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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**  
**(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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<b>Lord Wallace of Tankerness</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland and Deputy Leader of the House
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government
<b>Baroness Anelay of St Johns</b>	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Astor of Hever</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence
<b>Lord Bates</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
<b>Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth</b>	Whip
<b>Lord De Mauley</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Lord Deighton</b>	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
<b>Lord Faulks</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
<b>Lord Freud</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Baroness Garden of Frognal</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Gardiner of Kimble</b>	Whip
<b>Earl Howe</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
<b>Baroness Jolly</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Kramer</b>	Minister of State, Department for Transport
<b>Lord Livingston of Parkhead</b>	Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
<b>Lord Nash</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
<b>Baroness Neville-Rolfe</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
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<b>Baroness Verma</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Energy and Climate Change
<b>Lord Wallace of Saltaire</b>	Whip
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# Written Statements

*Tuesday, 24 March 2015*

## Adult Vocational Education

[HLWS433]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (Vince Cable) has today made the following statement.

The Government is today launching the consultation document – A Dual Mandate for Adult Vocational Education. A copy will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

This builds on our reform programme to date and explores some of the key issues that will ensure our vocational education system is able to meet the major skills challenges that will face this country over the next five years and beyond.

The issues raised in the document imply important changes for how we think about further education for adults. The further education sector covers a wider range of learners than either schools or higher education. It ranges from basic literacy, numeracy and elementary social skills at a level that would be taught in a primary reception class or even pre-school through to degree level technical education.

The primary focus of the document is on how we can strengthen higher level vocational education in this country. This is defined as education which goes above what should be achieved in compulsory education, but will often not involve a full-time academic degree. This is an area where England has had a historic weakness and where we continue to lag behind the performance of other developed countries.

The Government has started work to reverse these long-term issues: notably by supporting National Colleges as specialist institutions for areas including digital skills, the nuclear industry, high speed rail, and advanced manufacturing techniques; and by introducing high level apprenticeships as a parallel route to full-time higher education in order to provide more choice for learners and increase business engagement. But there is more to do, and sustained action by Government, businesses, and educational institutions will be necessary if we are to succeed.

This second part of the mandate is also important. Further education provides a vital lifeline to those, often in the most disadvantaged circumstances, who reached adulthood without the basic skills they need for the workplace or for modern life. We have set out how we improved the delivery of basic skills and community learning by allowing greater flexibility for providers to tailor services to the needs of users and to innovate by encouraging the development of a more diverse supplier base.

The final section of the document looks at the implications for providers of adult further education,

particularly further education colleges. It sets out two key trends that the Government forecast will continue over the rest of this decade and beyond. First, reductions in public funds for skills are unlikely to be reversed, and resource allocation will increasingly be contestable. Secondly, effective delivery will increasingly require greater specialisation.

The Government has supported a shift to greater influence and control over skills at the local level. The logic for such an approach is strong: adult further education essentially serves local labour market needs. The document therefore explores how greater influence at the local level, as signalled by City Deals and the Devolution Agreements with Manchester and Sheffield may be further strengthened and extended in future years.

The consultation period runs until 16 June 2015.

## Analogue Commercial Radio Licence Renewals

[HLWS438]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Hon Friend, the Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy (Ed Vaizey) has made the following statement:

The UK has a rich and thriving commercial radio sector, providing a wide range of programmes that appeal to a variety of different tastes. Commercial radio plays a key role in the provision of national, international and local news, delivering large amounts of locally produced and relevant content, and providing a dynamic platform for the UK's world leading music and entertainment industries.

A key part of supporting commercial radio is the need to create and maintain a stable regulatory framework that fully supports continued investment by commercial radio in the face of increased competition for audiences and changes in patterns of media consumption.

In December 2013, the Government concluded that it was not the right time to commit to a future radio switchover or set a firm or indicative timetable for such a move. This remains the Government's view. However, the Government fully supports the transition to digital radio and has provided up to £7.75m to fund the expansion of local digital radio coverage to approach commercial FM coverage by September 2016. An effect of the Government's decision in December 2013 was that the licences which were renewed for seven years under the provisions of the Broadcasting Act 1990 (as amended by the Digital Economy Act 2010 Act) will begin to expire from 2017, before a switchover is possible, and leaving around 60 licenses facing expiration.

In November 2014, the Government therefore consulted on whether the current legislation should be amended to allow further renewal of existing analogue commercial radio licences without re-advertising the affected licences. Our consultation found that there is widespread support for renewal of the affected licences. Although some respondents considered that the sector and listeners could potentially benefit from re-advertisement of these

licences, Government has concluded that the benefits of allowing further renewals outweigh any potential benefits of stations re-competing for licenses.

For this reason, the Government believes it is appropriate to give Ofcom the ability to further renew national and local analogue commercial radio licences under sections 103B (which covers national licences) and 104AA (which covers local licences) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 for a further period of five years. We believe a renewal period of this length will drive momentum in the continued transition to digital radio, and provide commercial radio with the stability it needs to support this transition.

The Government therefore intends to lay a Legislative Reform Order in Parliament as soon as possible to bring forward this change.

The Government is also today publishing its response to the consultation, alongside the full Impact Assessment and findings of an independent study carried out by Value Partners into the advantages and disadvantages of the proposals on which we consulted.

We believe this important change will continue to support the whole of commercial radio and provide the necessary stability for the sector as a whole as it moves towards a digital future.

### **British Indian Ocean Territory: Resettlement**

[HLWS440]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My Honourable Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (James Duddridge) has made the following written Ministerial statement:

My Right Honourable Friend the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr Hugo Swire) informed the House on 10 February 2015 of the next steps in the Government's review of its resettlement policy in the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), following completion, on schedule, of an independent feasibility study. The study found there was not a clear indication of likely demand for resettlement, and costs and liabilities to the UK taxpayer were uncertain and potentially significant. Ministers have now agreed that further work should proceed to address these fundamental uncertainties to a point that a decision on the way ahead is possible.

### **Budapest Convention on Contract for Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterways**

[HLWS437]

**Baroness Kramer:** My Right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Transport (John Hayes), has made the following Ministerial Statement

The Government has decided to opt in to the proposed Council Decision authorising Austria, Belgium and Poland to ratify, or to accede to, the Budapest Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterways (CMNI).

The Budapest Convention was adopted by the Diplomatic Conference organized jointly by the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine and the Danube Commission in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. It entered into force on 1 April 2005, and is intended to harmonize contractual and navigational standards on inland waterways in European countries. The UK is not a contracting party to the Budapest Convention.

The Convention is intended to harmonize contractual and navigational standards on inland waterways in European countries. Article 29 of the Budapest Convention contains provisions on the choice of law by the parties to a contract of carriage falling under the Convention. Those provisions affect the rules laid down in the Rome I Regulation, which came into force on 24 July 2008 and applies in situations involving a conflict of laws and to contractual obligations in civil and commercial matters.

Austria and Poland have on several occasions expressed their interest in becoming Parties to the Convention. Although Belgium ratified the Budapest Convention on 5 August 2008, it was after the adoption and entry into force of Regulation (EC) 593/2008 (the Rome I Regulation) on the law applicable to contractual obligations within the EU. Therefore, the Budapest Convention falls partly under exclusive European Union competence, because of its relationship with the EU regulation and any Member State wishing to join the Budapest Convention is first required to obtain Union authorisation to do so. The proposal is therefore also addressed to Belgium, in order to ensure Union authorisation and to rectify the currently unlawful situation.

The proposal has been published with a legal base falling within Title V of Part Three of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) – Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) matters. The EU currently has competency in this matter; the Government also maintains that the UK is still entitled to use its opt-in under Protocol 21 of the Treaty and in negotiations the Government will continue to seek amendments to the wording of the relevant Recital of the proposed Decision to reflect this. If the Government is unable to succeed, we will revert to laying a Minute Statement to underline the UK's position.

The UK is not a party to the Budapest Convention and has no cross-border exchange of goods within EU inland waterways. The UK has previously indicated, as has the Republic of Ireland, that there is no commercial carriage of goods by inland waterways between the two and so there is no impact on the UK. Nonetheless, it is clearly an important legal instrument for those Member States that do have cross-border exchange of goods within EU inland waterways, since it provides a mechanism for resolving conflicts of law in relation to the contracts associated with the carriage of goods.

Since the provisions are not expected to have any impact on UK businesses or operations involving contracts for the carriage of goods by inland waterways,

and there are no effects on relations with the three Member States seeking authorisation, the Government has chosen to opt-in.

### Companies House: Public Targets

[HLWS431]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** My Rt hon Friend the Minister for Business and Enterprise and Energy (Matthew Hancock) has today made the following statement.

I have set Companies House the following targets for the year 2015/16:

#### *Public Targets*

##### *Digital*

To achieve an average electronic filing target of 85% (received and accepted) by the end of the year

##### *Customer*

Achieve an overall satisfaction score of more than 88% in the Companies House satisfaction Survey

##### *Efficiency*

To reduce the average cost per company, adjusted for inflation and excluding exceptional items, by 10% in 2015/16.

##### *Compliance*

To achieve a monthly compliance rate of 94% for accounts submitted to Companies House

To achieve a monthly compliance rate of 77% for annual returns submitted to Companies House

##### *Service availability*

Our online services are available 99.9% of the time

### Crossrail 2 Safeguarding Consultation Response

[HLWS435]

**Baroness Kramer:** My Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Robert Goodwill) has made the following Ministerial Statement:

I am today publishing a response document summarising the views given during the consultation on updating the Safeguarding Direction for the proposed Crossrail 2 rail project, and providing the Government's response.

The Government has considered the responses to the consultation carefully, and the Secretary of State has decided to issue the safeguarding Direction with changes at Wimbledon, Wandsworth Common, Angel and Soho Square. The updated Direction will come into effect from today.

Crossrail 2 is a proposed new rail line across Central London, running from New Southgate and Tottenham Hale in the north-east to Wimbledon in the south-west. The route passes through the City of Westminster, the London Boroughs of Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney,

Haringey, Islington, Merton, and Wandsworth, and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Safeguarding is the first stage in the planning process. It enables the Secretary of State for Transport to issue a Direction to local planning authorities to protect land needed for long-term infrastructure projects. Safeguarding does not necessarily prevent other developments from taking place, but it ensures that when they do take place the design can accommodate the planned infrastructure.

The response document will be made available on the Department for Transport website. Copies of the response document, the Direction, guidance and associated maps have been made available in the libraries of both Houses.

### ECOFIN

[HLWS448]

**Lord Deighton:** My right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (George Osborne) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

A meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council was held in Brussels on 10 March 2015. Ministers discussed the following items:

#### *Investment Plan for Europe*

The Council agreed a General Approach on the proposal on the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). This will allow the Presidency, on behalf of the Council, to start negotiations with the European Parliament.

#### *Current Legislative Proposals*

The Presidency updated delegations on the state of play of legislative proposals in the field of financial services.

#### *Implementation of the Banking Union*

The Commission informed delegations on the state of play on Banking Union implementation, providing updates on the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD) implementation and the ratification of the Intergovernmental agreement (IGA) on the Single Resolution Fund (SRF).

#### *European Semester: Country reports*

The Commission presented the 27 "Country Reports" published in February.

#### *Implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact*

The Commission set out the main conclusions of the Country Report and In-depth Review exercise as they related to the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP). The Council adopted, through a vote by Eurozone Member States, a recommendation under the excessive deficit procedure (EDP) for France to correct its deficit by 2017.

#### *Other business*

ECOFIN had a short exchange of views regarding the fight against tax avoidance, in relation to the Presidency "Road Map" on fighting Base Erosion and Profit Shifting.

## Employment Support

[HLWS436]

**Lord Freud:** My honourable Friend The Minister for Disabled People (Mark Harper) has made the following Written Statement.

Today I am pleased to announce the outcome of the recent commercial procurement exercise to select providers for the new Specialist Employability Support contracts, the new provision which replaces the Residential Training College contracts.

Funding will be maintained at the current level, but will help more than double the current number of disabled people and comprehensively improve the geographic availability and accessibility of intensive support.

Specialist Employability Support is an innovative new programme that will focus on helping those disabled people who need the most support to either enter work or to move closer to the labour market and engage in further employment related courses or activities.

Specialist Employability Support will offer intensive, specialist support to disabled people, provided by a network of more than seventy specialist organisations throughout the country.

This new provision will ensure that high quality, intensive support is accessible to twice as many people than under current contracts, with the annual number of customers helped increasing from around 800 to up to 1,700. In addition, over the two years of the contract we anticipate that the new programme will deliver around 1,250 job outcomes, up to two thirds of which will lead to sustained employment in the open labour market.

The new programme is designed to forge stronger links with a range of other programmes and will bring together a variety of existing Work Choice and Work Programme providers, many different specialist voluntary organisations and a number of condition-specific specialists.

Specialist Employability Support will be provided through six separate contracts, each providing national coverage to ensure that the customer group has the optimum choice of support.

Four will be 'pan disability' contracts, meaning that support will be provided for people with a wide range of disabilities. Two will be specialist sensory impairment contracts; one focusing on people whose primary disability is a visual impairment, the other on supporting people whose primary disability is a hearing impairment.

The Specialist Employability Support programme features two main types of support:

Specialist Employability Support, which consists of intensive, employability support provision, and;

Specialist Employability Support Start Back, which is a shorter-term provision that will help to prepare disabled people for other support provided by DWP or other organisations. All six Specialist Employability Support providers will offer both support options.

The six successful bidders were:

Pan disability  
Shaw Trust  
Remploy  
Kennedy Scott  
Steps to Employment  
Visual impairment  
Royal National College for the Blind  
Hearing impairment  
Doncaster Deaf Trust -

The new provision will go live on 1 September 2015.

There was strong competition for each of the contracts on offer, with bids showing real innovation and flexibility. The majority of the current Residential Training Colleges were involved in successful tenders to continue to provide support under the new provision.

DWP has consistently engaged with the existing contractors to prepare them for the tendering process and has developed a range of potential options to support the two Residential Training Colleges currently offering DWP provision who will not be involved in delivery of the new provision.

## Finance Bill 2015

[HLWS439]

**Lord Deighton:** My honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (David Gauke) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Government is today publishing Finance Bill 2015.

In December 2014, the Government published over 250 pages of draft Finance Bill 2015 legislation for technical consultation, meeting its commitment to publish the majority of Finance Bill clauses in draft at least three months ahead of introduction. The final legislation reflects comments received during the consultation process.

The Government has subsequently decided to defer a number of measures previously announced for Finance Bill 2015 to a future Finance Bill, in recognition of the accelerated Parliamentary process that the bill will be subject to. At the same time, a number of priority measures announced at Budget 2015 will be included in the bill. The detail of these changes is set out in the *Overview of Tax Legislation and Rates*, published on 18 March:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/finance-bill-2015-overview-documents-at-budget-2015>

In addition, a number of clauses which had been intended for Finance Bill 2015 have been deferred as a result of discussions with the Opposition in the context of the end-of-Parliament wash up process. These clauses concern:

- A new tax exemption for travel expenses of members of local authorities (announced July 2014);

- A new statutory exemption from income tax for trivial benefits in kind, implementing a recommendation of the Office of Tax Simplification's review of employee benefits and expenses (announced at Budget 2014);
- Simplifying link company requirements for consortium claims under Corporation Tax (announced Autumn Statement 2014);
- Changes to scheme rules for the Enterprise Investment Scheme and Venture Capital Trusts (announced at Budget 2015) - on which draft legislation is being published today and which are subject to EU State aid approval; and
- A separate rate of excise duty for aqua methanol (announced at Budget 2014).

The Government intends that measures deferred to a future bill will be legislated at the earliest opportunity in the new Parliament.

## Foreign Affairs Council

[HLWS447]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My Right Honourable Friend the Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington) has made the following written Ministerial statement:

My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs attended the Foreign Affairs Council on 16 March in Brussels. The Foreign Affairs Council was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini.

Dimitris Avromopoulos, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, was in attendance for the working lunch at the FAC on migration. The General Affairs Council was chaired by the Latvian Presidency. The meetings were held in Brussels.

### *Foreign Affairs Council*

A provisional report of the meeting and Conclusions adopted can be found at:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2015/03/16/>

### *Africa*

Ministers held an in-depth strategic discussion on EU relations with Africa, covering peace, prosperity and partnership with regional African organisations. Ms. Mogherini highlighted the opportunities Africa offered to the EU and was keen to emphasise that there was a story of progress, growth, and economic opportunity. The Foreign Secretary highlighted the need to focus on both challenges and opportunities, highlighting the contribution Africa could make to an EU energy strategy. He also highlighted the economic benefits that could flow from reform, with the prospect of greater inward investment for those countries that provided good governance and stability.

The Council adopted Conclusions on Ebola, noting the scope for the EU and its Member States to keep playing a leading role in supporting co-operation in the affected region to end Ebola and ensuring it did not resurge. The

Council also adopted Conclusions on the Gulf of Guinea Action Plan, and Mali.

### *Libya*

Ministers discussed the situation in Libya and possibilities for EU support in the event of a positive outcome of the UN-led peace talks. Ms. Mogherini stressed the need for urgent consideration of possible EU support once a National Unity Government was established. The Foreign Secretary agreed that the EU needed to be prepared to respond swiftly to the different scenarios, and set out the importance of focusing on the twin-tracks of the political process and counter-terrorism. He also highlighted the need for the EU to focus on working with international partners to stem the flow of irregular migrants and weapons from Libya, and ensuring that Libya's financial assets were safeguarded for the benefit of all Libyans. Other Member States emphasised concerns over the humanitarian situation, irregular migration flows, energy instability and the rise of extremists. Ministers called on the High Representative to prepare policy options, including on possible CSDP activities, ahead of the April FAC. The Commission was also invited to develop a comprehensive strategy for Libya, taking into account the regional context.

### *Migration*

Over lunch, ministers explored how EU foreign policy could contribute to comprehensively tackling Europe's migration challenges. The debate will feed into the preparation of more concrete proposals for decision at one of the next Foreign Affairs Councils.

### *Eastern Partnership*

The FAC discussed preparations for the 4<sup>th</sup> Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga on 21-22 May 2015. The Summit, chaired by European Council President Donald Tusk, will bring EU Heads of State or Government together with those of Eastern partner countries. A meeting between EU Foreign Ministers and their counterparts from the Eastern Partnership countries is scheduled to take place in the margins of the Foreign Affairs Council in April.

### *Other Business*

Hungary raised the situation of Christians in Iraq and passed on a request from the Chaldean Archbishop of Erbil for humanitarian assistance. Luxembourg raised Israel's withholding of tax receipts from the Palestinian Authority.

Ministers agreed without discussion a number of other measures:

- The Council adopted Conclusions on the EU regional strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat
- The Council welcomed the political agreement to conclude the Bosnia-Herzegovina SAA
- The Council approved the EU position for the EU-Ukraine Association Council: The EU agreed the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council would adopt the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda

- The Council established the EU position for the first meeting of the EU-Moldova Association Council, to take place on 16 March 2015 in Brussels
- The Council adopted the EU position for the 11th meeting of the EU-Tunisia Association Council, which will be held on 17 March 2015 in Brussels
- The Council authorised the EU to approve the implementation of the EU-Tunisia Action Plan at the EU-Tunisia Association Council
- The Council extended the mandates of two EU Special Representatives until 31 October 2015:
  - i) EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, Mr Alexander Rondos. A budget of €1.77million was allocated to him for the period between 1 March 2015 and 31 October 2015.
  - ii) EU Special Representative for the Sahel, Mr Michal Reveyrand-de Menthon. €900.000 has been set aside for his activities during the period between 1 March 2015 and 31 October 2015.
- The Council authorised the opening of negotiations for an agreement on cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union in crisis management operations
- The Council extended the mandate of the EU military mission to contribute to the training of Somali security forces
- The Council launched the EU military advisory mission in the Central African Republic
- The Commission pledged €1m to Vanuatu in the wake of Cyclone Pam.

#### *General Affairs Council*

A provisional report of the meeting and Conclusions adopted can be found at:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/gac/2015/03/17/>

The General Affairs Council (GAC) on 17 March focused on: preparation of the European Council on 19 and 20 March 2015; and the European Semester 2015.

#### *Preparation of the March European Council*

The GAC prepared the 19 and 20 March European Council, which the Prime Minister attended. The March European Council agenda covered: Energy Union, including energy security, the internal market and climate security; economic issues including the annual European Semester process; and external relations issues, including Ukraine, Libya and the Eastern Partnership Summit to be held in Latvia in May.

On Energy Union I emphasised the importance of having the right governance system in place. Member States must have flexibility to decarbonise in the most efficient way by choosing their own energy mix and the EU must not impose unnecessary burdens, as was recognised at the 2014 October European Council. I also welcomed the commitment to a technology and innovation strategy, but as set out in the Commission's

communication, this should cover the full range of emerging technologies.

On economic issues, I supported the goal of concluding negotiations on an ambitious, comprehensive and mutually beneficial TTIP agreement by the end of the year. I also emphasised the need to pursue the better regulation agenda and reduce regulatory burdens, especially for SMEs.

#### *European Semester 2015*

The GAC noted the Presidency Synthesis Report and updated Roadmap for the 2015 European Semester for further discussion at the March European Council.

#### *Any Other Business*

Under Any Other Business, the Presidency briefed the Council on a letter it had received from the Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs outlining the intentions of the Government of Iceland in relation to its application to join the EU.

## **House of Lords: Printing and Publishing**

[HLWS449]

**Lord Sewel:** At its meeting on 10 March, the Administration and Works Committee considered a proposal regarding the publishing of documents produced by the House and its committees. The House currently contracts The Stationery Office (TSO) to publish House documents; that contract expires in March 2016.

The Committee agreed that:

- Paper copies of House of Lords documents will continue to be made available to members through the Printed Paper Office (PPO). Although there will be some cosmetic changes in appearance, there will be no change in current Members' entitlement to papers or the documents available.
- Hansard will no longer be posted overnight to Members' external postal addresses. If a Member needs to receive Hansard regularly and is unable to collect it from the PPO or access it online they can ask for copies to be posted using the normal post forwarding arrangements or, exceptionally, the morning after a sitting day.
- The facility for members to subscribe to receive paper copies of House of Lords documents other than Hansard at external postal addresses will be discontinued. Most documents relating to sittings of the House have short publishing deadlines, unpredictable volumes and a very short shelf-life, to the extent that most are already out of date when they are received. All documents are available online and paper copies can still be collected from the PPO. Requests made under special circumstances, such as illness, will be considered sympathetically.
- The Administration will cease external sale of paper copies of House documents, as there is very limited market demand for these.

The Administration will also seek to improve the quality of electronic publications for third parties through better online presentation and delivery. Efforts to realise one of the Administration's strategic tasks, to "exploit developments in ICT, information management and data systems to enable Members and staff to work in more flexible and cost-effective ways", have already been made, including the release of the new House of Lords Business application for iPads (downloaded by searching for Lord business papers in the iTunes store).

Changes to the order paper, House of Lords Business and subscriptions will take effect from the start of the new Parliament; other changes will be introduced incrementally.

### **Independent Medical Expert Group: Triennial Review**

[HLWS441]

**Lord Astor of Hever:** My hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans (Anna Soubry) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am today announcing the start of the Triennial Review of the Independent Medical Expert Group. Triennial reviews are part of the Government's commitment to ensuring that Non Departmental Public bodies continue to have regular independent challenge.

The Review will examine whether there is a continuing need for the Independent Medical Expert Group's function and its form, and whether it should continue to exist at arm's length from Government. Should the review conclude there is a continuing need for the body, it will go on to examine whether the body's control and governance arrangements continue to meet the recognised principles of good corporate governance.

The House will be informed of the outcome of the review, which is expected to be completed in the summer.

### **International Investments**

[HLWS432]

**Baroness Verma:** My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (Edward Davey) has made the following written statement today.

Further to the statement made on 11 June 2014 by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills I would like to inform Parliament that we have agreed, along with the Secretary of State for International Development, to pursue a new pilot joint venture with the UK Green Investment Bank (GIB) to assist in investment of the UK's International Climate Fund (ICF).

GIB has been very successful in mobilising private sector investment into the UK's green infrastructure and economy—since its official launch in autumn 2012, GIB has invested in 42 projects and committed £1.8bn of capital, which will deliver £6.6bn of new infrastructure investment. The projects supported by GIB will, when

complete, save 3.7m tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. At the same time, the Government has ambitious targets for providing support to projects in developing countries that will mitigate climate change or enable communities to adapt to its effects. Developed countries have committed to jointly mobilising US\$100bn of climate finance a year by 2020 for developing countries, from both public and private sources. The UK is playing its part; we have already allocated £3.87bn to the UK's ICF to finance such projects. This also contributes to the Government's 0.7% of GNI aid commitment. Unmitigated climate change will hit the poorest first and hardest.

It is vital that we use public climate finance to catalyse private investment into developing countries. By working with the Green Investment Bank, DECC will be able to draw on its unique mix of investment expertise, commercial discipline and close alignment of green policy objectives to maximise the impact and effectiveness of UK climate finance.

We intend to commit £200m of UK climate finance in the pilot over three years, to invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in developing countries; supporting economic growth, job creation, and development of reliable energy infrastructure. In doing so the pilot aims to demonstrate the commercial viability of low carbon investment and crowding-in of private investment in addition to delivering significant emissions reductions. This will complement the existing portfolio of ICF investments, which work through multilateral development partners, such as the World Bank, as well as direct support to programmes developed and delivered in countries.

This new venture will have no impact on the resources or capital of £3.8bn which we have allocated to GIB for investment in the UK. GIB remains fully committed to helping the UK meet its domestic climate change goals. Indeed, this additional activity should benefit GIB's core UK operations as GIB further builds its global reputation both as an expert in green finance and as a fund manager.

The UK's financial services industry is world renowned, as is our leadership in tackling climate change, and this vehicle brings together these two strengths in a partnership that will enhance the UK's reputation globally.

### **Local Audit**

[HLWS429]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My rt hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Eric Pickles) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today, the final commencement Order of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 was signed off. This means that the residual Audit Commission will close its doors on 31 March, paving the way for local audit appointment within a new, leaner, framework which, whilst it retains the knowledge and expertise of the Commission where it has value, will create more freedom

and flexibility for local public bodies, replacing top-down inspection with local accountability.

Hon. Members will recall that in August 2010, I announced plans to disband the Audit Commission and refocus audit on helping local people hold local public bodies to account for their spending decisions. The new system coming into effect will sweep away the old top-down regime, offering greater responsibility and choice for local councils, replacing central bureaucracy with local democracy, whilst upholding the same high standards of audit.

Whilst this quango was borne of good intentions, local government has changed since the 1980s. The Commission had become a regulator of local government, micro-managing local services and imposing excessive red tape, from Best Value Performance Indicators, to Comprehensive Performance Assessment to Comprehensive Area Assessment. Such box-ticking exercises did not champion the public's interests, as evident by the fact the Audit Commission bullied and cajoled councils into axing weekly rubbish collections in order to meet Whitehall targets set by Labour Ministers.

Despite a slogan of 'protecting the public purse', it wasted public money on ill-advised spending decisions, such as a luxury London hotel to house its chief executive, a best practice audit conference with a string quartet, drinks receptions for its "alumni", fine dining at the most expensive restaurants using corporate credit cards, Board dinners in Oysters Bars (losing the receipt in the process), and hiring lobbyists to "combat the activities of Eric Pickles" (arguably, one of the least successful lobbying campaigns in history).

We therefore abolished the Commission's interfering and ineffective inspection regimes in 2010, and in 2012 the remaining in-house audit contracts were successfully outsourced, saving £250 million over 5 years. The Royal Assent of the Local Audit and Accountability Act in January 2014 put the legal framework in place to finish the job. Our latest estimates for the savings to taxpayers have increased to £1.35 billion over ten years, with councils pocketing the bulk of the savings.

My Department will also this week make the necessary transfer schemes to provide continuity for essential roles in the local audit system. The National Audit Office will set the standards for public audit and take on responsibility for the code of audit practice, with the Financial Reporting Council and professional accountancy bodies monitoring the quality of audit as they already do for the private sector. The recent inspection by PwC into the London Borough of Tower Hamlets illustrates how a private firm can provide robust advice and analysis without fear or favour.

The Cabinet Office will assume responsibility for the National Fraud Initiative, joining up its existing anti-fraud work. Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd is the transitional locally-led body set up to manage the existing audit contracts until they expire ahead of full local appointment of auditors in 2017. This new streamlined regime mirrors the framework already used for the private

sector, whilst maintaining the high standards of public audit.

The localisation of audit is complemented by other transparency reforms to increase local accountability and empower an army of armchair auditors. The Local Government Transparency Code requires councils to place online important local information about spending and decisions; we have introduced a lighter-touch transparency code to smaller local bodies like parish councils so people can access key spending, governance and meeting information; we have changed the law to allow filming and reporting of public council meetings by the press and public; a new common period next year will allow local ratepayers to inspect councils' accounts – a right more powerful than Freedom of Information, and it is our intention to legislate in the next Parliament to allow those local inspection rights to be exercised by members of the press who may not otherwise live or work in the council area.

I am confident that these reforms will protect taxpayers' money and ensure high standards in local government.

## Local Government Update

[HLWS426]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Kris Hopkins) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I would like to update hon. Members with a number of actions by my Department relating to local government.

### *Updating statutory notices for the 21st Century*

Statutory notices are an important way of ensuring that local residents are informed of decisions that affect their property and lives. Public bodies must do more than provide just 'an obscure notice' on the depths of a council website, with local newspapers retaining a key role. Last year, my Department invited bids for innovative approaches to be taken to both protect local newspapers and provide essential information to the public in new ways.

We have now announced almost £1 million of funding for 24 local pilot programmes as part of efforts to help councils bring their public information requirements into line with the modern media. We have backed proposals from both councils and local newspaper groups which embrace new technology and innovation to improve the provision of vital information to the public.

The pilots include collaborations between councils and local media organisations, tests of new technology such as mobile phone applications and social media, and consultations with local people over how they want to receive information.

We are committed to supporting an independent free press, and to ensuring that local taxpayers are better informed about council decisions that affect their lives. We look forward to seeing the results. The pilots will run from March 2015 to the end of August 2015.

*Calling time on inflated golden goodbyes*

My Department has previously sought the views of the local government sector on reforms to the legal minefield that can pressure councils into giving large pay offs to chief executives they want to dismiss.

Slow and costly bureaucracy requires councils to appoint a “designated independent person”, usually a Queen’s Counsel, to review dismissal and disciplinary cases for chief executives. Councils seeking to dismiss a chief executive for misconduct or poor performance have in some cases paid out inflated lump sums to avoid the cost of taking this bureaucratic route. Local government estimates the review process can cost at least £100,000 in legal fees, not counting independent investigation costs and salary for the suspended officer. One previous case cost £420,000 and took 16 months to adjudicate. Ministers believe decisions by full council ensure proper democratic accountability, without the need for a centrally dictated process.

We are laying this week the associated secondary legislation which will reduce the unnecessary and costly bureaucratic process for councils to take decisions about disciplinary matters, including dismissal, of the most senior staff.

They will require such decisions to be taken transparently by Full Council; and when making such a decision, require the council to consider any advice from a panel of independent persons. These are the independent persons appointed for the purposes of the members’ conduct regime under the Localism Act 2011, and, where possible, must be local government electors for the area concerned; there will be restrictions against paying inflated expenses for such advice.

The reforms give councils the power to decide on the best disciplinary process that will deliver value for money for local taxpayers, whilst retaining independent scrutiny and accountability to local people.

My Department will also be shortly be publishing guidance to local government on the use of severance agreements and on ‘off-payroll’ arrangements, reflecting reforms we have introduced at a Civil Service level to protect taxpayers’ interests.

*Protecting local government against cyber threats*

My Department have been working jointly with security experts and local government colleagues to develop guidance for local authority leaders and their teams on cyber resilience. It is very important, as local people increasingly access local service electronically, that they have confidence that their information will be safe and the services they use can be relied upon. We are publishing guidance this week on the steps that local councils should take to build resilience.

*Review of Arms Length Bodies*

We are announcing the start of the Triennial Review of the Valuation Tribunal Service and the Valuation Tribunal for England. The Valuation Tribunal considers appeals from council taxpayers and business ratepayers about the levels of council tax and non-domestic

(business) rates. The Review will examine their role, whether they are operating efficiently, and whether their control and governance arrangements continue to meet the recognised principles of good corporate governance.

*Reforming council tax and business valuation practices*

Following a statutory consultation, my Department has now published its response and associated secondary legislation on curtailing the powers of entry of the Valuation Office Agency, using powers under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. This Government believes that the privacy and rights of homeowners and businesses should be protected and strengthened wherever possible. These reforms include protection from unnecessary and intrusive visits into a taxpayer’s home or business, and introduce a new requirement for consent from a First-Tier Tribunal before any power of entry. It is intended that this will create a considerable road block and check and balance against use of the power.

This action builds on steps we have taken to cancel the last Administration’s plans for a council tax revaluation in England, and terminate the ‘Big Brother’ council tax revaluation database being drawn up by the Valuation Office Agency.

*Cutting red tape on councillors*

Ministers in my Department have agreed with colleagues in the Ministry of Justice to take forward steps to remove the annual fee that many councillors are required to pay to register as data controllers under the Data Protection Act. Instead, local authorities will undertake the notification process itself as part of their local authority-wide registration, and individual councillors will be exempt from the fee. This will remove an effective ‘tax on volunteering’. Ministers have asked officials to draft the necessary secondary legislation in purdah, with a view to laying the amending legislation early in the next Parliament.

I am placing copies of the associated documents in the Library of the House.

## **Logistics Commodities and Services Transformation Programme**

[HLWS446]

**Lord Astor of Hever:** My hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology (Mr Philip Dunne) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

On 23 February 2015, in a Ministerial Written Statement, I informed the House that Leidos had been selected as the preferred bidder for a transformation programme within Logistic Commodities and Services (LCS), part of Defence Equipment and Support.

Contractual negotiations have now been completed, and I am pleased to announce that the Ministry of Defence will shortly be signing a 13 year contract with Leidos to run the procurement and inventory management of commodity items and the storage and distribution elements of LCS. The transformation programme is

expected to deliver financial savings of around £0.5 billion over the life of the contract and involve the TUPE transfer of some 1250 staff. It will bring Defence logistics up to the standard of industry best practice, deliver more efficient and effective processes across the supply chain and enhance the quality of support provided to our Armed Forces.

LCS staff are based at a number of MOD sites across the United Kingdom, but the bulk of the current LCS storage activity in the UK is located at LCS Bicester in Oxfordshire and LCS Donnington in Shropshire. The majority of procurement and inventory management of commodity items is currently undertaken at Abbey Wood, Bristol. It is of course early days and I cannot be definitive on the impact on jobs; it is a matter for Leidos, ultimately, to determine the number of staff necessary to undertake the work. What I can say is we do not foresee any site closures as a direct result of LCS(T).

Team Leidos is a skilled and experienced team of private sector defence and logistic specialist partners with the global expertise to deliver the transformation required. The programme represents a significant financial investment in new facilities (including the investment of around £90 million in the construction of a new defence fulfilment centre next to the existing LCS site at Donnington in Shropshire) and a further £40 million investment in new IT systems to provide the modern and efficient services that the UK Armed Forces need.

### **National DNA Database: Ethics Group Annual Report**

[HLWS444]

**Lord Bates:** I am pleased to announce the publication of the 7<sup>th</sup> annual report of the National DNA Database Ethics Group on 24 March 2015. The Group was established on 25 July 2007 to provide Ministers with independent ethical advice on the operation and practice of the National DNA Database.

I welcome the recommendations made within the report including the need to ensure rigour across DNA methodologies to minimise the risk of error and contamination and the importance of sharing DNA information internationally in order to assist in the apprehension of those that commit crimes across national borders.

The Ethics Group's annual report can be viewed on the website of the National DNA Database Ethics Group and I am arranging for a copy to be placed in the Library the House.

### **Passport Office: Annual Report**

[HLWS443]

**Lord Bates:** My hon Friend the Minister of State for Security and Immigration (James Brokenshire) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Annual Report and Accounts for Her Majesty's Passport Office has been laid before the House today.

On 26 September 2014, the Home Secretary announced that Her Majesty's Passport Office would cease to operate as a separate Agency and would be absorbed into the Home Office on 30 September. These Accounts cover the period from 1 April to 30 September 2014 only.

Copies of the report are available from the Vote Office.

### **Public Data Principles**

[HLWS428]

**Lord Wallace of Saltaire:** My Right Honourable friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Francis Maude) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am laying the attached 'Report on departmental open data commitments and adherence to public data principles for the period between April and June 2014'.

The report is released on a quarterly basis and details progress against our commitment to open up government data.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Report on Departmental Open Data Commitments [QWMS Q1 FINAL - clean (1).docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2015-03-24/HLWS428/>

### **Security and Intelligence Agencies: Contingencies Fund Advance**

[HLWS427]

**Lord Wallace of Saltaire:** My Right Honourable friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Francis Maude) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

My statement of 17 March informed Parliament of the intention to access £66,800,000 from the contingency fund pending Parliamentary approval of the supply estimates 2014-15. Royal Assent of the Supply and Appropriation (Anticipation and Adjustments) Bill has been further delayed therefore the Security and Intelligence Agencies are seeking an additional advance of £42,900,000.

As the Security and Intelligence Agencies are non-Ministerial departments, I am making this statement on behalf of their Accounting Officer, to ensure that Parliament is informed of this advance from the Contingencies Fund.

### **Service Complaints Commissioner: Annual Report**

[HLWS445]

**Lord Astor of Hever:** My hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans (Anna Soubry) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am pleased to lay before Parliament today the Service Complaints Commissioner's annual report for 2014 on the fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Service complaints system.

This is the first report to be published by Nicola Williams as the Service Complaints Commissioner, and covers the work of her office in 2014 under the leadership of her predecessor Dr Susan Atkins. I would like to take this opportunity to echo her praise for the work done by Dr Atkins during her time in post.

The report details those areas where further work is required to make improvements to the way complaints are handled, whilst also recognising the good work that the Services have undertaken during 2014 and the changes that they have made to the way they manage complaints. The continuous improvement approach that the Services have adopted since the complaints system was introduced in 2008 has, year on year, delivered significant changes to how complaints are managed by all those involved in the process. These changes, and those proposed by the Armed Forces (Service Complaints and Financial Assistance) Bill will make the process shorter and quicker, whilst also strengthening oversight and accountability through the powers of the new Service Complaints Ombudsman.

The findings of the report and the recommendations made are now being considered in detail. A formal response to the Commissioner will follow when that work is complete.

### Social Security Advisory Committee

[HLWS430]

**Lord Freud:** Today, I will publish the outcome of the review of the Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC). I am pleased to announce that the government supports the continuation of the Committee in its current form. The Department for Work and Pensions has completed a robust examination of the Committee's functions, delivery arrangements and governance structure. The review was carried out in line with the Cabinet Office's key principles for reviews of Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB). The SSAC is a cost effective advisory NDPB whose functions are integral to improving the quality of policy making and of secondary legislation in the Department for Work and Pensions. I attach a copy of the review report to this statement and will place a copy in the House library.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

SSAC Triennial Review report [2015-03-24 SSAC Triennial Review report FINAL.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2015-03-24/HLWS430/>

### Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committees: Triennial Review

[HLWS442]

**Lord Astor of Hever:** My right hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans (The Rt Hon Mark Francois) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Ministry of Defence is required to review their Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) at least once every three years to ensure that they have regular independent challenge. I am today announcing the Review to examine whether there is a continuing need for the function provided by the Veterans Advisory & Pensions Committees (VAPCs).

The Review will be conducted in two stages. The first stage will examine the key functions of the VAPCs. If the outcome of this stage is that delivery should continue, the second stage of the Review will ensure that the body is operating in line with the recognised principles of good corporate governance.

I will inform the House of the outcome of the review in the summer when it is completed.

### Welfare and Duty of Care in Armed Forces Initial Training: Ofsted Report

[HLWS434]

**Lord Astor of Hever:** My hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans (Anna Soubry) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today Ofsted publish their eighth report on welfare and duty of care in Armed Forces initial training, copies of which I have placed in the Library of the House. Following inspections of eight Armed Forces initial training establishments between September 2014 and January 2015, Ofsted report that recruits and trainees feel safe and that their welfare needs are being broadly met.

The report is, largely, a positive one and emphasises the improvement in many aspects of welfare and duty of care in the establishments inspected; indeed all the locations assessed by Ofsted were judged as 'good' or better, and two, in particular, were rated as 'outstanding'. In a change from previous years Ofsted conducted, for the first time, an ungraded monitoring visit to review the arrangements for welfare and duty of care of phase 1 Reserve recruits. This reflects the growing importance of the Reserves within the armed forces as a whole and paves the way for further Ofsted involvement with Reserve Forces training in future years.

In another development this year, Ofsted conducted visits to each of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force training headquarters. These visits, which did not result in graded judgements, identified strengths in the provision of support and strategic direction for training, as well as identifying specific areas for development and improvement.

Ofsted make a number of recommendations for improvement, particularly in the areas of instructor selection and qualification, site infrastructure and information and data management and analysis.

The Armed Forces remain committed to ensuring that initial training is supportive of the needs of its recruits,

cadets and trainees and this year's Ofsted report provides assurance and recommendations to maintain our commitment to a culture of continuous improvement.

# Written Answers

Tuesday, 24 March 2015

## Academies

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government who owns any profits accrued from academy schools and chains investing their cash reserves. [HL5822]

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the cash reserves held by academy schools and chains can be used for non-educational purposes. [HL5823]

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how parents of children attending academy schools can access details of any cash reserves being held by the school. [HL5824]

**Lord Nash:** Single academies and multi-academy chains retain any surplus they make within the legal entity of the academy trust. Under charity law academy trustees must act in the best interests of the trust and ensure all funds are properly managed and applied to the trust's charitable objects.

Academy trusts must use all of their assets, including their cash reserves, in accordance with their charitable objects as set out in their articles of association. This includes the advancement of education and provision of recreation facilities.

Cash reserves are disclosed in academy trusts' annual accounts which EFA requires trusts to publish on their websites. These accounts are also published by the Department on its school performance tables webpage and are filed at Companies House.

## Asylum: Education

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of education received by children of asylum seekers in the United Kingdom. [HL5790]

**Lord Nash:** Education is a devolved matter. The Department for Education has not made any assessment of the level of education received by children of asylum seekers in the United Kingdom. Parents of children of compulsory school age have a duty to ensure their children receive a full time education suitable to the children's age, ability, aptitude and any special education need the children might have, either by regular attendance at a school or otherwise. Where a child of compulsory school age (including children of asylum seekers) is not registered at a school or receiving an education other than at a school, the relevant local authority has the power to require that parent to satisfy them as to the suitability of

the education being provided for that child. If they are not satisfied then the local authority can require the child to register at a named school.

It is the fundamental responsibility of every school to educate its pupils regardless of their background so that they can achieve their full potential. Our funding system gives local authorities the freedom to allocate extra funds to schools to support pupils whose first language is not English, including children of asylum seekers.

## Asylum: Finance

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what the cost was of assessing applications under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 in each of the last three years. [HL5766]

**Lord Bates:** We are unable to disaggregate the cost of assessing Section 4 applications from the cost of asylum casework generally without incurring disproportionate costs.

## Asylum: LGBT People

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps have been taken to ensure that the new Home Office guidance issued in February, Asylum Policy Instruction: Sexual identity issues in the asylum claim, is implemented by all government representatives. [HL5839]

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps have been taken to improve training to Home Office civil servants on LGBTI asylum issues, particularly so that stereotyping does not appear in interview questions, following the report of the investigation by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, John Vine, into the Home Office's handling of asylum claims made on the grounds of sexual orientation, published in October 2014. [HL5840]

**Lord Bates:** Following publication of the Home Office guidance, a communication was sent to all relevant parts of the Home Office alerting them to it and advising them of its main issues. Subsequently, a communication was issued to the main caseworking areas offering them awareness raising sessions with policy officials to support their understanding of the guidance. Sessions took place in the immigration office at Becket House on 19 March and further sessions are planned around the country in April. Sessions also took place in Harmondsworth and Yarl's Wood in advance of the publication of the guidance. In light of the new instruction, and following the report of the investigation by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, John Vine, into the Home Office's handling of asylum claims made on the

grounds of sexual orientation, an internal review of training needs and training materials will be conducted during April and May.

Within the existing 5-week mandatory Foundation Training Programme for all new asylum decision makers, a 1-day module provides skills on handling asylum applications submitted on the grounds of sexual orientation. This helps trainees to interview people sensitively and effectively, identify effective and ineffective questions, use country of origin information effectively, make fair and defensible decisions and identify what may constitute persecution in sexual orientation claims. It is designed to enable decision makers to make well informed and legally sound decisions.

This course was designed and first rolled out to asylum decision makers in 2011 and has continued to be updated in line with policy changes.

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps have been taken to ensure that statistical data concerning asylum claims made on grounds of sexual identity are accurately recorded, as recommended by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, John Vine, in his investigation into the Home Office's handling of asylum claims made on the grounds of sexual orientation, published in October 2014; and when such data will be released. [HL5841]

**Lord Bates:** Information on the basis of an asylum claim is not usually recorded but the Home Office has made arrangements to record this data for cases made on the basis of sexuality on our Case Information Database. This process still requires significant further development. Once we are satisfied with the quality of the data we will be in a position to release this.

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people detained in immigration detention centres are pursuing asylum claims based upon their sexual identity; and how many such claims were (1) granted, (2) refused, and (3) overturned on appeal, in each of the last five years. [HL5842]

**Lord Bates:** Information on the basis of an asylum claim is not usually recorded, but the Home Office has made arrangements to record this data for cases made on the basis of sexuality on our Case Information Database. This process still requires significant further development: once we are satisfied with the quality of the data we will be in a position to release this, however we will be unable to release the data retrospectively.

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps will be taken to tackle bullying, harassment and abuse of LGBTI people in immigration detention centres, including Harmondsworth and Yarl's Wood, in the light

of the recent Inquiry into the Use of Immigration Detention in the United Kingdom by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Refugees and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Migration, and concerns expressed by the UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group. [HL5843]

**Lord Bates:** We take the welfare of our detainees very seriously and no form of ill-treatment or discrimination is tolerated.

All immigration removal centres have anti-bullying strategies in place. Every detainee receives an individual risk assessment at the point of initial detention which is repeated when the detainee enters the immigration removal centre. The risk assessment is kept under review.

On 9 February 2015 the Home Secretary announced an independent review of welfare in detention, led by Stephen Shaw CBE, which will focus on vulnerable detainees. The review is expected to report in 6 months.

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps will be taken to implement the Supreme Court's recent judgment in *R (JB (Jamaica)) v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2015] UKSC 8; and whether they intend to carry out a fundamental review of those countries designated under section 94(5) of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, in the light of discrimination and violence experienced by LGBTI people in certain countries. [HL5914]

**Lord Bates:** The Government is considering the full implications of the judgment. Any proposals for changes to the designation of countries must be made by order, and will be put to Parliament. We will continue to consider each asylum and human rights claim on its own merits.

## Cancer

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the level of non-medical support available to cancer patients; and what steps they are taking to increase such levels. [HL5614]

**Earl Howe:** The national report of NHS England's 2014 Cancer Patient Experience Survey showed that of those patients who said they needed it:

- 59% said they were definitely given enough care and help from health or social services after leaving hospital;
- 23% said they were to some extent; and
- 18% said they did not get enough care and help.

We know that the number of cancer survivors continues to grow – there are currently around two million people living in the United Kingdom with a cancer diagnosis, and this is projected to increase to four million by 2030.

There are a number of pieces of work set up to address the needs of people living with and beyond cancer.

Macmillan Cancer Support published the first stage of its *Routes from Diagnosis* work in April 2014, developed in conjunction with Public Health England and Monitor Deloitte. A copy of this report has been placed in the Library.

The National Cancer Survivorship Initiative, a multi-agency public sector/third sector partnership, produced a considerable body of evidence and resources for best practice to support the identified needs for people living with and beyond cancer. These were published in March 2013 in the report *Living With and Beyond Cancer – Taking Actions to Improve Outcomes*. A copy of this report has been placed in the Library.

NHS England is now delivering a programme of work in collaboration with Macmillan Cancer Support to incorporate a number of these actions into mainstream commissioning and service provision. This work is formally supported by reference to the Cancer Recovery Package in the recently published Five Year Forward View, which aims to ensure care is coordinated between primary and secondary care so that patients are assessed and care planned appropriately. Living with and beyond cancer is also a key theme for the new independent Cancer Taskforce, which will produce a new cancer strategy in summer 2015.

## Democratic Republic of Congo

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo about the reported imprisonment of members of the Congolese opposition (including parliamentarians), disappearance of human rights activists, harassment of United Nations officials, and killing of journalists there; and what response they have received. [HL5742]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** I refer the noble Lord to my answer of 23 February to the noble Lord Chidgey (HL4967). Officials continue to raise the ongoing detention of protestors with senior members of the Congolese government.

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo about the imprisonment of the Congolese opposition leaders Vano Kiboko, Jean-Bertrand Ewanga and Diomi Ndongala; and what response they have received. [HL5743]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** I refer the noble Lord to my answer of 23 February to the noble Lord Chidgey (HL4967). Officials continue to raise the ongoing detention of protestors with senior members of the Congolese government.

## Driving under Influence

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many deaths in the United Kingdom have resulted from drink driving in each year since 2010. [HL5787]

**Baroness Kramer:** The Department for Transport only holds information on reported personal-injury accidents on public roads (including footways) in Great Britain, which became known to the police.

The table below gives the number of deaths in Great Britain in accidents involving at least one driver with illegal blood alcohol content in each year since 2010.

Year	95% CI lower <sup>2</sup>	Number of deaths <sup>1</sup>	95% CI upper <sup>2</sup>
2010	220	240	260
2011	220	240	250
2012	210	230	250
2013 <sup>3</sup>	230	260	290

1. Estimates are rounded to the nearest ten.

2. Upper and lower range for fatalities based on the 95% confidence interval

3. Figures for 2013 are provisional

These figures are produced from breath tests carried out by the police following accidents and information from coroners in England and Wales and procurators fiscal in Scotland about drivers who died in accidents. Due to complexity of the information from post-mortems and accidents where at least one driver did not stop, there is a considerable uncertainty about precisely which accidents involved drivers who were over the drink drive limit. As a result, the number of deaths is an estimate and the exact figure is unknown.

The figures in the table provide the best estimate of deaths and the upper and lower confidence interval represent the range in which we are 95% confident the exact figure falls.

Years with overlapping confidence intervals do not have statistically significant differences in the number of deaths. Therefore the number of deaths has been broadly the same each year from 2010 onwards.

The figures for 2013 are provisional estimates. Final figures for 2013 will be released in August 2015 alongside a first estimate for 2014.

## Ebola

*Asked by Lord Avebury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the light of the containment of the ebola epidemic in West Africa, they intend to review the ebola screening arrangements at Heathrow. [HL5590]

**Earl Howe:** Screening arrangements at London Heathrow and the other ports remain under constant review.

### Embryos

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Earl Howe on 24 November 2010 (WS 101–2) and the Written Answer by Earl Howe on 10 March (HL5228), what are the reasons provided by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) to account for changes in data over time; whether this primarily reflects epistemological deficiencies, and if so why responsibility for inaccuracy does not therefore arise; and if not, what is the ontological explanation for how information can change over time so as to require reconciliation or correction whilst still remaining correct at the time. [HL5623]

**Earl Howe:** The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised that the changes to data over time are small, reflecting the dynamic nature of the Register, that includes the notification of changes received from clinics and research centres, as well as reconciliation work undertaken by the HFEA's register team.

### Energy Community

*Asked by Lord Bowness*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Baroness Verma on 18 March (HL5568 to HL5572), whether, in view of the Energy Community's aims in respect of enhancing security of supply, attracting investment in power generation and networks, and reducing dependence upon Russian supplies of gas, they consider that the United Kingdom should increase the level of its participation in the various institutions of the Energy Community as it is entitled to do as a participant; and at which meetings the views of the United Kingdom on the issues to be considered by the various institutions and groups of the Energy Community are discussed within the European Union to ensure that the United Kingdom's position is reflected by the European Union representatives at the meetings at which the United Kingdom does not participate. [HL5881]

**Baroness Verma:** The UK agrees that the Energy Community has an important role to play in the energy security of the EU and neighbouring countries and that the Energy Community has been an effective vehicle for encouraging countries in the EU near neighbourhood to align themselves with the EU energy networks.

The UK ensures that it takes all opportunities to influence the direction of EU policy towards the Energy Community. This is normally achieved through contributions to discussions at official-level meetings in

Brussels, where the EU's policy towards the Energy Community is agreed.

### Entry Clearances: Married People

*Asked by Lord Rooker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to announce the result of their reconsideration of the application of Mrs Kiran to join her husband in the United Kingdom as directed by Judge Ford of the First-Tier Tribunal in Birmingham on 5 January under Appeal Number OA/05588/2014. [HL5805]

**Lord Bates:** It is not the policy of the Home Office to comment on the detail of individual applications. However I can confirm that the instructions of the court in this case are being implemented.

### EU Defence Policy

*Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the comment by German defence minister Ursula von der Leyen in an interview with Deutschlandfunk that a European army is "the future"; and what is their assessment of the impact of that comment, together with those by other German leaders and the President of the European Commission, on the credibility of NATO. [HL5754]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We have always been clear that defence is a national, not an EU, responsibility and that there is no prospect of that position changing and therefore no prospect of a European army. The Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), made clear NATO's primacy in European Defence at the December 2013 European Council and we will continue to underline this with EU Partners and Institutions as we look towards the June European Council stocktake on CSDP.

NATO is the bedrock of the UK's defence and a leading instrument of our national security. The NATO Summit in Wales showed that the Alliance is strong and united, reaffirming the centrality of NATO to European and global security.

### Eurostar

*Asked by Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Kramer on 16 March (HL5635), whether their support for Eurostar's plans for new services means that the concerns of the Border Agency have been resolved without requiring passengers to change trains en route. [HL5885]

**Lord Bates:** The UK Border Agency was abolished in March 2013. The Government is supportive of Eurostar's plans for new services between Southern France and London commencing in May 2015 and between Amsterdam and London from December 2016.

The operating model for these new Eurostar services makes provision for a stop at Lille or Brussels to allow for physical security, Schengen exit and UK entry checks to be completed. This was a commercial decision made by Eurostar which is satisfactory in terms of UK border control requirements.

### Fracking

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the advance payment of £100,000 to local communities for every site fracked during exploratory fracking is voluntary or whether it is a condition of a licence being granted. [HL5652]

**Baroness Verma:** The shale gas industry has made a commitment to the Community Engagement Charter, coordinated by its representative body UK Onshore Oil and Gas, which includes a commitment to provide benefits to local communities at the exploration/appraisal stage of a minimum £100,000 per well site where hydraulic fracturing takes place.

The Infrastructure Act 2015 introduced a range of further requirements that must be met before an operator can carry out hydraulic fracturing. Once these provisions come into force, the Government will not issue a hydraulic fracturing consent unless satisfied that a scheme is in place to provide financial or other benefit for the local area.

A Sovereign Wealth Fund would ensure that revenues from shale gas and oil are put to good use. Proposals will be brought forward in the next Parliament.

### GCSE

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the finding by the Open Public Services Network that pupils in some parts of England are not offered certain GCSEs, and the impact that this may have on their job prospects. [HL5757]

**Lord Nash:** As a result of our education reforms thousands more pupils are taking the core academic GCSEs. We want all young people to have access to these rigorous subjects regardless of where they live. Recent GCSE performance tables showed that 90,000 more pupils took the challenging EBacc compared to 2010, an increase of 71% in four years. These are the core subjects most valued by employers and universities.

From 2016, we are replacing the existing 5 A\*-C including English and mathematics headline secondary accountability measure with Progress 8. Focusing on performance across eight qualifications rather than five will incentivise schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and ensure that the progress made by pupils is fully recognised.

### Gripen Aircraft: Brazil

*Asked by Lord Temple-Morris*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what requests for export licences they have received in respect of United Kingdom technology for Gripen aircraft being sold to or built in Brazil. [HL5583]

**Lord Livingston of Parkhead:** We have granted two licences for export to Sweden of components for Gripen where Brazil was identified as one of the ultimate end-users.

### Heathrow Airport

*Asked by Lord Avebury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what were the results of their consultation with Public Health England on how the refurbishment plans for short-term holding facilities at Heathrow might be delivered. [HL5591]

**Earl Howe:** Public Health England (PHE) and the Border Force have agreed arrangements to release accommodation space at London Heathrow in order to provide temporary holding room space for Border Force. These changes do not compromise current screening operations which continue to be delivered through close and effective working between PHE, Border Force and Heathrow Airport Limited.

### Honours

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to strip honours received from individuals who are implicated in the recent child exploitation cases. [HL5633]

**Lord Wallace of Saltaire:** It is possible to rescind an honour on the advice of the Forfeiture Committee and with the approval of the Sovereign. Forfeiture may be considered for holders of awards in civilian or military Orders of Knighthood and for those appointed Knight Bachelor. We cannot comment on whether or not specific cases are being considered for forfeiture. There is no posthumous forfeiture of honours.

### Immigration

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications for (1) entry, and (2) asylum, the United Kingdom has granted on grounds of religious persecution in each of the last five years. [HL5795]

**Lord Bates:** There is no visa route available to apply to enter the UK on grounds of religious persecution, so no UK visas have been issued on these grounds. It is not possible to provide information regarding the number of people who have claimed asylum on the grounds of

religious persecution, as information on the basis of a claim for asylum is not readily accessible.

The information requested in the noble Lord's question could only be obtained through a manual search of individual case files, which would only be achievable at a disproportionate cost.

### **In Vitro Fertilisation**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Earl Howe on 24 February (HL Deb, col 1622) and the Written Answer by Earl Howe on 9 March (HL5132), for how many years the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has been advising them on the drafting of regulations for proposed interventions for mitochondrial disease; what are the reasons for the current delay in the HFEA announcing its proposals for the regulation, monitoring and reporting of mitochondrial donation treatment cycles; whether it is still their view that "further delay would not be doing the right the thing for families who desperately want to have the choice to access these new techniques"; if so, how delays due to the HFEA have already been explained to such families; and whether they will be able to announce publication of the HFEA's proposals for regulation, monitoring and reporting in advance of the next General Election. [HL5620]

**Earl Howe:** The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) is the United Kingdom's national regulator and will apply the mitochondrial donation regulations in practice. It is therefore entirely appropriate, and indeed essential, that the HFEA was consulted on the wording of the draft regulations to ensure that they will work in regulatory practice. The HFEA was consulted on the draft regulations that were published for public consultation in February 2014 and on the revised regulations that took account of the comment received in that consultation that were debated in both Houses of Parliament.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology (Mitochondrial Donation) Regulations 2015 were approved by the House of Commons on 3 February 2015 and by the House of Lords on 24 February 2015. They come in to force on 29 October 2015. It would have been inappropriate for the HFEA to finalise its proposals for the regulation, monitoring and reporting of mitochondrial donation treatment cycles in advance of Parliament's decision.

Outline plans of the HFEA's proposals in this area were discussed at the Authority's 11 March 2015 meeting, which was open to the public to observe. The HFEA has advised that there is no delay. The minutes will be available on the HFEA website in due course.

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government to what extent Council Directive 93/42 EEC of 14 June 1993

concerning medical devices and Directive 98/79 EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 1998 on in vitro diagnostic medical devices applies to items such as IVF laboratory equipment or reagents where there is no intention to place such items on the market; how it is possible for a fertility clinic to obtain CE marking for items that they do not intend to place on the market for the purposes of HFEA licence condition T30; and what consideration is given to the quality, safety and efficacy of in-house products that conform to the highest clinical standards and which demonstrably exceed those of marketed equivalents. [HL5622]

**Earl Howe:** The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has informed us that it has been advised by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) that medical devices manufactured and used within the same healthcare institution without having been transferred to a different legal entity do not come within the scope of the Medical Devices Directives referred to, and do not therefore need to be CE marked.

I have nothing further to add to my previous answer of 20 February 2015, HL4711, regarding HFEA licencing conditions and guidance in relation to the use of CE marked and non-CE marked products.

### **Israel**

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning its recent demolition of a European Union-funded shelter for displaced people on Mount Scopus, in north-east Jerusalem. [HL5769]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities, but have been monitoring developments and are concerned. The Jerusalem municipality has said it demolished the structure because it was constructed on land which had been designated for a national park. We had previously lobbied against the land being redesignated in this manner.

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Israel's nuclear submarine capability. [HL5773]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** In accordance with longstanding convention followed by successive governments, we are not in a position to comment on the detail of intelligence matters.

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what encouragement they will give to Israel to become a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. [HL5774]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We have consistently called on Israel to join the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear state and to agree a full scope Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. Our objective is to achieve a Middle East free from Weapons of Mass Destruction, but realistically this will only be possible when political solutions have been found to the tensions in the region.

### **Lord's Resistance Army**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in bringing Joseph Kony and the leaders of the Lord's Resistance Army to justice. [HL5741]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The UK has consistently promoted a co-ordinated international approach to defeating the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and continues to be active in leading this work in the UN Security Council. The African Union's Regional Task Force continues to play a key role in tackling the LRA threat on the ground.

The LRA has been weakened, but remains a threat. It numbers approximately 250 fighters who are scattered between the Central African Republic, the Sudans and the Democratic Republic of Congo. A notable recent success was the capture in January of Dominic Ongwen, allegedly a senior commander in the LRA. Mr Ongwen has been transferred to the International Criminal Court to face charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

### **Mediterranean Sea**

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many vessels, aircraft and drones are available for Operation Triton; and what assessment they have made of their adequacy to cope with current flows of migrants. [HL5803]

**Lord Bates:** Frontex has recently reported that the technical resources provided by the Member States to Operation Triton include: 2 Fixed Wing Aircraft, 1 Helicopter, 2 Open Shore Patrol Vessels, 6 Coastal Patrol Vessels and 1 Coast Patrol Boat. We understand that this provision of technical resource fully meets the request made to Frontex for assistance by Italy, the host state of this Operation.

To date, Operation Triton has intercepted thousands of migrants in the Central Mediterranean, both directly and through cooperation with Italy's national search and rescue efforts, bringing those intercepted safely to the EU. While the UK is not able to join Frontex, we continue to support Operation Triton through the deployment of UK experts. To date we have met all Frontex requests, and made clear our willingness to consider any further requests for support of this kind.

The recent deaths in the Mediterranean are a further tragic reminder of the great risks migrants take when they

attempt the perilous journey to reach Europe across the Mediterranean. Like our counterparts across the European Union, the UK wishes to find the best way to prevent tragedies of this kind. Unfortunately, in the open sea, no amount of vessels and surveillance can ensure a safe passage.

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to discuss with UNICEF the content of its recent statement on the risks to children who attempt to cross the Mediterranean in order to reach Europe. [HL5804]

**Lord Bates:** The Government is determined to do all it can with international partners, including UN agencies, to reduce the flow of illegal migrants attempting these perilous crossings and to combat the organised criminals who are making huge profits by exploiting vulnerable people. The presence of children on these voyages is a matter of particular concern.

We are taking action at a national and international level to find sustainable solutions, for example through regional protection initiatives and the new Khartoum Process, a joint EU and African Union initiative supporting dialogue and concrete cooperation to tackle people smuggling and human trafficking in the Horn of Africa, including measures to address the abuse and exploitation of children and other vulnerable migrants.

The Government also welcomes joint EU efforts to provide concrete support to Italy to assist that country in meeting its responsibilities towards those arriving on its shores, and the EU's intention to enhance efforts to address the root causes of the situation under its forthcoming European Agenda on Migration.

### **Mesothelioma**

*Asked by Lord Wigley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their latest estimate of the expected deaths from mesothelioma over the next 25 years. [HL5853]

**Lord Freud:** Based on the latest projections of annual mesothelioma deaths by the Health and Safety Executive, the best estimate is that there will be around 53,000 mesothelioma deaths in Great Britain over the 25-year period 2013-2037.

The statistical model used suggests an uncertainty range of 49,000 to 58,000 deaths on that estimate. However, the true uncertainty range may be wider as longer-range predictions are reliant on assumptions about asbestos exposures that cannot currently be fully validated.

### **Middle East**

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning deaths and injuries in Gaza since August 2014 from explosive remnants of war (ERW);

and what plans the international community has to deal with ERW. [HL5770]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We are aware of the UN Mine Action Service's reporting that since the ceasefire on 26 August 2014, 46 people have been reported injured and 10 killed as a consequence of explosive remnants of war (ERW). The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) is a crucial service provider to the Gazan population. More than 1,000 UNRWA teachers across the Gaza Strip have been trained to educate students about the dangers of ERW. While we have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, it is important to note that UK support is helping UNRWA to conduct its work on ERW. The UK is the third biggest donor to UNRWA's General Fund, contributing £107 million between 2011 and 2015.

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with the government of Israel concerning the Palestinian children killed by live ammunition in 2014; and how many of the soldiers responsible have been charged. [HL5771]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We regularly raise the issue of excessive use of force with the Israeli government and security figures. Our Ambassador in Tel Aviv raised his concern over the high number of Palestinian civilian fatalities, including of children, with the Israeli Attorney General (AG) on 19 January. He said the UK wanted to see rigorous investigations into these incidents. Israeli authorities have told us that self-defence and a more challenging security environment were part of the explanation for the increase in fatalities. A number of investigations are pending. We are aware of one case - the Betunia case in which two Palestinian teenagers were shot on 15 May - in which the AG's investigation had led to the prosecution of those responsible. We continue to monitor developments in this and other cases.

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Israeli Peace Initiative; and what action, if any, they will take to promote it. [HL5772]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We are aware of the Israeli Peace Initiative and support the idea of a greater role for regional players in a renewed peace process. We welcome the important role civil society has in generating ideas for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

*Asked by Lord Turnberg*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 13 March (HL5374), what steps they are taking to alert Gazan citizens of the need to vacate the area where Hamas are rebuilding tunnels close to the border with Israel. [HL5848]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We have no plans to alert Gazan citizens of the need to vacate areas where

Hamas are rebuilding tunnels. It would be the role of the de facto government in Gaza or the Government of Israel to give a warning if the civilian population were under threat from any military action. International Humanitarian Law requires warring parties to give 'effective advance warning' of attacks that may affect civilian populations.

We stress the importance of protecting the civilian population in accordance with international law with the Government of Israel and we have asked all those with influence to stress the same point to Hamas.

## NATO

*Asked by Lord Kilclooney*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which of the 28 member states of the European Union are not members of NATO; and whether they intend to encourage those member states to join NATO. [HL5726]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** There are 6 Member States of the European Union who are not members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO): Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Malta and Sweden. Of these, all except Cyprus are official NATO Partners, cooperating both through NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace programme.

The UK is committed to NATO's Open Door policy, as enshrined in Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, which provides that any European state in a position to further the principles of the treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area may apply to join NATO. It is for individual States to consider whether they wish to apply for NATO membership, taking into account their own defence and security considerations.

## Nigeria

*Asked by The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the prospects for a free and fair Presidential election in Nigeria in 2015, and (2) progress made by the Nigerian Independent National Electoral Commission towards minimising the possibility of electoral fraud. [HL5761]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The British Government is closely following developments ahead of Nigeria's presidential and gubernatorial elections on 28 March and 11 April respectively. This vote will set Nigeria's course for the next five years and beyond and as Africa's largest democracy its impact will be felt well beyond its borders. It is vital the elections go ahead without any further delay on 28 March. As the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), said on 8 February, the Nigerian people have the right to credible, peaceful and transparent elections. The UK welcomes efforts undertaken to date to this end, including the 14 January 'Abuja Accord' in which political leaders

committed to preventing violence before, during and after the elections. We encourage all parties to respect the result of the vote and to pursue any grievances through the proper channels. We continue to support Nigeria's Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) to deliver the elections. Over 80% of Permanent Voter Cards have now been collected and field tests of the card readers were broadly successful. This is testament to the positive advances that INEC have made, under the leadership of Professor Jega, to enable the successful delivery of the elections.

### Occupational Pensions

*Asked by Lord Stevens of Ludgate*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they or the Pensions Regulator have received about the operation of the Pensions Regulator internet portal for the registration of contacts for the automatic enrolment of employees into workplace pensions, in particular in relation to problems with the login details supplied to employers; and what steps they plan to take to rectify any such problems to enable employers to meet the 1 April deadline for registration. [HL5740]

**Lord Freud:** The Pensions Regulator has received feedback from some small and micro businesses about the operation of the internet portal for automatic enrolment contact detail registration, known as the "nominate a contact" webpage. This feedback suggests that some users are not very familiar with their PAYE reference. The letters currently sent to customers from the Regulator protects customer data by masking the first 3 digits of their PAYE reference with asterisks and some customers are trying to enter the asterisks as part of their PAYE reference which is generating an error message.

The Regulator is fully aware of the issue. To address it, they are updating the website to clarify exactly what to enter and including the full PAYE reference on relevant letters in future so employers have all the details they need in front of them when prompted by the letter to visit the automatic enrolment contact nomination webpage.

### Olympic Games: Brazil

*Asked by Lord Moynihan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are on target to meet the aspirations of UK Sport and the British Olympic Association for Team GB to be the first team from a host Olympic country to improve its performance at a subsequent Olympic Games; and whether they will publish the current median aspirations and expectations for Rio de Janeiro 2016 on a sport-by-sport basis. [HL5811]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** UK Sport believe their ambition is attainable for Team GB to win more Olympic and Paralympic medals at Rio 2016 than at London 2012. Sports have identified athletes with the capability to win

medals and UK Sport is providing the necessary financial and technical support.

UK Sport are implementing well-planned strategies to maximise the possibility of achieving more medals in Rio in 2016 in conjunction with the National Governing Bodies of Sport and system partners including the British Olympic and Paralympic Associations. UK Sport are closely monitoring the progress of all sports and their current insights suggest that the aspirational goal remains possible with progress towards the Paralympic aspiration being particularly encouraging.

UK Sport will formally announce Olympic and Paralympic medal targets in the weeks prior to the Games in Rio.

*Asked by Lord Moynihan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have been involved in discussions to field a women's football team at the 2016 Olympic Games; and whether they have the support of the British Olympic Association to field a women's football team. [HL5903]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** The fielding of GB football teams at future Olympic Games is a matter for the national football authorities and the British Olympic Association.

### Overseas Trade: Iceland

*Asked by Lord Kilclooney*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the United Kingdom has (1) separate trade agreements with Iceland, or (2) trade agreements with Iceland negotiated by the European Union. [HL5727]

**Lord Livingston of Parkhead:** The United Kingdom does not have its own separate trade agreements with Iceland. UK trade relations with Iceland are governed mainly by the 1972 bilateral Free Trade Agreement between Iceland and the EEC, and the agreement on the European Economic Area which entered into force in January 1994.

### Pakistan

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the freedom and safety of Christians to practise their religion in Pakistan; and when they next intend to raise this issue with the government of Pakistan. [HL5793]

**Lord Allen of Kensington:** We remain deeply concerned by the violent persecution of Christians and other religious minorities in Pakistan. On 15 March the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood), joined our High Commissioner in Islamabad, in condemning the most recent attack on Christians in Lahore. The Secretary of

State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), discussed Pakistan's misuse of the blasphemy laws with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in November 2014. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office monitors religious freedom in Pakistan in its annual Human Rights report, published last week. We continue to urge the government of Pakistan to protect the human rights of all its citizens as laid down in the Constitution and in accordance with international standards.

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they give to United Kingdom citizens intending to visit Pakistan concerning freedom of worship, and whether it is safe to visit places of worship in Pakistan. [HL5794]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** Foreign and Commonwealth Office Travel Advice is comprehensive and is regularly updated. This advice includes:

"There is a high threat from terrorism, kidnap and sectarian violence throughout Pakistan. In the aftermath of an attack on a school in Peshawar in December 2014, there is a heightened threat of terrorist attacks, and kidnapping against western nationals in Pakistan. You should be particularly vigilant at this time and take appropriate security precautions. Security forces in Pakistan remain on high alert following recent attacks.....Be vigilant, keep a low profile and vary your routes and timings if you make any regular journeys. Public places and public gatherings are often targeted, including courts and government buildings, hotels, airports, markets, shopping malls, restaurants, educational institutions and religious shrines".

### **Palestinians**

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about the refusal to allow delegations of British parliamentarians to enter Gaza from Israel since 2009; whether similar requests for entry via Egypt were refused in 2014; and what representations they have made for access in such situations. [HL5802]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We do not hold the details of delegations of British parliamentarians that have been refused permission to enter Gaza from Israel since 2009. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises against all travel to Gaza. We therefore do not make representations on behalf of parliamentarians wishing to do so.

Our Embassy in Cairo forwarded a request to the Egyptian authorities for a British aid convoy to access Gaza via the Rafah crossing in 2014, after Egypt changed its policy to only considering applications requested by embassy note verbale. The convoy included one or two parliamentarians. The FCO made clear to the organisers that the visit was at their own risk. The Egyptian

authorities agreed access for a reduced version of the convoy, but this was shortly before the Rafah crossing was closed indefinitely in October. We understand the convoy did not therefore gain access.

### **Poland**

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Poland on behalf of British citizens with claims concerning restitution of property seized during (1) the Nazi, and (2) the Communist, eras. [HL5574]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The Government attaches great importance to supporting the families affected by the Holocaust – including in respect of property restitution and implementation of international declarations. The Government has raised issues relating to Polish law in the area of property restitution with the Polish authorities on a number of occasions including at Ministerial level, by the UK's Special Envoy on Post-Holocaust issues, Sir Andrew Burns, and by our Embassy in Warsaw. The issue of property restitution was last raised with the Polish government in November 2014 during a visit to Poland by the noble Lord Ahmad. We share the hopes of international partners that the government in Poland will revive legislation as soon as possible, and we will continue to encourage them to do so.

We welcome the legislation passed in Poland in March 2014 that is intended to make the longstanding Polish benefit for war veterans and victims of oppression more accessible to eligible veterans and victims living abroad, including Holocaust survivors. Poland's legal system already allows for claims relating to property seized during the Communist era to be pursued in their civil court.

### **Russia**

*Asked by Lord Temple-Morris*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the sanctions in which the United Kingdom is participating against Russia in connection with events in Ukraine. [HL5642]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The UK supports and fully participates in the EU sanctions imposed on Russia for its actions in destabilising eastern Ukraine and illegally annexing Crimea. These measures include listing individuals and entities for travel bans and asset freezes, as well as economic measures such as an arms embargo, capital market restrictions for certain Russian state-owned companies, restrictions on exporting energy technology to Russia and specific bans on investment, tourism services, importing and exporting goods to and from Crimea. A full list of EU sanctions measures can be found on the EU website at: <http://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special->

coverage/eu\_sanctions/index\_en.htm. A copy of the current EU sanctions is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

EU Sanctions [EU Sanctions.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-03-11/HL5642>

*Asked by Lord Temple-Morris*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost to the United Kingdom of participation in European Union and other sanctions against Russia in connection with events in Ukraine, both in relation to loss of direct trade and also through Russian reciprocal actions. [HL5643]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** EU sanctions imposed on Russia have been designed to maximise the impact on Russia whilst minimising the impact on the UK and EU. We accept that there will be a cost to our economies both from EU sanctions and Russian retaliatory measures, and have been clear that it should be shared equally across the EU, but there is a much greater cost involved in failing to stand up to Russia's destabilising and illegal aggression.

## Schools

*Asked by Baroness Wolf of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many new (1) state primary, and (2) state secondary, schools were established in England during each of the years from 1997 to 2014 inclusive, excluding schools converting to academy status. [HL5738]

**Lord Nash:** The table below provides the numbers of new state primary and secondary schools between 2010 and 2014. This includes new free schools and new academies but does not include maintained schools that converted to academy status.

Prior to 2010 the records did not capture the information in a way which would allow us to respond fully to the Rt Hon Lady's question. For example, before 2010 the records made no distinction between genuine new provision and mergers or amalgamations of existing schools.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>
2010	5	3
2011	23	8
2012	31	37
2013	46	62
2014	47	63
Total	152	173

## Social Security Benefits

*Asked by Baroness King of Bow*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Supreme Court judgment of 1 March regarding the benefits cap. [HL5870]

**Lord Freud:** We welcome the Supreme Court ruling that the benefit cap is lawful. The Court decided that the benefit cap does not breach the European Convention on Human rights and does not unlawfully discriminate against lone parents.

## Sports: Disability

*Asked by Lord Moynihan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether London 2012 led to increased sponsorship investment and media profile for disability sport in 2013 and 2014; and whether projections for 2015 forecast a further increase in sponsorship for British Paralympic sport. [HL5813]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** DCMS does not hold information on sponsorship investment and media profile for disability sport, but remain committed to delivering a lasting legacy for disability sport. 42 of the National Governing Bodies of Sport which Sport England invests in have specific targets for increasing the number of disabled people who play their sport and Sport England is investing over £170m to get more disabled people playing sport. 1.58 million disabled people aged 16 and over now take part in sport once a week, an increase of 263,900 more disabled people playing sport since we won the bid to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

## Sports: Finance

*Asked by Lord Moynihan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what financial support Olympic and Paralympic sports received from lottery funding and the public from the years 2010 to 2014, and what are the budgeted figures for 2015 and 2016. [HL5812]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** UK Sport are investing the following for Summer and Winter Olympic and Paralympic sports:

2010-11: £81m  
 2011-12: £84.2m  
 2012-13: £83.7m  
 2013-14: £87.7m  
 Budgeted figures  
 2014-15: £94.1m  
 2015-16: £99.9m

Sport England's investment in Olympic and Paralympic sports including golf, rugby union and snowsport:

2010-11: £79.1m

2011-12: £71.6m

2012-13: £73.6m

2013-14: £76.6m

2014-15: £75.4m

Budgeted figures

2015-16: £63.5m

*Asked by Lord Moynihan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government in which Olympic and Paralympic sports there has been a reduction in real terms in funding support from UK Sport since 2012. [HL5815]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** UK Sport makes funding awards on a four year cycle in line with the Olympic and Paralympic calendars, and is currently supporting 46 Summer & Winter Olympic and Paralympic sports. These four year awards are reviewed each year through the Annual Investment Review process which measures sports against an agreed set of annual targets. The 18 sports which have seen a reduction in funding since 2012 are:

Archery

Badminton

Basketball

Goalball

Handball

Judo

Powerlifting

Swimming

Synchronised Swimming

Table Tennis

Visually Impaired Football

Volleyball (indoor, sitting and beach)

Water polo

Wheelchair fencing

Wheelchair basketball

Wrestling

## Syria

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they and their allies will take action to prevent the use of barrel bombs, in particular against civilians, by the Assad administration in Syria. [HL5718]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We are appalled by the Assad regime's indiscriminate use of weapons against the Syrian people. Through the UN, EU and other multilateral fora we have called for an end to these indiscriminate attacks, for a robust response to these violations of

international law and for those responsible to be held to account.

## Tajikistan

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of relations between the United Kingdom and Tajikistan. [HL5798]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We value our relationship with Tajikistan and welcome the strengthening of ties between our two countries created by recent high level exchanges, including the visit last July by Tajik Foreign Minister, Sirojiddin Aslov.

Our priorities for Tajikistan remain promoting good governance and regional stability, and we continue to raise our concerns on human rights and the rule of law at every appropriate opportunity.

## Terrorism: Prosecutions

*Asked by Lord Morris of Aberavon*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Attorney General will ask HM Chief Inspector of the Crown Prosecution Service to carry out an inquiry into the decision not to prosecute for the Arndale Centre plot, and invite him to publish his findings. [HL5599]

**Lord Wallace of Tankerness:** The Attorney General has no plans to ask HM Chief Inspector of the Crown Prosecution Service to carry out an inquiry into the decision not to prosecute for the Arndale Centre plot. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) concluded that there was insufficient evidence that was admissible in a criminal court in this jurisdiction to afford a realistic prospect of conviction. The Attorney General has no reason to doubt the CPS's conclusion.

## Ukraine

*Asked by Lord Moonie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what contingency plans they have to evacuate United Kingdom nationals from Ukraine; and when any such plans were last updated. [HL5577]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** Our Embassy in Kyiv has a Crisis Management Plan in place to support the possible evacuation of British nationals from Ukraine. The plan was most recently updated on 30 May 2014.

*Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 9 March (HL5328) concerning the supply of 75 armoured vehicles to Ukraine, for what purpose other than military action those vehicles could be used. [HL5752]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The Saxon is a lightly armoured personnel carrier (APC). The information we

have received from the Ukraine Ministry of Defence states that the APCs will be used by two battalions operating in the Anti-Terrorist Operation area (ATO), and by airmobile units for reconnaissance and general patrolling. We are aware that the Ukrainians are also considering converting some of the APCs for use as “Medevac vehicles.”

### Use of Immigration Detention Inquiry

*Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government whether they plan to implement the recommendations of the Report of the Inquiry into the Use of Immigration Detention in the United Kingdom. [HL5515]

**Lord Bates:** We will issue a response to the All Party Parliamentary Group’s report of their Inquiry into the Use of Immigration Detention and will ask Stephen Shaw to consider any aspects of the Inquiry’s report that fall within the terms of reference for his independent review of the welfare of those held in immigration detention.

### Wind Power: Seas and Oceans

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what are the locations of sea-based wind turbines in the United Kingdom; and how many turbines there are at each location. [HL5792]

**Baroness Verma:** The UK currently has 1,183 turbines (4,043MW) at fully operational offshore windfarms with an additional 284 turbines (1,063MW) at sites that are currently under construction. These turbines are located off the coast of:

	<i>Fully Operational</i>	<i>Under Construction</i>
South West Scotland	60	1
North West England	187	-
North Wales	55	160
South East England	130	15
Thames Estuary	315	-
East England	80	-
East Midlands	217	-
North East England	137	-
North East Scotland	2	-
Yorkshire and Humber	0	108

### Written Questions

*Asked by Lord Jopling*

To ask the Leader of the House what discussions she has had with HM Treasury in the light of 12 of the 15

Written Questions awaiting answer on 11 March for more than the target 10 working days being to HM Treasury. [HL5645]

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** I take very seriously my responsibility as Leader of the House to encourage Ministers to be punctual in answering written questions. My office immediately approach departments who have not responded to questions after 10 working days, and remain in contact with them until the questions are answered. This process was followed with HM Treasury for the 12 questions that remained unanswered after 10 working days on 11 March. All of those questions have now been answered. At the end of this Session I will publish data on each department’s promptness in dealing with Questions for Written Answer to allow for proper scrutiny of their performance.

### Written Questions: Government Responses

*Asked by Baroness Gardner of Parkes*

To ask the Leader of the House what guidance she issues to Departments in respect of their providing full answers to questions for written answer, particularly when failure to answer has been followed up. [HL5717]

*Asked by Lord Laird*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government whether their policy is that all Parliamentary Written Questions should be answered in full in all parts. [HL5810]

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** As Leader of the House, I have a particular responsibility to encourage departments to be punctual in answering written questions, but the content of each answer is a matter for the minister concerned. All Ministers are accountable to the House for those answers. That direct accountability is important: that is why Ministers in this House must provide personally signed answers to members.

To inform Ministers in answering questions put to them, the Ministerial Code says that “It is of paramount importance that Ministers give accurate and truthful information to Parliament”. It also makes clear that “Ministers should be as open as possible with Parliament and the public, refusing to provide information only when disclosure would not be in the public interest”. In addition, the longstanding rules of this House on Questions for Written Answer (rules that the House reaffirmed in agreeing to the Procedure Committee’s 5<sup>th</sup> Report of the 2014-15 Session) set out that all answers should be complete and comprehensible.

If any member has particular concerns about a response that they have received that they consider does not adhere to these rules, I would encourage them to raise it with me directly.

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