi and Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe**

Tom Brake: [\[58595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2016 to Question 53303, what representations the Government

has made to the Iranian government on the release of Kamal Foroughi and Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Ministers and officials have repeatedly made representations on all consular cases involving British nationals in Iran, including Mr Foroughi's and Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's, at all levels, with the Iranian Government. I raised these cases when I met the Iranian ambassador on 7 December and our ambassador in Iran will continue to raise these cases with the Iranian Government at every available opportunity in Tehran.

■ **Mauritania: Human Rights**

Tom Brake:

[\[58530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on the reported arbitrary detention of Mauritanian anti-slavery human rights defenders between 30 June and 3 July 2016; and what representations his Department has made to the Mauritanian government on (a) that reported detention and (b) the treatment of human rights defenders in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The British Government continues to make representations on human rights concerns at the highest levels with the Mauritanian government. Most recently, the Head of the British Office in Nouakchott raised slavery and detention of the Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement Mauritania activists with the Mauritanian Prime Minister and eight other ministers in a meeting alongside EU Heads of Mission on 9 December 2016.

Ministers and officials have also met recently with anti-slavery activists to discuss treatment of human rights defenders. On Tuesday 6 December 2016, Baroness Anelay of St Johns met with the UN Special Rapporteur on Slavery, Ms Urmila Bhoola, and the Mauritanian anti-slavery activist, Biram Dah Abeid to discuss concerns about slavery in Mauritania. Officials in Nouakchott also met with Mauritanian human rights campaigners from SOS Esclaves in the same month.

■ **Mauritania: Political Parties**

Tom Brake:

[\[58536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when his Department last met the main opposition parties in Mauritania; and whether slavery and reprisals against anti-slavery human rights defenders in that country were discussed at that meeting.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK Head of the British Office Mission in Nouakchott last met with a coalition of Mauritanian opposition parties on Friday 2 December 2016. Human rights, including the issue of slavery, were discussed during the meeting.

■ Nabeel Rajab**Tom Brake:**[\[58529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Bahrainian government on the release of Nabeel Rajab.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Officials at the British Embassy in Bahrain continue to monitor the case of Nabeel Rajab attending each of his hearings, most recently on 28 December. I continue to have broad ranging conversations with my opposite number, His Excellency Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, covering all bilateral issues.

■ Palestinians: Counter-terrorism**Mr Ivan Lewis:**[\[58554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of efforts by the Palestinian Authority to deter terrorism.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We consider that the track record of President Abbas and the Palestinian Authority shows their genuine commitment to non-violence and a negotiated two-state solution. As outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 2334, we continue to urge the leadership to do all they can to prevent all acts of violence, including through tackling incitement to violence and through condemning specific attacks when they occur. We welcome the security cooperation between the Palestinian Authority Security Forces and Israel, which is ongoing and which helps to prevent violence. The UK continues to support the Palestinian Security Forces to build up its capability.

■ Palestinians: Elections**Mr Ivan Lewis:**[\[58562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that free and fair elections take place in both the West Bank and Gaza.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We continue to call on the Palestinian leadership to work towards genuine and democratic elections for all Palestinians. Strong, inclusive and democratic institutions, based on respect for the rule of law and human rights, are crucial elements in establishing a viable and sovereign Palestinian State. Our Consulate General in Jerusalem has regularly discussed the local elections with senior Palestinian officials over the past months. Following the postponement of the elections, we have continued to urge all sides to make efforts to hold genuine and democratic local elections in the West Bank and Gaza in accordance with the law.

■ Palestinians: Human Rights

Mr Ivan Lewis: [\[58552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the Palestinian Authority's ability to ensure equal respect for the human rights of its citizens.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 24 October 2016 (written PQ 48706).

■ Palestinians: Politics and Government

Mr Ivan Lewis: [\[58551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to promote good governance by the Palestinian Authority.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the Hon. Member to my reply to the Rt Hon. Member for Enfield North (Joan Ryan) of 24 October 2016 (PQ 48772).

■ Somalia: Elections

Tom Watson: [\[58648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the ability of independent news media based in Somalia to report freely on the forthcoming presidential elections in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK has raised concerns publicly about restrictions to Freedom of Expression, Association and Assembly in Somalia: in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office updates on Human Rights Priority Countries and to the Human Rights Council. The most recent UK statement on Somalia to the Human Rights Council on 28 September.

The UK has raised concerns about these restrictions during the electoral process at the highest levels of the Federal Government of Somalia.

■ Somalia: Homicide

Tom Watson: [\[58647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the rates of conviction and sentencing in Somalia for the unlawful killing of journalists in that country; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Violations of Freedom of Expression, including the harassment, detention and extra judicial killing of journalists in Somalia, are a growing concern. In October 2016 Somalia was again ranked by the Committee to Protect Journalists as "the worst

place in the world to be a journalist" citing the high numbers of journalists killed without convictions.

Somali authorities rarely investigate such violations or prosecute perpetrators. This is due to a lack of capacity to monitor and gather information, and also an insufficient legislative framework to investigate and prosecute violations when they occur. This reinforces a culture of impunity.

The UK regularly expresses concerns at a senior level with the Federal Government of Somalia about restrictions to Freedom of Expression, Association and Assembly, and the need to investigate and prosecute cases of abuse.

Through our Conflict, Stability and Security Fund we will continue to work with the Federal Government of Somalia to strengthen the institutional and legal framework for compliance with international human rights standards and treaties, and the capacity to uphold these.

■ **Somalia: Public Relations**

Tom Watson:

[\[58596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, (a) how many contracts the Government has placed with UK-based public relations companies that include work in or on Somalia and (b) with which companies those contracts have been placed.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

According to our records, and following consultation with relevant officers, I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not awarded any contracts to UK-based public relations companies for work in or on Somalia during this Parliament.

■ **South Sudan: International Assistance**

Imran Hussain:

[\[58348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 16 November 2016 to Question 52554, who his Department's regional partners are in the facilitation of humanitarian access for aid agencies in South Sudan.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We work with a wide range of partners including other countries in the region and regional institutions to try to improve humanitarian access for all aid agencies in South Sudan.

■ **Yemen: Military Intervention**

Tom Brake:

[\[58527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the Government's policy is on each of the findings of the Saudi-led Coalition's Joint Incident Assessment Team's investigations of eight airstrikes, published on 4 August 2016.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK welcomes the release by the Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) of the outcome of eight investigations into incidents of alleged breaches of international humanitarian law (IHL) in Yemen. It is important that credible allegations of violations of IHL are investigated and the Saudi-led Coalition has committed to doing this. We regularly press, including at senior levels, the need for the Saudi-led Coalition to conduct thorough and conclusive investigations into reports of alleged violations of IHL. The UK has not been directly involved in investigations undertaken by the JIAT, but has supported its development and delivered two training sessions in Saudi Arabia on the process for investigating alleged IHL violations.

HEALTH**■ Accident and Emergency Departments****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[59328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent representations he has received from NHS trusts requesting additional support for accident and emergency services in England; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

No recent representations have been received from National Health Service trusts in respect of additional support for accident and emergency services in England.

■ Cancer: Complementary Medicine**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[59019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the oral contribution of the hon. Member for Bosworth of 8 December 2016 on the treatment of cancer using Chinese medicine, Official Report, col 450, what his policy is on the use of traditional Chinese medicine for the treatment of cancer.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department does not maintain a position on any particular complementary or alternative medicine treatments. It is the responsibility of local National Health Service organisations to make decisions on the commissioning and funding of any healthcare treatments for NHS patients taking into account issues to do with safety, clinical and cost-effectiveness and the availability of suitably qualified/regulated practitioners. They would also have to take into account any locally developed policies on funding, commissioning and priorities.

■ Care Leavers: Mental Health Services**Ian Mearns:**[\[58377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that care leavers receive specialist mental health assessments.

Nicola Blackwood:

The health, including mental health, of children in care is currently assessed when they enter and leave care. The Expert Working Group on looked-after children's mental, co-chaired by Professor Peter Fonagy and Alison O'Sullivan, is considering a wide range of issues including what kind of assessments are needed and when. The Expert Working Group is expected to finish its work in October 2017.

Ian Mearns:[\[58378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the extent of unmet mental health needs among care leavers.

Nicola Blackwood:

We have asked the Expert Working Group for looked-after children's mental health to consider how to improve access to mental health and wellbeing services. The group will bring together a wide range of experts, drawing on evidence from children and young people and the people who care for them.

■ Children in Care: Mental Health Services**Ian Mearns:**[\[58379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the Expert Working Group for looked-after children's mental health plans to publish recommendations on mental health assessments for both looked-after children and care leavers.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Expert Working Group for looked-after children's mental health will look at international evidence and consider what sort of assessment is needed and when. This will enable professionals working with looked-after children and care leavers to make evidence based decisions which are appropriate for each individual child or young person.

■ Community Health Services: Liverpool**Rosie Cooper:**[\[59411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2017 to Questions 58635, 58636, 58637, 58638, 58639, whether there is any non-recurrent funding in the contract let by Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group for Liverpool community health services to be provided by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust from 2017-18.

Mr Philip Dunne:

We are informed by NHS England that the contract for 'core services' which will be let by NHS Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on behalf of the CCG, Liverpool City Council and NHS England has not yet been let. Following a transaction process led by NHS Improvement (NHSI), Bridgewater NHS Foundation Trust (FT) has been identified as the preferred bidder, and the submission is being assured by NHSI. When let, the existing Liverpool Community Health contract will novate to

Bridgewater NHS FT. As such, and as with all other major National Health Service contracts, there is no specific end point.

The accepted bid for 2017/18 includes £4.6 million non-recurrent funding for transition and transformation, the same level as for the current year.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[59412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2017 to Questions 58635, 58636, 58637, 58638, 58639, what the recurrent contract value is in the contract let by Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group for Liverpool community health services to be provided by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust from 2017-18.

Mr Philip Dunne:

We are informed by NHS England that the contract for 'core services' which will be let by NHS Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on behalf of the CCG, Liverpool City Council and NHS England has not yet been let. Following a transaction process led by NHS Improvement (NHSI), Bridgewater NHS Foundation Trust (FT) has been identified as the preferred bidder, and the submission is being assured by NHSI. When let, the existing Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust contract will novate to Bridgewater NHS FT. As such, and as with all other major National Health Service contracts, there is no specific end point.

The accepted bid for 2017/18 is for £77 million recurrent funding, the same level as for the current year.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[59413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2017 to Questions 58635, 58636, 58637, 58638, 58639, whether the recurrent and non-recurrent contract value let by Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group for Liverpool community health services includes (a) the National annual two per cent NHS Efficiency target and (b) the North Mersey Sustainability and Transformation Plan requirement for an annual 3.5 per cent increase in community health service case activity in each of the next five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

We are informed by NHS England that the contract for 'core services' which will be let by NHS Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on behalf of the CCG, Liverpool City Council and NHS England has not yet been let. Following a transaction process led by NHS Improvement (NHSI), Bridgewater NHS Foundation Trust (FT) has been identified as the preferred bidder, and the submission is being assured by NHSI. When let, the existing Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust contract will novate to Bridgewater NHS FT. As such, and as with all other major National Health Service contracts, there is no specific end point.

Efficiency targets post 2018/19 cannot be forecast for any NHS provider. For 2017/18 and 2018/19, all NHS providers are expected to deliver the nationally set target of 2% efficiencies. This would be expected of Bridgewater NHS FT across all its services.

The Cheshire and Mersey Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) contained a national template which set out that community spend was anticipated to increase by approximately 3.5% per year (for all CCGs) while hospital spend was anticipated to increase by approximately 1.8% each year. The STP, along with other planning activity, is expected to manage spend to sustainable levels while also ensuring quality and service performance are secured. In North Mersey, there is a Local Delivery System Plan which describes all the work to be undertaken to address this. This includes implementation of the Healthy Liverpool Community Model.

■ Department of Health: Credit Unions

Gareth Thomas: [58454]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department permits its employees to join a credit union through payroll deductions; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

We can confirm the Department currently does not have the facility to allow staff to join a credit union through payroll deductions. Staff can still make arrangements to contribute to a credit union via direct debit.

■ General Practitioners: Mental Illness

Luciana Berger: [59431]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health 2016, how much his Department has spent on incentive schemes to encourage GPs to monitor the physical health of their patients who have mental health illness in the last 12 months.

Nicola Blackwood:

The information is not held centrally.

■ Health Services: Wansbeck

Ian Lavery: [58253]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much funding the Government plans to provide to which NHS services in Wansbeck constituency in each of the next five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Information is not available in the format requested. Future funding for local health services in Northumberland (which covers Wansbeck constituency) is a matter for NHS England.

A full table setting out allocations to each clinical commissioning group for 2016-17 to 2020-21 is published on NHS England's website and can be found here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ccg-allocations.pdf>

■ Life Expectancy

Ian Lavery: [\[58254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the estimated life expectancy is for people who earn (a) below and (b) above the average household income.

Nicola Blackwood:

Data for life expectancy, broken down by household income, is not routinely collected.

Life expectancy is higher now than it has ever been for both men and women, and is generally increasing in most areas – including deprived areas, but inequalities remain.

The Office for National Statistics publishes data on life expectancy broken down by deprivation decile. The latest available data, 2012-14, show that life expectancy for males in the most deprived decile is 74.1 years, compared with 83.2 years for males in the least deprived decile. For females it is 79.1 years in the most deprived decile, compared with 86.1 years in the least deprived decile.

■ Mental Health Services

Craig Tracey: [\[58682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with GP representatives, primary care providers or mental health organisations about the quality of mental health support provided in primary care.

Nicola Blackwood:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State meets with representatives of primary care providers and mental health organisations on a regular basis to discuss a wide range of topics, including improving care and support for people with mental health problems.

Luciana Berger: [\[59430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of people with severe mental health problems received screening in accordance with NICE guidelines in the last 12 months.

Nicola Blackwood:

The information is not available in the format requested.

■ Mental Health Services: Restraint Techniques

Luciana Berger: [\[59432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patients in each ethnic group have been injured in mental healthcare settings through the use of inadequate restraint practices in each of the last five years.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not held centrally.

■ Mental Health Services: Waiting Lists

Luciana Berger: [\[59429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of people experiencing psychosis received a NICE-approved package within two weeks of referral in each year since 2010.

Nicola Blackwood:

Waiting times data for early intervention in psychosis are published from two datasets: from the interim management level data in NHS England's Unify2 collection, and from experimental data in the Mental Health Services Dataset through NHS Digital. Links to these publications are below:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/eip-waiting-times/>

<http://content.digital.nhs.uk/mentalhealth>

The provision of National Institute for Health and Care Excellence approved care will take longer to measure. The Royal College of Psychiatrists' Centre for Quality Improvement is currently undertaking assessment and quality improvement work, supported by an annual self-assessment by all early intervention in psychosis services. The first results of this will be published in April 2017.

■ NHS Trusts: EU Nationals

Mr Pat McFadden: [\[58469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many EU nationals work in each NHS Trust (a) as doctors, (b) as nurses and (c) in other positions.

Mr Philip Dunne:

On 20 December, NHS Digital published data on the nationality of staff working in the National Health Service in England, as at September 2016. An European Union national is a person who holds the nationality of an EU member country and as such includes those who declare themselves as United Kingdom nationals.

The number of EU doctors, nurses and other staff, in each NHS trust, who declared themselves as nationals from the EU is set out in the attached table. Those staff who are from the UK have been identified separately. As nationality is self-reported it may reflect cultural heritage rather than country of birth, nor do these figures necessarily equate to migrants from other countries.

Attachments:

1. PQ58469 attached file [PQ58469 - attached document.xlsx]

■ Nutrition

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[58887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 23 December 2016 to Question 58016, when his Department plans to publish the proposed timescale for the reviews of the nutrient profiling model.

Nicola Blackwood:

The proposed timescale for the review of the nutrient profiling model is due to be published on gov.uk at the end of January 2017.

■ **Tobacco****Mary Glendon:**[\[59260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the Government plans to publish a new Tobacco Control Plan for England.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government is developing a new tobacco control plan, which will be published shortly.

HOME OFFICE■ **Deportation: EU Nationals****Stephen Timms:**[\[59452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her most recent assessment is of the success and value for money of Operation Adoze; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Operation Adoze enabled Immigration Enforcement to remove those abusing their free movement rights – working closely with partners as appropriate. As this approach was effective, the approach has been rolled out nationally, and the published guidance was updated accordingly in May 2016.

■ **Immigrants: EEA Nationals****Neil Coyle:**[\[59405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EEA nationals residing in the UK who are out of work or not actively seeking work for a period longer than three months have been asked to provide evidence of identity and nationality of an EEA member state and evidence that they are exercising a free movement right in the UK in each of the last six years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but the Home Office does not hold the information requested.

■ **Immigration: EU Nationals****Paul Blomfield:**[\[59341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for permanent residency from EU nationals are outstanding.

Paul Blomfield: [\[59343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications from EU nationals for permanent residency have been (a) rejected and (b) successful in each of the last (i) 12 months and (ii) five quarters.

Paul Blomfield: [\[59344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what average time is taken for a decision on permanent residency to be made for EU nationals.

Paul Blomfield: [\[59345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the most common reason was for rejecting applications from EU nationals for permanent residency in the last three years.

Paul Blomfield: [\[59346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU nationals who were rejected for permanent residency were asked to leave the UK in the last 12 months.

Paul Blomfield: [\[59447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to change the basis on which EU nationals get permanent residency once the UK has left the EU.

Paul Blomfield: [\[59448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with her Cabinet colleagues on the effect of granting permanent residency to all EU nationals resident in the UK on 23 June 2016 on (a) the economy, (b) public services and (c) the UK's Brexit negotiations.

Paul Blomfield: [\[59449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the success rate for applications for permanent residency applications from EU nationals was in each of the last five quarters.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

At present, the UK remains in the EU. This means that EEA, Swiss and UK nationals continue to have the same rights and status that they had before the referendum.

This Government has been clear that we want to protect the status of EU nationals already living here and the only circumstances in which that would not be possible is if British citizens' rights in European member states were not protected.

Statistics on applications for Documents Certifying Permanent Residence issued to EEA nationals are published quarterly in table ee_02_q of the Immigration Statistics. These cover the period up to September 2016 and include data for grants, refusals and invalid applications (hence rejected). The most recent edition (European Economic Area data tables Immigration Statistics July to September 2016) is available at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572387/eea-q3-2016-tables.ods

The Home Office does not publish data on the reasons for 'rejections' in this category or the number of permanent residence cases that remain pending.

In line with Regulation 18(1) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations, a document certifying permanent residence must be issued to an EU national as soon as possible after an application and relevant documents have been submitted. The time taken to reach a decision will depend on the complexity of the case and the evidence supplied.

■ Immigration: Poland

Mrs Louise Ellman:

[58962]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what representations she has received on the concerns of the Polish community since the EU referendum; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force.

Poland is and will remain an important partner for the UK. The Secretary of State for the Home Department has regular contact with her European counterparts, including Polish Interior Minister Mariusz Błaszczak. Most recently this included an inward ministerial visit to the UK on 5 September, and as part of the UK Poland Intergovernmental Consultations on 28 November. A range of issues of mutual interest were discussed including free movement rights, action to tackle hate crime, and continued security and police cooperation.

■ Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Luciana Berger:

[59428]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect of funding changes on the service provided by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service in the last six years.

Brandon Lewis:

There is no question that fire and rescue services still have the resources they need to do their important work. In 2016/17 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority has £60.9m of core spending power, a reduction of 1 percent when compared to 2015/16. Since 2010/11, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authorities' non-ringfenced reserves rose by 124% to £28.2 million. Over the same period, the service attended 32 percent fewer incidents (including rescues and other non-fire incidents) and 33 percent fewer fires.

Fire and Rescue Authorities have delivered significant savings over the past five years but like all parts of the public sector, services need to increase efficiency and

the Government believes there is scope to make further savings, for example through smarter working, greater collaboration and more effective procurement.

■ Metropolitan Police: Ethnic Groups

Ms Harriet Harman: [59445]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of (a) police officers and (b) staff employed by the Metropolitan Police Service are of black and ethnic minority backgrounds.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office collects and publishes data on the ethnicity of the police workforce on an annual basis. The latest data show that as at 31 March 2016, 12.6% of police officers and 25.7% of police staff in the Metropolitan Police Service were from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds.

The latest available data are published in the "Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2016" statistical bulletin:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2016>

The data can also be found on the police.uk website:

<https://www.police.uk/metropolitan/E05000614/performance/diversity/>

■ Metropolitan Police: Public Appointments

Keith Vaz: [59527]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have applied for the post of Metropolitan Police Commissioner; and when the closing date is for applications for that post.

Brandon Lewis:

The Government will not comment on the progress of this recruitment process while it is ongoing, but will provide information about the number of applications when the appointment is announced in due course.

■ Overseas Students: Entry Clearances

Paul Blomfield: [59615]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2017 to Question 58285, how many of the 968 institutions that had Tier 4 sponsor status revoked in the period May 2010 to September 2016 were universities.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Only two of the 968 institutions that had their Tier 4 sponsor licences revoked between May 2010 and September 2016 were UK universities.

Paul Blomfield: [\[59616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2017 to Question 58285, how many institutions failed their basic competence assessment but retained their licences after having had discretion applied in the period May 2010 to September 2016; and how many of those institutions were universities.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but in order to obtain these figures a manual interrogation of Home Office databases would need to be undertaken, which would incur disproportionate costs.

■ **Police: Finance**

Keith Vaz: [\[59528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the police funding formula.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office is undertaking a process of engagement with the policing sector and independent experts on reform of the Police Core Grant Distribution Formula. No decisions will be taken until Ministers have considered the outcome of the Review. Any new formula will be subject to public consultation before implementation.

■ **Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013**

Kate Green: [\[58874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2016 to Question 54678, when details of the review of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 and consultation documents will be published on her Department's website; what deadline is in place to ensure stakeholders have adequate time to respond to the consultation; and what steps she is taking to ensure that the consultation process is accessible to small dealers such as Gypsies, Travellers and Roma.

Brandon Lewis:

We are not publishing a formal consultation document to inform the review of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013. We have written to interested bodies and organisations to invite them to submit evidence to inform the review and we have asked for responses by 30 January. We will consider any reasonable request to submit evidence beyond this date to ensure that we hear from as wide a range of interested parties as possible. We are interested to hear from smaller dealers, including from Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities, with whom we are in direct contact about the review.

■ **Theft**

Chi Onwurah: [\[59399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2016 to Question 57549, what the maximum amount is that police forces can

charge for the recovery of stolen property; whether charges must reflect costs; and to whom victims can appeal if they consider police charges too high.

Brandon Lewis:

The return of recovered stolen property and any associated charges is an operational matter for the police.

These charges are set by Statutory Instrument (The Removal, Storage and Disposal of Vehicles (Prescribed Sums and Charges) Regulations 2008).

Where a person has a complaint about the level of charges, they may complain to the chief officer or the Police and Crime Commissioner.

■ **Undocumented Migrants: Private Rented Housing**

Stuart C. McDonald:

[\[59523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to (a) measure and (b) assess the effects of the right to rent scheme.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Right to Rent scheme is predicated on checks being carried out by third parties (landlords and lettings agents). This means that the majority of illegal migrant prospective tenants will be denied access to the private rented sector as a result of these checks with no intervention by enforcement officers and no reference to the Home Office.

However, information about a range of factors is collected to measure the performance of the scheme itself. The Right to Rent scheme is a single measure among others which restrict access to services and benefits and encourage illegal migrants to return home.

Monitoring of the effects of the Right to Rent scheme on landlords and tenants is also ongoing through the expert Landlords Consultative Panel, co-chaired by the Immigration Minister and Lord Best, an acknowledged expert in the fields of housing and planning. The Panel comprises bodies representing landlords, lettings agents, housing charities, local authorities and the Equality and Human Rights Commission amongst others. The Panel meets periodically, and communication channels outside these meetings allow for reporting by private rented sector and third sector groups of the experience of those they represent.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ **Central African Republic: International Assistance**

Fiona Bruce:

[\[58869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the outcome of the Brussels conference for the Central African Republic on 17 November 2016.

James Wharton:

DFID welcomes the outcome of the Brussels donor conference for the Central African Republic which raised approximately \$2 billion against an overall target of \$3.1 billion over five years. This will fund a joint recovery and peacebuilding plan supported by the government, the EU, the UN and the World Bank. DFID remains concerned about the humanitarian situation. An estimated 50% of the population needs humanitarian assistance and the crisis is one of the least well-funded in the world. At the conference the UK's Ambassador to the Central African Republic announced a three year package of humanitarian support totalling £60 million.

■ Developing Countries: Dementia**Tom Brake:**[\[58669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of trends in the number of people globally living with dementia on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 3.

James Wharton:

DFID is committed to help countries achieve Global Goal 3, to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. The largest burden of ill health in developing countries remains communicable diseases and diseases of maternal and child health and nutrition, but dementia is increasing as a health concern. DFID helps countries to strengthen health systems, so they can respond to current and future health needs, and committed in the recent development reviews to strengthen our work on disability so that fewer people are held back by conditions such as dementia.

■ Developing Countries: Tuberculosis**Tom Brake:**[\[58865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to encourage international co-operation to tackle the spread of tuberculosis.

James Wharton:

Tackling the spread of infectious diseases like tuberculosis (TB) is a priority across the recently published bilateral and multilateral development reviews and the research review. The United Nations General Assembly recently agreed to hold the first ever High Level Meeting on TB in 2018 and ahead of this, we will work with international partners to galvanise increased commitments.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Antidumping****Louise Haigh:**[\[58975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how the UK's representative on the Committee of Permanent Representatives was instructed to vote on the proposals to modernise the UK's trade defence instruments.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 11 January 2017]: The UK believes in a free and open approach to trade. There was no formal vote.

Arms Trade: Export Controls**Margaret Ferrier:**[\[58546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many licence applications have been refused under Criterion 2c of the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria in each year since 2008; and what the destination country was of each of those applications so refused.

Mark Garnier:

I refer the hon Member to the answer given by my hon Friend for Broxtowe (Anna Soubry), the then Minister of State for Small Business, Industry and Enterprise, to the hon Member for Leeds Central on 4 May, UIN 36102.

Since this answer was provided a further 10 Standard Individual Export Licence applications have been refused under Criterion 2.

Licences granted and refused are published as Official Statistics, on a quarterly basis, at www.gov.uk.

Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement**Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[59272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether he has made a request to the Government's business managers for a (a) debate and (b) vote on ratification of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement; and if he will publish the full text of that agreement.

Greg Hands:

My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade is committed to holding a full parliamentary debate on the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. Department for International Trade officials have made a request to Government business managers to identify a date. As is normal practice, decisions on the timing of a vote on ratification will be made following the European Parliament's vote. The full text of the agreement is publicly available.

Department for International Trade: Credit Unions**Gareth Thomas:**[\[58457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether his Department permits its employees to join a credit union through payroll deductions; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

I can confirm my department currently does not have the facility to allow staff to join a credit union through payroll deductions. Staff can still make arrangements to contribute to a credit union via direct debit.

■ Department for International Trade: Staff**Mr Pat McFadden:**[\[58471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many (a) EU and (b) non-EU nationals are employed by his Department.

Greg Hands:

All Government Departments are bound by legal requirements concerning the right to work in the UK and, in addition, the Civil Service Nationality Rules. Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks, but there is no requirement on departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose. Once employed, employees are invited to disclose their nationality, however this is entirely voluntary. As such, there are no total figures for the department that can be provided.

■ EU External Trade**Jonathan Edwards:**[\[58089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the average amount of time taken is for EU trade agreements with other countries to be (a) negotiated and (b) ratified.

Greg Hands:

The amount of time taken to negotiate and ratify EU trade agreements can vary substantially. However, as an indication, negotiations for the Comprehensive Economic & Trade Agreement (CETA) with Canada were concluded after five years of formal talks, whilst negotiations with Vietnam and Singapore took three and four years respectively. The EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement of 2011 is the most recent agreement to be fully concluded, with the EU and all Member States having ratified by 2015. In each case, timeframes are not necessarily indicative for other agreements.

■ EU External Trade: Solar Power**Barry Gardiner:**[\[59436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to include representatives of the solar industry in trade discussions with China.

Greg Hands:

China is a key market for international trade discussions in renewable energy and is the world's largest market for both photovoltaics and solar thermal. We have a toolbox of services and a network of experts available to support the UK solar industry to access this market.

■ Fossil Fuels: Nigeria

Callum McCaig: [\[58177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Nigeria.

Callum McCaig: [\[58178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Angola.

Callum McCaig: [\[58179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Norway.

Callum McCaig: [\[58180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Saudi Arabia.

Callum McCaig: [\[58181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Iran.

Callum McCaig: [\[58182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Qatar.

Callum McCaig: [\[58183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to the United Arab Emirates.

Callum McCaig: [\[58184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Brazil.

Callum McCaig: [\[58185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Mexico.

Callum McCaig: [\[58186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to the US.

Callum McCaig: [\[58187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage oil and gas supply chain exports to Iraq.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) supports the oil and gas supply chain through various mechanisms.

UK Export Finance (UKEF), the UK's export credit agency (ECA), is strategically and operationally aligned with DIT and offers competitive finance and insurance packages to support UK-based companies of all sizes and across all sectors. In 2015/16 UKEF provided £586 million of support for exports in the energy industry.

DIT currently operates 'High Value Campaigns' (HVC's) in Azerbaijan, Brazil, East Africa (Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda), India, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Oman and Saudi Arabia.

The programme is reviewed on a regular basis. An assessment of a HVC for Iran is being considered as part of the business planning process for 2017/18. For markets not covered by HVCs, DIT staff offer help to UK companies on a case by case basis.

Overseas Trade**Barry Gardiner:**[\[58411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on international trade policy of the Prime Minister's announcement of the creation of the GREAT club bespoke visa and immigration service.

Greg Hands:

GREAT Club was launched in January 2014. It is an invitation-only service, providing leading business executives with bespoke immigration support.

In November 2016, the Prime Minister announced that the Indian Government will be able to nominate GREAT club members. This agreement reinforces the Government's commitment to strengthen trading ties with all corners of the globe as the UK leaves the EU and demonstrates both governments' commitment to building the closest possible trade and economic relationship between the two countries.

Overseas Trade: Caribbean**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[58364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps the Government is taking to promote trade between the UK and (a) Jamaica, (b) St Lucia and (c) Montserrat and Anguilla.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) offer a range of export services to UK firms. These include actively seeking out opportunities for UK firms in each market; conducting market research and leading market visits. In February 2016, there was a security & defence market visit to Jamaica. The Department are planning further events such as a UK food and beverage regional event in collaboration with the GREAT campaign for later this year. In St Lucia, DIT has worked to promote the interests of UK companies, particularly in the infrastructure sectors.

For Montserrat and Anguilla, we have reiterated our commitment to ensuring that the Territories reach their full potential as open, dynamic and sustainable economies, delivering growth, prosperity and employment for their citizens.

■ Overseas Trade: Tanzania

Andrew Rosindell: [\[58362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps the Government is taking to promote trade between the UK and Tanzania.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has three dedicated staff in Tanzania. Tanzania is part of the 'High Level Partnerships Programme' which promotes cross-government coordination of trade support. In addition, high level support for specific commercial opportunities is provided by the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy for Tanzania, Lord Hollick.

DIT Tanzania is involved in three high value campaigns, those for oil & gas, infrastructure and renewables. The current pipeline includes at least £500m worth of potential UK export success over the next five years.

■ Trade Agreements: Heathrow Airport

Sammy Wilson: [\[58465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans his Department has to make use of the proposed expansion of Heathrow Airport and potential new long-haul air links arising from that expansion in negotiating future trade agreements.

Mark Garnier:

I refer the hon Member for East Antrim to the answer I gave to the hon Member for Copeland on 11 November 2016, UIN: 52613.

■ Trade Promotion

Barry Gardiner: [\[58078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what his plans are for funding sector-specific (a) trade missions and (b) market research to encourage exports.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade is committed to providing operational support for exports and facilitating inward and outward investment. Since the founding of the Department for International Trade, 82 trade missions have been undertaken or are scheduled to take place up to and including 31 March 2017, visiting 35 markets (including North America, East & South Asia).

Barry Gardiner: [\[58079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what funding his Department plans to provide to support sector-specific trade delegations to (a) North America, (b) East Asia and (c) South Asia.

Greg Hands:

Since the founding of the new Department for International Trade, up to and including the 31st March 2017, the following funds have been invested to support sector-specific trade delegations to a) North America, b) East Asia and c) South Asia;

a) North America: £293,310

b) East Asia: £190,845

c) South Asia: £212,955

Barry Gardiner:[\[58080\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the Trade Access Programme scheme will continue in 2017-18.

Greg Hands:

The Department can confirm that the Tradeshow Access Programme will continue in 2017-18.

Barry Gardiner:[\[58168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the budget of the trade access programme will be next year.

Mark Garnier:

DIT is currently finalising its business planning forecasting for 2017 – 18. The Tradeshow Access Programme budget will be announced in due course.

Barry Gardiner:[\[58169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what (a) multi-industry and (b) industry-specific market visits his Department plans to organise in key regions including (i) North America, (ii) East Asia and (iii) South Asia.

Greg Hands:

Since the Department for International Trade was founded, the following multi-industry and industry-specific market visits have been delivered or are planned to take place in the regions referenced up to and including the 31st March.

In summary, the department has delivered or is planning to deliver 3 multi-industry market visits to North America and 1 each to East Asia and South Asia, 10 industry-specific market visits to North America and 6 each to East Asia and South Asia.

Planning for 17/18 is currently underway and a programme of market visits for the period will be finalised in due course.

Barry Gardiner:[\[58410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps his Department is taking to offer support to new exporters with meeting areas and networking facilities at overseas exhibitions.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade supports over 400 events and missions annually and has a presence at major trade shows overseas to support UK companies, including new British exporters. At these events meeting areas and networking facilities are available to help businesses promote their goods/services.

■ UK Trade and Investment**Barry Gardiner:**[\[58413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the relative commercial success of UKTI sponsored multi-industry market visits and industry-specific events since his Department was created.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade's International trade and Investment team (ITI), which assumed the responsibilities of UKTI in July 2016, undertakes a yearly client survey of businesses to measure the quality and impact of our services. In financial year 2015-16:

- 65% of businesses attending DIT Trade Shows and Missions expected their attendance to result in a positive financial benefit. On average, businesses anticipated additional export sales of £331,000 as a direct result of this activity.
- For those attending DIT-sponsored Events, 41% of businesses expected a positive financial benefit. On average, businesses anticipated additional export sales of £611,000 per business as a result of attending Events organised with the support of the Department.

■ UK Trade with EU: Chemicals**Barry Gardiner:**[\[58414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what representations his Department has received from chemical companies based in the UK on their access to EU markets after the UK leaves the EU.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade, and other departments including DExEU, BEIS, DEFRA and HSE, have had extensive discussions with representatives from both UK based chemicals companies and trade bodies such as the Chemical Industries Association, the British Coatings Federation and others at both Ministerial and official level. The Department will continue to hold such discussions, as it does with many sector representatives.

Barry Gardiner:[\[58415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he plans to take to ensure that British industries dependent on the REACH regulation to import raw materials for coatings and inks will be able to import the materials they need after the UK leaves the EU.

Mark Garnier:

As the Prime Minister has stated, we want British companies to have the maximum freedom to trade with, and operate in the Single Market – and to let European businesses do the same here - including the trade in the REACH regulated chemicals used in coatings and inks after the UK leaves the EU.

DIT is in regular discussion with others across Whitehall to help ensure this is the case. This includes colleagues in DEFRA and HSE who are responsible for regulation and standards for the sector.

UK Trade with EU: Manufacturing Industries**Barry Gardiner:**[\[58412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the potential access of British coatings companies to European markets after the UK leaves the EU.

Mark Garnier:

The Chemical Industry Association estimates the chemical sector is worth £15 billion annually to the UK economy.

As the Prime Minister has stated, we want British companies to have the maximum freedom to trade with and operate in the Single Market – and to let European businesses to do the same here.

The Department for International Trade, colleagues in BEIS and others have regular discussions with representatives of the British coatings industry. Delegates from DIT, BEIS, HSE and DEFRA, who are responsible for regulation and standards for the sector, recently participated in a round-table discussion on the UK leaving the EU organised by the British Coatings Federation (BCF) and attended by a number of companies from the sector.

World Trade Organisation**Barry Gardiner:**[\[58537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what his policy is on whether the UK's schedules of concessions and commitments will be submitted to the WTO as modifications or as rectifications after the UK has left the EU.

Greg Hands:

As the proposed UK schedules will replicate the UK obligations contained in the current EU schedules and not alter the scope of UK concessions the Government intends to follow the WTO rectification procedures established, in 1980, for goods, and 1999, for services.

Barry Gardiner:[\[58538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to his Written Ministerial Statement of 5 December 2016, HCWS316, how the planned UK-specific

WTO schedules he announced in his 5 December statement will differ from the UK's existing obligations.

Greg Hands:

As the Government prepares UK-specific WTO schedules, it is the intention of the Government not to alter the scope of UK obligations, or the concessions currently enjoyed by WTO members.

Chris Leslie:

[\[59071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to his written ministerial statement of 5 December 2016, Official Report, HCWS316, on the UK's commitments at the World Trade Organisation, what process he plans to adopt to secure parliamentary approval of the necessary draft schedules he is preparing.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 12 January 2017]: Parliament will be involved in helping shape the UK's future as we leave the European Union. We will keep Parliament informed of the development of the schedules.

JUSTICE

■ Magistrates' Courts: Staff

Christina Rees:

[\[58143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many full-time equivalent staff have been employed in magistrates' courts in each year since 2010.

Christina Rees:

[\[58144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many full-time equivalent staff have been employed in Crown courts in each year since 2010.

Christina Rees:

[\[58145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many full-time equivalent staff have been employed in county courts in each year since 2010.

Sir Oliver Heald:

Information on the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff employed by HMCTS by jurisdiction in each of the last four years is set out in the table below. Information prior to 2013 is not held centrally.

| Date | FTE | | |
|------------|-------|--------|--------------|
| | Crown | County | Magistrates' |
| 31/03/2013 | 2,076 | 4,143 | 5,059 |
| 31/03/2014 | 2,000 | 4,141 | 4,758 |
| 31/03/2015 | 2,050 | 3,761 | 4,352 |
| 31/03/2016 | 2,133 | 3,764 | 4,065 |

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ Palace of Westminster: Repairs and Maintenance

Chris Bryant:

[\[59461\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, when he plans to respond to the report of the Joint Committee on Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster.

Mr David Lidington:

It will be a matter for the House to make a decision on the recommendations of the Joint Committee report. As the Hon Member is aware, I announce forthcoming business every Thursday morning at Business Questions.

Future proceedings on the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster, and all other future business, will be announced in the usual way.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Parliamentary Private Secretaries: Travel

Chris Bryant:

[\[59433\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, how many Parliamentary Private Secretaries have travelled (a) with and (b) on behalf of their Ministers since she came into office.

Mrs Theresa May:

Travel arrangements are made in accordance with the Ministerial Code. This information is not held centrally.

■ Prime Minister: Meetings

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[58547\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, when information on her external meetings from July to September 2016 will be published.

Mrs Theresa May:

Information covering the period from July to September 2016 was published on 21 December 2016 and is available on the gov.uk website.

■ **Saudi Arabia: Ammunition****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[58302\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what discussions she has had with the Saudi government on its possession of internationally prohibited munitions.

Mrs Theresa May:

I refer the hon. Member to the Statement made by the Secretary of State for Defence, my right hon. Friend the Member for Sevenoaks (Mr Fallon) on 19 December 2016, Official Report, column 1215-1227.

■ **Yemen: Military Intervention****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[58301\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she discussed the conflict in Yemen with the Saudi government on (a) 15 September and (b) 7 December 2016.

Mrs Theresa May:

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the right hon. Member for Leicester East (Mr Vaz) on 16 December 2016, UIN 56583.

TRANSPORT■ **Cycling****Ian Austin:**[\[58191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with organisations representing cyclists since his appointment.

Andrew Jones:

As the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport I am responsible for cycling. I last met with organisations representing cyclists on 14 November 2016 and will be meeting with the All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group in a few weeks.

Ian Austin:[\[58192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken to improve safety for cyclists since his appointment.

Andrew Jones:

The Government is fully committed to creating a safe environment for all road users, and in particular vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

In September we launched a cycle safety campaign targeting both cyclists and lorry drivers to raise awareness of the dangers of being alongside a lorry turning left. The

campaign ran in London and Manchester – cities with the highest number of cyclist fatalities involving a lorry.

We are also working on wider cyclist safety in other ways, including changes to vehicle design, mandatory training for HGV drivers and optional training for cyclists, including extending the Bikeability programme of cycle training. Bikeability provides trainees with riding skills suited to the road, but also explains the importance of obeying the Highway Code, the correct use of safety equipment, and sharing the road with other people.

Ian Austin:

[\[58357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will meet the All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group to discuss issues facing cyclists in London and elsewhere.

Andrew Jones:

I am responsible for cycling and will be meeting with the All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group in the next few weeks.

■ **Cycling: Accidents**

Ian Austin:

[\[58358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he, his driver or any official reported to the police the incident on 12 October 2016 in which a cyclist came off his bike.

Andrew Jones:

The incident was not reported to the police. At the time of the incident, my Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State checked the cyclist was okay and waited until he was back on his feet. He spoke to the cyclist and apologised; they shook hands. No details were requested at the time by either party who then went their separate ways.

■ **Cycling: Safety**

Ian Austin:

[\[58352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 in protecting cyclists.

Andrew Jones:

No assessment has been made.

■ **Department for Transport: Credit Unions**

Gareth Thomas:

[\[58461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department permits its employees to join a credit union through payroll deductions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr John Hayes:

I can confirm my department currently does not have the facility to allow staff to join a credit union through payroll deductions. Staff can still make arrangements to contribute to a credit union via direct debit.

■ Driving Tests: Personation**Karl McCartney:** [\[58402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the average length of sentence was for people convicted of using an impersonator to take the (a) written and (b) practical parts of the driving test for them in each of the last five years and by geographical area.

Karl McCartney: [\[58405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the average length of sentence was for people convicted of impersonating a candidate and taking the (a) written and (b) practical parts of the driving test for them in each of the last five years and by geographical area.

Andrew Jones:

The attached spreadsheet shows the:

- average length of sentence for people convicted of using an impersonator to take the written and practical driving test in each of the last five years and by geographical location, and the
- average length of sentence for people convicted of impersonating a candidate and taking the written and practical driving test in each of the last five years and by geographical location.

Attachments:

1. Diving Test - Statistics [058402, 058405 - Average Length of Sentence - Driving Tests.xlsx]

Karl McCartney: [\[58403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many people were sent for prosecution for impersonating a candidate and taking the (a) written and (b) practical parts of the driving test for them in each of the last five years and by geographical area.

Karl McCartney: [\[58406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many people were sent for prosecution for using an impersonator to take the (a) written and (b) practical parts of the driving test for them in each of the last five years and by geographical area.

Andrew Jones:

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency does not record the number of people sent for prosecution.

Karl McCartney: [\[58404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many people were convicted for impersonating a candidate and taking the (a) written and (b) practical parts of the driving test for them in each of the last five years and by geographical area.

Karl McCartney: [\[58407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many people were convicted for using an impersonator to take the (a) written and (b) practical parts of the driving test for them in each of the last five years and by geographical area.

Andrew Jones:

The majority of these types of investigation are instigated by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and undertaken until such a time as it has evidence to support arrest and possible prosecution.

The attached table shows the:

- number of people convicted for using an impersonator to take a theory or practical test in each of the last five years and by geographical area
- number of people convicted for impersonating a candidate to take the theory or practical driving test in each of the last five years and by geographical area.

Attachments:

1. 58407, 58404 - Driving Tests - Fraud [058407, 058404 - Driving Tests - Fraud.xlsx]

■ Driving: Licensing

Karl McCartney: [\[58408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people who currently hold a driving licence fraudulently obtained by using an impersonator to take the (a) written and (b) practical parts of the driving test for them.

Andrew Jones:

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), the Agency responsible for practical and theory driving tests, is unable to estimate the number of people who currently hold a driving licence fraudulently obtained by using an impersonator to take the (a) written and (b) practical parts of the driving test for them.

The DVSA does however has a dedicated Counter-Fraud and Investigation Team which actively investigates instances of fraud, including impersonation at theory and practical driving tests. DVSA has also recently launched a 3-year counter fraud strategy. One aspect of the strategy is to prevent the fraudulent issue of licences or the circumvention of controls as part of the delivery of DVSA products and services; ensuring they are only accessible by those who are eligible or entitled to them. The strategy also aims to prosecute and disrupt those individuals and organisations suspected of submitting fraudulent applications or of being complicit in criminal activity.

Over the last five years over 1,100 licences have been revoked due to evidence that the licence was obtained fraudulently, which includes impersonation.

■ Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[59476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the total spent by his Department on the development of ultra-low emission technology for road vehicles in each of the last five years.

Mr John Hayes:

Working through Innovate UK, the Office for Low Emission Vehicles has invested £74m over the last five years in the development of new technologies to significantly reduce carbon emissions from road vehicles. This funding has been at least match-funded by industry, growing the UK automotive sector and accelerating the introduction of ultra low emission technology to the vehicle market.

| YEAR | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Spend by OLEV (£m) | 10 | 11 | 16 | 12 | 25 |

■ Railways: Tickets

Mr Steve Reed: [\[59438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on the passengers who use contactless cards to pay for their journey; and what steps his Department is taking to encourage the introduction of contactless cards on the network outside of London.

Andrew Jones:

The Department is working actively with bus, train and other transport operators across the UK to develop the use and liability models that will allow greater adoption of contactless bankcard payments on public transport outside of London, which already has contactless in operation across its network.

This collaborative working has already started to deliver real world implementations. For example on Stagecoach buses in Oxford and in the North East passengers can now pay for their travel with their contactless cards. Other operators are not far behind. On rail, the Secretary of State has announced his intention that all passengers should have the option of a smart ticket by the end of 2018.

However the Department does not hold detailed information on the use of contactless payments outside of London.

■ Road Signs and Markings

Neil Parish:

[\[59474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce street clutter.

Andrew Jones:

The Department for Transport (DfT) has always advocated minimising street clutter as it is unsightly, and can cause navigational difficulties for some groups.

Overuse of street furniture can create a cluttered environment, though where it is placed is a matter for local councils. However, the Department has published a range of guidance covering all aspects of street design, which stresses the importance of providing uncluttered environments. These include Inclusive Mobility, Traffic Advisory Leaflet 1/13: Reducing Sign Clutter, and the Manual for Streets.

Traffic signs can also contribute to clutter. In 2016 DfT revised the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) to give local councils more flexibility in what signs they place and where. The Circular published alongside the TSRGD highlights these changes and makes it clear that the Department expects authorities to make use of these to reduce the amount of clutter on the roads.

Outdoor advertisements, such as 'A' boards, are controlled by local planning authorities under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. Placing 'A' boards on highways (including footways) where vehicular traffic is prohibited requires express advertisement consent from the local planning authority, and the consent of the relevant highway authority under section 115E of the Highways Act 1980.

■ Southern: Industrial Disputes

Ian Lavery:

[\[58250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government is taking to support a resolution of the dispute between Southern Rail and the Rail, Maritime and Transport Union.

Paul Maynard:

We have continually urged all sides to get back around the negotiating table and end this dispute which is causing immense pain and misery for thousands of hard working commuters. In December last year the Secretary of State offered to meet with the unions to try and help resolve this dispute. He repeated this offer in a letter to the unions in January. However we have yet to receive a reply indicating that they are willing to suspend the strikes and meet.

Ministers and officials have been working tirelessly to try and find a way through this dispute, but the unions appear to have little interest in any resolution that does not involve a full roll-back of modern working practices which includes the introduction of new trains.

■ Southern: Standards**Ms Harriet Harman:** [\[59444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to improve service for passengers on Southern Rail in 2017.

Paul Maynard:

The most immediate improvement we wish to see is the unions calling off their futile strike action and work to rule. The Secretary of State has met with ASLEF, before they decided to strike. I again strongly urge both they and the RMT to get back round the negotiating table with the serious intention of actually resolving this dispute and to put passengers interests first.

We have brought in Chris Gibb to head a new project board, working with the train operator, Network Rail and the Department, to explore how to achieve a rapid improvement to services for the public on Southern and they have identified areas on which to focus. In addition, the Secretary of State recently announced that a further £300 million will be spent by Network Rail from their existing budget specifically to improve the infrastructure on this part of the network, which will consequently improve the service for those passengers.

■ Southern: Tickets**Mr Steve Reed:** [\[59439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Southern Rail to ensure that passengers who pay with contactless cards are able to receive enhanced compensation under the terms of the scheme announced by his Department on 2 December 2016.

Paul Maynard:

As we announced in December, Southern's Season ticket holders are able to claim a refund for the equivalent of a month's (4 weeks) travel. Passengers who pay for their journey by contactless cards (i.e. credit/debit cards) are not season ticket holders and therefore are not eligible to claim under this scheme. However the majority of commuters on Southern are season ticket holders.

Passengers using contactless card, and those who purchase day tickets, can claim through the Delay Repay system, which was enhanced on the whole of GTR from 11 December to Delay Repay 15.

Mr Steve Reed: [\[59440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Southern Rail compensation scheme announced by his Department on 2 December 2016 extends to passengers who use contactless cards to travel.

Paul Maynard:

As we announced in December, Southern's Season ticket holders are able to claim a refund for the equivalent of a month's (4 weeks) travel. Passengers who pay for their journey by contactless cards (i.e. credit/debit cards) are not season ticket holders and

therefore are not eligible to claim under this scheme. However, the majority of commuters on Southern are season ticket holders.

Passengers using contactless card, and those who purchase day tickets, can claim through the Delay Repay system, which was enhanced on the whole of GTR from 11 December to Delay Repay 15.

■ Transport for London: Railways

Mr Steve Reed:

[59442]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish his Department's cost-benefit analysis of the Mayor of London's business case for devolution of rail services to Transport for London.

Paul Maynard:

Departments do not routinely publish internal policy advice and related analysis. Our analysis highlighted a number of uncertainties in the business case particularly around the operational risks associated with splitting the franchise, and around the benefits that were being claimed.

We believe that partnership is the best way to deliver benefits for all passengers and this is what we have offered Transport for London and Kent County Council.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Disability Living Allowance

Stephen Timms:

[59456]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the reassessment outcomes were for each disability living allowance award type for each main disabling condition in the last 12 months.

Penny Mordaunt:

The tables attached give statistics on the reassessment outcomes for each Disability Living Allowance award type and for each main disabling condition in the last 12 months.

Further information on reassessment outcome can be found in published statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-independence-payment-april-2013-to-october-2016>

Attachments:

1. DLA - reassessment outcomes by award type [PQ UIN 59456 DLA reassessment outcomes by award type.xlsx]

■ Food Banks**Dan Jarvis:** [\[58354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what information his Department holds on the use of three-day emergency food parcels.

Damian Hinds:

This Department does not hold this information.

■ Personal Independence Payment**Stephen Timms:** [\[59455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how health re-assessments for personal independent payments are prioritised; and whether assessors conducting such assessments do so in order of (a) impairment, (b) location, (c) disability living allowance awards and (d) any other criteria.

Penny Mordaunt:

The only claims to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) which are prioritised, whether they are new claims or Disability Living Allowance to PIP reassessment claims, are those from people who are terminally ill. Claims from terminally ill people are currently receiving decisions in five days on average from the point their claim is registered.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification**Stephen Timms:** [\[59451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the National Audit Office's report on Benefit Sanctions, published on 30 November 2016, what plans his Department has to use data it holds to ensure that benefit sanctions are meeting the Government's objectives.

Damian Hinds:

Following publication of the National Audit Office (NAO) Value for Money Study into Benefit Sanctions, there was a subsequent Public Accounts Committee hearing on 12 December 2016. DWP is currently waiting for the Public Accounts Committee to publish their final report and recommendations, before responding to the NAO report.

Tommy Sheppard: [\[59498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people being transferred from disability living allowance to personal independence payment have had their benefits (a) stopped temporarily and (b) stopped permanently in each year since April 2013.

Penny Mordaunt:

Eligible Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimants do not transfer to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) but are instead invited to claim PIP under a process of reassessment activity. DLA claimants invited to claim PIP have 28 days in which to

do so, but may request additional time where that would be reasonably required. Where a DLA claimant fails to make a claim to PIP within the time allowed, payment of their DLA is suspended and they are advised that if they do not make a claim to PIP within a further period of 28 days their DLA will be terminated. Claimants may request further time to make their claim at that point if that would be reasonably required. Where a claimant does make a claim to PIP within the time allowed their DLA is reinstated from the point at which it was suspended. Where a claimant fails to make a claim to PIP within the time allowed their DLA is terminated from the point at which it was suspended.

Information on the number of suspensions and terminations in the above circumstances is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

DLA claimants who do claim PIP and subsequently comply with the requirements to provide information or evidence and attend a consultation where required continue to receive their DLA while their PIP claim is being assessed. Claimants also continue to receive their DLA for a further 28 days following the pay day which immediately follows the date of the PIP decision.

■ Social Security Benefits: Overpayments

Mr Mark Hendrick:

[\[57615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much (a) his Department's Debt Management team recovered in overpaid benefits from the estates of people who died in 2015 and (b) in overpaid benefits paid to people who had died was written off in 2015.

Caroline Nokes:

The value of recovery from estates of people who had died in 2015 is £25,490,422 as calculated at 13 December 2016.

The value written off in 2015, where the customer's date of death fell in 2015, is £16,685,094.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

DEFENCE

■ Defence Infrastructure Reform

Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Mark Lancaster): [\[HCWS410\]](#)

Defence infrastructure is a vital component in enabling the Armed Forces to train and prepare for operations, and for the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to deliver its outputs. The MOD spends nearly £5 billion each year operating, maintaining, constructing and disposing of its extensive infrastructure base, which represents 1.8% of the UK land area.

In November, we announced a long term programme to invest £4 billion over the next decade in an estate that will help deliver Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015's ambitious plan for Joint Force 2025 enabling savings in running costs of £140 million over 10 years, whilst releasing 91 of our most expensive sites by 2040. This will help to deliver the MOD's contribution of land sufficient for 55,000 new homes towards the Government's housing target.

In parallel, we have reviewed how our estate is managed and infrastructure decisions are approached, taken, and implemented across the whole of Defence. This includes the role of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), the Royal Navy, Army and Air Force Commands and MOD Head Office. The aim has been to ensure that every pound we spend on our estate represents optimum value for money.

We have reached two principal conclusions from this review. First, we will achieve improved allocation of available funding if infrastructure decisions that bear on the work of the military Commands are taken by them rather than by the DIO. The Commands are better placed to balance infrastructure requirements against other enablers of military capability such as equipment and trained personnel for which they already hold the budgets. In line with the Defence operating model, we therefore plan to delegate this authority, and the relevant funding, to the Commands and to Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) from April 2018, subject to confirmation later this year that all parts of the organisation are ready to support this, and that effective safeguards are in place to ensure that we continue to drive towards a better estate that more efficiently and effectively enables military capability.

Secondly, we will restructure the DIO to operate more effectively in the new delegated environment. This means making it more customer-facing at both the strategic and operational level, improving its internal operation so that it can work better with, and deliver better value from infrastructure providers, and also strengthening its abilities to act to assure that appropriate standards are being met across the Defence estate and to provide Ministers with advice on the long term affordability of the estate and the strategic implications for the estate of decisions taken by the Commands. Since 2014 a Strategic Business Partner contract has been in place with Capita, under which they lead and manage the DIO. Capita have been instrumental in helping us deliver the Better Defence

Estate Strategy and in sustaining specialist capability. We are reviewing with Capita how their continued support can be adapted to the new infrastructure model we now envisage.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ OSCE Ministerial Council, Hamburg, 8-9 December 2016

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):
[\[HCWS411\]](#)

I represented the United Kingdom at the 23rd Ministerial Council meeting of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), held in Hamburg, Germany on 8-9 December 2016 and hosted by German Foreign Minister and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Frank-Walter Steinmeier. The Council is the top decision-making body of the OSCE and was attended by Ministers from across its 57 participating States.

The Council took place in the final month of a year when the OSCE has continued to be at the centre of the international response to the Ukraine crisis, via its Special Monitoring Mission, its Observer Mission to two Russian checkpoints on the Ukrainian-Russian border and through its membership of the Trilateral Contact Group. Ukraine remained the core element of many statements in plenary by participating States including by US Secretary of State Kerry, German Foreign Minister Steinmeier, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Klimkin and EU High Representative Mogherini among others. In my interventions in the discussions that took place on 8 December I repeated our strong support for Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity and expressed deep concern at the ongoing situation in eastern Ukraine and Crimea.

A number of other important issues were also discussed. The UK used the event to highlight the need to resolve other protracted conflicts and to minimise the risk of new conflict, including by reducing military risk through conventional arms control. I joined Georgian Foreign Minister Janelidze and other 'Friends of Georgia', including US Secretary of State, John Kerry in expressing our support to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and calling on Russia to reverse its recognition of Georgia's regions as independent states. I also underlined the UK's ongoing support for the OSCE's Autonomous Institutions and its Field Missions including in my bilateral discussions with Michael Link, Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and Dunja Mijatović, the Representative on Freedom of the Media.

Behind the scenes, the UK delegation continued to negotiate a range of Declarations and Decisions for adoption by the Ministerial Council. These negotiations made progress in a number of areas, resulting in a Declaration welcoming the broad range of the OSCE's project assistance in the field of Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition. A Declaration on the OSCE Framework for Conventional Arms Control was also agreed, signalling approval for a structured dialogue between participating States on the current and future challenges and risks to security in the OSCE area. Declarations and Decisions were also made on migration, on reducing the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies,

on enhancing the use of Advance Passenger Information, and on strengthening good governance and promoting economic connectivity.

Divergent approaches limited the scope to reach consensus on a number of proposed Declarations. It was particularly disappointing that disagreement from certain participating States to the inclusion of a reference to Crimea meant that a Declaration on the OSCE's role in, and support to, Ukraine could not be agreed, despite 56 of the 57 participating States agreeing the text. It was also disappointing that, despite the best efforts of the UK and other States, attempts to agree Decisions in the Human Dimension failed, primarily due to further Russian obstructionism. However, the UK was instrumental in securing the agreement of 42 participating States to a joint Statement on human rights which was delivered by the Ambassador to Norway to the OSCE during the closing session.

I met Irish Foreign Minister Dara Murphy and Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavuşoğlu on non OSCE business.

A copy of the UK plenary intervention can be found online on the gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/united-kingdom-statement-to-the-23rd-osce-ministerial-council>