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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Stowell of Beeston	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office and Department for Transport
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Baroness Altmann	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Whip
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Bridges of Headley	Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change, Wales Office and Whip
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Whip
Lord Dunlop	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Whip
Lord Faulks	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
Lord Freud	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Deputy Chief Whip and Spokesman for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord Maude of Horsham	Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Lord O'Neill of Gatley	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
Baroness Shields	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture Media and Sport
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Verma	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for International Development
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 28 October 2015

Finance Bill 2015

[\[HLWS266\]](#)

Lord O'Neill of Gatley: I have made a statement under Section 19(1)(a) of the Human Rights Act 1998 that, in my view, the provisions of the Finance Bill are compatible with the Convention rights. A copy of the statement has been placed in the Library of the House.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 28 October 2015

Andargachew Tsege

Asked by Lord Jay of Ewelme

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, and to what effect, to secure the release of Andy Tsege from prison in Ethiopia; and what representations they have made to the government of Ethiopia about allowing Mr Tsege's lawyer to travel to that country. [HL2782]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The British Government remains deeply concerned by the continued detention of British national, Andargachew Tsege, in Ethiopia and about his welfare. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs has raised this case with Dr Tedros, the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, on 18 occasions. Most recently on 21 October. He welcomed the improvement in consular access to Mr Tsege, following the Government's intervention, but noted it must be more regular and must include access to a lawyer. Mr Tsege should be given the ability to challenge his detention through due legal process.

Arms Trade: Syria

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have considered a comprehensive mandatory ban on the supply of arms and equipment to all of the combatants in Syria. [HL2727]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We do not consider that a comprehensive mandatory ban on the supply of arms and equipment to all of the combatants in Syria would be advisable. EU-Syria trade embargoes prohibit the exportation of jet fuel, chemical weapons (and precursors) to Syria. EU sanctions have denied many of the regime's pre-war funding streams, limited its supply of non-conventional arms, reduced its access to key resources and increased pressure on Assad from those close to him. UN Security Council Resolution 2170 prohibits the direct or indirect supply, sale, or transfer of arms and equipment to ISIL, Al Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaida. The UK supplies non-lethal goods to the Moderate Opposition to protect civilians and save lives. We assess all export licence applications on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, and have one of the most robust export licensing systems in the world.

Asylum: Voluntary Work

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bates on 5 October (HL2365),

what criteria they use to distinguish between volunteering and voluntary work. [HL2614]

Lord Bates: The legal distinction between an employee and a volunteer is complex given the differences between the types of voluntary work and volunteering activities that individuals can be involved in. The principal difference is that volunteering must not amount to unpaid work or job substitution. In particular: there should be no payment, other than reasonable travel and meals expenditure actually incurred (not an allowance for the same); there should be no contractual obligations on the volunteer; the volunteer is helping a registered voluntary or charitable organisation (or organisation that raises funds for either); the volunteering is for a public sector organisation; and the volunteering is not a substitute for employment (i.e. fulfilling a role that a salaried worker would normally fulfil).

Although it is Home Office policy to support asylum seekers volunteering for charities or public sector organisations; we make it clear that it is the responsibility of any organisation considering recruiting volunteers to ensure that such activity does not constitute voluntary work or employment. Further guidance is available on gov.uk:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handling-applications-for-permission-to-take-employment-instruction>

Community Rehabilitation Companies

Asked by Baroness Corston

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many organisations now running Community Rehabilitation Companies included plans to contract women's centres in the bids for Transforming Rehabilitation contracts; and what steps will be taken if Community Rehabilitation Companies that included such plans in their bids fail to act upon them within a reasonable time. [HL2623]

Asked by Baroness Corston

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are taking steps to monitor whether women's centres have lost funding since the Transforming Rehabilitation programme came into force in February. [HL2626]

Asked by Baroness Corston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that women's centres that are not in Community Rehabilitation Company supply chains do not close due to a lack of funding. [HL2627]

Lord Faulks: The new Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) owners were required to put forward plans to make sure female offenders are properly supported as part of their bids. All eight owners of the 21 CRCs included in their bids organisations that deliver services for women. CRCs are currently in the process of finalising who they wish to commission services from on an ongoing basis. The MoJ robustly manages and

monitors the performance of CRCs, in line with government standards, to make sure they fulfil their contractual commitments to maintain service delivery, reduce reoffending and deliver value for money to the taxpayer. This includes making sure they provide services that meet the particular needs of female offenders.

Conflict, Stability and Security Fund

Asked by Baroness Uddin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund will be allocated for survivors of sexual violence in conflict zones. [HL2719]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Seven million pounds has so far been allocated to Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative activity in 2015-16. We are currently finalising subsequent allocations.

Devolution

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to rename the so-called Sewel Convention in the light of recent events; and if so, what name they plan to give it. [HL2682]

Lord Dunlop: The Government has no plans to rename the Sewel Convention.

East Coast Railway Line

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many unplanned closures there were on the East Coast main line in September. [HL2621]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have been informed by Network Rail that there were twelve unplanned closures on the East Coast main line (including the Moorgate East and Doncaster to Leeds lines) in September.

Energy: Prices

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to amend the Climate Change Act 2008 to alleviate the costs of power for large energy users in the United Kingdom. [HL2775]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The Climate Change Act does not impose specific costs on large energy users in and of itself. Instead, the Act sets up a long term target to reduce emissions across the whole economy. It is for the Government to decide the cost effective way of meeting that target and Government is mindful of the impact of policies on energy intensive users.

For energy intensive sectors, voluntary Climate Change Agreements (CCAs) allow 90% reduction from the

Climate Change Levy (CCL) for electricity in return for signing up to stretching energy efficiency improvement targets agreed with Government. Metallurgical and mineralogical sectors have been exempt from paying the CCL since April 2014. In addition, the Government has paid over £131m in compensation to eligible energy intensive industries, for the indirect impacts of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) and Carbon Price Support mechanism on their electricity prices. Further relief measures are currently being considered by the European Commission.

EU Immigration

Asked by Lord Maginnis of Drumglass

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications of the Islamic doctrine of hijrah for the United Kingdom and Europe in the context of increased migration from the Middle East and North Africa; and whether in the light of that assessment increased resources are being given to police and security agencies within the United Kingdom to manage any potential threat. [HL2493]

Lord Bates: We work closely with our European partners to assess the threat we face from terrorism and to respond appropriately. This includes ensuring that appropriate screening processes are in place where necessary with regard to individuals entering and exiting our borders.

A Written Ministerial Statement in December 2013 confirmed that the police counter terrorism resource budget would be at least £564 million for 2014-15. A further Written Ministerial Statement in December 2014 confirmed at least the same amount would be available for 2015-16. In addition, HM Treasury has increased funding in 2015-16 for counter terrorism policing by a further £14.9 million to strengthen our capabilities in response to the increased threat from terrorism.

In the Summer Budget this year, the Chancellor announced that counter terrorism spending will be protected in real terms for the 2016/17 - 2020/21 Spending Review period. This demonstrates the Government's commitment to providing the resources needed to tackle threats from terrorism.

European Court of Justice

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the statement made on 14 October by the President of the European Court of Justice that there is a strong link between the Court and European integration. [HL2764]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The role of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) is defined in Article 19 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) as to "ensure that in the interpretation and application of the Treaties the law is observed". The TEU also provides, in

Article 5, that “the Union shall act only within the limits of the competences conferred on it by Member States in the Treaties to attain the objectives set out therein” and that “competences not conferred upon the Union remain with the Member States”. European law, including the judgments of the CJEU, has direct effect in this country because it has been given that authority by Acts of Parliament.

Food: Production

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what steps they plan to take to promote the Rural Development Programme vocational skills measures in order to enhance the knowledge and skills of food producers. [HL2797]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Vocational skills offers can be delivered under a number of Rural Development Programme schemes. These are either national or have offers tailored to the needs of the local area. Defra publicises its schemes in a variety of ways including through the GOV.UK website. Local organisations such as Local Enterprise Partnerships also promote relevant local offers to their areas.

Genetics

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what progress they have made in meeting their target of collecting and sequencing 100,000 human genomes by 2017. [HL2696]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty’s Government how many people have so far been involved since recruitment into the 100,000 Genomes Project began. [HL2697]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty’s Government when they will report on progress with the 100,000 Genomes Project. [HL2698]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Almost 10,000 people have been involved in the 100,000 Genomes Project so far, with more joining through the NHS Genomic Medicine Centres each day. The Project will sequence 100,000 whole genomes from around 70,000 people. Cancer patients have their genome and the genome of their cancer sequenced. Rare disease patients have their genome sequenced as do two of their blood relatives.

As at 12 October 5,234 whole genomes had been sequenced and added to the data centre. Substantial progress has been made across all aims of the project including the establishment of 11 NHS Genomics Medicine Centres who are actively recruiting participants and the first rare disease patients being diagnosed.

Regular updates on the 100,000 Genomes Project including the total number of genomes sequenced are published on Genomics England’s website:

www.genomicsengland.co.uk

Health Services and Social Services: LGBT People

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what representations they have received regarding the report *Unhealthy Attitudes* published in July by Stonewall, and what steps they propose to take to improve training for health and social care employees about LGBT rights. [HL2771]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Correspondence has been received by Department of Health Ministers accompanying copies of the report *Unhealthy Attitudes*.

On 20 October 2015, NHS Employers, the Lesbian and Gay Foundation and Stonewall presented a paper at NHS England’s Equality and Diversity Council, of which the Department are members, calling for positive and robust leadership to promote LGBT equality in the National Health Service.

No other representations have been received about the report.

Health Education England (HEE) currently hosts training on equality and diversity through the e-learning for healthcare (e-LfH) portal. A review of the content is scheduled to take place next year. The package is available free to all NHS employed staff and allows all users to run reports on the HEE e-LfH Hub demonstrating their use and providing evidence for their clinical professional development.

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what derogations they are seeking from European Technical Standards for interoperability in respect of dimensions of the GC structure gauge for new high-speed lines for station platforms and other incursions into this gauge that might prevent standard GC gauge compatible trains from using HS2. [HL2659]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: It is the intention that the HS2 project will comply with the GC structure gauge requirements for new high speed lines as set out in the current Technical Specification for Interoperability. There is no intention at this stage for a derogation to be sought in relation to this requirement.

Hinkley Point C Power Station

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government which technical approvals are still outstanding in respect of the new Hinkley Point nuclear power plant. [HL2891]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The EPR reactor proposed for use at Hinkley Point C has successfully completed Generic Design Assessment. NNBGenCo has also received a site licence to operate the site, environmental permits and development consent. The UK's independent regulators will continue to regulate Hinkley Point C through construction, operation and decommissioning. Specifically, once safety-related construction activities have started, the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) will use the nuclear site licence to regulate construction by releasing key hold points in line with NNB GenCo's development of the site specific safety case.

Housing Occupancy

Asked by Baroness Gardner of Parkes

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is an authority that has the right to inspect properties with regard to the number of people living in the property; and what power that body has to act. [HL2829]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Local authorities have powers under Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985 to tackle overcrowding. They can inspect a property to determine the number of people who are living there and have powers to take action against landlords of overcrowded properties on a tenant's behalf, such as serve a notice to abate overcrowding.

In addition the Housing Act 2004 introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System which is designed to assess the presence and severity of a range of hazards in the home, such as excess cold, fire, crowding and space. This allows action to be taken by local authorities, such as issuing an improvement notice, against individual properties which are substandard or dangerous.

Immigrants: Bail

Asked by Baroness Hamwee

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications for a bail address under section 4 of the Immigration Act 1999 have been (1) made, (2) granted, and (3) refused, in each of the last five years. [HL2667]

Lord Bates: The table below shows the number of Section 4 Bail accommodation applications received in each of the last five years.

Refused Bail applications shows the number of individuals who have been informed by the Home Office

that suitable accommodation cannot be found, not refused in principle to offer an address.

<i>Application outcome</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>
Number of Bail Applications received	3367	3138	3465	3841	3635
Number of Bail addresses offered	2001	1841	2398	2624	2850
Number of Refused Bail applications	3	0	0	0	0

Israel: Nuclear Weapons

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 24 July (HL1516) concerning the decision of the government of Israel not to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, whether any safeguards are in place to discourage the extension or upgrading of Israel's nuclear deployment capacity. [HL2766]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Israel does have a facility-specific safeguards agreement in place with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), namely "The Agreement between the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Government of Israel and the Government of the United States of America for the Application of Safeguards" (commonly referred to as an INFCIRC 66-type agreement). The agreement applies to a single facility in Israel, which is the Soreq Nuclear Research Reactor. The facility is inspected by the IAEA to ensure that it is not used for weapons purposes. We continue to call on Israel to upgrade this arrangement to a full scope Comprehensive Safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel following the shooting of Maram Abudl-Latif al-Qaddoumi and her father in September. [HL2798]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While our officials in Tel Aviv have not raised these specific cases with the Israeli authorities, we do regularly raise our concerns with them about the manner in which the Israel Defence Forces polices protests, including the use of lethal and non-lethal ammunition. Most recently, an official from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised the issue of the live fire with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 22 October.

Kurds

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, and to what extent, they are (1) engaged in diplomatic contacts with, and (2) providing support to, the Kurdish authorities and groups involved in the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. [HL2907]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK has a strong and well-established relationship with the Kurdistan Region of Northern Iraq. We maintain a Consulate General in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region, and have regular contact with officials from the Kurdistan Regional Government. As part of our wider support to Iraq, we are providing significant military assistance to the Kurdish Peshmerga to help them degrade and defeat ISIL. In addition to air support, we have trained over 2,100 Peshmerga fighters in infantry fighting skills, weapons handling and Counter-Improvised Explosive Device procedures. We have also gifted weapons, non-lethal equipment and airlifted support provided by other partners in the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.

In Syria the situation is more difficult. Kurdish groups are effective against ISIL, and have benefited from US airstrikes against ISIL. But we remain concerned that the Syrian Kurdish authorities maintain links with the Assad regime and the proscribed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), so we are not able to provide material support. UK officials have discussed our concerns with the Democratic Union Party (PYD), the ruling Kurdish authority in Northern Syria and continue to do so.

Lebanon: Electricity

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Lebanon about practical ways in which the United Kingdom can help Lebanon to secure an uninterrupted supply of electricity. [HL2871]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK is committed to promoting stability and prosperity in Lebanon. We call on all parties to resolve the ongoing political deadlock, which is damaging the Lebanese government's ability to provide its people with functioning state institutions and essential public services, including the supply of electricity. The Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) delivered this message in person when he spoke to the Lebanon's Prime Minister during his visit to the country last month.

Lyme Disease

Asked by Lord Condon

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to raise awareness of the challenge of Lyme disease in the light of suggestions that the problem has spread to urban environments. [HL2622]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Public Health England (PHE), alongside various stakeholders including local authorities, undertakes a number of local and national initiatives to raise public awareness of the risks posed by ticks and the illnesses they may carry. The National Institute of Health and Care Excellence and Lyme Disease Action have produced guidance, which is attached, and training modules for general practitioners (GPs), and PHE has a helpline for doctors, as well as running GP training days.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Lyme Disease Guidance [HL2622.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-14/HL2622>

Muhammad Bekzhanov

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Uzbekistan concerning Mr Muhammad Bekzhanou. [HL2825]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Our Embassy in Tashkent raised Mr Begjanov's case with the Government of Uzbekistan last year and, together with our EU colleagues, we have called for his release as part of an annual amnesty granted by the Uzbek authorities. We plan to raise Mr Begjanov's case again with the Uzbek authorities in the coming weeks. More broadly we have raised with the Uzbek authorities our concerns about the use of a provision of Uzbekistan's Criminal Code to impose additional sentences for violation of prison rules such as in the case of Mr Begjanov and various other prisoners.

We have longstanding concerns about the overall human rights situation in Uzbekistan. Our Embassy in Tashkent raises these issues at every appropriate opportunity with the Uzbek authorities and funds projects that support good governance and human rights. We also continue to encourage further progress towards full implementation of Uzbekistan's international human rights commitments.

NHS 111

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their current assessment of the effectiveness of the NHS 111 service. [HL2776]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will review the current performance of the NHS 111 service and take steps in order to ensure that more qualified nurses are used to handle calls from the public. [HL2777]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance they and the NHS 111 service give to qualified nurses about the prioritisation of complex cases and more routine calls, in the light of the targets set for that service. [HL2779]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government has seen successes with the NHS 111 service since its launch, with over a million calls offered to the NHS 111 service in August, of which 93.6% were answered within 60 seconds.

The Government expects all NHS 111 centres to be appropriately staffed to offer people safe care and advice and treatment at all times and has asked NHS England for assurances that the NHS 111 service is doing all it can to help patients. Furthermore the Care Quality Commission has announced it will inspect and rate NHS 111 services by September 2016 to give additional assurances that minimum levels of quality are attained.

New Commissioning Standards for Integrated Urgent Care were published last week by NHS England. Developed jointly with commissioners and providers, the Commissioning Standards will support the transformation of urgent care services; introducing the clinical hub employing a broader range of clinical skills, direct booking into general practitioner appointments, improved clinical governance and staff development amongst other developments. Commissioners will now complete their plans to achieve the Commissioning Standards. A copy is attached.

The commissioning of NHS 111 services is led by local Clinical Commissioning Groups and the safety and effectiveness of NHS 111 services are subject to constant review by local commissioners, monitoring performance and investigating complaints and clinical incidents through existing clinical governance arrangements.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Commissioning Standards [integrtd-urgent-care-comms-standrds-oct15 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-20/HL2776>

NHS 111: East Midlands*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the safety of the NHS 111 service in the East Midlands. [HL2778]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The commissioning of NHS 111 services is led by local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). The safety and effectiveness of NHS 111 services are subject to constant review by commissioners, who monitor performance and investigate complaints and clinical incidents through existing clinical governance arrangements. In addition the services are subject to inspection by the Care Quality Commission.

NHS England advises that it has asked local CCGs to conduct a full investigation into recent serious allegations about the NHS 111 service in the East Midlands. This investigation is being coordinated by North Derbyshire CCG, and NHS England will continue to maintain oversight of progress. The investigation report is due at the beginning of December.

NHS: Finance*Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Individual Funding Requests NHS England received in (1) 2013–14, (2) 2014–15, and (3) 2015–16 to date, and how many of those requests were accepted in each year. [HL2792]

Lord Prior of Brampton: NHS England has advised the following:

– In 2013-14, 1,283 Individual Funding Requests were received, of which 280 were accepted.

– In 2014-15, 1,436 Individual Funding Requests were received of which 535 were accepted.

– In 2015-16 (up to September 2015), 560 Individual Funding Requests were received of which 163 were accepted.

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many requests under the NHS England Standard Operating Procedures for funding requests for clinically critically urgent treatment outside established policy have been received so far in 2015–16, and how many of those requests have been approved. [HL2793]

Lord Prior of Brampton: NHS England has advised that it received 31 clinically critically urgent applications in 2015-16 (April 2015 to September 2015) of which 18 were approved.

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether NHS England will hold a consultation on generic commissioning policies, including for Individual Funding Requests, and if so, when details of that consultation will be published. [HL2794]

Lord Prior of Brampton: NHS England has advised that it is planning to consult early in the new year on the generic commissioning policies, including on Individual Funding Requests. Publication details will be announced following completion of the consultation.

Northern Ireland Government*Asked by Lord Laird*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Dunlop on 19 October (HL2605) concerning the government of the Republic of Ireland and recent talks at Stormont, whether the

government of the Republic of Ireland has been represented in any way at any discussions under section 1 of the 1998 Belfast Agreement. [HL2714]

Lord Dunlop: As noted in response to Written Question HL2605, a commitment always to uphold the three-stranded approach in cross-party talks was contained in the Government's Northern Ireland manifesto at the General Election. The involvement of the Irish Government is in accordance with this established three-stranded approach to Northern Ireland affairs and the 1998 Belfast Agreement.

Nurses: Training

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received from the Council of Deans and Universities UK regarding the abolition of NHS bursaries; and whether they will publish any correspondence received. [HL2672]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the expected quality of placements of student nurses in the NHS in a free market in training places compared to a system of commissioned places funded by bursaries. [HL2673]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had regarding the impact of abolishing NHS student bursaries on the take-up of courses including nursing, midwifery, and for professions allied to health. [HL2674]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Department of Health received joint correspondence from Council of Deans of Health and Universities UK about a number of issues relating to healthcare education funding in England. A copy of the letter is attached.

There have been no discussions with external stakeholders/bodies about the impact of potential changes to the funding of health care education and training in England, nor have any decisions been taken in this regard. The Department will consider all of its expenditure as part of the Spending Review (SR). The Government will announce the outcome of the SR on 25 November 2015.

The Department has not made any formal assessment of the expected quality of placements of student nurses in the National Health Service in a free market in training places compared to a system of commissioned places funded by bursaries.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Healthcare Education Funding Letter [POC953467.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-15/HL2672>

Organised Crime: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of paramilitary-linked organised crime in Northern Ireland. [HL2951]

Lord Dunlop: The assessment of the structure, roles and purpose of paramilitary organisations in Northern Ireland, published on 20 October stated that individual members of paramilitary groups are involved in 'serious criminal activity'. Examples cited in the assessment include: 'large scale smuggling operations, fuel laundering, drug dealing and extortion of local businesses'.

Overseas Trade: China

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the United Kingdom does not have a free trade agreement with China, and what assessment they have made of whether such an agreement would help to boost trade between the United Kingdom and China. [HL2710]

Lord Maude of Horsham: The recent EU Trade Strategy emphasised the EU's engagement in deepening and rebalancing our relationship with China in a mutually beneficial way. The ongoing negotiation of a bilateral investment agreement is the top priority towards this objective and will bring substantial benefits for both the UK and the EU. The UK Government fully supports the ambition of further deepening the EU-China relationship through an FTA. Whilst no formal assessment has yet been made to ascertain the impact of an FTA with China we anticipate the benefits will be significant.

Parades Commission

Asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will require the Northern Ireland Parades Commission to publish information relating to each determination it makes, and if not, why not. [HL2878]

Lord Dunlop: The publication of information relating to determinations made by the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland is an operational matter for the Commission acting independently of Government.

Parking Offences: Fines

Asked by Lord Stone of Blackheath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the statistics provided in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 showing that the London Borough of Merton did not comply with 87 per

cent of the decisions by independent adjudicators regarding the issuing of parking penalty fines, what assessment they have made of (1) the value for money of, and (2) the efficacy of, independent adjudicators who consider and make recommendations on such fines. [HL2649]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: No such assessment has been made. The adjudication services are not administered by central Government. However there is a distinction between recommendations, which do not have to be followed by authorities, and adjudicators' directions following successful appeals, which must be complied with in law.

Patients: Safety

Asked by Lord Mawson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what research is being undertaken to establish the impact of the safeguarding policy for patients on the behaviour of nurses in attending to the needs of patients. [HL2613]

Lord Prior of Brampton: No central research has been commissioned to assess the impact of safeguarding policies for patients on the behaviour of nurses in attending to the needs of patients. Research may have been commissioned at a local level; however, this data is not collected centrally.

The Care Act 2014, which placed adult safeguarding on a statutory footing for the first time, made clear the responsibilities of agencies in relation to adult safeguarding with a greater focus on the prevention of abuse and neglect.

The Department is clear in statutory guidance supporting the Care Act that workers across a wide range of organisations, and not just those in frontline health and social care roles, need to be vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves.

Commissioners and providers will have clear policies and procedures that set out the roles of nurses and all other staff in relation to safeguarding and the training and support that is required in order for them to fulfil those roles.

The Department and NHS England's Compassion in Practice nursing strategy was published in December 2012 and is based around six core values: Care, Compassion, Competence, Communication, Courage, and Commitment. The vision aims to embed these values, known as the 6C's, in all nursing, midwifery and care-giving settings throughout the NHS and social care to improve care for patients. A copy of the strategy is attached and can be found at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/nursingvision/>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Compassion in Practice [compassion-in-practice.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-14/HL2613>

Pets: Sales

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prevent the sale of exotic animals as pets in the United Kingdom. [HL2772]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Existing legislation including the Pet Animals Act 1951, which regulates animals sold as pets, and the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which makes it an offence to fail to protect the welfare of animals, provide a number of important safeguards for exotic animals sold as pets. Defra is currently reviewing legislation on licensing animal activities, including the 1951 Act, and will shortly be consulting publicly on a set of proposals to make the licensing system more effective.

Police: Finance

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the specific assessments made in the five-factor simplified model for assessing the need for police funding; and what evidence there is that that model is the best way to assess such funding needs. [HL2629]

Lord Bates: The simplified model is based on an understanding of the drivers of crime and police demand and uses objective indicators based on demographic, socio-economic and environmental factors to determine force level allocations.

The simplified model is based on three broad elements that, while not themselves drivers of individual criminal activity, correlate highly and strongly with long term patterns of crime and overall police demand: • population levels; • the underlying characteristics of a local population; and • the environmental characteristics of police force areas

The Government has assessed the simplified model against five guiding principles – robustness, stability, transparency, incentives and future proofing – and has concluded that it meets those principles.

Public consultation on the model has now closed and we received over 1,700 responses. We are refining our proposed model in light of this feedback and are engaging further with Police and Crime Commissioners and forces as part of this process.

Probation

Asked by Baroness Corston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the accuracy in practice of the Weighted Annual Volumes estimated for each contract package area in order to develop contracts for the Transforming Rehabilitation programme. [HL2624]

Lord Faulks: The Weighted Annual Volume (WAV) was not estimated. Flat projections were made for each contract package area and made available to bidders for

the purposes of bid evaluation. The contracts held with Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) include a payment mechanism which accounts for changes in volumes (paying providers more if volumes increase, and less if volumes decrease). This was communicated to providers throughout the bidding and competition process.

Railways: Electrification

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the new contractor for rail electrification schemes in the North West will be appointed, and what is the timetable for carrying out and completing each of those schemes. [HL2628]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Network Rail is working through the contract details to complete contract award on the North West Electrification Schemes. This programme forms part of the delivery review being undertaken by the new Chairman of Network Rail, Sir Peter Hendy. Contract award is expected before the end of 2015. Interim arrangements are in place to ensure that progress on these important schemes continues.

Right to Buy Scheme

Asked by Baroness Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many homes sold under the Right to Buy scheme since 2000 have been replaced; and whether they will place the figures for each year since 2000 in the Library of the House. [HL2739]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: In 2012, the Coalition Government reinvigorated the Right to Buy scheme, increasing maximum discounts to realistic levels and for the first time ever, introduced a requirement to replace every additional sale nationally with a replacement property.

In the first year (2012/13) following the reinvigoration of Right to Buy by the last Government, there were 3,054 additional homes sold. By the end of Q1 2015/16 there were 3,644 new starts and acquisitions. Councils have three years to replace the additional homes sold.

Right to Buy sales by Local Authority (Table 691) and Local Authority starts and acquisitions (Table 693) can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table 691 LA right to buy sales [Copy of 1516Q1_LT_691.xlsx]

Table 693 LA housing starts and acquisitions [Copy of 1516Q1_LT_693.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-19/HL2739>

Right to Buy Scheme: Housing Associations

Asked by Lord Dear

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether a Community Land Trust under the proposed Right to Buy scheme is required to sell one of the houses it owns if it is unable to provide an alternative from (1) its existing stock, (2) its newly built stock, (3) the stock it will build in the future or (4) the stock of another housing association. [HL2728]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Under the voluntary agreement with the National Housing Federation, there would be a presumption that housing associations would sell the tenant the property in which they live, but there would be some broad circumstances where a housing association could exercise discretion to decline a sale. These circumstances include properties held in the Communities Land Trust.

Asked by Baroness Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many housing association tenants are expected to buy their home under the Right to Buy scheme by (1) 2020 and (2) 2025; and whether they will place research on this topic in the Library of the House. [HL2737]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Working with the National Housing Federation, the Government has secured an agreement with housing associations to give their tenants the opportunity to buy their home with an equivalent discount to the Right to Buy. This will deliver the manifesto commitment to extend the benefits of Right to Buy to 1.3 million tenants.

More details will be announced in due course.

Asked by Baroness Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the National Federation of Housing and the Local Government Association regarding funding the right to buy for housing association tenants. [HL2826]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government regularly meets the National Housing Federation and Local Government Association to talk about a number of issues.

Asked by Baroness Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville

To ask Her Majesty's Government what the cost of the right to buy discount for housing association tenants is expected to be each year until 2020; what assessment was carried out on the projected costs of discounts; and whether they will place any such research in the Library of the House. [HL2828]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government has been clear that the sale of high value vacant council housing will pay for the cost of compensating housing associations for the discount, so the Right to Buy will be cost neutral.

Road Traffic Offences: Fines

Asked by Viscount Goschen

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the generation of revenue from penalties is a legitimate objective in the deployment and operation of cameras used to enforce traffic regulations such as those governing the use of bus lanes and yellow box junctions. [HL2658]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Raising revenue is not a legitimate objective for such deployments. The objective of enforcing moving traffic contraventions should be to meet the traffic authority's legal network management duty to secure the expeditious movement of traffic. That is, to secure the efficient use of the road network and the avoidance of congestion. Relevant governing legislation, such as the Traffic Management Act 2004, is not revenue raising legislation.

Saudi Arabia: Capital Punishment

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Saudi Arabia concerning the cases of Dawood Hussein al-Marhoon and Abdullah Hasan al-Zaher. [HL2848]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We are aware of and seriously concerned by the cases of Dawood Hussein al-Marhoon and Abdullah Hasan al-Zaher. We have raised these cases at a senior level in the Government of Saudi Arabia, most recently on 11 October. The UK opposes the death penalty in all circumstances and in every country, especially in cases which do not meet the minimum standards defined by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This includes the execution of a minor and the use of the death penalty for a crime which isn't deemed "the most serious".

Saudi Arabia: Religious Freedom

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of Saudi Arabia's 2014 Penal Law for Crimes of Terrorism and its Financing on religious freedom in that country. [HL2872]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The British Government has been following Saudi Arabia's counter-terrorism and terrorism financing legislation issue closely since it started being implemented on 31 January 2014. There has been no change to the limited level of religious freedom in Saudi Arabia and we are not aware of any persecution of religious groups through this legislation. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office continue to monitor this, including through the annual Human Rights and Democracy report.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the freedom of religious minorities in Saudi Arabia to practise their religion or belief in private. [HL2873]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The British Government strongly supports the right to freedom of religion or belief, which is restricted in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is a Muslim country in which Islamic law is strictly enforced and the public practice of any form of religion other than Islam is illegal. However, the Saudi authorities do accept foreign workers privately practising religions other than Islam. These restrictions on freedom of religion or belief reflect widely-held conservative social values in Saudi society. The Saudi authorities are encouraging reforms but at a pace that is acceptable to its society.

Teachers: Recruitment

Asked by Lord Quirk

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase the number of talented young people entering the teaching profession. [HL2644]

Lord Nash: Teaching is a hugely popular career and there are currently more teachers in England's classrooms than ever before and record levels of top graduates entering the profession.

In order to support recruitment in 2016/17, we have increased postgraduate bursaries, which put a premium on degree class, to attract top graduates in English Baccalaureate subjects including physics, mathematics, chemistry, biology, computing, modern foreign languages and geography. Prestigious scholarships, worth £30,000 for physics and £25,000 for mathematics, chemistry or computing, are also available to talented graduates with a first or 2:1 degree who are passionate about their subject and have the potential to be inspirational teachers. We are also continuing to fund Teach First and their mission to get the best graduates into challenging schools.

We are spending £67 million to recruit an additional 2,500 mathematics and physics teachers and boost the skills of 15,000 existing non-specialist teachers. This package includes new undergraduate courses that provide students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects the option to train to teach alongside their academic studies, and paid internships in teaching to increase opportunities for STEM undergraduates to experience teaching before they commit to it as a career.

We also run a programme of marketing activities to explain the benefits of a career in teaching and attract young people into the profession. This includes communicating with young people via the "Get into Teaching" website, digital advertising and activity on social media. Department officials attend more than 40 graduate recruitment events each year where they meet one-to-one with students, setting out the benefits of a career in teaching.

Teachers: Vacancies

Asked by Lord Quirk

To ask Her Majesty's Government which areas of the country are most at risk of an actual or projected shortage of teachers in schools. [HL2643]

Lord Nash: The government is committed to making teaching an attractive career for talented people, and will continue to support schools recruit and retain the brightest and best teachers. At a national level, our indicators show that the system overall is recruiting and retaining a sufficient number of teachers to meet demand. However, we fully recognise that, as the economy improves, schools face a challenge to recruit teachers, with schools in certain areas, such as coastal and rural areas, often facing greater difficulties.

We are supporting schools through policies that help them to attract and retain good teachers, such as reducing unnecessary workload, tackling poor pupil behaviour, and increasing pay flexibility.

Trade Agreements

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the International Business Advisory Council's statement that implementing the World Trade Organisation's trade facilitation agreement should be a priority for governments. [HL2756]

Lord Maude of Horsham: The Government strongly supports the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on Trade Facilitation and encourages other WTO Members to ratify so that the agreement can enter into force as soon as possible.

Implementation of the Agreement will reduce the costs of cross-border trade, benefitting consumers and business alike. Once implemented, studies suggest the Agreement will add over £70 billion to the global economy. Of this, we expect a benefit to the UK of up to £1bn.

UK Membership of EU

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Parliament will be able to debate and vote on proposals for the renegotiation of the United Kingdom position in the European Union before they are submitted to the European Council. [HL2763]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The British Government has been clear that it will continue to keep Parliament informed on the progress of the renegotiation, including through evidence sessions to the appropriate Committees. Most recently the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Aylesbury (Mr Lidington), gave evidence to the

European Scrutiny Committee on 16 September, and the House of Lords EU Committee on 12 October on this topic. The Government will also ensure that any documents that are subject to Parliamentary scrutiny are deposited in the usual manner.

United Nations

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the UN concerning criticism of the United Kingdom's internal and external policies by UN officials. [HL2767]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The British Government carefully notes all commentary, complimentary and otherwise, from different parts of the UN system and responds in a differentiated way, depending on our assessment of the comments made, and the expertise and mandate of the body or individual concerned, in close coordination with Whitehall departments. We engage all parts of the UN system to ensure that the UK's policies are clearly explained and understood.

Written Questions: Government Responses

Asked by Baroness Hamwee

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total cost of answering written parliamentary questions in 2012–13, 2013–14 and 2014–15. [HL2666]

Lord O'Neill of Gatley: While Her Majesty's Government does not monitor the total costs of all written parliamentary questions, HM Treasury does set a disproportionate cost threshold based on the estimated cost of answering them. This cost was most recently assessed at £164 per written question.

Yemen: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what evidence, if any, they have received about the use of illegal rocket-propelled cluster bombs by Saudi Arabia in Yemen; and whether they have made representations to Saudi Arabia on that subject. [HL2575]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We are aware of recent reports that the Saudi Arabian led Coalition may have used cluster munitions in Yemen. We note that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not yet a state party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, but have encouraged Saudi Arabia to accede to the Convention. The British Government has always been clear that any action taken must be in accordance with International Humanitarian law (IHL). We have raised our concerns with the Saudi Arabian government and the Houthis and have received repeated assurances of their IHL compliance.

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