



# HOUSE OF COMMONS

## Daily Report

Wednesday, 26 April 2017

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 26 April 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:37 P.M., 26 April 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

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ **Music: Digital Technology**

**Kevin Brennan:**

[\[71668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the music industry on transparency and fair remuneration of artists in relation to subscription income from digital streaming.

**Joseph Johnson:**

Over the past 6 months, BEIS Ministers have held several meetings with stakeholders from the UK music industry, including representatives of songwriters, performers, record labels and publishers, to discuss issues of mutual interest including those relating to transparency and remuneration of artists in relation to digital streaming.

#### ■ **Pay: Complaints**

**Paul Blomfield:**

[\[71511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 20 April 2017 to Question 70317, what the total number of complaints of failure to pay wages received by ACAS was in April 2016 to March 2017.

**Margot James:**

Between April 2016 and March 2017, Acas received 24,204 applications for conciliation through the Wages Act jurisdiction.

In the same time period, Acas received 79,375 Helpline calls relating to 'Wages & National Minimum Wage'. This recording category includes a number of associated wage issues not just failure to pay wages but does not disaggregate complaints from general enquiries. All complaints are forwarded to HM Revenue and Customs (my answer to Question 70317 refers). Acas will provide further advice to callers who work for insolvent companies where enforcement is not an option and to those who would prefer not to be referred for enforcement as they wish to consider their options or pursue their matter through another route such as Early Conciliation or the civil court.

#### ■ **Research: Finance**

**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:**

[\[71276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much government research funding was provided to each higher education institution in each of the last three years; what proportion of all government research funding is provided to such institutions; and if he will make a statement.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The attached tables show the amount and proportion of research income earned by each higher education institution (HEI) from the Research Councils and higher education funding bodies across the UK in each of the last three years.

**Attachments:**

1. HE Provider income from RCs & Funding Councils [HE-research-income-71276.xlsx]

**■ Research: West Midlands****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[71241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support investment in science research at universities in the West Midlands.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Government is fully committed to maintaining the UK's world-leading science, research and higher education base.

According to Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data, eleven institutions in the West Midlands, which includes the Universities of Warwick; Birmingham; and Aston, received public research funding from Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Research Councils totalling £188 million in 2015/16.

The Autumn Statement 2016 announcement of an extra £2 billion a year in research and development by 2020-21 underlines the place of science and innovation at the heart of this Government's industrial strategy.

**■ Science: South West****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[71632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the science and technology sectors in the South West.

**Joseph Johnson:**

In the Autumn Statement 2016 the Government announced that we will make Britain the global go-to nation for scientists, innovators and tech investors, by investing an extra £2 billion a year in R&D by 2020/21. This funding is in addition to the protection of the science resource budget in real terms from its 2015/16 level of £4.7 billion that was announced at the Spending Review in Autumn 2015, where the government also committed to invest in new scientific infrastructure on a record scale – £6.9 billion over the period 2015-2021.

The South West has received €300 million of Horizon 2020 funding to date. The government has committed to underwrite all Horizon 2020 awards, even when specific projects continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU. The decision to underwrite the grants of competitively bid for EU research funding will give British participants and their EU partners the assurance and certainty needed to plan ahead for projects that can run over many years.



This Government intends to secure the best possible outcome for the UK research base as we exit the European Union. We would welcome an agreement to continue to collaborate with our European partners on major science, research, and technology initiatives. However, whatever happens in the future, the Government is committed to ensuring the UK, including the South West, remains world leading in international research and innovation.

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ Cabinet Office: Conditions of Employment

**Rob Marris:**

[\[70601\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many and what proportion of staff employed by his Department are employed on a contract which is (a) full-time permanent, (b) part-time permanent, (c) for less than two years' duration, (d) on an agency basis and (e) zero-hours.

**Chris Skidmore:**

*[Holding answer 20 April 2017]:* Departments seek to make the best use of staff and resources to deliver the Government's objectives in a way that represents value for money for the taxpayer.

To ensure that effective service levels are delivered at all times, my Department uses an appropriate mix of employment contract types that meet the needs of the business.

From departmental records, the present number and proportion (%) of staff employed on a contract which is;

- full-time permanent is 1,839 (69%)
- part-time permanent is 178 (7%)
- for less than two years' duration is 656 (24%)
- zero-hours is Nil (0%)

### ■ Cabinet Office: Secondment

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[71437\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many staff have been seconded to his Department from outside the Civil Service in the last six months.

**Chris Skidmore:**

In the last six months, seven individuals have been seconded to my Department from outside the Civil Service.

My Department is committed to the benefits that can be brought for the taxpayer in the delivery of Government objectives from the interchange with other sectors and is always looking for opportunities to develop such arrangements with relevant companies or organisations where this is beneficial to the taxpayer.

**■ Chemical Weapons: Syria****Emily Thornberry:** [\[71565\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the Joint Intelligence Committee's findings on the chemical weapons attack of 4 April 2017 in Khan Sheikhoun.

**Chris Skidmore:**

It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

**■ Colorectal Cancer: Males****Mr Jonathan Lord:** [\[71473\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many men under the age of 60 have been diagnosed with bowel cancer in each of the last seven years.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Response to PQ71473 [PQ71473 v.02.pdf]

**■ Elections: Fraud****Cat Smith:** [\[71056\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what analysis his Department has undertaken on susceptibility to electoral fraud of local and national electoral processes.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Government believes that electoral fraud is unacceptable on any level. In December last year, the Government published its response to Sir Eric Pickles' review of electoral fraud, *Securing the ballot*.

The Government's response set out the mechanisms by which each of Sir Eric's recommendations can be implemented, including through primary legislation, secondary legislation, or through changes to guidance.

The Government provides support to Returning Officers, who have responsibility for ensuring the integrity of 2017 polls, and works closely with the Electoral Commission and the National Police Chiefs' Council, with a view to preventing electoral fraud.

**■ General Election 2017****Andrew Gwynne:** [\[71436\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what contingency plans there are in the event that his Department is alerted to online interference in the General Election 2017.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The UK voting system does not lend itself to electronic manipulation - voting and counting of ballots are manual processes conducted under the watchful eye of observers.

We have systems in place to defend against electoral fraud at all levels and have seen no evidence of successful cyber intervention in UK democratic processes.

As the UK's technical authority on cyber security, the NCSC is set up to provide advice and incident management. Where necessary, these well-rehearsed incident response procedures, that are applicable irrespective of the nature of an incident, will be employed.

**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71442\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans the Government has to prevent external interference from a (a) state, (b) non-state actor in the General Election 2017.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The UK voting system does not lend itself to electronic manipulation - voting and counting of ballots are manual processes conducted under the watchful eye of observers.

We have systems in place to defend against electoral fraud at all levels and have seen no evidence of successful cyber intervention in UK democratic processes.

**■ Viscount Rothermere****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71433\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Prime Minister has met Lord Rothermere in 2017.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Details of Ministers' meetings with external organisations, including with newspaper and other media proprietors, editors and senior executives, are published on a quarterly basis and made available on the [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) website.

**■ Voting Rights****Alex Salmond:**[\[71585\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if his Department will bring forward legislative proposals to allow people over the age of 16 to vote in elections.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Since the 2015 general election, Parliament has debated lowering the voting age to 16 a number of times and has repeatedly voted against it.

**■ Voting Rights: EU Nationals****Margaret Ferrier:** [\[71556\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government plans to bring forward legislative proposals to extend the franchise to EU nationals for the 8 June 2017 UK general election.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The franchise for the Parliamentary election remains unchanged as set out in the Representation of the People Acts 1983 and 1985.

**TREASURY****■ Diageo: Scotland****Stephen Gethins:** [\[71542\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of Diageo's plans for 100 job losses on the Scottish economy.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The Government has been in contact with Diageo and understands the company has begun a consultation with staff about proposed operational changes. The Government understands this will be a worrying time for Diageo employees and their families.

Job Centre Plus stands ready to assist in the event of redundancies being confirmed, and the Government continues to support the Scottish economy and key sectors such as the food and drinks industry.

**■ European Banking Authority: Scotland****Stephen Gethins:** [\[71580\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on the Scottish financial industry and wider economy of the European Banking Agency headquarters leaving the UK.

**Simon Kirby:**

The future of our relationship with the European Banking Authority (EBA), and any potential effects on the wider banking sector relating to the location of EBA staff, is subject to the outcome of the withdrawal negotiations.

**■ European Union Solidarity Fund: Gordon****Alex Salmond:** [\[71807\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what funding he expects will be received from the application made to the EU Solidarity Fund to assist people in Gordon constituency who were flooded by Storm Frank in January 2016.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The Devolved Administrations have received significant financial support through the application of the Barnett formula to flood recovery support for local authorities in England. The Draft Amending Budget for the UK's application to the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF), relating to damage incurred through flooding in Winter 2015-16, has now been approved by the European Council and the European Parliament. As explained in the Written Ministerial Statement by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 16 January 2017, the funding received following this application does not offer additional support, but is to reimburse a small portion of the significant financial support that has already been provided by the Government.

**■ Minimum Wage: Care Homes****Barbara Keeley:**[\[71600\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, which social care providers have been identified by HM Revenue and Customs as non-compliant with national minimum wage legislation; how much is owed in arrears by each such provider; to how many staff such arrears are owed; and what value of fines have been levied on care providers to date.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) do not comment on individual cases. Anyone who feels they have been underpaid National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage should contact the Acas helpline on 0300 123 1100. HMRC review all complaints that are referred to them.

**■ Non-domestic Rates****Tom Watson:**[\[71630\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) music venues, (b) nightclubs and discoteques and (c) public halls in England have a rateable value of less than £100,000.

**Jane Ellison:**

There are 349 public halls and 1,158 nightclubs and discotheques with a rateable value less than £100,000 in England, as identified by the categorisation used for compiling the 2017 Rating Lists.

There is no classification specifically for music venues so it is not possible to reliably estimate a number for that category.

**■ Sovereign Wealth Funds****Stephen Gethins:**[\[71618\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how he plans to maximise the effect of investment of sovereign wealth funds in the UK in each of the next five years.

**Simon Kirby:**

The government welcomes investment from investors all over the world, including Sovereign Wealth Funds.

**Stephen Gethins:**[\[71619\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how he plans to maximise investment in the UK by sovereign wealth funds in each of the next five years.

**Simon Kirby:**

The government welcomes investment from investors all over the world, including Sovereign Wealth Funds.

**Stephen Gethins:**[\[71620\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government has a strategy for (a) current and (b) future collaboration with sovereign wealth funds; and if he will publish that strategy.

**Simon Kirby:**

The National Infrastructure Delivery Plan set out the government's plan for attracting inward investment through infrastructure development.

**Stephen Gethins:**[\[71621\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what additional financial and legal protections are in place for UK firms and agencies which (a) collaborate with and (b) take investment from sovereign wealth funds.

**Simon Kirby:**

The UK is open to investment from all sources. There are well-developed markets for professional and financial advice that support this. There are no specific protections relating to sovereign wealth funds.

**■ Taxation: Electronic Government****Stephen Timms:**[\[71628\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2016 to Question 53970, when HM Revenue and Customs plans to publish the post-implementation review of Real Time Information.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs expects to publish the post-implementation review of real time information later this year.

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Affordable Housing

**John Healey:**

**[66913]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the net capital expenditure on affordable housing by the Homes and Communities Agency and its predecessor agencies was in each year since 1991-92, by region.

**Gavin Barwell:**

Government's capital expenditures on affordable housing through government's affordable homes programmes are available publicly.

A summary of housing expenditure under the Housing Corporation for the period 2000 - 2008 and the National Affordable Homes Programme 2008-11 is available through the National Archives website:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20071204140632/http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk>

For the Affordable Homes Programme 2011-2015:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/affordable-homes-programme-2011-to-2015-guidance-and-allocations>

For the Affordable Homes Programme 2015-2018:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/affordable-homes-programme-2015-to-2018-quarterly-updates>

For the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016-21:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/affordable-homes-programme-2016-to-2021-successful-bidders>

Data for London only is available at:

<http://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-committees/budget-monitoring-sub-committee>

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/spending-money-wisely/annual-accounts-and-governance-statement>

Information on expenditure on affordable housing prior to 2000 is not publicly available.

Between 1997 and 2010 social housing stock fell by 420,000. Since 2010 the overall stock of social housing has increased by 76,000.

## ■ Bilfinger: Non-domestic Rates

**Jim McMahon:**

[R] [\[53735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if the Government will intervene in the business rates appeal by Bilfinger GVA on behalf of NHS trusts to prevent public funds being spent on Bilfinger GVA,

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

*[Holding answer 23 November 2016]:* I am aware of discussions between a number of local authorities and NHS Trusts in relation to charitable business rate relief. The decision to grant charitable rate relief is taken by individual local authorities, the Department for Communities and Local Government is working closely with the Department of Health, the Local Government Association, and local government to consider the issues.

## ■ Communities and Local Government: Freedom of Information

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[71037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many staff in his Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

FOI requests may be responded to by any member of staff across the Department, as they are allocated to the most appropriate person to respond depending on the subject of the request.

## ■ Communities and Local Government: Secondment

**Tracy Brabin:**

[\[70943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many staff are seconded to his Department; and how many such staff are seconded from which companies and organisations.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Department had thirteen employees working on secondment contracts as of 31 March 2017 from each of the following companies and organisations:

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL	LOCAL AUTHORITY
London Borough of Bexley	Local Authority
London Borough of Lambeth*	Local Authority
Selby District Council	Local Authority
South Tyneside Council	Local Authority
Southend on Sea Borough Council	Local Authority
Surrey County Council	Local Authority



KENT COUNTY COUNCIL	LOCAL AUTHORITY
Westminster City Council	Local Authority
Homes & Communities Agency	NDPB
St. Basils	Non Profit
Barclays	Private
Von Bradsky Enterprises	Private

\*There are two employees currently seconded from this organisation.

### ■ Community Development

#### **Grant Shapps:**

[\[69596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will publish and regularly renew guidance for the public on setting up (a) no cold-calling zones and (b) other local community action projects.

#### **Mr Marcus Jones:**

I refer my Rt Hon Friend to the answer given on 24 April 2017, by my Hon Friend the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility, to Question UIN 69670.

### ■ Help to Buy Scheme: Leasehold

#### **Justin Madders:**

[\[68793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to stop providing Government support through the Help to Buy scheme for new houses sold on a leasehold basis.

#### **Gavin Barwell:**

In a speech on the 28 March 2017 the Secretary of State said that he will look to ensure Help to Buy Equity Loans are only used to support new build houses on acceptable terms.

### ■ Housing

#### **Mr Stephen Hepburn:**

[\[59338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much was spent on housing in (a) Jarrow constituency, (b) South Tyneside, (c) the North East and (d) the UK in each year since 1997.

#### **Gavin Barwell:**

The numbers of households on local authority waiting lists for each local authority in England since 1997 is published in live table 600 which is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-rents-lettings-and-tenancies>

Figures are not available at constituency level.

## ■ Housing: Construction

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [71171]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what role the National Infrastructure Commission has in overseeing the number of houses built on public land.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The remit of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) is set out in the NIC's framework document, published in January 2017. The NIC has a mandate to examine all sectors of economic infrastructure; it does not have a role in overseeing the number of homes built on public land. While the NIC will not make recommendations on social infrastructure, it will consider the potential impact of infrastructure decisions on housing supply.

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [71172]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, who is responsible for identifying and co-ordinating the release of public land for housing.

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [71173]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent progress there has been on the release of public land for housing; and if he will make a statement.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The Public Land for Housing programme was announced at Autumn Statement 2015 and aims to dispose of surplus government-owned land in England with capacity for at least 160,000 homes by the end of March 2020. This will increase the supply of land for housing development and contribute towards improving the efficiency and sustainability of the government's estate.

Each department is responsible for identifying and releasing land towards the programme's overall objectives, according to their individual plans and delivery commitments that each has agreed.

Ministers for the Department for Communities and Local Government are responsible for land and housing policy and for setting the overall direction of the programme. The Department for Communities and Local Government leads the programme by working with departments to identify and release land as quickly as possible, holding departments to account for their land disposal plans and publishing evidence to provide assurance that the programme's outcomes are being achieved.

The Homes and Communities Agency acts as the government's disposer of surplus land (outside London), receiving transfers from departments and disposing of land at

pace, providing expertise and advice to departments in meeting their part in the programme's objectives and collects, validates and reports programme performance data for the Department.

The Public Land for Housing Programme Annual Report, published in February 2017, reported that between May 2015 and September 2016 the total housing capacity of land either identified for sale or already released by all departments contributing to the programme was 145,492 (91 per cent of the programme ambition), of which land with capacity for 13,817 homes had been released.

## ■ **Housing: Planning**

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

**[71207]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will grant to local authorities the power to levy council tax on developments not completed within a set period.

**Gavin Barwell:**

This government has no such plans, but in our Housing White Paper we set out a range of measures to speed up build out. The consultation is currently open.

## ■ **Infrastructure: Sussex**

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

**[71571]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the extent to which extra infrastructure spending in (a) Mid Sussex and (b) West Sussex has been in line with new house building; and if he will make a statement.

**Gavin Barwell:**

Between 2011-12 and 2015-16, total net housing additions in West Sussex were 15,280, of which 3,470 were accounted for by Mid Sussex. The planning system offers a number of tools to help ensure development of new homes contribute to meeting infrastructure need, including the community infrastructure levy and planning obligations where necessary to make development acceptable. Although my Department does not monitor the full range of infrastructure spending in local areas, government publishes detailed annual data of each local authority's capital expenditure.

This is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-capital-expenditure-receipts-and-financing>.

## ■ **Landlords**

**Lyn Brown:**

**[71404]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to strengthen local authority powers to deal with rogue landlords.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The Government is committed to providing a strong professional private rented sector with decent standards and good service. An existing framework provides local authorities with strong powers to require that landlords make necessary improvements to a property. Through the Housing and Planning Act 2016 the Government introduced a range of new measures to crack down further on rogue landlords. Local authorities can now impose civil penalties of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution and we have extended rent repayment orders to allow tenants and local authorities to reclaim rent paid for a wider range of housing offences. They can access information held by tenancy deposit schemes to help identify privately rented housing and to further crack down on rogue landlords in their area through targeted enforcement and prevention work. Other measures include:

- a database of rogue landlords and property agents convicted of certain offences;
- banning orders for the most serious and prolific offenders;
- enabling powers to allow for regulations to require letting agents and property management agents to belong to a Client Money Protection scheme;
- enabling powers to require mandatory electrical safety checks.

The Government has also:

- made it a legal requirement for letting and managing agents in England to belong to one of the three Government approved redress schemes, offering a clear route for landlords and tenants to pursue complaints;
- introduced legislation to protect tenants against retaliatory eviction where they have a legitimate complaint about the condition of the property;
- made it mandatory to install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms (where necessary);
- introduced new routes for evicting those who do not have the right to rent and a new offence for those knowingly renting to illegal migrants.

We have consulted on extending mandatory licensing of HMOs and are currently consulting on banning letting agent fees for tenants.

In addition the Government made £12 million available to a range of local authorities with acute problems with rogue landlords, resulting in the inspection of over 70,000 properties and more than 5,000 landlords facing further action or prosecution for breaking the law.

**Landlords: Newham****Lyn Brown:**[\[71587\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the Landlord Licensing Scheme introduced by the London Borough of Newham on improving the (a) detection of housing benefit fraud and (b) reclamation of funds fraudulently obtained.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The Department will assess the effectiveness of the current licensing scheme adopted by the London Borough of Newham in delivering its objectives under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 if and when an application is made to the Secretary of State by the borough for confirmation of any further licensing designation under the provisions of the Act.

**■ Letting Agents: Fees and Charges****Grahame Morris:**[\[71226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he made of disparities in regional housing markets prior to publishing the consultation paper, Banning letting agent fees paid by tenants, published on 7 April 2017.

**Gavin Barwell:**

While we recognise that the housing market is different throughout England, evidence shows that concerns associated with letting agents charging fees to tenants are prevalent across the whole country, not just particular regions. Our consultation exercise also seeks evidence to inform the future approach.

**■ Neighbourhood Development Plans****Sir Nicholas Soames:**[\[71591\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to strengthen Neighbourhood Plans; and if he will make a statement.

**Gavin Barwell:**

We have strengthened Neighbourhood Planning through the Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016 that implement powers in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and proposed measures in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill. In addition, my recent Neighbourhood Planning written ministerial statement of 12 December 2016 further strengthened Neighbourhood Planning by making it clear that where communities have planned for housing in their area through a recent neighbourhood plan, that those relevant policies should not be deemed to be “out-of-date” unless there is a significant lack of land supply for housing in the wider local authority area.

The Government has made available £22.5 million to support Neighbourhood Planning through the 2015-18 support programme. The Housing White Paper 2017 set out our intention to make further funding available to neighbourhood planning groups from 2018-2020.

**■ Parking: Fees and Charges****Tom Blenkinsop:**[\[70927\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 20 March 2017 to Question 68027, when his Department plans to respond to the discussion paper, Parking reform: tackling unfair practices.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

*[Holding answer 20 April 2017]:* We have already taken steps to tackle rogue and unfair practices by private parking operators, including the banning of wheel clamping and towing.

Private parking companies receive DVLA data on the condition that it will only be used to help follow up alleged parking contraventions. It cannot be further processed for any other purpose. The audit by the Information Commissioner's Office in March 2016, judged the DVLA's procedures to offer high assurance that processes to mitigate the risks of non-compliance with the Data Protection Act are in place.

**■ Private Rented Housing****Lyn Brown:**[\[71401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of local authority licencing schemes in improving safety and living standards in the private rented housing sector.

**Gavin Barwell:**

Licensing is effective in delivering improved standards in the private sector when applied as necessary, for example, to target high risk houses in multiple occupation, or in specific areas that are suffering from problems, such as those associated with low demand for housing or anti-social behaviour.

**■ Social Media: Hate Crime****Nusrat Ghani:**[\[61015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of introducing fines for social media companies which fail to remove hate material from their online platforms.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

This Government has recognised the harm caused by hate on the internet and committed to take action to reduce this harm in the recently published Hate Crime Action Plan. Despite the challenges we face, we have made considerable progress in addressing hate on the internet. The Director of Public Prosecutions has published guidance to prosecutors on when it is in the public interest to take perpetrators to court. We also continue to support the police hate crime web-facility, True Vision to provide information to victims and professionals and to allow on-line reporting of hate crime. The College of Policing has included guidance to police and partners on responding to internet hate crime in their Hate Crime Strategy and Guidance. This guidance was downloaded over 4,700 times from True Vision in the first five months, in addition to the physical documents circulated to individual agencies.

We have supported the establishment of the UK No Hate Speech Movement which equips, trains and supports young volunteers to operate on the internet, supporting victims, reporting damaging material and challenging hate-fuelled perpetrators through 'counter-narrative' activity.

## ■ Social Rented Housing: Expenditure

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[47145]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much his Department spent on new social housing for rent in (a) the City of York and (b) England in each year since 2010; and how much it expects to spend for such purposes in each year for which projections have been made.

**Gavin Barwell:**

*[Holding answer 12 October 2016]:* The Department does not publish the capital expenditure spent on new social housing for rent. The capital expenditure on social housing through government's affordable homes programmes are available publicly for the National Affordable Homes Programme 2008-11, the Affordable Homes Programme 2011-2015, the Affordable Homes Programme 2015-2018 and the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016-21.

Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016-21 initial allocations:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/affordable-homes-programme-2016-to-2021-successful-bidders>

Data are only available by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) operating areas or by providers.

Affordable Homes Programme 2015-18 initial allocations:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/affordable-homes-programme-2015-to-2018-guidance-and-allocations#allocations>

Data are only available by HCA operating areas or by providers.

Affordable Homes Programme 2015-18 quarterly updates:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/affordable-homes-programme-2015-to-2018-quarterly-updates>

Data are only available by HCA operating areas or by providers.

Affordable Homes Programme 2011-15 initial allocations, signed contracts and quarterly updates:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/affordable-homes-programme-2011-to-2015-guidance-and-allocations>

Data are only available for HCA operating areas and by local authorities

National Affordable Homes Programme 2008-11 – Investment statement, Yorkshire and Humberside

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20071204140632/http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/server/show/nav.4140>

Data are only available by HCA operating areas

Government is investing an additional £1.4 billion in the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016-21, increasing the overall budget for this

programme to £7.1 billion to deliver 225,000 affordable housing starts by March 2021.

Between 1997 and 2010 social housing stock fell by 420,000. Since 2010 the overall stock of social housing has increased by 76,000.

## CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ BBC: Equality

**Mr David Lammy:**

[71109]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that the BBC gives equal weight to on-screen and off-screen diversity in fulfilling its public purpose to represent the diverse communities of the UK.

**Matt Hancock:**

We believe that the BBC should be at the forefront of representing diversity both on and off screen. This is why the Government has enshrined diversity in the new Charter's public purposes which, along with a commitment to serve all audiences enshrined in the BBC mission, will help hold the BBC to account for delivering for everyone in the UK.

Ensuring that the BBC complies with its duties under the new Royal Charter and Framework Agreement is a matter for the BBC Board in the first instance. Ofcom, as the BBC's first external regulator, will be setting measures by which the BBC's performance in meeting its mission and public purposes can be assessed. Ofcom is currently consulting on the BBC's draft operating licence and performance framework and I would encourage all interested parties to make their views known to Ofcom before these are finalised.

### ■ Broadband: Advertising

**Louise Haigh:**

[69014]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much the Government spent on advertising for its Go Superfast campaign by (a) the smallest available geographic area, (b) city and (c) region.

**Matt Hancock:**

It is not possible to get a regional split for all media spend as the campaign was bought on a national basis.

**Louise Haigh:**

[69029]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much her Department spent on the Go Superfast advertising campaign in (a) 2014 and (b) 2015.



**Matt Hancock:**

The Department spent a) £4,287,620.34 on the Go Superfast advertising campaign in 2014 and b) £3,438,000 in 2015. The campaign increased public awareness of, and interest in, superfast broadband in order to drive take up across the UK.

**Louise Haigh:**[\[69037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much she has spent on each advertising platform by the Go Superfast advertising campaign.

**Matt Hancock:**

A breakdown of media spend by advertising platform for the Go Superfast campaign is as below:

Television £2,398,000

Video on Demand £284,000

Out of Home (posters) £2,000,000

Press (national and regional) £828,000

Radio £300,000

Digital £928,000

In addition, the Department spent £987,620.34 on production costs.

**■ Culture, Practices and Ethics of the Press Inquiry****Julie Elliott:**[\[70829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, for what reasons no decision has yet been taken to commence the second part of the Leveson inquiry.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Government launched a consultation to look at Part 2 of the Leveson Inquiry (as well as the commencement of section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013). The consultation ran until 10 January 2017 and further details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-leveson-inquiry-and-its-implementation>.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport made a statement on 11 January 2017: <https://goo.gl/DJQpPC>.

The government committed not to take any final decisions on the matters to which the consultation relates until a judicial review application was determined by the court. Legal proceedings have now concluded and the consultation responses are currently being considered.

**■ Deaflympics****Margaret Ferrier:** [\[71471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with (a) UK Sport and (b) Sport England on the UK's representation at this year's Deaflympics.

**Tracey Crouch:**

No recent ministerial discussion has taken place with UK Sport or Sport England concerning the UK's representation at this year's Deaflympics. In 2012, Sport England invested £134,620 of National Lottery funding into UK Deaf Sport to support the Great Britain team in attending the last Deaflympics at Sofia in 2013.

**■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Capital Investment****Tom Watson:** [\[71667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, which capital investment projects have been funded by her Department in each of the last five years; and what the costs of each such project have been.

**Matt Hancock:**

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

**■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Data Protection****Tim Farron:** [\[69816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many (a) official and (b) official sensitive documents have been recorded as lost by her Department since 8 May 2015.

**Matt Hancock:**

The information requested is not held centrally. All losses are assessed and responded to individually and on a case by case basis with all possible mitigating actions being taken and in full compliance of our legal and other responsibilities.

**■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Freedom of Information****Andrew Gwynne:** [\[71038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many staff in her Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**Matt Hancock:**

FOI requests may be responded to by any member of staff across the Department, as they are allocated to the most appropriate person to respond depending on the subject of the request.

## ■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Land

**Mr Mark Prisk:**

[\[70673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to paragraphs 1.296 and 1.297 of the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, what progress her Department has made by estimated capacity of land sold since March 2016 in identifying and disposing of land to meet the Government's commitment.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Government has an ambition to sell surplus land and property to generate £5 billion from sales receipts and create capacity for at least 160,000 homes by the end of March 2020.

In March we published a Government Review: Making Commercial Terms of Government Land Disposals More Transparent. The report committed to publish details of Government land sales annually, with the first publication in summer 2017. The report will include all sales in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

Progress towards meeting the housing ambition is set out in Table 3 of the Public Land for Housing Programme Annual Report published in February 2017.

Increasing the supply of land for new homes is central to this Government's vision of a country that works for everyone. As a major landowner the Government has a crucial role to play in managing its estate more efficiently to secure best value for money for the taxpayer, boost growth and help support the building of new homes.

## ■ LIFE

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[71100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the funding recently allocated from the Tampon Tax Fund to the Life charity will exclusively be spent on young homeless women who are pregnant.

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[71120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many counselling sessions it is estimated will be provided to young homeless women who are pregnant by the charity, Life as a result of its funding allocation under the Tampon Tax Fund.

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[71122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the charity, Life plans to take referrals from the NHS when providing its services as a result of its funding allocation under the Tampon Tax Fund.

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[71123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the counselling services provide by the charity, Life as a result of funding allocation under the Tampon Tax Fund will be (a) subject to Care Quality Commission regulation and (b) provided by

counsellors who are registered with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

**Diana Johnson:** [\[71170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the funding allocation from the Tampon Tax Fund to charity, Life will pay for tampons for homeless women.

**Sarah Champion:** [\[71186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will review the decision to award the anti-abortion charity, Life, a grant from the Tampon Tax Fund.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

We will shortly agree the specifics of each of the 70 projects that successfully applied to the Tampon Tax Fund this year, to ensure that taxpayers' money is put to the best use. We will only make grants where we are 100% certain that they align with the aims of the fund.

**Sarah Champion:** [\[71180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will publish the (a) Tampon Tax Fund application submitted by the charity, Life and (b) criteria for awarding grants from the Tampon Tax Fund.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

We will shortly agree the specifics of each of the 70 projects that successfully applied to the Tampon Tax Fund this year, to ensure that taxpayers' money is put to the best use. We will only make grants where we are 100% certain that they align with the aims of the fund.

It would not be appropriate to publish details of individual applications in advance of grants being made. All applications into the fund were assessed by officials against three criteria: evidence for the need of the project: the organisation's ability to deliver; and the sustainability/impact of the project.

**Sarah Champion:** [\[71346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether she received representations on concerns relating to the application made by the charity, Life for funding from the Tampon Tax Fund.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) administers the Tampon Tax Fund. Since the announcement in late March of the 70 projects that successfully applied to the Tampon Tax Fund this year, DCMS has received correspondence from the public and letters from Members of Parliament regarding matters raised with them by their constituents, as well as a petition organised by the group 38 Degrees. This correspondence also included letters supporting the award of the grant.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[71353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department made of the charity, Life's patient information literature before awarding it a grant from the Tampon Tax Fund.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[71354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department made of the charity, Life's safeguarding policies and procedures before awarding it a grant from the Tampon Tax Fund.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

We will shortly agree the specifics of each of the 70 projects that successfully applied to the Tampon Tax Fund this year, to ensure that taxpayers' money is put to the best use. We will only make grants where we are 100% certain that they align with the aims of the fund.

All applications into the fund were assessed by officials against three criteria: evidence for the need of the project: the organisation's ability to deliver; and the sustainability/impact of the project, and were then vetted by officials before they were signed off.

## ■ Sanitary Protection: Taxation

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[71708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how the Tampon Tax Fund will address period poverty; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

The Tampon Tax Fund aims to support projects that improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls across the UK. It is not designed to specifically address period poverty.

We will shortly agree the specifics of each of the 70 projects that successfully applied to the Tampon Tax Fund this year, to ensure that taxpayers' money is put to the best use. We will only make grants where we are 100% certain that they align with the aims of the fund.

All applications into the fund were assessed by officials against three criteria: evidence for the need of the project: the organisation's ability to deliver; and the sustainability/impact of the project, and were then vetted by officials before they were signed off.

## ■ Sky: 21st Century Fox

**Tom Watson:**

[\[71533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the effect of the General election 2017 and purdah period is on the 40-day deadline by which Ofcom is required to assess the bid by 21st Century Fox to take over Sky.

**Tom Watson:**

[71572]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether Ofcom plans to report to her and provide a fit and proper assessment on the 21st Century Fox bid for Sky by 16 May 2017.

**Matt Hancock:**

I refer the Hon. Gentleman to the written statement made by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on 24 April 2017, Official Report Vol 624, Col 56WS

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-04-24/debates/1704249000010/SkyFoxMerger>

## ■ Sport England: Grants

**Tim Farron:**

[71629]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much (a) total and (b) per capita funding is provided by Sport England in each (i) region and (ii) county.

**Tracey Crouch:**

Sport England National Lottery and Exchequer grant investment in grassroots sport, broken down by constituency, is publicly available on Sport England's website: [www.sportengland.org/funding/investments-weve-made](http://www.sportengland.org/funding/investments-weve-made).

## ■ Sports: Hearing Impaired

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[71472]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to support deaf people who participate in sport.

**Tracey Crouch:**

Sport England is currently in discussions with National Disability Sports Organisations, including UK Deaf Sport, about the role they can play to support the delivery of Government's strategy for sport and physical activity, Sporting Future, which is focused on tackling inactivity in priority groups, such as disabled people. Between 2014 and 2017 Sport England is investing £365,791 in UK Deaf Sport to provide disability and impairment specific expertise to create more opportunities for deaf people to play sport regularly. This was an increase of £83,817 (30%) from its 2011-2014 investment.

## ■ Taxation: Sanitary Protection

**Sarah Champion:**

[71181]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the stages are in the application process for the Tampon Tax Fund; and whether the Minister for Civil Society approves each grant decision.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

We will shortly agree the specifics of each of the 70 projects that successfully applied to the Tampon Tax Fund this year, to ensure that taxpayers' money is put to the best

use. We will only make grants where we are 100% certain that they align with the aims of the fund.

All applications into the fund were assessed by officials against three criteria: evidence for the need of the project; the organisation's ability to deliver; and the sustainability/impact of the project, and were then vetted by officials before they were signed off.

## ■ **Television: Broadcasting Reception**

**Nick Smith:**

[\[71314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what progress has been made in improving terrestrial television coverage in (a) Blaenau Gwent and (b) other areas of the UK to ensure that all households have access to basic channels without needing to purchase a satellite dish.

**Matt Hancock:**

Ofcom estimates that 98.5% of UK households have access to around 18 channels including those from the public service broadcasters (PSBs) on the digital terrestrial TV (DTT, or Freeview) platform. Around 90% of UK households are also able to receive additional commercial DTT channels. Around 1.5% of UK households cannot easily receive DTT services with less than 0.5% not able to receive DTT services at all. However, DTT, cable and satellite digital television services together cover practically 100% of UK households, so that in all but the most exceptional of cases, everyone, including homes in hard to reach areas, should be able to get digital television services. As well as subscription services, digital satellite TV offers non-subscription reception options for a one-off equipment and installation cost, but with no on-going monthly payments. This includes FreeSat free-to-view satellite service which was launched by the BBC and ITV in 2008.

## ■ **Voluntary Work: Young People**

**Philip Davies:**

[\[71187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 5 April 2017 to Question 69622, on voluntary work: young people, how much of NCSs expenditure occurred in each region of the UK in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

The latest figures are for 2016 regional NCS programme costs, broken down by region against seasons (Spring, Summer and Autumn) in the attached table. These figures take into account provider costs exclusively which vary depending on provider.

**Attachments:**

1. 2016 regional NCS programme costs [2016 regional NCS programme costs.docx]

**DEFENCE**■ **Aircraft Carriers**

**Nia Griffith:** [\[71593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to reduce the number of amphibious landing crafts used by the Royal Marines.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 25 April 2017 to Question 71484.

**Attachments:**

1. Aircraft Carriers [Hansard Extract 25 April 2017 HOC 71484.docx]

■ **Military Aircraft**

**Ian Murray:** [\[71664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 20 April 2017 to Question 70279, if he will take steps to allow the posthumous naming of a current RAF Typhoon fighter aircraft, MacRobert's Spirit - not for self but for country, after Lady MacRobert in recognition of her philanthropic donation of four fighter aircraft during the Second World War.

**Mike Penning:**

The RAF is rightly proud of its connections with the MacRobert family. Whilst there are no plans to name a Typhoon as "MacRobert Spirit - Not For Self But For Country", the RAF will be naming a 6 Squadron Typhoon "Sir Roderic" after one of Lady MacRobert's fallen sons who served with the Squadron.

■ **Peacekeeping Operations**

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [\[71590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment he has made of the progress of all current military operations by sea, land and air; and if he will make a statement.

**Sir Michael Fallon:**

British Forces are involved in more than 30 operations in over 20 countries. We are effectively protecting the UK and its interests from a range of threats, and promoting security in key regions of the world.

Protecting the UK.

We continue to defend UK airspace with an integrated Air Defence system that includes Quick Reaction Alert Typhoon aircraft held at continuous readiness, Voyager tankers, and air surveillance and control facilities. We also provide such capabilities to police NATO airspace alongside our allies. Royal Navy assets defend our territorial waters and overseas territories, and maintain our Continuous At Sea Deterrent.



The Ministry of Defence (MOD) continues to ensure that the support it provides to the Government response in the event of a UK terrorism incident is in line with the current threat. The MOD has 10,000 military personnel available on standby at short notice to assist the civil authorities for significant terrorist incidents, supported by a wide range of niche military experts and equipment, such as bomb disposal specialists. The Police and maritime authorities have primacy for domestic security of the UK coastline against criminal elements but the MOD maintains forces to provide support to these authorities as required.

Counter-Daesh, Operation SHADER.

In Iraq and Syria, Operation SHADER is the UK's military response to the threat posed by Daesh. As part of the Global Coalition, the RAF is conducting airstrikes in support of local forces - the Iraqi Security Forces (including the Kurdish Peshmerga) and the Syrian moderate opposition - who are taking the fight to Daesh. British military training teams are providing highly valuable training to Iraqi forces in infantry skills, counter-IED techniques, medical skills and engineering expertise. This is part of the Government's overall strategy to defeat Daesh which includes stifling Daesh's finances; preventing the flow of foreign terrorist fighters across borders; supporting stabilisation efforts in areas liberated from Daesh; and exposing Daesh's delusional and false-religious narrative through counter-messaging.

Middle East.

We continue to underpin our enduring contribution to the security of the Gulf through the deployment of significant maritime and air capabilities. We have further reiterated our commitment to the Gulf States with two recent deployments. The first of these was HMS Daring, which deployed to the Gulf and the Southern Red Sea in October 2016 for seven months, protecting vital shipping lanes and ensuring maritime security. The second was the commitment of the UK's amphibious task group under HMS Ocean, which commanded the regional US-led Coalition Task Force 50 for the first time, from 25 November 2016 to 14 February 2017.

NATO.

As part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence, we have 800 personnel deployed in Estonia and 150 in Poland. We have 30 personnel deployed on NATO's mission in Kosovo and Headquarters Allied Rapid Reaction Corps and the UK Joint Force Air Component are on standby as NATO Response Force (NRF) Component Commands. In addition, we are leading the land element of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force with 3,000 personnel on standby to deploy rapidly if required. We have deployed Typhoon fast jets to Romania for four months as part of NATO's enhanced Southern Air Policing mission, and we are also contributing Royal Navy warships and Royal Air Force aircraft to the NRF.

Afghanistan.

The UK Government continues to make a key contribution to NATO's non-combat train, advise and assist mission which is helping the Afghan National Defence and

Security Forces to build security and stability for the long term. The UK has 500 troops in Afghanistan serving in a non-combat role, alongside our NATO partners as advisers in the Afghan security ministries and to the Afghan Air Force, and provide security for NATO Forces in Kabul. As the coalition lead for the Afghan National Army Officer Academy, the UK has helped to train over 2,000 officer cadets, who will be the next generation of military leaders.

#### Countering Illegal Migration.

The Royal Navy has been at the forefront of NATO's activity in the eastern Mediterranean tackling illegal people trafficking and irregular migration in the Aegean Sea. Between March 2016 and January 2017 a Royal Navy or Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship was deployed to the Aegean in support of the Turkish and Greek coastguards. NATO's activity in the Aegean has contributed to a 98% reduction in people attempting to make the dangerous crossing between Turkey and Greece.

We continue to provide a vessel to the EU's Operation Sophia, which aims to disrupt migrant smuggling in the Mediterranean, and are supporting training of the Libyan coast guard. The UK also has the command of the EU Op Atalanta counter-piracy mission off the Horn of Africa.

#### UN Peacekeeping and Training Missions in Africa.

The UK is increasing its commitment to UN peacekeeping. We have 200 troops on the ground in the UN Mission in South Sudan, set to reach over 350 by May, undertaking vital engineering and medical tasks. Over the last 12 months we have committed up to 70 troops to the UN support mission in Somalia.

Elsewhere in Africa we have training missions in Nigeria and Somalia, as well as contributing to the EU mission in Mali.

### ■ **RAF Northolt**

**Gareth Thomas:**

**[71589]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what refurbishment works he plans at RAF Northolt in April 2018; what estimate he has made of the cost of those works; and for how long he plans to close RAF Northolt for those works.

**Mark Lancaster:**

During spring 2018 the runway at RAF Northolt will close to complete improvements to its sub-structure and replace the runway arrestor beds. The precise dates and length of the closure will be determined during the detailed planning phase, which will take place through 2017 and focus on minimising the operational impact. To release cost information on the project at this stage in the process would prejudice the Department's commercial interests.

## ■ Reserve Forces

### Wes Streeting:

[71608]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the strength of the (a) Army Reserve, (b) Royal Navy Reserve, (c) RAF Reserve and (d) Royal Marines Reserve has been in each year since May 2010.

### Mark Lancaster:

The requested information is published in the Department's monthly Service personnel statistics, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-monthly-service-personnel-statistics-2017>

## ■ Royal Regiment of Scotland

### Douglas Chapman:

[71545]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many contact coupons were distributed by battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland in each year since 2014.

### Mark Lancaster:

No information is held on the number of contact coupons, also known as "Expressions of Interest" forms, that the Royal Regiment of Scotland has distributed since 2014.

## ■ World War II: Medals

### Ian Murray:

[71640]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 20 April 2017 to Question 70281, if he will take steps to grant posthumous awards for (a) Lady MacRobert and (b) other non-service personnel.

### Mike Penning:

Further to my answer of 20 April 2017 to question 70281 I can confirm that there are no plans to grant posthumous awards to non-service personnel as part of the RAF's 100th anniversary commemorations.

## EDUCATION

## ■ Building Schools for the Future Programme

### Tracy Brabin:

[70916]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of the decision to end the Building Schools for the Future programme on the number of available school places.

**Nick Gibb:**

Building Schools for the Future was cancelled in July 2010. Rather than providing new school places, the programme's main aim was to rebuild or refurbish all secondary and special schools in England by 2020.

Supporting local authorities to create sufficient school places is one of the Government's top priorities and we fund all school places needed based on local authorities' own forecasts. We are spending £7 billion to create new school places between 2015 and 2021, which, along with our investment in the free schools programme, we expect to provide 600,000 new places, including 270,000 in free schools. The latest data shows that nearly 735,000 additional pupil places were created between May 2010 and May 2016 with many more delivered since then and in the pipeline.

On top of this, our current school rebuilding programme, the Priority School Building Programme, is meeting the condition need at 537 schools across the country. It has reduced timescales to start building works by up to two years and is delivering projects for a third cheaper than Building Schools for the Future.

**■ Children: Day Care****Caroline Lucas:**[\[71555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the number of (a) nurseries and (b) nursery school places in (i) Brighton Pavilion constituency, (ii) Brighton and Hove local authority area that will offer 30 hours of free childcare from September 2017; whether there is sufficient (A) funding and (B) staffing capacity in place to meet demand for such places; and if she will make a statement.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

Local authorities are responsible for making an assessment about the number of 30 hours free childcare places that providers plan to offer in their areas. To support them to deliver 30 hours, the Government is investing £100 million to create almost 18,000 additional early years places for eligible children to help meet demand from working parents. This is backed by £1 billion extra revenue per year for the early years entitlements, including £300 million per year to increase the funding rates paid to nurseries, pre-schools and childminders that choose to deliver the offer. This means that Brighton and Hove local authority will see an increase in their hourly funding rate to £4.45. The Early Years Workforce Strategy published on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, also aims to support the early years sector to remove barriers to attracting, retaining and developing staff.

**Caroline Lucas:**[\[71641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 19 April 2017 to Question HL6597, on children: day care, how much additional funding will be provided to local authorities and childcare providers to enable them to deliver 30 hours of free childcare from September 2017; and what estimate she has made of the additional places for eligible children that will be created by that funding.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

We have committed over £1 billion more per year by 2019-20 to fund our commitments on the early years entitlements. This includes £300 million per year from 2017-18 for a significant increase to the hourly rate paid to local authorities for delivering the government-funded entitlements, including 30 hours of childcare from September 2017.

We will require that all local authorities pass 93% in 2017-18 then 95% from 2018-19 of 30 hours childcare funding to providers.

In addition to this, we are also investing £100 million of capital funding to create nearly 18,000 additional places for eligible children to help meet demand from working parents. This funding will support even more providers to deliver 30 hours.

**■ Department for Education: Freedom of Information****Andrew Gwynne:****[71040]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many staff in her Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

All officials within the Department, as part of their day-to-day work, may respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 within their own areas of responsibility. These are subject to clearance by senior officials.

**■ Further Education****Gordon Marsden:****[71388]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that staff and trade unions will be effectively consulted at each stage during the process of further education bodies becoming subsidiaries to higher education institutions.

**Robert Halfon:**

In order to become a subsidiary company of a higher education institution, a further education corporation would have to dissolve and the corporation would be required to consult publicly on proposals for dissolution and to take account of the views of those consulted.[1]

It would be for the individual corporations involved to satisfy themselves as to whether TUPE might apply where staff were transferring from a college to a subsidiary company and if so, to comply with the relevant requirements including those in respect of consultation with staff representatives.[2]

[1] Section 27 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/13/section/27> and regulations 3 and 4 of the Further Education Corporations (Publication of Proposals) (England) Regulations 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1157/regulation/3/made>

[2] TUPE guidance is at <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1655>

**■ Further Education: Staff****Gordon Marsden:** [71387]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether support staff of further education bodies, approved to become subsidiaries to high education institutions, will continue to have access to their local government pension scheme.

**Robert Halfon:**

Yes, staff employed by further education corporations who are eligible for the LGPS will continue to be so if the further education body becomes a subsidiary company of a higher education institution and they are designated by their employer (either individually or on the basis that they belong to a group of employees designated) as being eligible for the LGPS.

[1] This is set out in Regulation 3 and Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/2356/contents/made>

**■ Headteachers****Caroline Lucas:** [69730]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will place in the Library a copy of her response to the meeting request of 24 January 2017 from head teachers and their associations from Brighton, East Sussex, Peterborough Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, Essex, Devon, Cornwall, Surrey, Thurrock, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Wokingham and West Sussex.

**Nick Gibb:**

My Rt. Hon Friend the Secretary of State has no record of this meeting request of 24 January 2017, only a meeting request from this group of 24 March 2017.

**■ Pupils: Bristol East****Kerry McCarthy:** [71486]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average per pupil funding in primary schools is in Bristol East constituency; and what estimate she has made of per pupil funding levels in Bristol East constituency in each of the next three years.

**Nick Gibb:**

This year, in 2017-18, the average per pupil funding amount for schools in the City of Bristol local authority, provided through the Schools Block of the Dedicated School Grant is £4,684. This is an average amount across both primary and secondary schools in the local authority area. The distribution of funding between schools (including the balance between primary and secondary schools) is a matter for local discretion. Decisions about school funding in future years will be subject to the outcome of the national funding formula consultation. In the consultation, we made available data illustrating the amount each school would have received if the proposed formula had been implemented in full in 2016-17, and a projection of schools' allocations in the first year of transition. This data is published at

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/>.

## ■ Sandymoor School

**Derek Twigg:** [71412]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 21 March 2017 to Question 68119, on Sandymoor School, if she will publish an update on the anomaly in the financial statements of the Trust.

**Derek Twigg:** [71413]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2017 to Question 66084, on Sandymoor School, if she will provide an update on the reference to a deficit of £522,760.

**Edward Timpson:**

The financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2016 for Sandymoor School (published on 5 January 2017), made reference to a deficit of £522,760. The school and their auditors have confirmed that this was an error.

Sandymoor School has since corrected this error and filed updated financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2016 at Companies House on 11 April 2017. The updated statements have also been published on the school's website. The updated statements confirm that the school had a cumulative surplus on recurrent funds of £173,401 at the end of 2015/16.

## ■ Schools: Buildings

**Andrew Stephenson:** [71432]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much was awarded to schools in each English region through the Condition Improvement Fund in each of the last three years.

**Nick Gibb:**

The total amount of funding awarded to schools in each of the English regions from the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) in each of the last three years is shown in the table below.

The figures for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 rounds include funding for CIF appeals. The appeals round for 2017-18 has not yet been concluded.

REGION	2015-16 £M	2016-17 £M	2017-18 £M
East Midlands	42.5	44.5	44.4
East of England	74.5	84.4	67.7
Inner London	7.9	10.5	11.1
North East	14.5	18.1	12.2

REGION	2015-16 £M	2016-17 £M	2017-18 £M
North West	35.8	45.9	49.8
Outer London	39.3	43.8	51.2
South East	65.2	60.0	54.0
South West	56.7	58.8	57.8
West Midlands	53.4	64.6	72.1
Yorkshire and the Humber	32.3	25.6	45.4
Total	422.1	456.3	465.6

#### ■ Schools: Finance

**Angela Rayner:**

[\[71488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she plans to publish the summary of responses to the second stage of the Government's consultation on the National Funding Formula for schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

Introducing fairer funding is a priority for this Government and we are grateful for the active engagement of the education sector with our proposals. The Department received over 25,000 responses to its recent consultation from schools, local authorities, parents and representative groups across the country. These will be analysed in detail and the Government's response will be published in due course.

#### ■ Schools: Standards

**Catherine McKinnell:**

[\[70305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an assessment of the potential effect of expanding the number of selective schools on the performance of non-selective schools in that area.

**Nick Gibb:**

The consultation 'Schools that Work for Everyone' set out our proposal to increase the number of selective schools, stating that at the same time we want to improve the educational outcomes for those who do not attend selective schools. The evidence on the performance of pupils in selective areas who are not in selective schools shows mixed results. Some studies find an association with slightly poorer average educational outcomes for these pupils[1], or only for those in areas with high proportions of selective places[2], whilst another study found no adverse effects for



pupils in other schools[3]. The Government is considering the outcomes of the consultation and its intention is to publish its response in due course.

[1] Atkinson, A., Gregg, P. and McConnell, B. (2004) The results of 11 Plus selection: an investigation into equity and efficiency of outcomes for pupils in selective LEAs, cited in Coe et al (2008) Evidence on the effects of selective educational systems, CEM Centre, Durham University for the Sutton Trust

[2] Andrews, J., Hutchinson, J., and Johnes, R. (2016) Grammar schools and social mobility. Education Policy Institute.

[3] Sutton Trust (2008) 'Evidence on the effects of selective educational systems' by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring, Durham University'

### ■ **Schools: West Yorkshire**

**Tracy Brabin:**

[\[70912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions she has had with headteachers in (a) Batley and Spen constituency and (b) Kirklees on (i) school funding and (ii) the effect of the new school funding formula on schools in those areas.

**Nick Gibb:**

We are committed to introducing a national funding formula for schools that will calculate schools' funding allocations consistently and transparently, using an up to date assessment of need. We believe this represents a fairer way of funding schools.

We have consulted on our proposals and we are grateful to those who have taken the time to highlight their views as part of this process. We received over 25,000 responses to the consultation, which we are reviewing in detail.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Freedom of Information**

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[71041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many staff in her Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**George Eustice:**

FOI requests may be responded to by any member of staff across the Department, as they are allocated to the most appropriate person to respond depending on the subject of the request.

### ■ **FairFuelUK**

**Alex Salmond:**

[\[71774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she has responded to FairFuelUK's letter of 7 April 2017 requesting a meeting on taxation and diesel cars; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

HM Treasury has responsibility for taxation and the letter has been passed on for the responsible Minister to respond.

**■ Fossil Fuelled Power Stations: EU Law****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[71548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will vote in support of the EU's revised Best Available Techniques Reference Document for Large Combustion Plants at the European Industrial Emissions Directive Article 75 Committee on 28 April 2017.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The UK remains a member of the EU until we leave, with full rights and obligations of membership. Defra officials are currently examining the proposed Large Combustion Plant Best Available Techniques Reference Document ahead of the vote later this week.

**■ Livestock Industry: Greenhouse Gas Emissions****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[71339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the proportion of UK greenhouse gas emissions that come from livestock production (a) directly and (b) taking into account emissions from livestock feed from (i) inside and (ii) outside the UK; and if she will make a statement.

**George Eustice:**

The UK national inventory of greenhouse gases (GHG) reports emissions of 49.2 million tonnes from agriculture in 2014, the most recent year for which data is available. This represents around 9% of total UK GHG emissions. Of these, around 63% come from livestock and their manures.

Imported feeds such as soya meal can have significant environmental impacts. Defra has conducted research on home grown alternatives to imported feeds and continues to work with industry to reduce these impacts.

Industry is making progress to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from livestock production. For example, the British pig industry reduced emissions by 26% in the period 2018 to 2012, mainly due to a 50% reduction in the use of soya in pig feeds.

**■ Livestock: Hormone Treatments****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[71235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what research her Department has conducted into the effect of the use of pregnant mare serum gonadotropin on the (a) health and (b) welfare of horses, pigs, cows and sheep.

**George Eustice:**

As part of the veterinary medicines approval process, products containing pregnant mare serum gonadotropin (PMSG) have been assessed by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) against European standards for quality, safety and efficacy to determine the benefits of the product to the animals being treated.

This assessment also takes account of any potential risks to the environment, to the animals being treated, to people who administer the medicine and to those who may consume produce from treated animals. A product is only granted an authorisation if the benefits of the product outweigh its risks.

The government has not commissioned or funded any research into the effect of the use of PMSG on either the health or welfare of horses, pigs, cows or sheep.

In late January this year, in light of the media reports concerning the welfare of animals used during the production of PMSG, the VMD contacted all three companies holding UK Marketing Authorisations for these products. They all provided written assurances that they have systems in place to safeguard animal welfare in their supply chains.

**■ Slaughterhouses: CCTV****Angela Smith:**[\[71648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to encourage voluntary take-up of CCTV in equine slaughterhouses.

**George Eustice:**

In February 2015, the Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) published an independent assessment of the use of CCTV in slaughterhouses which concluded that CCTV can offer real benefits, particularly to slaughterhouse operators, but that it cannot replace the need for businesses to have proper monitoring procedures in place.

The vast majority of horses are slaughtered in slaughterhouses in England which have CCTV installed for welfare purposes, although cameras may not be present in all areas. Official Veterinarians also have the power to seize CCTV footage if they suspect that welfare standards are not being met.

Defra continues to encourage slaughterhouses to install CCTV in all areas on a voluntary basis in order to realise the benefits to animal welfare set out in the FAWC report.

**EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION****■ Brexit****Catherine West:**[\[70244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether he or officials of his Department have held discussions with UK MEPs on regional priorities for the UK's negotiations on leaving the EU.

**Mr David Jones:**

We are working closely with other Member states and our partners in the EU Institutions, including the European Parliament, to negotiate a successful outcome and the best deal for the UK. DExEU ministers are pursuing a programme of extensive engagement with the European Parliament which has included meetings with UK MEPs. This programme of engagement has laid the groundwork for constructive dialogue and we will continue to engage with MEPs through the process.

**Paul Blomfield:**[\[70748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether his Department has carried out an equalities impact assessment of the potential effects of the UK leaving the EU; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Government is committed to negotiating a deep and special partnership with the European Union and is conducting a wide-ranging programme of analysis, including analysis of groups and sectors, to ensure the best deal for the entire United Kingdom. All the protections covered in the Equality Acts of 2006 and 2010 will continue to apply once the UK has left the European Union. The UK is already well placed to continue championing equality, thanks in part to the legal protection assured by the Equality Acts.

**■ Brexit: Greater London****Catherine West:**[\[70247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether he or officials of his Department have met London MEPs to discuss priorities for London in negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

**Mr David Jones:**

We are working closely with other Member States and our partners in the EU institutions, including the European Parliament, to negotiate a successful outcome and the best deal for the UK. DExEU ministers are pursuing a programme of extensive engagement with the European Parliament which has included meetings with MEPs from the London region. This programme of engagement has laid the groundwork for constructive dialogue and we will continue to engage with MEPs throughout the process.

**■ Business: Bristol****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[71487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what discussions he has had with businesses in Bristol on (a) ending freedom of movement, (b) withdrawing from the EU single market and (c) their priorities for the Government's negotiations of the UK leaving the EU; and what research he has commissioned into the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the UK's core cities.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Since the EU referendum, Ministers from across Government have met civil society organisations and businesses from every sector. Ministers from the Department for Exiting the European Union have played an active part in this effort, engaging with businesses in every sector cluster and visiting every region of the UK, including Bristol, to hear and understand their priorities for our exit negotiations. This is part of our commitment to build a national consensus on our negotiating position. Government has regular engagement with the core cities as part of its wider work with local communities and organisations.

Details of Ministerial meetings are published in the Department for Exiting the European Union's quarterly Transparency Returns, which are made publicly available on Gov.uk.

**■ Business: EU Countries****Catherine West:**[\[70254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the economy of business relocating their offices to EU member states following the UK's exit from the EU.

**Catherine West:**[\[70255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the economy of businesses establishing new subsidiaries within EU member states following the UK's exit from the EU.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Government is committed to negotiating a deep and special partnership with the European Union to get the very best deal for businesses and households. We want a bold and ambitious free trade agreement, greater in scope than any before it, that allows British companies the maximum freedom to trade with and operate within EU markets, and that lets European business do the same in Britain. The government is conducting a wide-ranging programme of analysis and as we move into the period of negotiation, we have been clear that we will not disclose any material at a time that could affect the UK's position in those negotiations.

**■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Scotland****Ian Murray:** [\[71519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, if he will publish all official correspondence between his Department and the Scottish Government since 1 March 2017.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

There is high public interest in the government making sure that the UK remains as stable as possible throughout our exit from the EU. Disclosure of fragments of commercially or politically sensitive information may mean future discussions will not take place, or will not take place with the same frankness as before. The department has no plans to change policy regarding the publication of correspondence.

**■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Secondment****Tracy Brabin:** [\[70948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many staff are seconded to his Department; and how many such staff are seconded from which companies and organisations.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The department has sourced a large proportion of experienced staff from across Whitehall and a number of secondees from the private sector and the wider public sector. We are not in a position to give a final total for particular groups of staff as recruitment is ongoing and numbers are regularly changing.

**FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE****■ Arms Trade: Exports****Emily Thornberry:** [\[71729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to Criterion Three of the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, whether his Department's interpretation of whether items would provoke or prolong armed conflicts in the country of final destination extends to external conflicts to which the country of final destination is a party.

**Boris Johnson:**

No. Criterion Three of the Consolidated EU & National Arms Export Licensing Criteria refers specifically to "the internal situation in the country of final destination, as a function of the existence of tensions or armed conflicts" and not to external conflicts, which would be considered under other Criteria.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[71805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to Criterion Four of the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria,

whether his Department's interpretation of an adverse impact on regional peace and security includes any potential effect on the civilian population of a country in whose territory the country of final destination is engaged in armed conflict.

**Boris Johnson:**

Consideration of the application of international humanitarian law, the body of law which regulates the conduct of armed conflict, including seeking to limit the effects of conflict on civilians for humanitarian reasons, and international human rights law, the body of law which seeks to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, is considered more appropriately under Criterion Two of the Consolidated EU & National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, which refers specifically to international human rights instruments and international humanitarian law.

■ **British Nationals Abroad**

**Dan Jarvis:**

[71595]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many British citizens are estimated to be living abroad, by country.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The FCO does not record the volume of British citizens living abroad. The United Nations in their report on '*Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin*' estimated in 2015 that 4,917,460 British citizens were living outside of the UK. The report can be found at

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml>.

■ **British Nationals Abroad: Missing Persons**

**Tom Brake:**

[71407]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what changes in procedures have been implemented in handling the cases of missing persons overseas and in training staff in how to handle such cases in the last 10 years.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The FCO regularly reviews all aspects of policy and guidance for assisting British nationals in difficulty overseas. The package of support and guidance for staff on handling cases of missing persons overseas is currently under review. The review includes the development of specific training material for handling such cases. The FCO has developed a close working relationship with the NGO 'Lucie Blackman Trust' to support the friends and families of British nationals who are missing overseas. The FCO has also published on gov.uk the public leaflet 'Missing persons abroad' which explains what practical help FCO staff can offer to people when a British national goes missing abroad, what people can do themselves and where they can go for additional help.

**■ Chechnya: Homosexuality**

**James Berry:** [\[71444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations Ministers of his Department have made to the Russian Government on reports of arrests of gay men in Chechnya.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

I refer the Hon. Member to my response to written question 70842, and the answers I gave when replying to an Urgent Question in the House on 20 April 2017. Since then, the FCO Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia has written to the Russian Ambassador to the United Kingdom setting out our concerns and calling for the Russian authorities to undertake an investigation as a matter of urgency.

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[71594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking in response to reports of the imprisonment and abuse of homosexual men in Chechnya.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

I refer the Hon. Member to my response to written question 70842, and the answers I gave when replying to an Urgent Question in the House on 20 April 2017.

**■ Chechnya: LGBT People**

**Lyn Brown:** [\[71400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the UN on reports of persecution of LGBTQ people in Chechnya.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

In addition to the statement issued by my Noble Friend, the Minister of State, The Baroness Anelay of St Johns, officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have worked with EU partners to coordinate an EU statement and statements on behalf of the EU in the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The EU is as one on the serious nature of this issue. We will look to raise the continued persecution of the LGBT community in Russia at the next session of the UN Human Rights Council in June.

**Lyn Brown:** [\[71402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with EU counterparts on reports of persecution of LGBTQ people in Chechnya.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

In addition to the statement issued by my Noble Friend, the Minister of State, The Baroness Anelay of St Johns, officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have worked with EU partners to coordinate an EU statement and statements on



behalf of the EU in the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The EU is as one on the serious nature of this issue. We will look to raise the continued persecution of the LGBT community in Russia at the next session of the UN Human Rights Council in June.

**Lyn Brown:**

[\[71403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Russian counterpart on reports of persecution of LGBTQ people in Chechnya.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

I refer the Hon. Member to my response to written question 70842, and the answers I gave when replying to an Urgent Question in the House on 20 April 2017. Since then, the FCO Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia has written to the Russian Ambassador to the United Kingdom setting out our concerns and calling for the Russian authorities to undertake an investigation as a matter of urgency.

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**

[\[71467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the Russian Government on the persecution of the LGBT community in Chechnya.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

I refer the Hon. Member to my response to written question 70842, and the answers I gave when replying to an Urgent Question in the House on 20 April 2017. Since then, the FCO Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia has written to the Russian Ambassador to the United Kingdom setting out our concerns and calling for the Russian authorities to undertake a complete investigation.

## ■ Chemical Weapons Convention

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many requests the Government has received for assistance under Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention in each year since 2010; from which countries such requests have been received; what the nature was of each such request; and what assistance the Government provided in response to each such request.

**Boris Johnson:**

The UK has received no formal requests for assistance under the Article X provisions. However, in the last three years we have contributed to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons' programme to provide training assistance for States Parties in East Africa and South East Asia. The UK also assisted with the production of a treatment guide for victims of chemical weapons which was published in 2015. These activities were funded over and above our assessed contributions to the OPCW.

## ■ Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[71779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many people currently work within the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre on secondment from (a) other Government Departments and (b) outside the Civil Service.

**Boris Johnson:**

Staff from the four departments involved spend all, or part, of their time working as part of the centre. While doing so, they remain employed by the relevant department rather than being seconded to Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre (CPACC) or a single department. With the exception of one military officer working in the centre, all staff are drawn from the Civil Service.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[71781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will list the responsibilities of the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre; and what the relationship is between that unit and the (a) Export Control Joint Unit and (b) Export Control Organisation.

**Boris Johnson:**

The Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre (CPACC) brings together officials from FCO, DIT, MOD and BEIS covering global controls on chemical, biological, nuclear and conventional weapons and on their proliferation. This includes controls on their means of delivery, such as missiles, and broader international work on the security of relevant materials. The Export Control Joint Unit (ECJU) focuses specifically on the control of military and dual use exports, and the operation of the export licensing system. ECJU co-locates DIT's Export Control Organisation and the export licensing teams from MOD and FCO. Ministerial responsibilities are unchanged.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[71783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the total operating budget of the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre was in the most recent year for which figures are available.

**Boris Johnson:**

The Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre is funded by the contributing departments through their own budgets. The Ministry of Defence provides the office space, with each department funding its own staff and IT systems. There is no specific operating budget.

## ■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Politics and Government

**Mr Jonathan Lord:** [\[71546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK is deeply concerned by the continuing violence in many parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). We frequently raise the issue with the Government of DRC who are ultimately responsible for providing security for their citizens. We also recognise the need for the UN peacekeeping mission (MONUSCO) to deliver more, especially since its mandate was renewed in March. We have pushed hard in the UN Security Council for the protection of civilians to be the mission's first priority. A growing body of evidence implicates elements of the Congolese security services in killings and other human rights violations. We have made clear that those who commit such violations, will face consequences for their actions. EU sanctions are currently being considered.

**■ Diplomatic Service****Tom Brake:**[\[71405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many UK-based consular staff at Executive Officer grade are currently serving overseas in frontline consular work.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

There are around 600 staff working in our overseas consular network. These comprise a mix of UK based and local staff providing a balance of experience, skills, local knowledge and language. Of these, there are currently 10 UK-based FCO Grade B3 officers (Executive Officers). In addition, there are a further 27 UK-based FCO Grade C4 and C5 officers (Higher Executive Officers/Senior Executive Officers) and six UK-based FCO Grade D7 (Civil Service Grade 6) Consular Regional Directors providing strategic leadership to the front line overseas.

**Tom Brake:**[\[71588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many non-frontline UK-based Consular Regional Directors are based overseas; in which countries those directors are based; and what the total cost is of those posts.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We have six Consular Regional Directors in our overseas network providing strategic leadership to our front line consular services around the world. They are based in the Netherlands, Oman, Singapore, South Africa, Spain and the USA at a total cost of £761,349 per annum.

**■ Diplomatic Service: Qualifications****Tom Brake:**[\[71543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the murder and manslaughter teams in Consular Directorates are required to have particular qualifications to handle the cases they deal with; and what training such staff receive to carry out that work.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

All members of the Murder and Manslaughter Team complete the mandatory training for all front line consular staff at the start of their roles. They then complete a further programme of assessed learning specifically designed for those handling murder/manslaughter cases. The team also take opportunities for wider learning and development on trauma and crisis work to ensure they provide the best support to families of those murdered and killed overseas.

**■ Diplomatic Service: Training****Tom Brake:**[\[71406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what training consular staff receive before they start work; how long such training courses last; and what proportion of training time is spent on cases of murder, missing persons, rape and sexual assault.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

All front line staff undertake mandatory training designed to give them the relevant skills and knowledge to provide appropriate support in a range of circumstances, including cases of murder, missing persons, rape and sexual assault. Our training is aligned with our Consular Strategy 2016-2020 and is constantly updated in line with ongoing customer feedback, formal evaluations and policy or legal developments.

Frontline Consular staff, in London and overseas, undertake mandatory "Introduction to Consular Work" and "Safeguarding children and young persons" e-learning courses during their first week in the role. This is followed within three months by an "Assistance Guidance Assessment", which is conducted to a pass standard, and a five-day "Essential Assistance Workshop", an interactive course with activities focused on building customer care skills for handling the full range of consular casework with particular emphasis on the most vulnerable.

Staff then follow a programme of continuous development relevant to their role. This comprises a range of learning activities including e-learning, workshops and discussions with specialist agencies and NGOs dealing specifically with bereavement, rape and sexual assault which are designed to further enhance the skills, knowledge and behaviours of consular staff dealing with these and other vulnerable customers. There are also opportunities for staff to practice customer care skills through telephone handling skills practice programme.

We have also developed a learning retention and evaluation tool to help embed knowledge following training courses. This involves a series of online timed and targeted questions for a five month period.

**Tom Brake:**[\[71409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what training is given to staff working on frontline consular assistance issues in the Consular Directorate; and what the grades are of all such staff.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

All front line consular staff in London and overseas complete a mandatory programme of Consular training, including an "Introduction to Consular Work" and "Safeguarding Children and Young Persons" e-learning within their first week in the role. This is followed within three months by an Assistance Guidance Assessment, which is conducted to a pass standard, and attendance at a five day "Essential Assistance Workshop", an interactive course with activities focused on building customer care skills for handling the full range of consular casework, with particular emphasis on the most vulnerable.

In addition there is an ongoing programme of blended learning designed to support continuous development and further enhance the skills, policy knowledge and behaviours of consular staff dealing with all types of consular cases.

**Dogs: Meat****Margaret Ferrier:**[\[71322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with (a) his global counterparts and (b) animal rights groups on cruelty in the global dog meat trade; and if he will make a statement.

**Alok Sharma:**

I met with animal rights activists earlier this year to discuss this issue and my officials are in ongoing discussions with them to identify how to improve animal welfare and raise awareness of the cruelty and potential health implications of the global dog meat trade.

The consumption of dog meat is legal in many countries, and the UK has no grounds to intervene or take trade measures to prevent this. As such, I have not raised the matter with my global counterparts. However, the British Ambassador in Seoul has raised the issue with the Korean authorities, and officials from the British Embassy in Seoul have accompanied non-government organisations on a dog farm visit. Officials have also met with police representatives from China to discuss their implementation of animal welfare regulations.

As I stated in the Westminster Hall Debate on 12 September 2016, it is encouraging that in countries where dog meat is consumed there are signs that attitudes are changing.

**Embassies: Cider****Bill Wiggin:**[\[R\]](#) [\[71283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many UK embassies serve cider at functions.

**Alok Sharma:**

A number of our High Commissions and Embassies serve cider at functions. We do not centrally hold details of the occasions and the cider that is served. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

work closely with partners across Government and the private sector, including the National Association of Cider Makers, to promote Britain's world class offer in this area, including through the GREAT campaign. Our High Commissions and Embassies are uniquely positioned to showcase British food and drink across the world.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Freedom of Information**

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[71043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many staff in his Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

Freedom of Information (FOI) requests are dealt with by the relevant teams across the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as a core business function, with support from a small policy advisory team. Accordingly, all staff have a responsibility to respond to FOI requests, as appropriate.

■ **Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps**

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[71730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential implications of designation by the United States of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary General Corps as a foreign terrorist organisation for the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran.

**Boris Johnson:**

It would not be appropriate to speculate about the implications of a potential US designation. The UK remains committed to the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA). Consistent with Under the JCPoA, the Islamic Revolutionary General Corps (IRGC) remains sanctioned.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[71731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential implications of designation by the United States of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary General Corps as a foreign terrorist organisation for co-operation between Iran and Iraq in the campaign against Daesh.

**Boris Johnson:**

It would not be appropriate to speculate about the implications of a potential US designation. The UK is working as part of the 68 member Global Coalition, in which we continue to play a leading role, to support the Iraqi Government to clear Daesh from its territory in a way that protects civilians, minimises the humanitarian impact, and limits longer-term conflict by supporting political reconciliation.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[71799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his US counterpart on the potential designation by that

country of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a foreign terrorist organisation; and if he will make a statement.

**Boris Johnson:**

I have not had recent discussions with my US counterpart on the US's potential designation of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a foreign terrorist organisation.

## ■ **Iraq: Chemical Weapons**

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the progress of the Iraqi Government in implementing its plans for the destruction of remnants of chemical weapons stored at the Al-Muthanna complex; what assessment he has made of the security situation at that complex; and what assessment he has made of the potential threat posed by the spread of chemical weapons stored at that complex.

**Boris Johnson:**

In March 2017, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Executive Council agreed an approach proposed by Iraq to dealing with the remaining remnants of Saddam-era chemical weapons programme remaining in bunkers at Al-Muthanna in Iraq. We understand that the remaining materials are in poor condition which makes them hazardous to access and handle. However we continue to press the Government of Iraq to proceed as swiftly as possible and to ensure the security of the site.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the Government's policy is on the establishment of an independent international mechanism to investigate attacks using chemical weapons in Iraq.

**Boris Johnson:**

It is the responsibility of the Government of Iraq to investigate alleged use of chemical weapons on its territory. At Iraqi request, and in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has provided assistance to the Iraqi authorities over the past two years to support their investigation into such allegations. We therefore judge there is no requirement for the establishment of any additional international mechanism to investigate attacks using chemical weapons in Iraq.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received of attacks using chemical weapons in Iraq; what estimate he has made of the number of such attacks during (a) 2014, (b) 2015, (c) 2016 and (d) 2017; and if he will make a statement.



**Boris Johnson:**

There have been a number of credible reports of use of chemical weapons in Iraq since 2014, becoming more frequent over time. We welcome the Government of Iraq's decision to invite the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to support its investigations into chemical weapons use in Iraq. The Government of Iraq's findings confirmed the use of sulphur mustard in northern Iraq by a non-State actor in 2015 and 2016 and investigations continue into other allegations of use.

**Emily Thornberry:**[\[71646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the progress of the Iraqi authorities in (a) investigating reports of attacks using chemical weapons in that country, (b) establishing responsibility for such attacks and (c) bringing the perpetrators of such attacks to justice.

**Boris Johnson:**

We welcome the Government of Iraq's decision to invite the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to support its investigations into chemical weapons use in Iraq. Iraq's findings confirmed the use of sulphur mustard in Iraq by a non-State actor in 2015 and 2016. We condemn the use of chemical weapons by anyone anywhere. Those who commit such atrocities must be held accountable. We continue to work with Iraq and other international partners.

**■ Islamic State: Chemical Weapons****Emily Thornberry:**[\[71529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the former capacity of Daesh to produce chemical weapons at the University of Mosul; what assessment he has made of the quantity of chemical weapons produced at that site; what assessment he has made of the quantity of chemical weapons produced at that site; and what assessment he has made of the potential threat posed by the spread of chemical weapons produced at that site.

**Boris Johnson:**

The UN-Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Joint Investigative Mechanism confirmed last year Daesh responsibility for at least one attack in Syria in 2015 using sulphur mustard. There have been a number of further subsequent alleged uses of chemical weapons by non state actors in Iraq, including in recent weeks. Whether the materials for such attacks were produced at the University of Mosul or elsewhere, such attacks only underline the importance of international action to defeat Daesh.

**■ Muslim Brotherhood****Emily Thornberry:**[\[71732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his counterpart in the United States on the potential



designation by that country of the Muslim Brotherhood as a foreign terrorist organisation; and if he will make a statement.

**Boris Johnson:**

My officials have had ongoing discussions with their United States counterparts about the Muslim Brotherhood. If the United States were to designate the Muslim Brotherhood, we would consider any new evidence carefully against our own evidential thresholds for a UK listing. The Government will ensure that any potential action we take complements our strong collaboration with regional partners on our shared counter terrorism priorities.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential implications of designation by the United States of the Muslim Brotherhood as a foreign terrorist organisation on regional co-operation on counter-terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa.

**Boris Johnson:**

My officials have had ongoing discussions with their United States counterparts about the Muslim Brotherhood. If the United States were to designate the Muslim Brotherhood, we would consider any new evidence carefully against our own evidential thresholds for a UK listing. The Government will ensure that any potential action we take complements our strong collaboration with regional partners on our shared counter terrorism priorities.

## ■ Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the Government's priorities were for the 54th Special Session of the OPCW Executive Council on 13 and 19 April 2017; what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the outcome of those meetings; and if he will make a statement.

**Boris Johnson:**

The UK has been at the forefront of those making the case that those found responsible for chemical weapons attacks must be held to account. A UK-US-French attempt to agree UN sanctions in response to previous chemical weapons attacks was vetoed by Russia and China in the UN Security Council on 28 February. In March we helped secure agreement from the EU to add 4 Syrian military officials to the sanctions list for their role in carrying out chemical weapon attacks. We welcome the further sanctions Canada and the US have introduced in recent days. We will continue work with partners to take action against those responsible for chemical weapons attacks.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what voluntary financial contributions the Government made to the (a) Organisation for the Prevention of

Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Syria Trust Fund, (b) OPCW Voluntary Fund for Assistance and (c) voluntary trust fund for the OPCW International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons in (i) 2014-15, (ii) 2015-16 and (iii) 2016-17, in addition to the UK's assessed contributions to the OPCW budget, in each of those years.

**Boris Johnson:**

The UK made voluntary financial contributions to the Syria Trust Fund of £276,000 in 2014-15 and £50,000 in 2016-17. We have also supported significant contributions from the European Union, including 2.3 million euros announced in March 2016. The UK has not contributed to the other two funds over this period.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on the current funding shortfall of the (a) Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Syria Trust Fund, (b) OPCW Voluntary Fund for Assistance and (c) voluntary trust fund for the OPCW International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons.

**Boris Johnson:**

I am not aware of any current funding shortfall in these funds.

■ **Sri Lanka: Human Rights**

**Wes Streeting:**

[\[71609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he is having with his counterpart in Sri Lanka on implementation of UN Human Rights Council resolutions relating to human rights in Sri Lanka.

**Alok Sharma:**

I met with Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Samaraweera at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on 28 February. I also wrote to both the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe on 20 April. In the meeting and subsequent letters, I recognised the Sri Lankan government's efforts to improve the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. I also welcomed their co-sponsorship of UN Human Rights Council Resolution 34/1. I encouraged accelerated progress towards fulfilling the commitments their government made in co-sponsoring Resolution 34/1 and raised the importance of the return of all military-held private land, the delivery of devolution through constitutional reform, the establishment of credible transitional justice mechanisms and the development of new counter-terrorism legislation in line with international human rights standards.

The UK is committed to the full implementation of Resolution 34/1 and will continue to support the Government of Sri Lanka in its efforts to promote reconciliation and human rights.

## ■ Syria: Chemical Weapons

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what plans the Government has to seek the agreement of the (a) OPCW Executive Council, (b) Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and (c) UN Security Council on punitive measures against the Government of Syria in the event that the use of chemical weapons by that Government in Khan Sheikhoun on 4 April 2017 is confirmed by the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism.

**Boris Johnson:**

The UK has been at the forefront of those making the case that those found responsible for chemical weapons attacks must be held to account. A UK-US-French attempt to agree UN sanctions in response to previous chemical weapons attacks was vetoed by Russia and China in the UN Security Council on 28 February. In March we helped secure agreement from the EU to add 4 Syrian military officials to the sanctions list for their role in carrying out chemical weapon attacks. We welcome the further sanctions Canada and the US have introduced in recent days. We will continue work with partners to take action against those responsible for chemical weapons attacks.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate the Government has made of the (a) size of the chemical weapons stockpile and (b) number of chemical weapons production facilities not formally declared to the OPCW by the Government of Syria.

**Boris Johnson:**

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is responsible for verifying Syria's declaration and its Director General has reported to the Executive Council that despite a significant amount of time and resource devoted to engagement with the Syrian authorities over the last three years, "gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies remain in the Government of Syria's declaration to the OPCW". These gaps and continuing attacks mean that the OPCW, with our strong support, continues to investigate Syria's declaration to seek to uncover the full picture.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he plans for the OPCW Executive Council to convene in Special Session when the Fact finding Mission in Syria completes its investigation of the attack of 4 April 2017 in Khan Sheikhoun; and what priorities the Government has planned for such a meeting in the event that the use of chemical weapons in the attack is confirmed by the Fact Finding Mission.

**Boris Johnson:**

The Government's priority is that the Khan Sheikhoun attack is investigated and that those responsible are held to account. Once the Fact Finding Mission has determined that chemical weapons have or have likely been used in Syria, it is for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism to seek to attribute responsibility. We will work with partners to support that process.

The OPCW Executive Council met in special session on 13, 19 and 20 April to discuss the response to the Khan Sheikhoun attack and we will consider whether a further meeting of the Executive Council could usefully support that process.

**Emily Thornberry:**[\[71625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons Fact Finding Mission in Syria is being provided with adequate access to relevant (a) sites, (b) records and (c) personnel to carry out its investigations of the attack of 4 April 2017 in Khan Sheikhoun; and when he expects that investigation to conclude.

**Boris Johnson:**

It is for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to judge whether they are being provided with adequate access. The OPCW Director General has previously been clear in his criticism of Syrian co-operation with the OPCW over the Syrian chemical weapons declarations, in July 2016 calling on Syria "to provide information that is scientifically and technically plausible, to facilitate access to individuals with strategic knowledge and oversight of the Syrian chemical weapons programme, and to engage in a dialogue that is proactive and fully transparent". We continue to call on Syria to co-operate fully, including with the investigation into the Khan Sheikhoun attack. The Director General said on 19 April that he anticipated that the investigation would complete a first report of its findings within two weeks.

**Emily Thornberry:**[\[71626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether adequate steps are being taken to protect the security of personnel from the (a) Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact Finding Mission and (b) OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism deployed in Syria.

**Boris Johnson:**

The safety and security of staff conducting investigations is the responsibility of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Joint Investigative Mechanism working with UN Department of Safety and Security, and of states in which they are operating. In his statement on 19 April, the OPCW Director General underlined the importance he attaches to ensuring the investigators' safety and security.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to support the work of the (a) Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact Finding Mission in Syria and (b) UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism for Syria in addition to the UK's financial contributions to the OPCW budget.

**Boris Johnson:**

The UK has strongly supported the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and UN investigations from the outset of their work. In addition to financial contributions, the UK has provided support in the UN Security Council and OPCW Executive Council for their establishment, operation and for action on their conclusions.

In response to the OPCW's request to all states to provide assistance and information, we have helped train inspectors in forensic interviewing and negotiating skills, shared information we have on the attacks they are investigating and lobbied other states to be similarly supportive.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to his oral contribution of 18 April 2017, Official Report, column 551, when the Government decided that the Framework for Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons, agreed between the US and Russia on 14 September 2013, was the result of a misjudgement; whether that decision has also been reached by the US Administration; and what assessment he has made of the implications of that decision for the prospects of removing the remaining stockpiles of chemical weapons from Syria.

**Boris Johnson:**

Substantial chemical weapons stocks have been removed from Syria and destroyed following the agreement reached in 2013. However, the actions of the Syrian regime have shown that it retained some weapons and failed to abide by the obligations it took on when joining the Chemical Weapons Convention.

As I said to the House on 18 April, the deal was no substitute for resolute action. The UK continues to promote a clear and united international community approach to put an end to the possession and use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime.

## ■ UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[71534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the Government's policy is on the potential renewal of the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; and if he will make representations at the UN Security Council to expand the mandate of that mission to include a requirement to monitor and report on human rights abuses in Western Sahara.

**Boris Johnson:**

We support the renewal of the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and UK officials are discussing the UN Security Council Resolution that does this with Security Council partners. Previous Resolutions have stressed the importance of improving the human rights situation in Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps. We will continue to support efforts to ensure that MINURSO is able to fulfil the mandate given to it by the UN Security Council.

■ **Western Sahara: Politics and Government****Emily Thornberry:**[\[71531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in Western Sahara.

**Boris Johnson:**

Monitoring the security situation in the Western Sahara is one of the key responsibilities of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The Government maintains a close dialogue with MINURSO and with the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York. We support the UN Secretary General's calls on both parties to the Western Sahara dispute to exercise restraint and take steps to avoid escalating tensions.

**HEALTH**■ **Abortion****Fiona Bruce:**[\[71561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether public funds given to private abortion providers is ring-fenced for services only; and what steps his Department has taken to ensure that surplus made from such services is not used for lobbying to change the law on abortion.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for the contracting of independent sector places to perform termination of pregnancy. Information on contracts held by CCGs is not collected centrally.

**Fiona Bruce:**[\[71647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much his Department has spent on providing abortions in each of the last five years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Information about expenditure on abortions is not collected centrally.

## ■ Abortion: Clinics

**Fiona Bruce:** [\[71538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what alternatives to abortion are offered by clinics which provide NHS-funded abortions when providing abortions which are so funded.

**Fiona Bruce:** [\[71552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much his Department has spent on services targeted at offering alternatives to abortion for women with crisis pregnancies in each of the last five years; and on what those funds were spent.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department does not directly fund services that provide advice on unplanned or crisis pregnancies. The Government's Framework for Sexual Health Improvement in England (2013) sets out that women considering an abortion should be referred or signposted to services which provide impartial, accurate information and, if required, counselling on the full range of options available to women.

## ■ Accident and Emergency Departments

**Wes Streeting:** [\[71607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many accident and emergency departments have been (a) closed and (b) downgraded in each year since May 2010.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

This information is not held centrally. National Health Service commissioners and providers work together to ensure that local people receive a full range of services that meet their needs.

## ■ Amyloidosis

**Jim Shannon:** [\[71136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have been diagnosed with amyloidosis in each of the last five years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department does not hold data on the number of patients diagnosed with amyloidosis.

The National Amyloidosis Centre at University College Hospital, London estimates that there are around 600 new cases of the condition each year.

## ■ Blood: Donors

**Cat Smith:** [\[71026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans the Government has to remove the bar on men who have sex with men seeking to donate blood.



**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood Tissues and Organs is currently reviewing blood donor selection criteria, including the deferral period for men who have sex with men. The review is on track to be completed by summer 2017.

■ **BMI Healthcare: Kent**

**Justin Madders:** [\[71143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he has made an assessment of NHS patient safety at the BMI Healthcare hospital in Kent as a result of the recent inadequate assessment by the Care Quality Commission; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The responsibility for the decision to commission with BMI Fawkham Manor rests with the clinical commissioning group (CCG). This is its statutory role, while assuring the safety and quality of the providers they choose to commission with.

We understand that the Dartford, Swanley and Gravesham CCG is working with regulators and other partners to monitor and assess BMI Fawkham Manor Hospital's progress towards improvement. Since the inspection, BMI has set out a detailed action plan to address the Care Quality Commission's findings.

■ **Breast Cancer**

**Sir David Amess:** [\[71435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his strategy is to ensure funding for breast cancer services within Sustainability and Transformation Plans are not allocated funds from the £325 million provided for in the Spring Budget 2017.

**David Mowat:**

The additional £325 million announced by the Chancellor at the spring Budget is for use solely by Sustainability and Transformation Plans area capital bid projects. These funds are subject to the usual assurance processes by NHS England and Her Majesty's Treasury.

**Lyn Brown:** [\[71586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on patient experience of the removal of the two-week wait target for non-urgent referral for breast cancer symptoms.

**David Mowat:**

The two-week wait standard for non-urgent referral for breast symptoms has not been removed. In February 2017, 93.8% of people referred by a general practitioner for investigation of breast symptoms were seen by a specialist within two weeks.



## ■ Cancer

**Tom Brake:**

[\[71055\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with Health Education England on the level of its baseline cancer workforce; and whether that body has developed a system-wide action plan to address capacity issues.

**David Mowat:**

Working with partner organisations on the National Cancer Transformation Board, including the Department, Health Education England will publish a cancer workforce plan later this year which will set out the future cancer workforce requirements for the National Health Service and what can be done to achieve them.

## ■ Cancer: Frimley

**Michael Gove:**

[\[71610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure clear strategic governance in the delivery of cancer services with the Frimley Health Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

**David Mowat:**

There are two Cancer Alliances across the Frimley Sustainability and Transformation Plan footprint. Representatives of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan are included in the membership of each newly formed Cancer Alliance Board, which give strategic direction on behalf of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan and receive assurance and advice on priority setting and delivery of cancer services.

## ■ Cancer: Staffordshire

**Justin Madders:**

[\[71141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost to the public purse was of the cancelled tender for cancer services in Staffordshire.

**David Mowat:**

The Staffordshire Cancer and End of Life Programme advises that the costs for both the cancer and end of life procurements over a three year period up to October 2016 equates to £848,000. This has been funded by Cannock Chase, Stafford and Surrounds, North Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Clinical Commissioning Groups. The cost to each clinical commissioning group over the three years is circa £200,000 which is £65,000 per annum. The four clinical commissioning groups' total commissioning budget is circa £800 million per annum.

## ■ Care Homes

**Barbara Keeley:**

[\[71599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) registered care home and (b) nursing home places there were in each of the last seven years.

**David Mowat:**

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. The CQC has provided the following information in the attached table.

**Attachments:**

1. PQ71599 attached table [PQ71599 - Number of active care homes and number of care home beds.docx]

**■ Care Homes: Standards****Barbara Keeley:**[\[71649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many care homes inspected by the Care Quality Commission did not meet the requirements set out in Regulation 10 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 in each of the last three years.

**Barbara Keeley:**[\[71650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many care homes inspected by the Care Quality Commission did not meet the requirements set out in Regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 in each of the last three years.

**David Mowat:**

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. All providers of regulated activities, including National Health Service and independent providers, have to register with the CQC and follow a set of fundamental standards of safety and quality below which care should never fall. The fundamental standards describe the basic requirements that providers should always meet, and outline the outcomes that services users should always expect.

The CQC inspects providers against the fundamental standards and publishes the results on its website to help people choose care.

The CQC has provided the following information:

The attached table shows showing the number of care home locations <sup>1</sup> found in breach of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (HSCA RA) Regulations 2014 Regulation 10 or Regulation 12 in inspections published between 1 April 2015 <sup>2</sup> and 31 March 2017 and total number of care homes with an inspection published between 1 April 2015 <sup>2</sup> and 31 March 2017.

**Attachments:**

1. PQ71649 attached table [PQ71649 attached document.docx]

**Barbara Keeley:**[\[71654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many residential care homes have been rated by the Care Quality Commission as (a) inadequate or (b) requires improvement in each of the last three years.

**Barbara Keeley:**

**[71655]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many nursing homes have been rated by the Care Quality Commission as (a) inadequate or (b) requires improvement in each of the last three years.

**David Mowat:**

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care. All providers of regulated activities, including National Health Service and independent providers, have to register with the CQC and follow a set of fundamental standards of safety and quality below which care should never fall. The fundamental standards describe the basic requirements that providers should always meet, and outline the outcomes that services users should always expect.

The CQC inspects providers against the fundamental standards and publishes the results on its website to help people choose care.

The CQC has provided the following information:

Number of Care Homes with an Overall Rating of Inadequate or Requires Improvement Published Between 1 October 2014 and 31 March 2017

NUMBER OF CARE HOMES				
	Nursing Home	Nursing Home	Residential Home	Residential Home
Financial Year	Requires	Inadequate	Requires	Inadequate
Rating Published	improvement		improvement	
1 October 2014 - 31 March 15	341	97	383	101
2015-16	1,309	271	1,988	309
2016-17	1,241	260	1,927	306

Source: CQC database as at 3 April 2017

Notes: Some Nursing Homes or Residential Homes may have received two or more overall ratings since 1 October 2014. The above figures show the number of ratings published and include care homes which are no longer active. The above figures should not be used as an indication of total number of care homes currently rated Requires Improvement and Inadequate. The CQC began rating Adult Social Care providers in October 2014.

**■ Children: Obesity****Maria Eagle:** [71304]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 17 March 2017 to Question HL7127, if he will list the members of the external reference group that informed the March 2016 revisions to the Eatwell Guide.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The membership of the external reference group has been in the public domain from the outset of the review in November 2014; the members and observers can be found at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B8-loFG3pqf8UWwtS3RCNk5RaW8>

**Maria Eagle:** [71307]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 17 March 2017 to Question 55805, if he will take steps to assess the effect of the revised Eatwell Guide on (a) milk consumption by children and (b) changes in the level of childhood obesity.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

There are no plans to specifically assess the effect of the Eatwell Guide on children's milk consumption or changes in the levels of childhood obesity.

It is not possible to determine whether individual food and drink consumption patterns are directly influenced by national initiatives such as the Eatwell Guide, due to the range of factors that affect the diet.

**■ Cider: Health Hazards****Mrs Flick Drummond:** [71658]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the potential effect of a new duty band for super-strength cider on health outcomes.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Taxation policy is a matter for the Chancellor of the Exchequer; the United Kingdom Government believes alcohol duties should be proportional to alcohol content. A consultation on the introduction of a new band to target, high strength 'white' ciders is underway and ends on 12 June.

No estimate has currently been made of the effect of a possible new duty band on health.

**■ Colorectal Cancer****Mr Jonathan Lord:** [71470]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of progress in diagnosing and treating bowel cancer in the last seven years.

**David Mowat:**

One-year survival from colorectal cancer has improved from 75% in 2010 to 77.2% for patients diagnosed in 2014, the most recent year for which figures are available. Screening is critical in improving earlier diagnosis of bowel cancers and improving outcomes. The current screening test, guaiac faecal occult blood test will be replaced with a new easier to use screening test (Faecal Immunochemical Test for haemoglobin, FIT) from April 2018. In addition, from April 2016 NHS England has begun to commission the Bowel Scope Screening Programme, which will ultimately offer a flexi-sigmoidoscopy (bowel scope) to all 55 year olds in England.

**Colorectal Cancer: Screening****Tom Brake:**[\[71005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what sensitivity threshold the faecal immunochemical test will be set when it is introduced into the bowel cancer screening programme.

**Tom Brake:**[\[71211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to his oral contribution of 2 February 2017, Official Report, column 1296, whether the shortage in endoscopy capacity is a factor in influencing the sensitivity threshold that the faecal immunochemical tests will be implemented at when it is introduced into the bowel cancer screening programme.

**David Mowat:**

A final decision has yet to be taken on the sensitivity threshold for the faecal immunochemical test on its introduction to the bowel cancer screening programme in April 2018. Setting the threshold will require the balancing of a number of different factors, including how endoscopy capacity is affected.

**Tom Brake:**[\[71103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what additional funding will be made available to ensure that hospitals and clinical commissioning groups have the resources required to implement new NICE guidance recommending that all patients newly diagnosed with bowel cancer are tested for Lynch syndrome.

**Tom Brake:**[\[71184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will develop guidelines for managing people with Lynch syndrome in light of Bowel Cancer UK's recent report, Improving Services for Lynch Syndrome: Who's Responsible.

**David Mowat:**

In current NHS England commissioning practice, testing for Lynch syndrome in people with colorectal cancer is targeted using criteria based on family history and age of cancer onset to determine people at high risk.

New National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance recommends extending this offer to all people with colorectal cancer when they are first diagnosed. Offering tests to all people with colorectal cancer will need to be considered by NHS

England as part of its policy development process. Each year, a number of new drugs, medical devices, tests and treatments in specialised services are put forward to NHS England. The promising proposals are considered by experts in the field, including doctors, public health experts and lay people. These groups, established by NHS England, are known as Clinical Reference Groups (CRGs). The CRGs make detailed assessments of the new treatments, tests and devices through Policy Working Groups.

The NICE guidance has been sent to the Genetic Medicine CRG and they have been asked to submit a Preliminary Policy Proposal and to identify a Clinical Lead for progressing the proposal.

Consideration of the commissioning position and any financial implications will only be discussed once the proposal has been rigorously assessed.

### ■ **Community Health Services: Liverpool**

**Rosie Cooper:** [\[71117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reasons management of Liverpool Community Health was not given over to MerseyCare on a temporary basis until a new provider was appointed.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Three local acute providers came forward with a proposition for an interim management contract arrangement, and NHS Improvement concluded that the Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust, supported by Aintree University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust arrangement is best for local patients.

**Rosie Cooper:** [\[71118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust's announcement of 30 March 2017 on the new arrangement to manage community services in Liverpool, what the funding arrangements for the short-term management will be.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The funding arrangements for the short-term management period of Liverpool Community Health have not yet been confirmed with the proposed providers of the arrangement.

**Rosie Cooper:** [\[71119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust on its plans for children's services within Liverpool Community Health; what assessment he has made of the effects on health services for Liverpool residents of splitting the management of adult and children's health services currently both provided by Liverpool Community Health; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

No discussions between Ministers and Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust regarding Liverpool Community Health have taken place.

The process for the future provision of Liverpool Community Health services has not yet been determined. Discussions will commence on the process to be adopted with the relevant parties shortly. There is currently no agreement to a splitting of adult and children's services although this has been proposed as a potential option.

**Rosie Cooper:**[\[71121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, who he holds accountable for determining the future structure of health services provided by Liverpool Community Trust; how many of those currently involved in the process were also involved in the original restructuring attempt; what assessment he has made of NHS Improvement's capacity to conduct the process effectively; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

NHS Improvement and NHS England will be accountable for determining the future structure of health services provided by Liverpool Community Trust. The team currently involved in the process includes a number of individuals who were involved in the original restructuring process and have in-depth knowledge and experience of the Trust's services, the key stakeholders and the needs of the local population. There will be further strengthening of the team with regards to finance, advice and support. NHS Improvement have assured the Department that they have the capacity required and are sufficiently resourced to conduct effectively the process of restructuring the services currently provided by Liverpool Community Trust.

**■ Complementary Medicine: EU Grants and Loans****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the UK receives funding from the EU Alternative Medicine projects for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department does not hold this information centrally.

**■ Department of Health: Freedom of Information****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many staff in his Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**David Mowat:**

The Department does not have this information. Each Freedom of Information request could typically involve a variety of staff from our Call Centre, Ministerial Correspondence and Public Enquiries team, the relevant policy team and a senior civil servant.

**■ European Medicines Agency: Location**

**Tom Brake:** [\[71006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on the UK pharmaceuticals industry of the relocation out of the UK of the European Medicines Agency.

**David Mowat:**

As part of the exit negotiations the Government will discuss with the European Union and Member States how best to continue cooperation in the field of medicines regulation in the best interests of both the United Kingdom and the EU. It would not be appropriate to pre-judge the outcome of the negotiations.

**■ Fertility: Medical Treatments**

**Tom Brake:** [\[71544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to maintain or increase levels of investment in NHS fertility services other than by the development of benchmark pricing.

**Tom Brake:** [\[71611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to ensure that NICE guidelines for IVF treatment are fully implemented in the NHS.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for commissioning local health services and ensuring the needs of the local health population are met. NHS England is responsible for oversight of the commissioning system. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines are evidence based best practice for clinicians but are not mandatory.

I have written to NHS England specifically asking that it re-emphasise to all those involved in commissioning fertility services that they should have regard to the NICE fertility guidelines. In the light of the response to that letter, the Department will consider what further action may be appropriate.

NHS England and professional and stakeholder groups including the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, are working together to develop commissioning guidance. This guidance aims to improve the quality of commissioning and further encourage the implementation of the NICE fertility guidelines. NHS England has agreed to disseminate and promote the commissioning guidance to all CCGs in England.

**■ General Practitioners: Recruitment**

**Jim Shannon:** [\[71133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent steps his Department has taken to improve recruitment and retention of GPs.



**David Mowat:**

The Government has committed to an extra 5,000 doctors in general practice by 2020.

NHS England and Health Education England are working together with the profession to increase the general practitioner (GP) workforce. This includes measures to boost recruitment into general practice, encourage GPs to return to practice, and address the reasons why GPs are considering leaving the profession.

Health Education England has implemented a range of improvements to increase the flexibility of the GP recruitment processes and enable maximum recruitment into GP speciality. Health Education England reports that 3,019 new starters were recruited to GP training posts in 2016. This represents the highest number of GP trainees the National Health Service has ever recruited to speciality training in general practice.

In October 2016, NHS England announced a package of improvements to the GP Induction and Refresher Scheme to make it easier and quicker for qualified doctors to return to general practice. This is supplemented by a campaign to encourage doctors to return. NHS England is also starting to approve local schemes to bring in suitably qualified and experienced doctors from overseas.

NHS England has announced the launch of the GP Career Plus Scheme in 2017 to support the retention of doctors. This tests a range of ways to offer flexibility and support for experienced GPs at risk of leaving general practice. This is in addition to the GP Retention Scheme which offers funding to support doctors who can only work a limited number of sessions in general practice.

**Health Visitors****Sir Nicholas Soames:**[\[71215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many health visitors have been working in the NHS in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

NHS Digital publishes information on the number of nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff employed in the National Health Service in England each month.

The December data is the most recent data available. The information is shown in the following table.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Service workforce statistics – number of health visitors as at December 2012-16, full-time equivalent

DECEMBER-2012	DECEMBER-2013	DECEMBER-2014	DECEMBER-2015	DECEMBER-2016
7,986	8,553	9,639	10,212	9,278

Source: NHS Digital

*Note:* Health Visitors are employed by a range of organisations, including NHS trusts, clinical commissioning groups, local authorities and private providers. Current data collections do not cover the complete range of these organisations. As a result, it is not possible to provide accurate data on the total size of the health visitor workforce.

## ■ Health Visitors: Sussex

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [\[71214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many health visitors are employed by the NHS in (a) West Sussex and (b) Mid Sussex.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The number of health visitors employed by National Health Service trusts serving West Sussex and Mid Sussex at 31 December 2016 are shown in the following table.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Service workforce statistics – number of health visitors in Sussex as at December 2016, full-time equivalent

TRUST	DECEMBER-2016
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust	110
Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust	222

*Source:* NHS Digital

*Note:* Health Visitors are employed by a range of organisations, including NHS trusts, clinical commissioning groups, local authorities and private providers. Current data collections do not cover the complete range of these organisations. As a result, it is not possible to provide accurate data on the total size of the health visitor workforce.

## ■ Heart Diseases: Smoking

**Jim Shannon:** [\[71131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the risk of heart disease to women who smoke.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Smoking attributable deaths from heart disease have fallen by over 26% since 2007, but smoking remains one of the Government's most significant public health challenges. We are developing a new tobacco control plan that will set new ambitions and focus on supporting priority groups to quit.

## ■ Hepatitis

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[71107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reason the list price for (a) telaprevir, (b) boceprevir, (c) simeprevir, (d) sofosbuvir and (e) ledipasvir-sofosbuvir hepatitis C treatment is higher in the NHS than in other countries.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

These hepatitis C medicines were all granted new active substance marketing authorisations by the licensing authorities. Under the terms of the 2014 Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme new active substances can be priced at the discretion of companies on entering the market. However, the National Health Service is involved in commercial activities with the relevant pharmaceutical companies to secure best value in hepatitis C treatment. Discounts secured mean that the actual prices paid for medicines often do not reflect list prices. Confidential discounts occur in other countries too, which makes it impossible to undertake price comparisons with other countries.

## ■ HIV Infection: Home Care Services

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[71291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what safeguards there are to ensure that people living with HIV are not charged increased fees by residential and domiciliary care providers due to their HIV status.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[71316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people living with HIV are not discriminated against when accessing residential and domiciliary care.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[71317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Terrence Higgins trust report on supporting the over 50's living with HIV, published in January 2017, what steps he is taking to address HIV-related discrimination to such people in social care settings; and if he will make a statement.

**David Mowat:**

Discrimination has no place in the provision of social services.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care providers in England. All providers of regulated activities have to register with the CQC and follow a set of fundamental standards of safety and quality below which care should never fall.

One of the fundamental standards requires that all service users must be treated with dignity and respect. This includes making sure everybody is treated as equals and they are given any support they need.

The Department is working closely with our delivery partners, Skills for Care to improve the level of skills of the adult social care workforce.

Skills for Care has developed a comprehensive suite of standards and qualifications to help workers develop the skills and knowledge they need provide safe, effective and compassionate care for all people who use services.

Under the Care Act, local authorities are required to shape their local social care market to ensure that services are sustainable, diverse and offer high quality care and support. Prices and fee rates are negotiated locally by commissioners for state funded clients, whilst individuals and their families do so for those who self-fund.

Local authorities are subject to the Public Sector Equality duty, which requires them to take steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics (which includes people living with HIV), where they are different from the needs of others, and to minimise or remove disadvantages resulting from protected characteristics. Local authorities have a duty to ensure that when someone has been assessed as being eligible for care and support, they must commission the services to meet those needs. However, it is up to each local authority to decide what services to provide and how much based on local circumstances.

## ■ Hospitals: Admissions

**Barbara Keeley:**

[\[71597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patients were admitted to hospital from a care home as an emergency admission in each of the last seven years.

**David Mowat:**

The attached table shows counts of finished admission episodes with an emergency admission from a care home from 2009-10 to 2015-16. It is likely that the 'emergency admissions from care homes' total figures are incomplete and therefore significantly understated because some relevant admissions may have been coded under 'usual place of residence'.

### Attachments:

1. PQ71597 attached document [PQ71597 attached document.docx]

## ■ Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**

[\[71469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the costs and benefits to the NHS of widening access to the HPV vaccine known as Gardasil.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programme for girls was introduced in 2008 to reduce future incidence of cervical cancer. This was based on the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the independent expert body that advises ministers on immunisation matters, and took

into account a range of evidence including costs and benefits to the National Health Service.

In October 2013 JCVI considered a potential extension of the HPV programme to adolescent boys. Modelling was requested to re-examine the impact and cost-effectiveness of extending the HPV vaccination programme to adolescent boys which should be completed later this year. JCVI will then make a formal assessment of the cost-effectiveness of HPV vaccination for boys.

JCVI advised that a programme for men who have sex with men (MSM) is introduced for those aged up to 45, subject to procuring the vaccine at a cost effective price. Following this advice, Public Health England and its partners have introduced a pilot HPV programme for MSM in England in 2016. The pilot will continue in 2017-18 and will inform decisions on the potential national roll-out of a HPV vaccination programme for MSM.

## ■ In Vitro Fertilisation

**Jim Shannon:**

**[71137]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department takes to (a) regulate and (b) monitor the provision of IVF treatment.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

In the United Kingdom the provision of in vitro fertilisation (IVF) is regulated by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990, as amended (1990 Act).

Establishments wishing to provide IVF treatment must first be granted a licence from the UK national regulator, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). The 1990 Act requires that all IVF treatment cycles are reported to the HFEA. As part of the Authority's duty to ensure that safe, high quality care is provided to patients, it is required by the 1990 Act to inspect all licensed establishments a minimum of once every two years.

The Department has no role in the regulation of IVF provision and does not collect statistics about this. NHS England is responsible for oversight of the commissioning system. I wrote to NHS England on 7 March 2017 asking that it re-emphasise to all those involved in commissioning fertility services that they should have regard to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) fertility guideline.

The Department, NHS England and professional and stakeholder groups are working together to develop benchmark pricing for fertility services to ensure that clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) can get best value for their money. These partners are also developing commissioning guidance. This guidance aims to improve the quality of commissioning and encourage the full implementation of the NICE fertility guidance. NHS England has agreed to disseminate and promote the guidance to all CCGs in England.

**Tom Brake:**

[\[71408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to ensure that clinical commissioning groups do not decommission IVF services without formal public consultation.

**David Mowat:**

Principles for service change are enshrined in the four reconfiguration tests set down to the National Health Service in 2010, and which all local reconfiguration plans should demonstrate:

- Support from commissioners;
- Strong public and patient engagement;
- Clear clinical evidence base; and
- Support for patient choice.

There are no plans to introduce any additional duties in respect of fertility services.

## ■ Liver Diseases

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[71132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to encourage innovative stem cell and umbilical cord treatments for liver disease.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Government continues to support research through a range of funding agencies into the therapeutic use of stem cells. Over 80 patients have been recruited to a clinical trial to test the potential use of stem cells to treat liver disease. The results of this trial will only be available when the follow-up phase of the study has been completed. Before making this type of treatment available through the National Health Service it will be necessary to demonstrate that the treatment is both safe and effective and this is likely to involve further larger clinical trials.

## ■ Medical Treatments: Research

**Tom Brake:**

[\[71410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to improve provision of health and social care data to assist in research into cancer treatment and other fields of medical care.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

This is a priority already recognised by the Government.

Through the Personalised Health and Care 2020 programme, we will undertake work to improve the quality, availability and integrity of health data for outcomes for research.

## ■ Mental Health Services

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[71399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish a response to the Mental Health Taskforce's report on the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health: One Year On, published in February 2017.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Government published its response to the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health on 9 January 2017. The Government's response to the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health is attached.

**Attachments:**

1. PQ71399 attached document [PQ71399 attached document.pdf]

## ■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People

**Barbara Keeley:**

[\[71596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much was spent in (a) cash and (b) real terms on child and adolescent mental health services for each young person receiving such services in each of the last five years.

**Barbara Keeley:**

[\[71598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much was spent in (a) cash and (b) real terms on mental health services per head of population in each of the last five years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Spending on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) was reported separately in the Mental Health Five Year Forward View Dashboard from 2016/17 and is not available for previous years in this format.

The Dashboard reported that clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) on CAMHS cash spend per head in 2016/17 plans across CCGs was an average of £46.71. This figure does not include spend on Specialised CAMHS services.

Figures from NHS England's Five Year Forward View Dashboard report that clinical commissioning groups cash spend on mental health per head of the population in £164.68 in 2016/17 and 2015/16 was £159.58.

Spending on per head of the population for previous years is not available in this format.

## ■ Mental Health Services: Parkinson's Disease

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:**

[\[71557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what barriers to accessing mental health services his Department has identified for people with Parkinson's disease.

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:****[71559]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of mental health support available for people with Parkinson's disease.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

NHS England has initiated a Neurology Advisory Group, with the purpose of seeking alignment between programmes in NHS England, the other health Arm's Length Bodies and system partners, including the Chief Executive of Parkinson's UK, relevant to people with neurological conditions. The group has acknowledged that data from the NHS GP survey has consistently indicated that people with Neurological Conditions have the highest levels of anxiety and depression. This is an important issue and we are working with the Neurological Alliance who are due to publish a report on Mental Health and Neurological conditions in early summer. The Neurology Advisory Group will ensure that there is system alignment and a national approach to any recommendations, which will be of benefit to patients.

As set out in Implementing the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health the expansion of Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services will focus on people with long term conditions or medically unexplained symptoms. New psychological therapy provision will see physical and mental health care provision co-located. Therapy will be integrated into existing medical pathways and services – either primary care, or secondary care services including Neurology.

The report can be viewed here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/taskforce/imp/>

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:****[71558]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people with Parkinson's disease experiencing mental health problems accessed mental health services in the last 12 months.

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:****[71560]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people with Parkinson's disease are on a waiting list to access mental health services.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The information requested is not held.

## ■ Motor Neurone Disease: Electromagnetic Fields

**Jim Shannon:****[71135]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with clinical bodies on the potential link between motor neurone disease and exposure to strong electromagnetic charges in the (a) electricity network, (b) airline, (c) welding and (d) other industries.



**David Mowat:**

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health regularly meets with clinical bodies to discuss a wide range of issues including the diagnosis and treatment of people with motor neurone disease.

**NHS****Julie Elliott:**[\[71013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to conduct an analysis of the potential effects of the UK leaving the EU on the NHS.

**David Mowat:**

The Department is working on ensuring the best outcome for the health and social care system. All policy teams within the Department are involved with this work and assessing the implications of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union on their area. This includes working with NHS England and other arm's length bodies.

My Rt. hon. Friend the Prime Minister has instructed all departments to identify potential opportunities that will arise in their areas from EU Exit. The Government is united in its ambition to deliver a successful withdrawal from the EU and a new relationship with Europe, and departments will work together to deliver this.

**Justin Madders:**[\[71142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the NHS Special Projects team.

**David Mowat:**

We have made no recent assessment of the effectiveness of the Strategic Projects team, which was disbanded in July 2016.

**NHS Protect****Justin Madders:**[\[71106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, who will be responsible for setting out minimum security requirements and standards after the abolition of NHS Protect.

**Justin Madders:**[\[71144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, who will assume responsibility for the counter-terrorism security preparedness functions undertaken by NHS Protect following its change of role.

**Justin Madders:**[\[71145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whose role it is to keep central records of assaults on NHS staff following the change of role of NHS Protect.

**Justin Madders:**[\[71146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish the risk assessment undertaken by his Department before the decision was taken to change the remit of NHS Protect.

**Justin Madders:**

[\[71147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the change of role of NHS Protect on the safety of staff; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The standards for security management work are imposed through the relevant clauses of the standard commissioning contract between commissioners and providers. It is the responsibility for commissioners to ensure that security management standards are met in accordance with the contract. NHS England is responsible for the standard commissioning contract, the clauses within it and the standards to which it refers.

NHS Protect has never had responsibility for counter terrorism work in the National Health Service. This rests with the Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response branch within NHS England.

The figures previously published by NHS Protect were a collation of the numbers of reported assaults provided by individual health bodies. Employers in the NHS are responsible for assessing the circumstances of these reported assaults and addressing the risks identified and this work will continue at a local level where it is best delivered.

The role of NHS Protect was to develop national guidance to assist NHS organisations locally in their security management work. Comprehensive and detailed guidance is now available to NHS employers who are responsible for assessing risks to staff and addressing those risks. It was not, therefore, necessary for a separate risk assessment to be undertaken as this change should have no effect on the safety of NHS staff.

## ■ NHS: Crimes of Violence

**Holly Lynch:**

[\[70999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will commission a national alert system on security-related issues and individuals who may pose a significant present or potential threat to NHS staff, NHS service providers and NHS property assets.

**Holly Lynch:**

[\[71101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which organisations will have responsibility for ensuring that NHS providers comply with security standards following the decommissioning of NHS Protect's security management functions.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

From April 2017, the functions of NHS Protect have changed. Work is underway to create a new special health authority, called the NHS Counter Fraud Authority. The focus of the new organisation will be exclusively on tackling fraud, bribery and corruption across the National Health Service and the wider health group. The new authority will not have a remit for security management work.

Employers in the NHS are responsible for assessing risks to staff and addressing those risks. Any abuse of NHS staff is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. Any form of abuse should be reported and trusts should have no hesitation in involving the police. Comprehensive and detailed guidance is available to NHS employers to assist them in assessing and managing the risks accordingly and involving the police where appropriate. A separate NHS national alert system is therefore unnecessary.

The standards for security management work are imposed through the relevant clauses of the standard commissioning contract between commissioners and providers. It is commissioners' responsibility to ensure that security management standards are met in accordance with the contract. NHS England is responsible for the standard commissioning contract and the clauses within it.

## ■ **NHS: Reorganisation**

**Justin Madders:**

[\[71140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to establish an Office of Health and Care Sustainability.

**David Mowat:**

We will carefully consider the recommendations of the Lords Select Committee on the Long-term Sustainability of the National Health Service. The Government will set out its formal response in due course.

**Justin Madders:**

[\[71179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will estimate the total amount paid to private consultants for providing advice on sustainability and transformation plans.

**David Mowat:**

Information on local areas' use of external support is not held centrally. It is for each partner within every Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) area to decide where they may need support or advice from external organisations.

All partners within each STP area need to be disciplined about keeping costs as low as possible as they work to alleviate pressures on the National Health Service, and improve patient care.

The Department and NHS England have not commissioned external support to provide advice on STPs.

## ■ **Pharmacy: Finance**

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[71227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding his Department provides for minor ailments services provided by community pharmacies.

**David Mowat:**

Minor ailments services are commissioned locally, based on the needs of local areas.

Minor ailments services are already commissioned by clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) across many parts of the country. Ultimately NHS England will encourage all CCGs to adopt this joined-up approach by April 2018, building on the experience of the urgent and emergency care vanguard projects, with referral between NHS 111 and community pharmacies, to achieve this at scale.

## ■ Pregnancy: Advisory Services

**Diana Johnson:** [71116]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NHS referrals have been made to abortion services which (a) are and (b) are not registered with the Care Quality Commission in each year since 2009-10.

**Diana Johnson:** [71124]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NHS (a) referrals and (b) signpostings have been made to Crisis Pregnancy centres run by the charity, Life in the latest year for which figures are available.

**Diana Johnson:** [71125]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many Crisis Pregnancy centres not registered with the Care Quality Commission are located on NHS premises.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

This information is not collected centrally.

**Diana Johnson:** [71126]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his policy is on NHS (a) referrals and (b) signposting to Crisis Pregnancy centres which are not registered with the Care Quality Commission.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Government's Framework for Sexual Health Improvement in England (2013) sets out that women considering an abortion should be referred or signposted to services which provide impartial, accurate information and, if required, counselling on the options available. This includes NHS services and registered independent sector providers who can provide advice on the termination options available as well as information of alternatives to abortion.

The Framework is available on the gov.uk website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-framework-for-sexual-health-improvement-in-england>

## ■ Pregnancy: Screening

**Jim Shannon:** [71134]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what developments the NHS plans for tests to detect possible premature birth; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) recommends screening for several conditions in pregnancy. The case for continuation or otherwise of these programmes is reviewed as per the UK NSC's evidence review process, every three years or earlier should any significant new evidence emerge.

In November 2014, the UK NSC recommended that screening for pre-term birth should not be offered as the available screening test is not reliable. The UK NSC will review the evidence for preterm labour again in 2017/18.

Women are offered a minimum of two ultrasound scans during their pregnancy to screen for physical (structural) abnormalities in their unborn babies. The first scan usually takes place between 10 to 14 weeks, with a second scan for fetal anomalies at around 18 to 21 weeks. This scan can detect a large range of problems including some affecting the heart and abdomen. Early treatment after birth for these can help save a baby's life.

**■ Surrogate Motherhood: Lone Parents****Kirsten Oswald:**[\[71671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 66737, on Surrogate mothers: lone parents, when he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to give single parents with children born through surrogacy the same rights as couples.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Decisions on the timing of introducing a remedial order to Parliament to address the incompatibility in the Human Fertility and Embryology Act 2008 will be a matter for the incoming administration.

**■ Tobacco: Standards****Andrew Stephenson:**[\[70996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations he has received on introducing a standard for chewed tobacco products; and if he will make a statement.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department has not received any representations on the introduction of a standard for chewed tobacco products. The Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 introduced strict marketing rules for all tobacco products, including chewed tobacco products.

**■ Trampolining: Injuries****Jim Shannon:**[\[71138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have been treated by the NHS for injuries sustained as a result of trampolining in each of the last five years.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The information requested is not held centrally.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Assets: Russia

**Mr Dominic Raab:**

[\[70923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the National Crime Agency (NCA) is taking to investigate the findings made by the US authorities in the case of US V Prevezon et al that funds from the tax fraud against Hermitage Capital, investigated by Sergei Magnitsky, have been transferred to the UK bank account of Renaissance Capital Investment Management Limited; and whether the NCA has been notified or informed that laundered money ending up in that account is estimated to be in excess of \$8.3 million.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The NCA does not normally report on the detail of its investigations. It will continue to make inquiries in relation to the Hermitage case.

The UK regulated sector is required to carry out due diligence checks to identify illicit funds and report suspicions of money laundering to the National Crime Agency.

Where illicit funds are identified, then law enforcement agencies have, through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, robust powers to seize and recover these, including on behalf of other countries.

In the Criminal Finances Bill, the Government has introduced an amendment to the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) which has widened the definition of 'unlawful conduct' within the Act to include the torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of those exposing corruption, or obtaining, exercising, defending and promoting human rights, including in cases where that conduct was not an offence in the jurisdiction in which it took place. This allows for any assets held in the UK, which were deemed to be the proceeds of such activity, to be recovered. This measure makes a clear statement that we will not allow those who have committed gross abuses or violations around the world to launder their money through the UK.

### ■ Breathalysers

**Caroline Flint:**

[\[71463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the reasons are for the time taken for Home Office Type Approval for mobile evidential breath testing equipment.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Government recognises that drink driving is a serious threat to road safety and shares the police's desire to have roadside evidential breath test instruments available for use as soon as practicably possible. That is why the Home Office, Department for Transport and the police have been working with manufacturers

towards the Type Approval of a new generation of Mobile Evidential Breath Test Instruments (MEBTI).

The requirements of Home Office type approval is supported by a stringent and robust process to ensure that evidence from an approved instrument can be relied upon in Court. The ability to type approve also depends on the submission by manufacturers of instruments that meet the technical specification requirements and perform satisfactorily during testing. The Home Office has no control over the maturity of instruments submitted into the type approval process, nor of the performance during testing of any device submitted and therefore no control over the timeframes for type approval.

## ■ **Confiscation Orders: Nigeria**

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[67000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the value is of assets confiscated by the Government belonging to politically exposed persons from Nigeria since 2015.

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[67048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the value is of assets under restraint of assets related to politically exposed persons in Nigeria.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The NCA does not hold information on the volume or value of assets which have been restrained, confiscated or subject to civil recovery or property freezing orders by the categories described in the question. The nationality of the individual is not routinely recorded, as it is not always possible to obtain it, and they do not differentiate on the basis of politically exposed persons. However we have committed to publishing statistics on the use of Unexplained Wealth Orders as outlined in the Criminal Finances Bill.

## ■ **Crime**

**Steve McCabe:** [\[71274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the police's capability to tackle (a) fraud, (b) online abuse and (c) hate crime.

**Brandon Lewis:**

Improving the law enforcement response to fraud is a priority for the Joint Fraud Taskforce where we are working with law enforcement to improve the local, regional and national response to fraud. All police forces have access to regional support through the Regional Organised Crime Units and national support from the City of London Police.

We recognise that local policing capabilities in respect of the investigation of digital crime need to be further developed to meet the challenges the police face tackling fraud or online abuse in the digital era. We are supporting the work of the National

Policing Lead for Digital Investigation and Intelligence. We are also providing £4.6 million through the Police Transformation Fund to enable to police to improve digital capability, funding police led programmes that will work to equip forces with the tools to effectively police a digital age and protect victims of digital crime.

The police have increased their capability to record and respond to hate crime. This is reflected in the increase in police recorded hate crime. The police have also improved their training to staff on the identification, investigation and prosecution of hate crime.

#### ■ **Distributive Trade: Employment Agencies**

**Lyn Brown:** [\[70450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the effect on the prevalence of modern slavery of the use of third party agencies to supply temporary workers in the retail and distribution sectors.

**Sarah Newton:**

Modern slavery can occur in all sectors of business or industry. We are determined to reduce the risk of worker exploitation in all sectors. That is why we have appointed a Director of Labour Market Enforcement. The Director will advise the Government on the threat and how best to counter it. All businesses must stay vigilant to prevent modern slavery and other forms of worker exploitation in their supply chains.

#### ■ **Emergency Services: Communication**

**Lyn Brown:** [\[69427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of clear communications between police forces and ambulance services.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Airwave network is used for critical communications by all three emergency services, and the performance of the network is constantly monitored. The effectiveness of the emergency services communications is also tested as part of regular scheduled counter terrorism exercises which take place around the country.

#### ■ **Emergency Services: Gloucestershire**

**Lyn Brown:** [\[69243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Gloucestershire County Council review of police and fire governance arrangements that concluded that a merger of the fire authority with the police and crime commissioner for the area would not be cost-effective, for what reason she has decided to allocate £100,000 from her Department's budget to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire for the commissioning of a second review on such a proposed merger.



**Brandon Lewis:**

The Policing and Crime Act (2017) provides for PCCs to take on responsibility for the governance of fire and rescue services in their area, where a local case is made and it appears to the Secretary of State to be in the interests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness or public safety to give effect to the proposal.

The Home Secretary will respond shortly to a recommendation from the Police Reform and Transformation Board that grant funding be provided to up to 10 PCCs, including Gloucestershire, to support the development of proposals relating to future fire and rescue governance.

**■ Fire Service College****Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:**[\[71832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support she is giving to the Fire Service College to encourage more UK fire and rescue officers to undertake training offered by that body.

**Brandon Lewis:**

It is for individual fire and rescue authorities to decide what training is most appropriate for their officers and where they procure it.

**■ Home Office: Staff****Karl Turner:**[\[71636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many full-time equivalent staff there have been in (a) Immigration Enforcement, (b) UK Visa and Immigration and (c) Border Force in each year since 2012.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

(a) Immigration Enforcement (IE) and (b) UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) were formed in April 2013. From June 2014, IE and UKVI figures are published quarterly on gov.uk -

<https://www.gov.uk/search?q=Border+and+immigration+cross+cutting+data>

(c) Border Force figures for 2012/13 to 2015/16 were given in response to the answer given to the Hon. Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale, UIN 60627.

**■ Immigrants: Detainees****Dr Sarah Wollaston:**[\[71612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether procedures have changed as a result of recent successful prosecutions for unlawful immigration detention.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The cross-system Detention Gatekeeper has now been introduced to scrutinise all proposed detentions independently of an arresting team. Individuals can now only enter immigration detention with the authority of the Detention Gatekeeper, who will ensure that there is no evidence of vulnerability which would be exacerbated by

detention, that return will occur within a reasonable timeframe and check that any proposed detention is lawful.

Separately, Case Progression Panels have been introduced to review all cases within immigration detention by a peer-led panel. These panels focus on ensuring that there is progression toward return for all individuals detained, and that detention remains lawful.

### ■ Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[71480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 April 2017 to Question 69878, whether the terms and outcome of the performance appraisal for the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner will be published.

**Sarah Newton:**

In line with the Public Appointments Governance Code that was published on 16 December 2016, there is no plan to publish the terms or outcome of the performance appraisal for the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

### ■ Offenders: Deportation

**Karl Turner:** [\[71637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many foreign offenders have been deported twice or more in each year since 2010.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The information requested is recorded on electronic and paper files. Therefore the specific data requested is not aggregated in national reporting systems. To provide the information would require a disproportionately expensive manual case search.

### ■ Police: Employment Agencies

**Steve McCabe:** [\[71237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the total paid by each police force in England and Wales to recruitment agencies in each year since 2010.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The data is not held centrally.

### ■ Refugees: Children

**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[65720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what comparative assessment she has made of the number of refugee children coming to the UK under (a) Dubs and (b) the Dublin agreement; and if she will identify those numbers in quarterly immigration statistics.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

In 2016, over 900 unaccompanied asylum seeking children were transferred to the UK from Europe. Over 750 were transferred from France, including over 200 under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

In the joint Written Ministerial Statement of 8 November, the Government committed to publishing regular updates on the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children transferred to the UK. The Government is considering options for publishing this information.

Statistics on transfers under the Dublin Regulation are already available here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Dublin\\_statistics\\_on\\_countries\\_responsible\\_for\\_asylum\\_application](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Dublin_statistics_on_countries_responsible_for_asylum_application)

Asylum statistics are published quarterly in the Home Office Immigration Statistics release, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2016/asylum>

**■ Refugees: Sponsorship**

**Karl Turner:**

**[71638]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many community groups have signed up to the Community Sponsorship scheme since it was launched.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The number of people who have been resettled under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme is published in the quarterly Home Office immigration statistics. Since the scheme began in January 2014 a total of 5,706 people have been resettled in the UK to the end of December 2016. The figure includes those Syrians resettled with a community sponsor during this period.

We have seen considerable interest in the scheme from across the UK and are working with a number of groups as they develop their plans. Supporting a vulnerable resettled family is a significant responsibility and it is only right that we carefully assess every sponsoring organisation. We will, therefore, not be providing a running commentary on numbers that have been resettled with a community sponsor or how many community groups have signed up to the scheme.

**■ Sikhs**

**Rob Marris:**

**[51009]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which UK Sikh organisations she consulted in the development of her Department's publication, Action Against Hate: The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime, published in July 2016.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Government when developing the Hate Crime Action Plan (Action Against Hate) consulted with a range of stakeholders and community groups. This included the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, a number of Police Independent Advisory Groups and a meeting of community stakeholders hosted by Greater Manchester Police on behalf of the Home Office.

The Government welcomes engagement with all faith representatives including the Sikh Community in taking forward the Hate Crime Action Plan and using it as a vehicle to tackle community concerns.

■ **South Wales Police****Jo Stevens:**[\[71605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether additional resources are being made available to South Wales Police to assist with the costs of policing the Men's and Women's UEFA Champions League Finals in Cardiff in June 2017.

**Brandon Lewis:**

Special Grant funding of up to £1.4million has been awarded to the PCC for South Wales Police to support their policing operation around the Champions League Finals in Cardiff.

**HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION**■ **House of Commons: Procurement****Jon Trickett:**[\[70542\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington, representing the House of Commons Commission, pursuant to the Answer of 28 February 2017 to Question 65000, on procurement, what estimate he has made of the amount spent on procurement management in each year since 2010.

**Tom Brake:**

The actual cost of the House of Commons's procurement and commercial function in the years in question was:

2010/11	608,639
2011/12	629,270
2012/13	719,559
2013/14	540,377
2014/15	466,936

2010/11	608,639
2015/16	654,955
2016/17	778,122

### ■ House of Commons: Security

**Jon Trickett:**

**[70043]**

To ask the right hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington, representing the House of Commons Commission, how many security passes giving access to the House of Commons Commission's premises have been issued in each year since 2010.

**Tom Brake:**

The Pass Office database has full records for the last three years. Therefore, the table below shows how many security passes have been issued from April 2014.

Passes issued

	2014	2015	2016	2017
January		1,051	1,164	1,394
February		857	1,069	1,247
March		939	999	1,397
April	805	806	986	
May	833	2,041	1,043	
June	1,085	1,138	1,224	
July	1,096	982	1,114	
August	669	737	992	
September	1,252	1,337	1,325	
October	1,335	1,341	1,298	
November	1,042	1,230	1,295	
December	836	849	1,036	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8,953</b>	<b>13,308</b>	<b>13,545</b>	<b>4,038</b>

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT****■ Developing Countries: Abortion****Fiona Bruce:****[71665]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether any of her Department's funding for abortion services in developing countries has been allocated to countries where abortion is illegal.

**James Wharton:**

DFID's position on what we can and cannot support is set out in our policy paper on safe and unsafe abortion available online at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-and-unsafe-abortion-uks-policy-position-on-safe-and-unsafe-abortion-in-developing-countries>

**■ Developing Countries: Coal****Mr Virendra Sharma:****[71475]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 31 March 2017 to Question 69479, what assessment her Department has made of the role that coal can play in lifting people in developing countries out of energy poverty.

**Rory Stewart:**

The optimal energy mix of a country depends on a number of contextual factors. DFID assesses these on a case by case basis when deciding how best to support partner governments' energy strategies, including potential health and environmental impacts.

International Energy Agency (IEA) analysis suggests that many rural areas can be served at a lower cost by off-grid or mini-grid solutions – such as solar PV, small scale hydropower, and even diesel generators – than by extension of a centralised electricity grid. Coal may offer a cost-effective solution to energy access in some areas that are either connected to a national grid or located close to a grid.

The UK has a clear policy position to end public funding for both new plants and new investments in existing coal-fired power plants, which has been agreed with the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and other government departments. The UK Government will only consider proposals by multilateral development banks for financing coal-fired power plants in the world's poorest countries where it is clearly demonstrated that no other economically feasible alternative exists, where it fits with the country's pledged Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) and where there is a clear poverty reduction case.

**■ Disaster Relief****Patrick Grady:****[71663]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Disaster and Emergencies Preparedness Programme

funded by UK Aid; and when she plans to decide whether that programme should be renewed.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID conducts Annual Reviews of the Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP). The Annual Reviews are publically available through <https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-203044> and give an assessment of the effectiveness of the programme.

The DEPP's 14 core projects are due to end in March 2018. Decisions on whether and/or how to renew the programme will be made before March 2018.

■ **East Africa: Famine**

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[71662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to meet commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 on providing funding for local and national actors to respond to the East Africa food crisis.

**James Wharton:**

We are making progress to meet our commitments, made at the World Humanitarian Summit, on localisation. Globally DFID is the largest donor to the Country Based Pooled Funds and continues to invest in civil society consortia that support localisation. This includes through the centrally managed Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP) which invests in the longer-term capacity development of national and local NGOs in contexts of high humanitarian risk. In East Africa, DEPP supports 15 projects in Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan. Where we are required to deliver rapidly and across multiple contexts, such as in the east Africa food crisis, international assistance remains necessary to deliver at scale.

■ **Ethiopia: Humanitarian Aid**

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[71660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many Ethiopian local and national non-governmental organisations received humanitarian aid from her Department; and what proportion of her Department's overall aid for Ethiopia this represented in each of the last five years.

**James Wharton:**

DFID has provided £83.5 million to the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund (EHF) over the last five years from the total DFID bilateral funding listed in the table below. In 2015/16, the EHF provided £29 million of life-saving support to 4.3 million people during Ethiopia's worst drought in 30 years. Approximately £4.4 million of this funding was delivered by local and national NGOs.

In addition to our bilateral funding, targeted support is being provided through DFID's centrally managed Disasters Emergency Preparedness Programme to deliver 5 projects supporting national and local NGOs in Ethiopia to engage more effectively in humanitarian preparedness and response.

FINANCIAL YEAR	DFID BILATERAL PROGRAMME OUTTURN (IN £S)
2015/16	336,426,000
2014/15	336,355,000
2013/14	284,360,000
2012/13	261,460,000

Figures for financial year 2016/17 will be published in the DFID Annual Report and accounts due for publication in Summer 2017.

### ■ India: Electricity Generation

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[71476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 31 March 2017 to Question 69479, what assessment she has made of the cost per megawatt of power generating capacity installed of the investment in Adhunik Power and Natural Resources Ltd power project in Jharkhand compared with other CDC investments in (a) solar PV and (b) wind.

**Rory Stewart:**

Assessment of Adhunik Power and Natural Resources power project in Jharkland shows it has a lower cost per megawatt of power generating capacity compared to output of the average solar PV and wind projects in India.

### ■ India: Overseas Investment

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[71468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 31 March 2017 to Question 69479, how much of CDC's contribution to the India Infrastructure Fund was directed to the 540MW Adhunik Power and Natural Resources Ltd power project in Jharkhand.

**Rory Stewart:**

The investment in Adhunik Power represents less than 10 per cent of the total value of CDC's commitment to the fund.

### ■ Kenya: Humanitarian Aid

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[71661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many Kenyan local and national non-governmental organisations received humanitarian aid from her Department; and what proportion of her Department's overall aid for Kenya this represented in each of the last five years.



**James Wharton:**

From the total DFID bilateral funding listed below, the department has provided £1,960,000 over the past five years to the Kenya Red Cross Society through the British Red Cross Society. The funds have been used to strengthen the Kenya Red Cross Society's preparedness and response systems, assisting many households affected by disasters, such as the current drought, across Kenya.

In addition to our bilateral funding, targeted support is being provided through DFID's centrally managed Disasters Emergency Preparedness Programme to deliver 7 projects supporting national and local NGOs in Kenya to engage more effectively in humanitarian preparedness and response.

FINANCIAL YEAR	DFID BILATERAL PROGRAMME OUTTURN (IN £S)
2015/16	137,482,000
2014/15	95,921,000
2013/14	136,200,000
2012/13	91,800,000

Figures for financial year 2016/17 will be published in the DFID Annual Report and accounts due for publication in Summer 2017.

## ■ South Sudan: Politics and Government

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**[\[71547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment she has made of the humanitarian situation in South Sudan.

**James Wharton:**

The Secretary of State for International Development, the Rt Hon Priti Patel visited South Sudan on 10 April 2017. Severe food insecurity levels and malnutrition rates, including pockets of famine, continue to worsen alongside an unprecedented dry season and cholera outbreak. The operational environment is significantly constrained with severe access issues and diminishing humanitarian space. Fighting continues across the country, causing widespread displacement and driving the humanitarian crisis. There are 7.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and over 3 million people displaced.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Department for International Trade: Secondment

**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many staff have been seconded into his Department from outside the Civil Service in the last six months.

**Greg Hands:**

The Department for International Trade, including UK Export Finance, have had 22 staff seconded to the department from outside the Civil Service in the last six months.

**■ Department for International Trade: Staff****Mr David Lammy:**[\[71028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many full-time equivalent third-party contractors and consultants his Department has employed since its establishment; and what the cost to the public purse has been of that employment.

**Greg Hands:**

Since the formation of the Department for International Trade in July, this department has employed 106 full time equivalent third-party contractors and consultants.

**Mr David Lammy:**[\[71029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many full-time equivalent trade negotiators his Department employed on 31 March 2017.

**Greg Hands:**

The Department for International Trade has a strong core of trade policy officials, which has quadrupled in size since 24 June (from 45 to over 200 today) and is continuing to grow. The trade policy team includes policy and country specialists, as well as economic analysts and lawyers.

**Mr David Lammy:**[\[71030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many (a) applications, (b) applicants, (c) interviews and (d) job offers there have been for trade negotiator positions in his Department since July 2016.

**Greg Hands:**

At this stage, the Department's primary focus is on developing our trade policy positions, international relationships and approach to future trade negotiations.

The Department has run a number of recruitment exercises since July 2016 for both internal Civil Service and external candidates. From these recruitment exercises the Department's Trade Policy Team has taken on over 150 new members of staff to fill a range of trade policy positions, including analytical and legal posts.

We are also in the process of recruiting a Chief Trade Negotiations Adviser at the level of Second Permanent Secretary.

**Mr David Lammy:**[\[71033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many full-time equivalent third-party contractors and consultants his Department plans to employ in (a) 2017, (b) 2018 and (c) 2019; and what the cost to the taxpayer will be of that employment in each of those years.

**Greg Hands:**

The department for International Trade currently employs 106 full time equivalent third-party contractors and consultants, and would expect to employ similar numbers in the future.

**Education: Exports****Sir Nicholas Soames:**[\[71175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the Government's strategy is for increasing education exports by 2020.

**Mark Garnier:**

The Department for International Trade's education team work together with the Devolved Administrations, other government departments, our Trade Envoys, Business Ambassadors, our embassies and consulates around the world. They seek out new export opportunities and support the UK education supply chain through actively making representations to overseas buyers and governments, organising key meetings and missions showcasing UK products. Particular campaigns are focussed on China, Hong Kong, the Middle East, ASEAN and Latin America. UK Export Finance, the UK's export credit agency, offers finance and insurance to help UK-based companies of all sizes and across all sectors (including the education sector) win, fulfil and get paid for overseas sales.

**UK Trade with EU: South West****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[71631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate he has made of the number of jobs in (a) Bristol and (b) the South West that depend on trade with the EU.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government is working to secure an FTA with the EU and to build our global trading links with the rest of the world to support jobs across the UK. Our regional teams of international trade advisors in the UK encourage and support British businesses to start, increase or sustain their exporting activity. We offer financial support to help small and medium UK businesses gain market access and exposure through tradeshow as part of our strategic approach to exporting.

**JUSTICE****Insurance: Fraud****Mr George Howarth:**[\[71344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many successful prosecutions there have been for personal injury insurance fraud in the last 12 months.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

The information on the total number of successful prosecutions is not held centrally and can only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Freedom of Information****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many staff in her Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

FOI requests may be responded to by any member of staff across the Department, as they are allocated to the most appropriate person to respond depending on the subject of the request. The Ministry of Justice has a central Disclosure Team to support this function.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Secondment****Tracy Brabin:**[\[70955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many staff are seconded to her Department; and how many such staff are seconded from which companies and organisations.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

The table below shows the number of staff, as at 31 December 2016, who are seconded to the Ministry of Justice and which company they are from.

ORGANISATION CONTRACTED FROM	TOTAL EMPLOYEES
Cabinet Office	9
Community Rehabilitation Companies	5
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	3
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	1
Department for Education	3
Department for Transport	2
Department for Work and Pensions	10
Devon County Council	1
HM Inspectorate of Probation	1
HM Revenue and Customs	41
HM Treasury	1

ORGANISATION CONTRACTED FROM	TOTAL EMPLOYEES
Home Office	7
Metropolitan Police Service / Kent Police	1
National Assembly for Wales	1
National Audit Office	1
National Crime Agency	1
National Probation Service	2
Office for National Statistics / ONS	3
Rural Payments Agency	1
West Mercia Police	1
West Midlands Police	1
Youth Offending Service	2
Unknown	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>

■ **Vehicle Number Plates: Fraud**

**Andrew Stephenson:**

**[71340]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people have been convicted of vehicle licence plate cloning-related crimes in each year since 2012.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

From centrally held data it is not possible to separately identify convictions for offences where vehicle licence plate cloning was involved, without incurring disproportionate cost.

The number of people convicted of offences under the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994 (forgery and fraud of vehicle licence or registration documents etc.) which can include, but is not limited to, cloning number plates, is available at <https://www.gov.uk> in the Criminal Justice Statistics section.

**NORTHERN IRELAND****■ Northern Ireland Office: Freedom of Information**

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[71049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many staff in his Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**Kris Hopkins:**

FOI requests may be responded to by any member of staff across the Department, as they are allocated to the most appropriate person to respond depending on the subject of the request.

**SCOTLAND****■ Diageo: Scotland**

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[71540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions his Department has had with other Departments about Diageo's decision to terminate 100 jobs in Scotland.

**David Mundell:**

Scotland Office officials have been working closely with colleagues across the UK Government, as well as discussing directly with Diageo, to find a constructive way forward for the Leven and Shieldhall sites.

**■ European Banking Authority: Scotland**

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[71581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions his Department has had with other government departments on the effect on the Scottish financial industry of the European Banking Agency headquarters leaving the UK.

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[71582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions his Department has had with other government departments on the effect on the Scottish health and life science sectors of the European Medicines Agency headquarters leaving the UK.

**David Mundell:**

I have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a wide range of issues.

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[71583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what representations his Department has received from industry on the effect on the Scottish financial industry of the European Banking Agency headquarters leaving the UK.

**Stephen Gethins:**

[\[71584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what representations his Department has received from industry on the effect on the Scottish health and life science sectors of the European Medicines Agency headquarters leaving the UK.

**David Mundell:**

Following the EU Referendum, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Lord Dunlop, and I have had over 100 meetings with stakeholders, including representatives from the Scottish financial industry, to discuss EU-exit related issues.

■ **Scotland Office: Advertising**

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[71320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent on (a) television advertising, (b) radio advertising, (c) national newspaper advertisements, (d) local newspaper advertisements, (e) social media advertising, (f) online advertising and (g) other types of advertising in financial year 2016-2017.

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[71328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what his Department's advertising budget was in the financial year 2016-17.

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[71329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent on advertising, marketing and external communications in 2016-17.

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[71330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent on (a) online advertising and promotion, (b) animation, (c) design and (d) all advertising in financial year 2016-17.

**David Mundell:**

The Scotland Office did not spend any budget on television, radio, national or local newspaper, online or other types of advertising in the financial year 2016-17.

£15,955.65 was spent on social media advertising.

The Scotland Office spent £506.22 on design and print to support the UK Government's attendance at the Royal Highland Show in 2016.

The creation of animated digital content is carried out in-house by Scotland Office staff at no additional cost.

■ **Scotland Office: Construction**

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[71334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department has spent on building construction in each year since 2010.

**David Mundell:**

The Scotland Office has incurred no expenditure on building construction since 2010.

■ **Scotland Office: Information Officers**

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[71335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what estimate he has made of the cost of staff in media relations and communications roles in his Department in each of the next three years.

**David Mundell:**

The overall communication budgets for the next three years will be set in due course.

■ **Scotland Office: Travel**

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[71332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent on (a) air, (b) rail, (c) taxi and (d) other travel in 2016-17.

**David Mundell:**

The Scotland Office spend on travel for 2016-17 is shown below.

DESCRIPTION	COST
Air	£194,176
Rail	£79,478
Taxi	£24,279
Other travel costs	£60,383

## TRANSPORT

■ **A19: Accidents**

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[71775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answers of 20 April 2017 to Questions 70176 and 70174, on A19: accidents, what steps he is taking to increase patrols and speeding enforcement at accident black spots on the A19.

**Mr John Hayes:**

These powers lie with the police and Home Office.

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[71776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 20 April 2017 to Questions 70174, on A19: accidents, what assessment he has made of the causes of the



increase in the number of accidents on the A19 between Seaham and the Testos roundabout.

**Mr John Hayes:**

Highways England regularly undertakes route safety action plan studies on the A19.

This study looks to identify accident clusters and then undertakes analysis of the accidents to see if there are any common causation factors.

In the most recent study accident cluster sites were identified between Testos and Seaham. The analysis of the causation factors showed that driver behaviour was the primary cause of accidents at these sites.

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[71777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 20 April 2017 to Question 70174, on A19: accidents, what steps he is taking to reduce the number of accidents on the A19 between Seaham and the Testos roundabout.

**Mr John Hayes:**

Traffic modelling undertaken to date forecasts that the A19 Testos scheme being delivered by Highways England will result in a 28% reduction in accidents at the Testos roundabout with an overall accident saving across the affected network of 2%, and a 1.1% reduction in the number of total killed or seriously injured casualties on this part of the network. This equates to a reduction of 268 accidents over the assessment period.

■ **Cycling: Safety**

**Derek Thomas:**

[\[71674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve the safety of cyclists on roads.

**Andrew Jones:**

The government sees its role as setting the overall framework for road safety through the British Road Safety Statement. Local authorities, the police, the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales and others all have an important role to play to complement this framework. The recently published Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy sets out our objective to reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads by 2020.

■ **Department for Transport: China**

**Richard Burden:**

[\[71553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which Ministers and officials from his Department (a) supported and (b) attended the three-day trade mission to China in March 2017; and what the cost to his Department was of supporting and attending that trade mission.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The UK maritime industry directly supports 500,000 jobs and contributes more than £22.2 billion to UK GDP. This visit was an opportunity for the UK government to strengthen maritime trade links between the UK and China and establish new partnerships between British and Chinese companies.

I led the trade mission to China for the Department for Transport and hosted a number of events at the forum including the visit on board RMS Queen Mary 2, promoting UK excellence in the maritime industry.

I also travelled to Hong Kong for a further two days for additional engagements. I was supported and accompanied on this trip at official level by my Private Secretary and the Deputy Director for Maritime Growth.

The total cost to the Department was £28,100.39.

**■ Department for Transport: Freedom of Information****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff in his Department respond to Freedom of Information requests.

**Mr John Hayes:**

Freedom of Information requests are responded to by the most appropriate person in the Department, based on the subject matter of the request. This means that any member of staff may be responsible for answering requests, which are allocated to them on a case-by-case basis.

**■ FairFuelUK****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[71240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to meet FairFuelUK.

**Mr John Hayes:**

No representations have been received from FairFuelUK and no meetings are currently planned.

**■ Govia Thameslink Railway****Tom Brake:**[\[71617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the next review point of Thameslink's contract is which would enable the contract to be cancelled without penalty.

**Paul Maynard:**

Whilst Thameslink is used as an operating name by the franchisee, it is in fact part of Govia Thameslink Railway Limited, which operates the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern (TSGN) Franchise.

There are no review points under the TSGN Franchise Agreement. Schedule 10.2 of the Franchise Agreement sets out the termination provisions

(  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/488198/tsgn-franchise-agreement.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488198/tsgn-franchise-agreement.pdf) ).

**Tom Brake:**

**[71652]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the cost to the public purse would be of the Government cancelling Thameslink's contract immediately.

**Paul Maynard:**

Whilst Thameslink is used as an operating name by the franchisee, it is in fact part of Govia Thameslink Railway Limited, which operates the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern (TSGN) Franchise.

The Department for Transport monitors the operational and contractual performance of all franchises. If a franchisee does not meet its contractual commitments, it would be at the Secretary of State's discretion to make a decision on next steps. Schedule 10.2 of the TSGN Franchise Agreement sets out the termination provisions

(  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/488198/tsgn-franchise-agreement.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488198/tsgn-franchise-agreement.pdf) ).

The financial impact of termination would be subject to a number of variables which would depend on the specific circumstances.

## ■ High Speed Two

**Jon Trickett:**

**[71562]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the last tailored or triennial review of HS2 Ltd was; and when the next such review is due.

**Andrew Jones:**

The last triennial review (now known as the tailored review) for HS2 Ltd was conducted in 2011. The report into this review is provided in the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/3654/hs2-ltd-triennial-review-2011.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/3654/hs2-ltd-triennial-review-2011.pdf)

The Department is planning to undertake a tailored review for HS2 Ltd in 2017/18.

## ■ Lakes Railway Line: Electrification

**Tim Farron:**

**[71639]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans for electrification of the Lakes Line from Oxenholme Lake District to Windermere to be completed.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Hendy Review made provision for the Oxenholme to Windermere electrification scheme to be developed, with a target of March 2017 for selection of a single priced option. Network Rail indicated that the estimated cost to deliver the scheme has risen. In the light of this, Network Rail has been asked to undertake a value

management exercise to try to bring costs back in line with the original estimates. As a result of this investigation to bring down costs, the completion of the single option selection will be later than the published indicative date.

#### ■ London-Brighton Railway Line

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

[\[71551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what investment and improvements he is planning on the London to Brighton line; and if he will make a statement.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Government published the London South Coast Rail Corridor Study on 2 March 2017, which underlines the need for longer-term investment in capacity and performance improvements on the Brighton Mainline. We are continuing to work with Network Rail to define funding needs and a programme for future activity.

In addition, the Government has committed £300m to increase targeted maintenance and improve performance on Southern and Thameslink routes, including the Brighton Mainline, with works expected to be completed by Network Rail by December 2018.

#### ■ Manchester Piccadilly Station

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[71479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 4 April 2017 to Question 69245, if he will list those experts consulted in assessing the future capacity needs of Manchester Piccadilly station.

**Paul Maynard:**

The future capacity of Manchester Piccadilly has been assessed by the train operators, in setting out their plans to meet passenger needs in Manchester through the franchise period. In addition, as part of planning the next control period we are assessing the requirements for passenger capacity into Greater Manchester. Alongside this, Network Rail has applied for a Transport and Works Act Order for the Manchester Piccadilly and Oxford Road Capacity Enhancement scheme. A public inquiry was held in Autumn 2015 concerning the TWA Order application. The Department for Transport is currently considering the application. Network Rail, as the system operator, has been consulted extensively throughout by the Department in order to assess the available capacity at Manchester Piccadilly against the future needs of the current franchises and other operators.

#### ■ Maritime and Coastguard Agency: ICT

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**

[\[71282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the cost of implementing the new remote IT system for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has been.

**Mr John Hayes:**

There has not been, and there is no plan for, a new remote IT system specifically to support Marine Surveyors working remotely for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

The MCA already provides each surveyor with a laptop, mobile phone and printer to support the undertaking of survey and Port State Control inspections at ports. Surveyors are able to, and have been for some time, working remotely using the existing IT equipment.

However, replacement equipment will be issued across the whole of the MCA from April 2017, in line with an organisation-wide refresh.

**■ Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Port of Tyne****Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[71312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will restore the counter service in the Tyne marine office.

**Mr John Hayes:**

As part of the overall Survey and Inspection Transformation Programme, the closure of Tyne Marine Office will save the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) £88k per annum.

As a direct response to the feedback received during the consultation, the MCA has retained its presence in the north east of England by opening the exam centre in South Tyneside College.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency will continue to offer customers an appointment based service when appropriate.

**■ Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Staff****Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[71292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of marine surveyors who will be directly employed by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in each year from 2016-17 to 2019-20.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The number of Marine Surveyors, full time equivalents, employed at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency as at 31 March 2017 was 107, including five Ensign Surveyors.

For each of the subsequent years, through to 2019/20, the forecast is for 128, including nine Ensign Surveyors.

**■ Merchant Shipping: Training****Richard Burden:**[\[71563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many merchant navy (a) ratings and (b) officer cadets have been trained in each year since 2000-01.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The number of new entrant cadets, the number of cadets in training and the number of trainee watch ratings who start training each year can be found in the tables below.

The figures in Table 1 show the number of cadets supported by the Support for Maritime Training (SMarT) scheme who started training in each year since 2000-01.

	<u>2000/01</u>	<u>2001/02</u>	<u>2002/03</u>	<u>2003/04</u>	<u>2004/05</u>	<u>2005/06</u>	<u>2006/07</u>	<u>2007/08</u>
Officer cadets currently in training of which:								
SMarT1 new entrants	470	450	560	660	560	570	690	850
	<u>2008/09</u>	<u>2009/10</u>	<u>2010/11</u>	<u>2011/12</u>	<u>2012/13</u>	<u>2013/14</u>	<u>2014/15</u>	<u>2015/16</u>
Officer cadets currently in training of which:								
SMarT1 new entrants	930	750	850	900	780	790	820	750

Table 1: UK officer cadets under SMarT1 scheme (1999-2016)

These figures are derived from SMarT returns for SMarT1 training and may include a small number of EU trainees resident in the UK. Numbers are rounded to nearest 10. Figures for 2016-17 are not yet available.

The figures in Table 2 below show the number of watch rating trainees who have been supported by SMarT each year since 2011-12. The data held by the MCA for ratings training prior to 2011-12 includes concessionaire training and does not provide an accurate reflection of watch rating training.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>WATCH RATING TRAINEES</u>
2011/12	32
2012/13	13
2013/14	12

YEAR	WATCH RATING TRAINEES
2014/15	4
2015/16	7

Table 2: UK watch rating trainees under Smart scheme (2011 – 2016)

## ■ Northern Rail

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[71430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that an agreement is reached relating to the guard guarantee on Northern Rail services.

**Paul Maynard:**

While this dispute is for RMT and the train operator to resolve, the Secretary of State and I have made efforts to liaise with Rail North and Arriva Rail North to make sure the operator is limiting the impact of the strikes on passengers.

## ■ Northern Rail Franchise

**Diana Johnson:** [\[71114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many trains on the northern rail franchise operate driver-controlled operation.

**Paul Maynard:**

There are currently no trains running on the Northern network with driver controlled operation (DCO).

## ■ Railways: Disability

**Diana Johnson:** [\[71176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 24 January 2017 to Question HL4534, on railways: disabilities, how many and what proportion of train operating companies which run stations in northern England have assured him that all their stations on train lines operating driver-only operation will be staffed at all hours of operation; and what discussions he has had with those train operating companies on staffing levels.

**Paul Maynard:**

The staffing level at a station does not abrogate a train operating company of its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to provide assistance to those passengers who request it. There is no requirement for all stations, whether or not they are called at by driver only operated trains, to be staffed from first until last train; however the Northern franchise agreement stipulates some staffing levels at stations, the details of which are in the public domain.

**■ Railways: East Grinstead****Sir Nicholas Soames:**[\[71550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what investment and improvements he plans to make to the London to East Grinstead line; and if he will make a statement.

**Paul Maynard:**

In January this year £300 million was announced to boost resilience of mainline infrastructure on the Southern and Thameslink rail networks. The multi-million pound package of works will be delivered by Network Rail, who have made an initial assessment of delay hotspots. Work is expected to be completed by December 2018.

**■ Railways: Greater Manchester****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 4 April 2017 to Question 69245, what the timetables are for works on the electrification of the line between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Network Rail Enhancement Delivery Plan sets out the outputs, scope and milestones for projects and ring fenced funds that Network Rail is committed to deliver in the current investment period, 2014-2019. According to the latest version of this plan, published in March 2017, electrification from Manchester to Stalybridge will be ready for entry into service from December 2017.

The Government has been clear about the affordability and deliverability challenges faced in the current investment programme. In 2015, due to cost increases and schedule delay on important aspects of Network Rail's investment programme, Sir Peter Hendy was asked to replan the programme to see what could be delivered in an affordable and timely way within the current rail investment period. Following the Hendy Review, the funding available for enhancements is now fixed for the current investment period. A key aspect of this approach has been the ongoing assessment of investment decisions so that we deliver these improvements in a way that provides best value for taxpayers. As such, my Department and Network Rail are currently reviewing the most efficient way to deliver the promised passenger benefits on the important Manchester – Stalybridge – Huddersfield – Leeds – York corridor.

**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[71450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 30 March 2017 to Question 69312, on what dates Ministers of his Department have met representatives from Network Rail to discuss the delivery of rail electrification between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge stations.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Secretary of State and I regularly meet with representatives of Network Rail to discuss a wide range of issues, including the delivery of rail electrification between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge stations.



## ■ Railways: North West

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[71449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 30 March 2017 to Question 69312, when the next Enhancement Delivery Plan quarterly update will be published.

**Paul Maynard:**

Network Rail's Enhancement Delivery Plan update is published quarterly on its website. The Enhancement Delivery Plan was last updated at the end of March 2017 and the next update is due at the end of June 2017.

## ■ Roads: Repairs and Maintenance

**Andrea Jenkyns:**

[\[71678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made in introducing Pothole Spotter systems.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Department for Transport announced in January 2017 that we were undertaking a new innovative trial on the way potholes are identified and managed.

The Department for Transport is working in partnership with Thurrock, York and Wiltshire councils and two private sector SME's, Soenecs and Gaist, to undertake this trial which allows high-definition cameras to be mounted to refuse collection vehicles and by deploying innovative intelligent software will identify road surface problems before they become potholes.

The trial has now commenced in Thurrock and Wiltshire and is expected to commence shortly in York once we have finalised the programme with the council.

## ■ Shipping

**Richard Burden:**

[\[71666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2017 to Question 58094, when he plans to publish the (a) review of the Support for Maritime Training scheme and (b) analysis of commercial opportunities within the Maritime and Coastguard Agency that was commissioned by his Department on the recommendations of the Maritime Growth Study.

**Mr John Hayes:**

(a) The report we commissioned Frazer Nash and Oxford Economics to produce on the Support for Maritime Training (SMarT) funding programme has been completed and we intend to publish before the summer recess.

(b) I refer to my answer to UIN 57565 of 19 December 2016.

## ■ Shipping: Inspections

**Richard Burden:**

[\[71564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what regulatory oversight the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has of recognised organisations authorised to conduct vessel inspection and survey work on its behalf.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The UK, under International Conventions including the IMO Code of Recognized Organizations (Res. MSC.349(92)) and the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (Res. A.1070(28)) and as a Member State under European Directive 2009/15/EC is required to satisfy itself that any survey work completed by the six Recognised Organisations (ROs) acting on its behalf is effectively monitored.

Written survey agreements are in place between each individual RO and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) which govern the level of delegation of statutory functions and certification services for vessels registered in the UK.

To provide assurance that survey and certification work delegated to ROs was carried out to agreed standards, the MCA undertakes a comprehensive risk based programme of monitoring and assurance visits and audits.

**Richard Burden:**

[\[71569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what survey and inspection work has been carried out for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency by each authorised recognised organisation from January 2016 to date; and what the cost to the public purse was of each such piece of work.

**Mr John Hayes:**

Six Recognised Organisations (ROs) are authorised by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) to undertake approximately 85% of statutory ship survey and inspection work on its behalf, and issue certification dependent on vessel type under the following International Conventions:

- International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, and LL Protocol 1988;
- International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, SOLAS Convention 1974 and SOLAS Protocol 1988;
- International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, MARPOL 73/78; and
- International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969; and
- International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships.

Certain elements of statutory survey, audit and inspection functions from the applicable Conventions are retained by the MCA based on risk, for example Passenger Ship Safety Certification, International Ship Security Certification, International Safety Management Certification and the Maritime Labour Convention. Further authorisation may be provided under two trial authorisation schemes that

offer additional authorisation to ROs for qualifying low risk ships and shipping companies/operators.

There is limited cost to the public purse from the above authorisations, however the UK, under International Conventions including the RO Code <sup>[1]</sup> and III Code <sup>[2]</sup> , and as a Member State under European Directive 2009/15/EC <sup>[3]</sup> is required to satisfy that any survey work completed by ROs acting on its behalf is effectively monitored. The MCA undertakes a comprehensive programme of monitoring and assurance visits and audits, and from January 2016 to March 2017, this has incurred costs of £156,692 based on travel costs, and resource costs for the staff undertaking this work.

<sup>[1]</sup> IMO Code of Recognized Organizations – Resolution MSC.349(92)

<sup>[2]</sup> IMO Instruments Implementation Code – Resolution A.1070(28)

<sup>[3]</sup> Directive 2009/15/EC on common rules and standards for ship inspection and survey organisations and for the relevant activities of maritime administrations

## ■ Southern

**Tom Brake:**

**[71616]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the next review point of Southern's contract is which would enable the contract to be cancelled without penalty.

**Paul Maynard:**

Whilst Southern is used as an operating name by the franchisee, it is in fact part of Govia Thameslink Railway Limited, which operates the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern (TSGN) Franchise.

There are no review points under the TSGN Franchise Agreement. Schedule 10.2 of the Franchise Agreement sets out the termination provisions

([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/488198/tsgn-franchise-agreement.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488198/tsgn-franchise-agreement.pdf) ).

**Tom Brake:**

**[71653]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the cost to the public purse would be of the Government cancelling Southern's contract immediately.

**Paul Maynard:**

Whilst Southern is used as an operating name by the franchisee, it is in fact part of Govia Thameslink Railway Limited, which operates the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern (TSGN) Franchise.

The Department for Transport monitors the operational and contractual performance of all franchises. If a franchisee does not meet its contractual commitments, it would be at the Secretary of State's discretion to make a decision on next steps.

Schedule 10.2 of the TSGN Franchise Agreement sets out the termination provisions:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/488198/tsgn-franchise-agreement.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488198/tsgn-franchise-agreement.pdf)

■ **Taxis: Assistance Dogs**

**Derek Thomas:** [71676]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to prevent taxi drivers from discriminating against disability assistance dogs.

**Andrew Jones:**

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is illegal for the driver of a taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV) to refuse to carry an assistance dog unless they hold a medical exemption certificate issued by the local licensing authority. It is unacceptable that drivers continue to refuse assistance dogs and I strongly encourage licensing authorities to take robust action against those who are unwilling to comply. Courts already have powers to impose fines up to £1,000.

Guidance has previously been issued to licensing authorities to support their implementation of these legal protections, and we are currently reviewing Best Practice Guidance which will include strengthened recommendations relating to authorities' response to alleged instances of assistance dog refusal.

■ **Taxis: Disability**

**Derek Thomas:** [71675]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to make taxis more accessible for disabled people.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Department recognises the vital services that taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) provide for many disabled people, and is taking a number of steps to ensure that they are accessible to everyone that wishes to use them.

The Department recently amended the law to make it a criminal offence for drivers of designated taxi and private hire vehicles to refuse to carry passengers in wheelchairs, to fail to provide them with appropriate assistance, or to charge them extra, unless they hold a medical exemption certificate issued by the local licensing authority.

In addition, the Department plans to consult shortly on revised Best Practice Guidance for local licensing authorities, which will include strengthened recommendations relating to the provision of disability awareness training for taxi and private hire vehicle drivers and to authorities' response to alleged instances of assistance dog refusal.

**WALES****■ EU Grants and Loans: Wales****Jo Stevens:**[\[71604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what estimate he has made of the annual value of all EU funding allocated to Wales.

**Alun Cairns:**

For the 2014-20 funding cycle, Wales will receive a total allocation of €3,063,444,610 from the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds, comprising:

- European Regional Development Fund: € 1,406,822,703
- European Social Fund: € 1,005,652,552
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: €650,969,355

In the same period, under Pillar 1 of the Common Agricultural Policy, Wales will receive an allocation of around €1,956 million.

Wales will also receive funding under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, European Territorial Cooperation programmes and other EU funding programmes such as Horizon 2020.

**■ Horizon 2020: Wales****Jo Stevens:**[\[71603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with the Welsh Government Education Cabinet Secretary on access to Horizon 2002 funding after the UK leaves the EU.

**Alun Cairns:**

It is clearly very early in the negotiations to be discussing specific outcomes.

However, this Government is already taking actions to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements. The Chancellor announced in August 2016 that the Treasury will underwrite the payments of all successful bids for competitive EU research funding awards, even when specific projects continue beyond the departure from the EU. This applies to all UK partner organisations. This gives UK participants and their international partners confidence that they will have the funding necessary throughout the life of their Horizon 2020 funded project. Welsh organisations have attracted €66 million in Horizon 2020 funding between January 2014 and February 2017.

The Government is committed to ensuring the UK remains a world leader in international research and innovation. 'The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union' White Paper set out that the Government would welcome an agreement to continue to collaborate with our European partners on major science, research, and technology initiatives and we will approach the upcoming negotiations on this basis.

**Universities: Wales****Jo Stevens:**[\[71602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with Universities Wales on replacement of EU funding to universities in Wales after the UK leaves the EU.

**Alun Cairns:**

It is clearly very early in the negotiations to be discussing specific outcomes. However, this Government is already taking actions to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements. The Chancellor announced in August 2016 that the Treasury will underwrite the payments of all successful bids for competitive EU research funding awards, even when specific projects continue beyond the departure from the EU. This applies to all UK partner organisations. This gives UK participants and their international partners confidence that they will have the funding necessary throughout the life of their Horizon 2020 funded project. Welsh organisations have attracted €66 million in Horizon 2020 funding between January 2014 and February 2017.

The Government is committed to ensuring the UK remains a world leader in international research and innovation. 'The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union' White Paper set out that the Government would welcome an agreement to continue to collaborate with our European partners on major science, research, and technology initiatives and we will approach the upcoming negotiations on this basis.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****Access to Work Programme: Musculoskeletal Disorders****Marie Rimmer:**[\[71804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the conclusion of 17 February 2017 of the Improving Lives disability employment consultation, what plans his Department has to increase awareness of the Access to Work scheme among people with musculoskeletal conditions; whether there are plans for Public Health England to publish a musculoskeletal component to the Workforce and Wellbeing Charter on best practice; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure the views of people with arthritis will be reflected in future government policy.

**Marie Rimmer:**[\[71831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress his Department has made in fulfilling the recommendation of the Sayce report, published in June 2011, on disability employment support to transform the Access to Work scheme from the Government's best kept secret to a recognised passport to successful employment for disabled people.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

We have promoted Access to Work via the Disability Confident scheme, and will continue to do so. Disability Confident gives employers the tools and information they

need to think differently about disability and to take action to recruit, retain and develop disabled workers.

After the election period we intend to undertake further marketing and promotion of the Access to Work programme. This includes working with stakeholders and partners and employer associations to raise awareness through communications to their customers and ensuring advisers who work with potential customers, including Jobcentre Plus, health professionals and advisory groups, have the information and tools to act as advocates.

This includes work with organisations which support or have an interest in people with musculoskeletal conditions, such as the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists, the British Association of Occupational Therapists, a number of Arthritis support organisations, health professionals, advisory groups and various employer associations.

The standards set in the national Workplace Wellbeing Charter include many elements which support the reduction of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), such as increasing physical activity and weight reduction. However, there is no MSD specific standard.

Local accreditation schemes, such as the Better Work Award, can enhance the national standards by adding a local MSD component if appropriate, based on local population needs.

In March 2017, Public Health England, Business in the Community and The Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance published a musculoskeletal toolkit for employers to address MSD issues at work. The toolkit builds on the existing best practice and considers the transferable learning between business sectors and businesses of different sizes. The toolkit has been downloaded over 1000 times since publication.

In our November 2016 Green Paper, the Government set out further proposals to support individuals with musculoskeletal conditions to find or to stay in work. The subsequent consultation drew considerable input from sufferers of musculoskeletal conditions (including arthritic conditions) and their representative groups. The consultation closed on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and we are now carefully considering the submissions we received as we develop our policy options.

## ■ Disability Living Allowance

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

**[71634]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how long his Department holds medical evidence submitted to support a claim for disability living allowance; and whether that evidence may be used to support a claim for personal independence payment.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Evidence that supports any decision awarding benefit is kept for as long as that award is current and 14 months after it eventually ends. DLA claimants who are



invited to claim PIP are asked if they want if any medical evidence that supported their award of DLA to be used in considering their claim for PIP.

■ **Employment: Health**

**Mrs Flick Drummond:** [71578]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the cost to employers of (a) alcohol abuse, (b) obesity and (c) viral hepatitis in each of the last five years.

**Mrs Flick Drummond:** [71656]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of (a) alcohol abuse, (b) obesity and (c) viral hepatitis on (i) unemployment levels and (ii) job absenteeism in each of the last five years.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Department for Work and Pensions does not hold this information.

■ **HIV Infection: Personal Independence Payment**

**Caroline Lucas:** [71315]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the transition to personal independence payments does not have a disproportionate effect on people aged 50 and over living with HIV.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The PIP assessment is designed to treat all health conditions and impairments fairly. I can assure you that we have considered the needs of those with HIV in developing the assessment. We remain committed to providing support to disabled people and those with conditions such as HIV to better enable them to lead full and independent lives.

■ **Homelessness: Young People**

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [71706]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of changes to housing benefit for 18 to 21-year olds on levels of youth homelessness.

**Caroline Nokes:**

I refer the Hon Member to my answer of 15 March this year to Written Question 66778 on this subject. This can be accessed from the following link:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-03-07/66778/>



## ■ Housing Benefit

**Stephen Kinnock:**

[\[71238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the level of rent arrears in (a) public and (b) private sector accommodation since housing benefit has been paid directly to tenants.

**Caroline Nokes:**

DWP does not collect data on rent arrears. The Government believes that direct payment of Housing Benefit to claimants is an important consideration in encouraging people to manage their own budget in the same way as other households, particularly where it may help claimants when they move into work.

## ■ Housing Benefit: Private Rented Housing

**Stephen Kinnock:**

[\[71310\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of paying housing benefit directly to tenants on their ability to secure accommodation in the private rented sector.

**Caroline Nokes:**

DWP has not made an assessment specifically looking at the effect of paying Housing Benefit directly to tenants and their ability to secure accommodation in the private rented sector. The Government believes that direct payment of Housing Benefit to claimants is an important consideration in encouraging people to manage their own budget in the same way as other households, particularly where it may help claimants when they move in work.

**Stephen Kinnock:**

[\[71311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of number of tenants in receipt of housing benefit in the private rented sector (a) prior to housing benefit being paid directly to the tenant and (b) since housing benefit has been paid directly to the tenant.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Government believes that direct payment of Housing Benefit to claimants is an important consideration in encouraging people to manage their own budget in the same way as other households, particularly where it may help claimants when they move in work.

Direct payment of Housing Benefit to tenants was introduced nationally in the private rented sector from 2008 as part of the Local Housing Allowance scheme. Whilst the majority of Housing Benefit claimants are paid directly, there is still provision for direct payments to be made to landlords in certain circumstances. The number of tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit in the private rented sector is available on [DWP Stat-Xplore](#).

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

■ **Jobcentres: Porthcawl**

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

**[71213]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants attended Porthcawl Job Centre to claim (a) employment and support allowance and (b) universal credit in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement.

**Damian Hinds:**

The information requested for Employment and Support Allowance is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Statistics on the claimant count, which show the number of Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit claimants by Jobcentre Plus office, can be found at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp>

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/home/newuser.asp>

■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Alex Salmond:**

**[71803]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Gordon dated 2 March 2017 on behalf of a constituent.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

I apologise for the delay in responding to your letter on behalf of your constituent Ms Kimberly Roy. A response has been issued to you today (26 April 17).

■ **Musculoskeletal Disorders: Databases**

**Marie Rimmer:**

**[71801]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions the Joint Health and Work Unit has had with NHS England and NHS Digital on the Government's mandate to NHS England for its 2017-18 commitment to identify opportunities for regular collection of data relating to musculoskeletal conditions.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Improving Lives - the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper set out Government's commitment to work with NHS England to identify opportunities for regular collection of data about incidence, prevalence, clinical activity and outcomes of musculoskeletal conditions and services in England. The Government's Mandate to NHS England reiterated this commitment. This is part of wider work to consider ways to improve health and employment services for people with musculoskeletal conditions.

## ■ Personal Independence Payment

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[71633]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many home visits there were by Jobcentre Plus outreach workers providing home-based advice and support for claimants of personal independence payments in the last year.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The department does not hold the requested data.

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[71635]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidance his Department provides to family members submitting evidence to support a persons claim for personal independence payment; and what weight is given to that evidence by assessment providers.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Department provides guidance to family members for those who are approaching 16 and in receipt of DLA regarding the invite to claim PIP. Additionally claimants are asked if they want carers or relatives to provide information regarding health conditions or disabilities, space is provided for this in the "How your disability affects you" evidence gathering form. Decisions regarding PIP are made by Decision Makers, not Assessment Providers. Decision Makers will consider all evidence on the case.

Guidance for Health Professionals on how to evaluate and analyse evidence in preparing the Assessment Report can be accessed on the gov.uk website, section 2.8.13.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/547146/pip-assessment-guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/547146/pip-assessment-guide.pdf).

Furthermore, we introduced two comprehensive, statutory, independent reviews of the PIP Assessment. The second of Paul Gray's Independent Review's was published on 30 March 2017. We are considering the review's recommendations carefully and will respond later this year.

## ■ Poverty

**Dan Jarvis:**

[71592]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what current measurements his Department uses to determine (a) absolute and (b) relative poverty.

**Damian Hinds:**

DWP's Households Below Average Income (HBAI) publication provides annual estimates on the number and percentage of people living in low-income households. HBAI is the foremost source for data and information about household income in the UK. The statistics are based on data from the Family Resources Survey (FRS) whose focus is capturing information on incomes.

The latest release of the HBAI publication is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-199495-to-201516>

Absolute low income measures the number and proportion of individuals who have an equivalised household income below 60% of the median in 2010/11, adjusted for inflation.

Relative low income measures the number and proportion of individuals who have an equivalised household income below 60% of the median.

Household income is measured as the total weekly household income from all sources, after tax, national insurance and other deductions. An adjustment called equivalisation is made to income to make it comparable across households of different size and composition.

The median equivalised household income divides the population of individuals, when ranked by equivalised household income, into two equal-sized groups, and unlike the mean is not affected by extreme values.

Relative and absolute low income statistics are often utilised as measures of income poverty. We recognise the need to understand the complex issues that some families face and to develop a new approach to tackling poverty and engrained disadvantage. Because the root causes are not financial, our approach goes beyond the safety net our welfare system provides

New analysis carried out by my Department shows that children living in families where no one works are significantly more disadvantaged, and achieve poorer outcomes than other children including those living in lower-income working families. This is why *Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families*, published on 4 April, focuses on tackling the complex barriers faced by many disadvantaged families and provides a framework for a continuing focus on improving their children's outcomes, now and in the future.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Musculoskeletal Disorders

**Marie Rimmer:**

**[71773]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people with musculoskeletal conditions making the transition between disability living allowance and personal independence payments.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The latest available data on Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Reassessment Outcomes split by Disability Category and Outcome can be found at;

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

■ **Work and Health Innovation Fund: Musculoskeletal Disorders**

**Marie Rimmer:**

[\[71802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of the Health and Work Innovation Fund his Department plans to allocate to interventions for people with arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions; and what consideration his Department has given to launching a workplace-focussed information campaign on such conditions.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

We are currently considering responses to The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper Consultation to identify priority areas for investment that will help to build the evidence base. This includes consideration of approaches to improve support for people with musculoskeletal and other conditions, including the role that information campaigns might play.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### EDUCATION

#### ■ English Votes for English Laws Analysis for Higher Education and Research Bill

**The Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (Joseph Johnson):** [\[HCWS616\]](#)

I am pleased to announce the publication of the Government's analysis of English Votes for English Laws in relation to amendments made to the Higher Education and Research Bill in the House of Lords.

The English Votes for English Laws process applies to public bills in the House of Commons. To support the process, the Government has agreed that it will provide information to assist the Speaker in considering whether to certify a Bill or any of its provisions for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws. Bill provisions that relate exclusively to England or to England and Wales, and which have a subject matter within the legislative competence of one or more of the devolved legislatures, can be certified.

The memorandum also provides an assessment of Government amendments tabled in lieu of Lords amendments, for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws. The Department's assessment is that the amendments do not change the territorial application of the Bill.

This analysis reflects the position should all the Government amendments be accepted.

The memorandum can be found on the Bill documents page of the Parliament website at: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/highereducationandresearch.html> and I have deposited a copy in the Libraries of the House.

### FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

#### ■ Provision of Equipment to Moderate Armed Opposition Border Force and Medical Units

**The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):** [\[HCWS617\]](#)

The situation in Syria remains extremely fragile. An estimated 400,000 people have been killed since the war began six years ago, many of them innocent civilians. The Asad regime continues to use the most barbaric military methods and tactics available, including the use of indiscriminate artillery fire, chemical weapons and barrel bombs. The UK remains committed to doing all it can to promote a political settlement to end the conflict, to alleviate the humanitarian suffering, and to protect UK national security through countering terrorist and extremist threats.

In November 2015, my predecessor, the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, issued Written Ministerial Statements setting out our plans to give equipment and training to groups

selected from the Moderate Armed Opposition's (MAO) Southern Front, creating a Border Force and Casualty Evacuation capability in Opposition controlled areas of southern Syria. The Southern Front Border Force (SF-BFOR) working together with other MAO groups and in coordination with the Jordanian Authorities, has interdicted Jordanian citizens illegally entering Syria. They have also stopped smugglers carrying money, weapons and narcotics from Syria to Jordan, and Daesh fighters attempting to carry weapons, explosives and money in and out of the besieged area of the Yarmouk Basin. The Southern Front Casualty Evacuation capability (CASEVAC) capability is designed to provide vital medical support to the MAO and has, to date, established and equipped three medical teams with a command and control element attached to each. Primarily designed to support MAO fighters, they have provided treatment to over 100 injured MAO personnel in recent fighting in Dera'a City. These teams have also provided treatment to civilians wounded in the fighting often working alongside the Syrian Civil Defence. Other international donors have contributed to both initiatives.

The UK intends to continue its support to these programmes by providing targeted operational equipment – for patrolling and observation, and for provision of medical care to wounded fighters – as well as building the command and control capacity. We will give £3,438,338.54 in equipment to SF-BFOR and £2,779,970.30 in equipment to the CASEVAC medical units. For SF-BFOR the list of equipment includes: vehicles; day/night observation aids; communications equipment; metal and line detecting equipment to find and avoid improvised explosive devices; uniforms; and combined load carrying/protective vests. The list of equipment for the CASEVAC medical units includes: vehicles; communications equipment; medical treatment equipment; uniforms; and load carrying/protective vests. We expect to spend a total of £10 million this financial year on both programmes of support.

The use of these funds to cover the costs of the programme has been approved by the Syria Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Board, the Middle East North Africa CSSF Regional Board and Operations Committee. The equipment has been scrutinised to ensure that the provision of this equipment is consistent with export controls and complies with our international obligations. Recipients have been carefully selected and vetted to prevent equipment being given to those involved in extremist activities or human rights abuses. All equipment transfers are approved by HMG immediately before delivery. All our assistance is carefully calibrated and legal, is aimed at alleviating human suffering and supporting moderate groups and is regularly monitored and evaluated. We monitor the situation on the ground carefully.

#### ■ **Provision of Equipment to Syria Civil Defence and the Free Syrian Police**

**The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):**  
[\[HCWS618\]](#)

The situation in Syria remains extremely fragile. An estimated 400,000 people have been killed since the war began six years ago, many of them innocent civilians. The Asad regime continues to use the most barbaric military methods and tactics available, including the use of indiscriminate artillery fire, chemical weapons and barrel bombs. The

UK remains committed to doing all it can to promote a political settlement to end the conflict, to alleviate the humanitarian suffering, and to protect UK national security through countering terrorist and extremist threats.

In June 2016, my predecessor, the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, issued Written Ministerial Statements setting out our plans to give equipment to Syria Civil Defence and the Free Syrian Police teams operating in opposition-controlled areas of Syria. The UK subsequently distributed the equipment to both teams along with comprehensive training packages. Syria Civil Defence teams have now saved over 70,000 lives by rescuing civilians trapped in damaged buildings, fighting fires and providing emergency first aid. The Free Syrian Police continues its valuable work to prevent looting and to support the distribution of humanitarian aid. Other international donors have contributed to both initiatives.

The UK intends to continue its support to these programmes by increasing their communications capability and mobility of the teams, providing more targeted operational equipment – whether for search and rescue, or tracing explosives – as well as building up the capacity of these organisations to deliver on the ground. We intend give £2 million in equipment to Syria Civil Defence and £4 million in equipment to the Free Syrian Police. For Syria Civil Defence, the list of equipment includes: cutting and rescue tools; personal protective gear including helmets; uniforms; communications equipment; medical supplies; equipment for the disposal of unexploded ordinance; office supplies; vehicles; and fire fighting equipment. For the Free Syrian Police, the list of equipment includes: vehicles; communications kit; traffic signs and cones; uniforms; and generators. We expect to spend £19 million this financial year on both programmes of support.

The use of these funds to cover the costs of the equipment has been approved by members of the Middle East and North Africa Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Regional Board. The list of equipment has been scrutinised to ensure that the provision of this equipment is consistent with export controls and complies with our international obligations. Recipients have been carefully selected to prevent equipment being given to those involved in extremist activities or human rights abuses. All equipment transfers are approved by HMG immediately before delivery. All our assistance is carefully calibrated and legal, is aimed at alleviating human suffering and supporting moderate groups and is regularly monitored and evaluated. We monitor the situation on the ground carefully.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Immigration

**The Minister of State for Immigration (Mr Robert Goodwill):**

**[\[HCWS619\]](#)**

In 2016, the UK granted asylum or another form of leave to over 8,000 children. By the end of 2016, the UK had resettled more than 5,000 people under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Resettlement Scheme and the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme, as part of our commitment to taking 23,000 people by 2020. Our resettlement schemes allow children to be resettled with their family members, thereby discouraging them from



making perilous journeys to Europe alone. In 2016, we transferred over 900 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children from within Europe to the UK, including more than 750 from France as part of the UK's comprehensive support for the Calais camp clearance. And over 200 children have already arrived in the UK under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. The UK has pledged over £2.3 billion in aid in response to the events in Syria and the region - our largest ever humanitarian response to a single crisis. Within Europe, the UK has also established a £10 million Refugee Children's Fund to support the needs of vulnerable refugee and migrant children arriving in Europe. The fund includes targeted support to meet the specific needs of unaccompanied and separated children.

In my Written Ministerial Statement of 8 February 2017 I announced that, following consultation with local authorities, the Government would transfer the specified number of 350 unaccompanied children from Europe to the UK under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

The Government has very recently become aware that, due to an administrative error as part of collating the figures, one region pledged 130 places which were not accounted for in setting the specified number. As part of the consultation local authorities were asked to let their Strategic Migration Partnerships know how many places they could offer, and then the Strategic Migration Partnerships provided the regional number to the Home Office. The Home Office continued to work with the Strategic Migration Partnerships throughout the consultation process, and believed that two regions in England had not provided responses after the consultation closed. Both of these regions had already stepped up to take a number of children from over-burdened councils elsewhere in the country so it was assumed they would continue to support the national transfer scheme as and when they could, but were not able to provide specific numbers which the Home Office could then allocate to section 67 cases. The Home Office recently discovered that one of the regions had sent a return and we are now including their pledges in the specified number for the purposes of section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

In order to ensure the specified number of children to be transferred is a true reflection of the responses to that consultation, I am today announcing that, in accordance with section 67 of the Immigration Act, the Government is increasing the specified number from 350 to 480. As outlined in my original statement, the specified number includes over 200 children already transferred from France as part of the Calais camp clearance. It does not include children transferred to the UK pursuant to the family reunion criteria of the Dublin III Regulation.

The Government remains fully committed to the implementation of our commitment under section 67 to transfer unaccompanied children to the UK from Europe and no eligible child has been refused transfer to the UK as a result of this error. The Home Secretary has written to her counterparts in France, Greece and Italy and we are working closely with Member States, as well as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and NGO partners so we can identify and transfer children to the UK as soon as possible. Home Office officials have met with their counterparts in each of the countries in the past few weeks to plan future transfers. We

have secondees in Greece and Italy working on transfers of unaccompanied children to the UK under both the Dublin III Regulation and section 67 and we published the criteria for future transfers on 10 March. Over the coming months, the Government will continue to work with EU Member States and partners to implement section 67.