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**Thursday
13 July 2017**

**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 Evans of Bowes Park	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	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Department for International Development and Treasury Spokesman
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, Northern Ireland Office
Baroness Buscombe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord O'Shaughnessy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health, Whip
Lord Price	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Baroness Sugg	Whip
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office and Women and Equalities Spokesperson
Lord Young of Cookham	Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip and Wales and Scotland Office Spokesperson

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Written Statements

Thursday, 13 July 2017

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

[HLWS46]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Hon. Friend the Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (George Eustice) has today made the following statement:

Agriculture and Fisheries Council will take place on July 17-18 in Brussels.

As the provisional agenda stands, the primary focus for fisheries will be a presentation by the Commission on the state of play of the Common Fisheries Policy and consultation on the fishing opportunities for 2018.

On agriculture, there will be a de-brief on the outcome of the recent trilogue discussions concerning the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on organic production and labelling of organic products.

The Council will also exchange views on modernising and simplifying the Common Agricultural Policy, implementation of the May 2015 Council conclusions, trade-related agricultural issues and wine labelling.

The Estonian Presidency, whose Presidency term commenced on July 1, will present their 6 month Work Programme to the Council.

There are currently eleven items scheduled under 'Any other business':

- A European One Health Action Plan against Antimicrobial Resistance (tabled by the Commission).

- African swine fever: state of play (tabled by the Commission).

- Symposium on the Future of Food in the EU (Brussels, 27 June 2017) (tabled by the Maltese, Slovak and Netherlands delegations).

- The consequences of the mandatory food origin labelling on the internal market (tabled by the Belgian delegation).

- Meeting on Dual Quality of Foodstuffs (Bratislava, 30 May 2017) (tabled by the Slovak delegation).

- Dual quality of foodstuffs – presentation of the latest study (tabled by the Czech delegation).

- Meeting of the Ministers of agriculture of the Visegrad Group countries and Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia (Nadarzyn near Warsaw, 2 June 2017)

(tabled by the Polish delegation).

- Trade practices applied by third countries vis-à-vis EU responsible EU Member States (tabled by the Czech delegation).

- International Ministerial Conference on "GMO free agriculture: a chance for rural development in Central and South Eastern Europe" (Vienna, 9–10 May 2017) (tabled by the Austrian delegation).

- AU-EU Agriculture Ministerial Conference on "Making Sustainable Agriculture a Future for Youth in Africa" (Rome, 2 July 2017) (tabled by the Commission).

- Drought in Portugal (tabled by the Portuguese delegation).

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. The outcome of these negotiations will determine what arrangements apply in relation to EU legislation in future once the UK has left the EU.

Ambulance Response Programme

[HLWS49]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: My Rt hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has made the following Written Statement in the House of Commons:

I am today announcing the publication of the University of Sheffield Report on the Ambulance Response Programme and subsequent recommendations by Sir Bruce Keogh, NHS England's National Medical Director. The report evaluates a series of pilots that I announced to the House in my Written Ministerial Statement of 6 January 2015, intended to support ambulance services in England to maintain and improve clinical outcomes for patients in the face of unprecedented increases in demand. Copies of the report and Sir Bruce's recommendations are attached.

Based on the extensive evidence base detailed in the report, NHS England is proposing a new framework of ambulance performance standards and related operational changes that are focused on patients' clinical needs and will help the service to operate more efficiently. In particular:

- enabling ambulances to dispatch resources much more clearly based on the clinical needs of patients ensuring the consistent delivery of very rapid responses to those who genuinely need them, through putting in place a four tier response time based on the clinical needs of patients;

- introducing specific standards for stroke and heart attack, aimed at ensuring patients start the right treatment in hospital as quickly as possible;

- improving performance management of 'tail' waits by introducing mean and 90 th centile measures; and,

- achieving greater consistency and transparency for less urgent calls by bringing all response standards into a consistent national framework.

These ambulance response times are more stringent than anywhere else in the UK. Moreover, evidence from the pilots suggests that these changes will be beneficial for rural populations, narrowing the gap which currently exists in the time it takes for an ambulance resource to transport patients to hospital.

In my statement in January 2015 I said I would apply the following three tests before extending the Ambulance Response Programme:

- there is clear clinical consensus that the proposed change will be beneficial to patient outcomes as a whole, and will act to reduce overall clinical risk in the system;
- there is evidence from the analysis of existing data and piloting that the proposed change will have the intended benefits, and is safe for patients; and,
- there is an associated increase in operational efficiency. The aim is to reduce the average number of vehicles allocated to each 999 call and the ambulance utilisation rate.

I have accepted Sir Bruce's advice that these tests have been met. I am authorising NHS England to implement the Ambulance Response Programme recommendations in all ambulance services in the England so that patients across the country will benefit from the improvements seen in the pilot ambulance services.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Letter with Sir Bruce Keogh's recommendations [13.7.17 Jeremy Hunt - Ambulance Response Programme letter.pdf]

Report on Ambulance Response Programme [ARPreport_Final.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2017-07-13/HLWS49/>

Aviation Update

[HLWS42]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Chris Grayling), has made the following Ministerial Statement.

In October 2016, the Government selected a new Northwest runway at Heathrow as its preferred scheme for delivering new airport capacity in the South East.

In February a consultation on a draft Airports National Policy Statement was launched, which set out the reasons for this preference, along with the mitigation and compensation measures the government expects the promoter to put in place if planning permission is to be granted.

The consultation closed on 25th May and the work to analyse the over 70,000 responses is progressing well. I would like to thank all of those who contributed their views.

This government is fully committed to realising the benefits that a new Northwest runway at Heathrow would bring, in terms of economic growth, boosting jobs and skills, strengthening domestic links and – critically – increasing and developing our international connectivity as we prepare to leave the European Union.

The timing of the election, in particular the need to re-start a Select Committee inquiry into the draft Airports NPS means we now expect to lay any final NPS in parliament in the first half of 2018, for a vote in the House of Commons.

I will provide a further update to the House after the summer recess on our next steps following analysis of the consultation responses.

Today I am also publishing a response to the consultation held earlier this year on a new night flight regime for Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. I am fully aware that noise is a major concern for those living near these airports, and that night noise is widely regarded as the most disturbing impact of aviation. While advances in new technology mean that aircraft are generally getting quieter, the limits governing night noise at these airports has not kept pace with these developments.

The new rules we are publishing today will encourage the use of quieter aircraft at all three airports by reducing the amount of noise these airports are legally allowed to make, and will give local residents a five year guarantee about the level of noise that they will be exposed to. This decision strikes a balance between managing the impacts on local communities by locking in the benefits offered by recent technological developments, with the economic benefits of night flights.

This decision should be seen as a signal that this government takes this issue very seriously, which is why we expect a ban on scheduled night flights of 6.5 hours at an expanded Heathrow. We will also explore whether there is more we can do – including considering further legislation – to incentivise the industry more generally to invest in the quietest aircraft and operate them in the quietest way.

Strong international links are critical to the future prosperity of our country, with a world-class hub airport and thriving aviation sector central to this. We are committed to realising the economic and social benefits aviation has to offer, while taking seriously the need to balance this with managing the local and environmental impacts of aviation.

EU Exit: July Negotiating Round

[HLWS43]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union (David Davis MP) has made the following written statement in the House of Commons:

Next week the UK's negotiating team will travel to Brussels for the second round of talks, continuing our journey towards a new, deep and special partnership between the UK and the EU.

Today, in advance of those discussions, I am publishing three position papers that the UK negotiating team will discuss with our EU counterparts next week.

1) *Ongoing Union judicial and administrative proceedings*

The UK's departure from the EU will end the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in the UK. However, there will be cases before the CJEU that involve the UK as a party on the day of the UK's withdrawal, which by definition relate to the period

when the UK was a member of the EU. These will need to be resolved satisfactorily as part of a smooth and orderly exit. A similar issue arises for EU administrative procedures involving the UK.

2) *Nuclear safeguards and materials*

The UK will withdraw from EURATOM when it leaves the EU. However, the UK and the EU have a strong mutual interest in continuing to cooperate on civil nuclear matters, harnessing shared expertise and maximising shared interests, for instance in nuclear research and development. As part of our orderly withdrawal and to provide certainty to industry, it is therefore important the negotiating teams work through issues relating to nuclear materials and non-proliferation (safeguards).

3) *Privileges and immunities*

The UK recognises the need for certain privileges and immunities to apply for a limited period after exit, in order to allow the EU a reasonable time in which to wind up its current operations in the UK. Looking ahead to the deep and special partnership, the UK wants to put in place a legally acceptable framework of privileges and immunities that allows for the smooth conduct of relations between the UK and the EU.

In addition to discussing these and other technical withdrawal issues next week, the two negotiating teams will also focus on citizens' rights, the question of a financial settlement, and Northern Ireland and Ireland.

On citizens' rights, the Government's priority remains providing certainty as soon as possible to EU citizens living in the UK, and UK nationals in the EU. To that end, we will use next week's round to review the technical elements of the EU and UK proposals, identifying areas of alignment and those where further work is required by both parties.

On the financial settlement, as set out in the Prime Minister's letter to President Tusk, the Government has been clear that we will work with the EU to determine a fair settlement of the UK's rights and obligations as a departing member state, in accordance with the law and in the spirit of our continuing partnership. The Government recognises that the UK has obligations to the EU, and the EU obligations to the UK, that will survive the UK's withdrawal—and that these need to be resolved.

Finally, in June, I agreed with Michel Barnier to establish a dialogue on Northern Ireland and Ireland, which in recognition of its importance is led by the UK and EU Coordinators. Both parties are committed to the Belfast Agreement, avoiding a return to a hard border, ensuring that nothing is done that jeopardises the peace process, and preserving the Common Travel Area and associated arrangements. Our focus next week will be on discussing how to ensure the preservation of the Common Travel Area, and to restate our shared commitment to the Belfast Agreement.

The position papers published today are available on the Government website, and I have arranged for copies to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The

Government will publish further position papers on other issues in due course, providing more information to business and individuals, and informing our negotiations with the EU. In addition, the Government will publish technical notes shared with the EU, and may agree joint publications with the EU as part of the ongoing negotiations.

Finance Bill

[HLWS47]

Lord Bates: My right honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mel Stride) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Finance Bill introduced in March 2017 provided for a number of changes to tax legislation that were withdrawn from the Bill after the calling of the general election. The then-Financial Secretary to the Treasury confirmed at the point they were withdrawn that there was no policy change and that these provisions would be legislated for at the first opportunity in the new Parliament.

The Government confirms that intention. It expects to introduce a Finance Bill as soon as possible after the summer recess containing the withdrawn provisions. Where policies have been announced as applying from the start of the 2017-18 tax year or other point before the introduction of the forthcoming Finance Bill, there is no change of policy and these dates of application will be retained. Those affected by the provisions should continue to assume that they will apply as originally announced.

The Finance Bill to be introduced will legislate for policies that have already been announced. In the case of some provisions that will apply from a time before the Bill is introduced, technical adjustments and additions to the versions contained in the March Bill will be made on introduction to ensure that they function as intended. To maximise certainty about the exact provisions that will apply, the Government is today publishing updated draft provisions.

The Finance Bill will include legislation for the Making Tax Digital (MTD) programme. Having listened carefully to the concerns raised by the Treasury Select Committee, parliamentarians and stakeholders, the government is announcing policy changes that will be reflected in the legislation to be introduced. Businesses will not be mandated to use the MTD system until April 2019 and then only to meet VAT obligations. This will apply to businesses with turnover above the VAT threshold. Businesses with turnover below the VAT threshold will not be required to use the system but can choose to do so. Businesses will also be able to opt in for other taxes, benefitting from a streamlined, digital experience.

The Government will not widen the scope of MTD beyond VAT before the system has been shown to work well, and not before April 2020 at the earliest. This will ensure that there is time to test the system fully and for digital record keeping to become more widespread

Fiscal Risks Report

[HLWS45]

Lord Bates: My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Elizabeth Truss) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has today published its first Fiscal Risks Report (FRR). The report highlights that although the Government has made significant progress in reducing the deficit, debt remains high leaving the economy and public finances vulnerable in the event of shocks. The FRR fulfils the OBR's legal obligation to publish a statement setting out the main risks to the public finances at least once every two years. It was laid before Parliament earlier today and copies are available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office.

The Government welcomes this first FRR which keeps the UK at the frontier of fiscal practice worldwide. The establishment of the OBR has ensured that policy is made on an unbiased view of future prospects, improving confidence in the fiscal forecasts, and the publication of this report represents a significant further step taken by this Government to enhance fiscal transparency and management. This Government's commitment to fiscal openness was recognised by the IMF in its 2016 Fiscal Transparency Evaluation which found the UK to be "at the forefront of fiscal reporting practices worldwide". The publication of the FRR today addresses one of the recommendations of that evaluation as well as the findings of recent NAO reports on risks to the public finances. The Government will respond formally to the FRR within the next year, as required under the Charter for Budget Responsibility.

Over the past seven years, the Government has taken important steps to reduce the UK's exposure to fiscal risks. The 2008 crisis was a dramatic illustration of the danger of ignoring potential threats to the public finances. Since 2010, the Government has reduced the country's exposure to fiscal risks through cutting the deficit by three-quarters from its post-war high of 9.9% of GDP, whilst protecting public services and delivering improved outcomes across health, education and policing and overseen record levels of employment, with over 2.9 million more people into work. The Government has also delivered far reaching reforms to financial supervision which has significantly reduced the likelihood and impact of financial instability. Today, the Government is announcing a new approval regime for government guarantees and other contingent liabilities representing a further enhancement to the UK's public expenditure control framework which the IMF and other international commentators recognise as being one of the strongest in the world.

Despite this progress, the OBR's report shows that the UK's fiscal position remains vulnerable. The legacy of the great recession remains, with debt forecast to peak this year at almost 90% of GDP – its highest level in 50 years. The unprecedented deficit that the Government inherited in 2010, which the Government has been cutting since

2010, and which saw us spend £4 for every £3 we raised in tax, is the cause of the rapid increase in debt. This report examines a broad spectrum of risks, and illustrates the potential impact on the public finances of a number of these risks materialising at the same time through an innovative "fiscal stress test". Failing to have a credible plan to get the debt down would expose the UK to greater risk, which could have devastating consequences for our public services in the event of a new shock. The report also highlights risks from an ageing society and the erosion of tax bases.

That's why the Government remains determined to learn the lessons of the past and bolster the UK's fiscal resilience. The Government's fiscal rules are designed to guide the public finances back to balance at a pace sensitive to the needs of the economy. The structural deficit must be below 2% of GDP and debt must be falling as a share of GDP by 2020-21. The OBR forecasts that the Government is on track to meet both of its fiscal targets and that debt will start falling as a share of GDP before the end of the decade. It is vitally important that we continue with our plan to get the debt to GDP ratio down to improve our resilience and address the risks highlighted by the report.

The Government is also working to ensure fiscal sustainability over the long-term. The Government is taking important steps to enhance the UK's long-run productivity. Since 2010 there has been over a quarter of a trillion pounds of public and private investment in infrastructure. Looking ahead, the Government is investing more in economic infrastructure, innovation and housing through the £23bn National Productivity Investment Fund by 2021-22. It is also transforming technical education for 16-19 year-olds through the introduction of T-levels, increasing by over 50% the number of hours of training, and including a high-quality 3 month work placement for every student, giving young people the technical skills they need to succeed in the world of work, and businesses the edge they need to compete in the global economy. Stronger growth through raising productivity is the only sustainable way to deliver economic resilience, higher real wages and increased living standards in the long-run.

Pensions

[HLWS48]

Baroness Buscombe: My Right Honourable Friend The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (The Rt. Hon. David Gauke MP) has made the following Written Statement.

In February this year, the Department for Work and Pensions published a Green Paper looking at what more needs to be done to ensure consumer confidence and secure the future of defined benefit (final salary) pensions schemes.

Building on this Green Paper, the Department intends to publish a White Paper later this year which will set out proposed next steps on what reform is needed to support

the sector. It will address the commitments in the Government's manifesto in relation to the regulation and rules governing defined benefit private pensions. The paper will also consider innovative delivery structures, such as consolidation and measures to drive efficiency within the sector.

While the sector is broadly working as intended, the White Paper will consider the need to evolve and adapt the regulatory regime to improve security for members. With more than £1.5 trillion invested in these schemes, people need to have confidence that they are resilient and robustly regulated.

The Government wishes to ensure that the defined benefit pensions system continues to balance the needs of consumers, the schemes themselves and business for the future.

Throughout the Green Paper process the Department has worked closely with a range of external stakeholders to develop sensible policy proposals. We are grateful to those who have contributed to the consultation and it is our strong intention that this collaboration should continue throughout the White Paper process.

United Nations Ocean Conference

[HLWS44]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Life Opportunities (Thérèse Coffey) has today made the following statement

I would like to update the House on the recent United Nations Ocean Conference, held in New York from 5th–9th June. Although I was unable to attend due to the pre-election period Defra's Deputy Director for Marine policy led the United Kingdom delegation. I wish to convey to the House the global importance of the conference and summarise its key outcomes.

The UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development, commonly referred to as SDGs or the UN 2030 Agenda, are a collection of 17 Goals that set the global environment and development agenda from 2016 to 2030. They cut across all areas of Government, from ending poverty and achieving gender equality through to tackling climate change and using resources sustainably.

The Conference was an attempt to galvanise international action on the implementation of SDG 14: *Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development*. This SDG tackles a range of marine issues such as marine pollution and ocean acidification.

It produced two major outcomes: a Call for Action and a registry of over 1300 voluntary commitments made by the global community to support the implementation of SDG14.

I am pleased to report that, through its statement to the conference, the UK Government was able to demonstrate its continued support for the SDG process. We recognised the delivery of SDG 14 has a particular significance for Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries and that we would continue to support the Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme, in developing sustainable ocean economies, alleviating poverty, and mitigating the effects of climate change and environmental threats.

The UK Government statement noted that climate change and ocean acidification continue to be significant threats to the long term health of our oceans. We highlighted the major role the UK played in securing the Paris Agreement and reiterated our commitment to its implementation.

I am also pleased to report that, recognising the need to take action on pollution from land-based sources, including the increasing amount of plastics and micro-plastics, the UK was able to sign up to the UN Environment Clean Seas Campaign.

The expertise of our marine science industry was demonstrated through the successful ocean acidification event led by the UK.

The UK also made four voluntary commitments to support the implementation of SDG14, highlighting our work on Marine Protected Areas, including in the Overseas Territories; marine science; marine litter and the Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme. These can be viewed on the conference website at <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/>

The Call for Action was agreed by consensus at the conference although the United States dissociated itself from the language on the WTO and recalled the US administration position on the Paris Agreement. The Call highlights particular action to be taken on a number of issues including: the need to increase scientific knowledge, prevention of pollution, in particular from plastics; delivering sustainable fisheries and improving access to market for small scale artisanal fisheries in developing countries; concluding negotiations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on fishery subsidies; and encouraging active engagement in the discussions on the development of an international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. The Call for Action is available at <https://oceanconference.un.org/callforaction>

Written Answers

Thursday, 13 July 2017

AWE

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether it is the case that (1) some local residents were evacuated during the fire at the Atomic Weapons Establishment in 2010, (2) the Atomic Weapons Establishment pleaded guilty in 1999 to illegally discharging tritium into the Aldermaston Stream, and (3) the High Court found, in *Blue Circle Industries Plc. v Ministry of Defence*, that plutonium contamination from the Atomic Weapons Establishment damaged a nearby marshland; and if so, whether they intend to review their answer by Earl Howe on 21 March (HL6105) that "the defence nuclear programme has never experienced an incident that posed any risk to the public or the environment". [HL396]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the risks to (1) the public, and (2) the environment, from the radioactive contamination of marshland adjacent to the Atomic Weapons Establishment following flooding in July 1989; and how that assessment has affected current policy. [HL453]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the risks to (1) the public, and (2) the environment, from the illegal discharge of tritium into the Aldermarston Stream from the Atomic Weapons Establishment. [HL454]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the risks to (1) the public, and (2) the environment, from the fire at the Atomic Weapons Establishment in August 2010. [HL455]

Earl Howe: The answer given on 21 March 2017 (HL6105) was in response to a question concerning safety improvements in the defence nuclear weapons programme. The response was in relation to radiological incidents at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), none of which have ever posed any risk to the health of the public or the environment. The incidents raised by the noble Baroness did occur; a small number of residents were evacuated in 2010 as a precautionary measure due to a fire in a non-nuclear area. I can confirm that in none of the incidents cited was it assessed that there was any radiological risk to the public.

The risk of any of these incidents recurring has been greatly reduced due to subsequent improvements to the infrastructure at AWE.

Activity at AWE sites is governed by a number of permits, authorisations, licences and consents for managing waste and discharges to the environment. AWE plc and the Ministry of Defence continuously monitor their compliance and inspections are routinely undertaken by the relevant regulatory authorities, including the Environment Agency.

Bahrain: Prisons

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they have been invited by the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain to provide support and training to improve the administration and conditions of prisons in Bahrain. [HL521]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has been providing a range of technical and practical assistance to the Government of Bahrain since 2012, in support of its reform programme. Any training provided by or on behalf of the Government complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

The technical assistance we have been providing to Bahrain supports the building of effective and accountable institutions, strengthening the rule of law, and police and justice reform. It has included work with the National Institution of Human Rights, the Ministry of Interior Ombudsman, and the Prisoners' and Detainees' Rights Commission.

Bahrain: Technical Assistance

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether, in response to invitations from the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, they are providing any training or assistance for that government; and, if so, in what areas. [HL520]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has been providing a range of technical and practical assistance to the Government of Bahrain since 2012, in support of its reform programme. Any training provided by or on behalf of the Government complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

The technical assistance we have been providing to Bahrain supports the building of effective and accountable institutions, strengthening the rule of law, and police and justice reform. It has included work with the National Institution of Human Rights, the Ministry of Interior Ombudsman, and the Prisoners' and Detainees' Rights Commission.

Buildings: Safety

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they are planning to assess the impact of the Cabinet Office

Cutting Red Tape programme on building safety; if so, what those plans are; and if not, whether they will consider doing so. [HL405]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Cutting Red Tape programme was a series of reviews of regulation and its implementation run jointly by the Cabinet Office and BEIS during the 2015-17 Parliament. Building regulations were relevant to the Cutting Red Tape Review into House Building which was published in February 2017 and focused specifically on new builds. The report did not make recommendations, but reported the findings from consultation with business and other interests, including areas where there might be overlap and duplication between planning conditions and building regulations. The findings of the review helped to inform the Housing White Paper which was published at the same time.

Business: Billing

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many companies and LLPs fulfil the criteria for a "qualifying company" under the Reporting on Payment Practices and Performance Regulations 2017 No. 395, and will therefore be required to report their payment practices and performance. [HL392]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Impact Assessment for these Regulations estimated that 15,200 businesses would be in scope to comply with the payment practices and performance reporting requirement.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what evidence qualifying companies and LLPs will be required to provide to support their reporting under the Reporting on Payment Practices and Performance Regulations 2017 No. 395, and how the Government will verify evidence submitted by relevant companies. [HL393]

Lord Prior of Brampton: A named company Director, or designated member in the case of LLPs, must approve the information being provided for the payment practices and performance reporting requirement. It is a criminal offence to knowingly or recklessly publish information that is false or misleading. The Government will investigate any challenges to the accuracy of the information provided, on a case by case basis.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what are their plans for identifying and investigating misleading, false or deceptive reporting of payment practices and performance by qualifying companies and LLPs as established by the Reporting on Payment Practices and Performance Regulations 2017 No. 395. [HL394]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government will investigate any challenges to the accuracy of the information provided, on a case by case basis.

Anyone who is concerned that a business might not have complied, or may have made a false statement, can raise this by contacting the company directly or by contacting the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy at paymentpracticesreporting@beis.gov.uk.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what are the (1) minimum and (2) maximum level of fines that will be applicable for the reporting of misleading, false or deceptive payment practices and performance as established by the Reporting on Payment Practices and Performance Regulations 2017 No. 395, and what other disciplinary action will be taken or recommended against relevant firms and individual persons. [HL395]

Lord Prior of Brampton: In England and Wales, there is no minimum, and no maximum level of fine which would be due on conviction of reporting misleading, false or deceptive payment practices or performance under the Regulations. This reflects the changes to maximum fines which may be imposed on summary conviction in England and Wales under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. In Scotland and Northern Ireland, fines cannot exceed Level 5 of the Standard Scale. The Government has no plans to take or recommend other disciplinary action against firms or individual persons.

Business: Regulation

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their estimate of the total reduction in regulatory costs on business since 2015; and what is their estimate of the total reduction expected by 2020. [HL408]

Lord Prior of Brampton: In June 2016 the Government reported net savings to business of £885 million from regulatory provisions that counted towards its Business Impact Target during the first year of the 2015-17 Parliament. The Government has not yet published a final report covering the whole of the 2015-17 Parliament.

The Government does not have an estimate of the expected regulatory impact on business for the period between now and 2020.

Business: Urban Areas

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment have they made of the role of business in reviving high streets. [HL262]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The Government recognises the crucial role that business plays in reviving high streets. We established the Future High Street Forum in March 2013, consisting of retailers, investors and developers. The Forum provides joint business and

Government leadership to enable our high streets to adapt and compete in the face of changing consumer and social trends. The Forum will advise the government in the formation and delivery of policies to support high streets and town centres, in the short and longer term.

Central African Republic: Peace Negotiations

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the peace accord between the government of the Central African Republic and 13 armed groups, signed in Rome on 19 June. [HL428]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Her Majesty's Government, welcomes the peace accord, signed on 19 June. However, we remain concerned by continued violence between armed groups in the Central African Republic, which is causing heavy civilian loss of life and significant population displacement, despite the agreement including an immediate cessation of hostilities. We call on all armed group leaders immediately to implement the cessation provisions in the agreement as well as to honour their commitment, without any restriction, to the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process.

Construction: Aggregates

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their estimate of the proportion of construction aggregates that derive from recycled sources; and what assessment they have made of the scope for increasing this figure. [HL368]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Mineral Products Association has produced analysis in regards to recycled aggregates. The report, Mineral Products Industry at a Glance 2016, indicates 28% of aggregates in 2015 came from recycled or secondary sources.

Mineral Planning Authorities in England are responsible for assessing recycled aggregates. When undertaking their Annual Aggregate Assessments they identify the proportion of construction aggregates that derive from recycled sources and estimate the future supply of recycled materials.

Consumers: Protection

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 14 February (HL5241), whether the Consumer Green Paper has been published. [HL332]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government will in due course publish a Green Paper that will examine markets which are not working fairly for consumers.

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Budget Statement on 8 March, and in the light of the Grenfell Tower fire, when they will publish the green paper on protecting consumers; and how they intend to incorporate market surveillance into that green paper. [HL347]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government will in due course publish a Green Paper that will examine markets which are not working fairly for consumers. The content and scope of the Green Paper is under discussion.

D-Day Landings: Anniversaries

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what plans they have to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-Day in 2019. [HL499]

Earl Howe: To ask Her Majesty's Government, 's plans to formally commemorate the 75th Anniversary of D-Day in 2019 have yet to be decided. Elements of Defence routinely support annual local events both in the UK and in France.

Department for Communities and Local Government: Regulation

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the Grenfell Tower disaster, what plans they have to review their one-in, two-out policy for new regulations. [HL406]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government has not yet decided how its better regulation system, including any One-In, Two-Out policy, will operate in this Parliament.

Department for Exiting the European Union: Contracts for Services

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they have a strategy for the outsourcing of services; and, if so, whether they plan to alter this strategy as a result of Brexit. [HL541]

Lord Young of Cookham: The driving principle underpinning the delivery of public services is – and will remain – the best value for money for the public purse. As part of this, we are committed to opening up government procurement and to identifying opportunities for private and voluntary sector involvement in service delivery where these can offer benefits to the taxpayer.

Developing Countries: Health Services

Asked by Lord Crisp

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their assessment of the success of the Department for International Development's Health Partnership Scheme. [HL501]

Lord Bates: The 2016 independent evaluation of the Health Partnership Scheme provided robust evidence that the Scheme contributed to strengthening partnerships; that its projects have strengthened developing country health worker skills and knowledge; and that the approach represents good value for money. The evaluation also finds that the Scheme benefits UK volunteers, who gain new skills and experience which they can take back into the UK health system.

Asked by Lord Crisp

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they are planning to replace the Department for International Development's Health Partnership Scheme; and if so, when the new scheme will start. [HL502]

Lord Bates: DFID is considering plans for future support to health partnerships. Any potential new investment would need to be approved by Ministers.

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether health alliances, such as the Uganda UK Health Alliance and the Zambia UK Health Workforce Alliance, will be covered by any new Health Partnership Scheme. [HL503]

Lord Bates: We recognise the contribution of these two alliances to health partnerships. Eligibility and selection criteria will be considered as part of the design of any future support for health partnerships.

Asked by Lord Crisp

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what plans they have to ensure the continuation of existing health partnerships during the period before the commencement of any new Health Partnership Scheme. [HL504]

Lord Bates: DFID is currently implementing an extension to the existing Health Partnership Scheme. This will allow partnerships to continue while plans for future support are being explored.

Devolution: England

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Young of Cookham concerning an English Parliament (HL4548) whether they will explain why an English Parliament would detract from a strong United Kingdom whilst a Scottish Parliament does not. [HL414]

Lord Young of Cookham: The Government believes in a strong United Kingdom Parliament for a strong United Kingdom. English votes for English laws embeds fairness and balance into Parliament's law making process, strengthening England's voice, just as devolution has strengthened the voices of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland within our Union. We therefore do not believe there is public appetite or need for an English Parliament. English Votes for English Laws ensures English matters are approved by English MPs.

East Africa: Peacekeeping Operations

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what arrangements they have made to ensure that UK deployments in Somalia and South Sudan are fully committed to people-centred peacekeeping and robust implementation of a protection of civilians mandate. [HL440]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK contributes strongly to support both the policy and the delivery of people-centred peacekeeping. The missions supported by British forces in Somalia and South Sudan have a strong focus on the protection of civilians. The important enabling functions carried out by British medics and military engineers on the ground will assist these missions to fulfil this vital task.

As a member of the UN Security Council, the UK has a key role in setting the mandates for peacekeeping missions. Working alongside our partners, we seek to ensure that all missions are mandated to protect civilians where relevant. All new UN peacekeeping missions since 1999 have had a protection of civilians element in their mandate, and for some it is the primary goal. The UK has also been a champion of the use of 'phased mandates' which prioritise the delivery of certain tasks, such as protection of civilians. All capacity building training provided by the Ministry of Defence covers International Humanitarian Law, and the Armed Forces deliver training on gender issues and the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence to more than 7,000 African peacekeepers each year.

Energy

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they have any plans to produce a new Energy White Paper. [HL297]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government has set a clear direction of travel on energy policy, through our legislative framework for reducing carbon emissions, by taking a range of key decisions including on Hinkley Point C and funding for renewable electricity, and by ensuring high levels of security through the capacity market.

Our Clean Growth Plan will set out proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy through the 2020s. We intend to publish that plan when Parliament sits again after summer recess. We are also committed to action to reduce the cost of energy, including tackling unfair practices in the energy market.

Entry Clearances: Nepal

Asked by The Earl of Sandwich

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many Nepalese students applied to undertake further education in the UK in the last two years for which figures are available, and how many were accepted. [HL282]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Information on total sponsored entry clearance visa applications to study by nationality, is published in the quarterly Immigration Statistics Sponsorship tables, (found here: <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2017/list-of-tables#visas>).

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table - C11-C13 Immigration Stats Sponsorship [Table - C11-C13 - Immigration Stats Sponsorship Tables.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-06-29/HL282>

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their assessment of the benefits and costs to the UK of membership of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. [HL447]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) informs and contributes towards better evidence-based policymaking in areas relevant to living and working conditions.

Eurofound is funded from a central EU budget and the UK has not made any additional voluntary financial contributions to the foundation.

Since the EU referendum vote, the UK has continued to participate in Eurofound. Future engagement between the UK and Eurofound will be considered as part of the broader EU exit negotiations.

European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their assessment of the benefits and costs to the UK of

membership of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology. [HL513]

Lord Prior of Brampton: This Government wants the UK to be the go-to place for innovators and investors across the world, and we intend to secure the best possible outcome for the UK research base as we exit the European Union.

We support the objectives of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), which include the creation of links integrating education and entrepreneurship to research to drive innovation.

As my Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister has said, we would welcome an agreement to continue to collaborate with our European partners on major science, research, and technology initiatives. However it is too early to speculate on the UK's future relationship with the EIT.

Whatever happens in the future, the Government is committed to ensuring the UK remains a world leader in international research and innovation.

Fire Resistant Materials

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what measures they are taking to ensure that flame retardant materials used in homes, offices and public spaces both (1) prevent fires, and (2) are non-toxic, (a) in normal use, (b) during fires, and (c) for disposal or recycling at the end of life of items, such as furniture, foam mattresses, electronic goods and building insulation which contain such materials. [HL264]

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether there is any one Government department charged with ensuring that all fire retardant materials are safe and effective at all times. [HL265]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Public safety is a priority for Government. There are a range of measures in place across a number of Government departments to ensure the effectiveness and safety of flame retardant materials.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is responsible for product safety legislation, which requires products to be safe when they are placed on the market.

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has responsibility for ensuring the safety of chemicals, including those used as flame retardants.

The Health and Safety Executive oversees the EU regulations concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals (known as REACH). This has several aims, including providing a high level of protection of human health and the environment from the use of chemicals.

Lead responsibility for the safety and effectiveness of flame retardant chemicals will rest with the Department responsible for any legislation specifying their usage.

Fracking

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they intend to bring forward legislation to (1) treat non-fracking drilling as permitted development, (2) make major shale planning decisions the responsibility of the National Planning Regime, and (3) make changes to the proposed Shale Wealth Fund, as outlined in the 2017 Conservative Party manifesto. [HL299]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government has been recently elected and its approach to implementing the manifesto proposals has yet to be finalised.

Asked by Lord Bird

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they intend to authorise a moratorium on fracking in England until all available evidence relating to its environmental, economic and social impacts has been independently reviewed and assessed. [HL331]

Lord Prior of Brampton: A moratorium on hydraulic fracturing was previously imposed in the UK after the detection of two small tremors related to shale gas development in Lancashire in 2011. The Government asked the Royal Society and Royal Academy of Engineering to conduct an independent review of the scientific and engineering evidence on the risks associated with hydraulic fracturing for shale gas, which concluded that "The health, safety and environmental risks associated with hydraulic fracturing as a means to extract shale gas can be managed effectively in the UK as long as operational best practices are implemented and enforced through regulation". The Government lifted the moratorium in December 2012 and supports the safe and environmentally sound exploration of shale gas to determine the potential of the UK's resources.

Government Departments: Consultants

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, which companies are currently contracted to provide outsourced consultancy services by each Government department and to state, for each company listed, (1) the country in which the company, or any relevant parent company, is registered and, (2) the renewal date for any contract through which they are engaged. [HL543]

Lord Young of Cookham: Full information on which companies are currently contracted to provide outsourced services to each Government department is not held centrally.

However, a list of those suppliers that departments may engage through the Crown Commercial Service's range of frameworks can be found at:

<http://ccs-agreements.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/suppliers>

Since January 2011, details of central government contracts above the value of £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder. Contracts published prior to 26 February 2015 can be viewed at:

<https://data.gov.uk/data/contracts-finder-archive>

Those published after 26 February 2015 can be viewed at:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>

Infrastructure: Ownership

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they intend to bring forward proposals to "ensure that foreign ownership of companies controlling important infrastructure does not undermine British security or essential services", as outlined in the 2017 Conservative Party manifesto; and, if so, when. [HL301]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Her Majesty the Queen, in her speech to Parliament, set out that the Government would "bring forward proposals to ensure that critical national infrastructure is protected to safeguard national security". The Government will bring forward these proposals in due course.

Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, when they will publish their new Emissions Reduction Plan. [HL302]

Lord Prior of Brampton: We want the plan to be an ambitious, robust and clear blueprint for Britain's low carbon future, and are working with colleagues across Government to ensure it meets these criteria.

We intend to publish the plan when Parliament sits again after summer recess.

Munchausen's Syndrome: Prosecutions

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is the average total cost to (1) local authorities, (2) health authorities, (3) local education authorities, and (4) the courts, of prosecuting an unfounded case of Munchausen's syndrome by proxy. [HL275]

Lord Keen of Elie: The information requested is not held.

Nuclear Weapons: Safety

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether the MOD maintains a record of incidents in the defence nuclear programme where there is a potential risk to the public or to the environment. [HL397]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what criteria, if any, the MOD uses to assess whether an incident in the defence nuclear programme poses a risk to the public or to the environment. [HL398]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what categories of incident the MOD records in the defence nuclear programme; and what criteria are used to decide whether an incident is recorded. [HL399]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether the MOD maintains a record of accidents with an International Nuclear Radiological Event Scale rating of 1 or more which have occurred in the defence nuclear programme. [HL400]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many incidents in the defence nuclear programme have presented a risk to (1) staff working in that programme, or (2) members of the emergency services, since 2000. [HL401]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they will publish the records of accidents and incidents which have taken place in the nuclear defence programme in the past 30 years; and whether they will place a copy of those records in the Library of the House. [HL452]

Earl Howe: Maintaining nuclear safety within Defence is paramount and continuously assessed. It is independently regulated in accordance with legislative requirements by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and, where exempt, by the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) independent nuclear regulator, the Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator (DNSR). All events, incidents and near misses are recorded across the full spectrum of International Atomic Energy Agency Nuclear Event Scale ratings. Each nuclear licensed and authorised site is required to maintain records and demonstrate learning as part of the routine regulatory engagement process.

The MOD also has Ministerial Reporting Criteria for nuclear events which align with those used by the civil sector. As well as Defence Ministers, the reporting criteria requires the MOD to inform, as appropriate, the ONR, the Environment Agency and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. In addition, any events are routinely discussed with established Local Liaison Committees. I can reassure the noble Baroness that MOD nuclear programme activities are demonstrably well within accepted civil nuclear safety standards. I can confirm that since 2000 events and incidents have not challenged these standards and that the health of the public, the environment, and our workers remain safe. The MOD is not complacent and all incidents assessed as having safety

significance are fully analysed to establish the root cause and measures put in place to prevent recurrence.

Further information can be found in the annual DNSR Reports publications, and copies can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-nuclear-environment-and-safety-board-assurance-reports>

The information regarding all incidents over the last 30 years is not held centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Peers*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bridges of Headley on 27 June 2016 (HL662), whether they intend to prioritise the establishment of honorary titles for the spouses of women members of the House of Lords; and for same sex spouses and civil partners of members of the House of Lords. [HL701]

Lord Young of Cookham: I refer the Noble Lord to the answer I gave Lord Lexden on 11 July 2017 (HL291): The Government is sympathetic to those who are seeking to change the current system of courtesy titles, and has considered this complex issue. However, resolving this difficult matter is not a priority for the current Parliamentary session.

Plastic Bags: Fees and Charges*Asked by Lord Rennard*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their estimate of the proportion of the total reduction in regulatory costs on business since 2015 that has resulted from the introduction of the 5p charge on plastic bags. [HL407]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government has not yet published a final record of its total regulatory impact on business for the 2015-17 Parliament. Therefore it is not yet possible to calculate the savings from the introduction of the 5p charge on plastic bags as a proportion of the total reduction in regulatory costs on business.

Police: Mass Media*Asked by Lord Lexden*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 23 December 2016 (HL4133), whether the College of Policing's authorised professional practice on media relations has been published. [HL292]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on media relations was published on the College of Policing website on 15 June 2017. It can be found at this address,

<https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/engagement-and-communication/media-relations/>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

APP Media Relations [APP Media Relations.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-06-29/HL292>

Police: Wales

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many police officers were deployed in Wales (1) in 2010, and (2) on the most recent date for which figures are available. [HL259]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of police officers employed by each police force in England and Wales on a bi-annual basis. These data are published in the 'Police workforce, England and Wales' statistical bulletins.

Political Parties: Finance

Asked by Lord Wigley

The Senior Deputy Speaker how much financial support ("Cranborne money") has been allocated to each political party for the 2017–18 financial year. [HL545]

Lord McFall of Alcluith: For the 2017-18 financial year, the maximum amount available for financial assistance to opposition parties and the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers ("Cranborne money") is as follows:

- (1) £605,318 to the Labour Party,
- (2) £302,229 to the Liberal Democrats, and
- (3) £91,929 to the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers.

Privy Council

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what was the size of the Privy Council on 1 July 2017. [HL635]

Lord Young of Cookham: The information is set out in the table below.

Date	Number of Privy Counsellors
1 July 2017	671

A list of current Privy Council members can be found here:

<https://privycouncil.independent.gov.uk/privy-council/privy-council-members/privy-counsellors/>

Regulation: Finance

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what are the individual budgets agreed between the Better Regulation Executive and Government departments with regulatory responsibility; and what progress has been made against those targets to date. [HL409]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Deregulatory budgets were agreed between Ministers for a number of departments with regulatory responsibility during the 2015-17 Parliament. The Government has not yet decided what approach it will take to deliver better regulation during the current Parliament.

Roads: Accidents

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, which agencies failed to report statistics on road casualties to the Department for Transport in time for the scheduled publication of Reported Road Casualties for October 2016 to March 2017; and what reasons were given by those agencies for their failure to report on time. [HL270]

Lord Callanan: The Department for Transport has postponed publication of its annual 2016 road casualty data until 28 September as a result of a delay in receiving final validated data from Transport for London (TfL), in particular the data which TfL receives and processes for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The MPS data makes up around 15% of the road casualty dataset for Great Britain and therefore a significant component of the national total.

The MPS implemented a new reporting system at the end of 2016, the Case Overview and Preparation Application (COPA) system. TfL has reported that, due to changes in the reporting of road casualty data by the MPS via the COPA system, it has taken longer than normal in providing TfL with the required data to ensure validation and finalisation.

Safer Neighbourhood Teams

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many safer neighbourhood teams have been operational in England and Wales in each year since they were first introduced. [HL260]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The number of full time equivalent police officers and PSCOs primarily employed in Neighbourhood Policing teams and/or Safer Neighbourhood teams roles can be found in the data tables published alongside the annual the 'Police workforce, England and Wales' statistical bulletins, which can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales>

Officers and PCSOs with multiple responsibilities or designations are recorded under their primary function. The data do not therefore provide a complete picture of all officers assigned to neighbourhood policing functions.

Some forces are not able to make a clear distinction between 'Neighbourhood Policing' roles and 'Incident (Response) Management' roles, therefore those forces record the majority of, or all, employees under just one function. A more reliable measure is the number of officers employed in 'Local policing' roles, which includes both neighbourhood and response functions. This measure is available for 2015 and 2016, but not for previous years where a different framework was used.

Any comparisons at force level should be made with care due to collaboration arrangements between forces for particular functions. Additionally, police functions data are often affected by re-structuring within police forces. Therefore comparisons over time for specific functions should be made with care.

Data as at 31 March 2015 and 31 March 2016 can be found in the Tables F1, F3 F4 and F6 of the police workforce statistics published in July 2016: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544954/police-workforce-tabs-jul16.ods

Previous data were collected under a different framework, with different definitions, and are therefore not directly comparable with data as at 31 March 2015 or 2016. Data have been published since 2012, and can be found in the supplementary data tables of the relevant police workforce publications via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales>

As HMIC has made clear, there is no simple link between police numbers and crime levels, between numbers and the visibility of police in the community, or between numbers and the quality of service provided.

Decisions on the size and composition of the police workforce are operational matters for Chief Officers working with their Police and Crime Commissioners and taking into account local priorities. The next release of 'Police workforce' statistics is due to be published on 20th July, and will represent the picture as at 31 March 2017.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table - HL260 [Table - HL260.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-06-29/HL260>

South Sudan: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the claims included in a press release issued by Amnesty International on 4 July concerning (1) forcible displacement in the Equatorial region of

South Sudan, (2) war crimes against civilians, (3) abduction and gang-rape, and (4) food shortages and starvation resulting from conflict. [HL418]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are deeply concerned about the violence, and forced relocation of populations along ethnic lines in South Sudan, along with the blocking of humanitarian access. We take very seriously the UN reports which suggest that civilian populations have been deliberately targeted on the basis of their ethnic identity.

We are working through the UN, EU, and with regional partners to make clear our concerns about the insecurity, and to try to prevent an increase in violence. The UK Government urges all parties to show restraint, to end the fighting, and to return to an inclusive political process.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what action they are taking to ensure that (1) civilians in the Equatorial region of South Sudan are protected under international law, (2) those on all sides responsible for war crimes are brought to justice, and (3) UN peacekeepers fulfil their mandate to protect civilians. [HL419]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK strongly supports the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and continues to lobby the Government of South Sudan to cooperate fully with the Mission so that it can fulfil its mandate to protect civilians, monitor the human rights situation, and secure the delivery of humanitarian aid. We have contributed nearly 400 troops to UNMISS to provide vital medical and engineering support, which will help to improve the delivery of the Mission.

The 2015 Peace Agreement mandated the creation of a Hybrid Court in South Sudan for the most serious of crimes. We continue to urge all parties to accelerate the establishment of the Court. The UK Government has jointly led a resolution at the Human Rights Council in Geneva which extended the mandate of the South Sudan Human Rights Commission to gather evidence of crimes for use in a court of law.

Special Constables

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many Special Constables there are in each police force in England and Wales. [HL569]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of Special Constables in each police force in England and Wales on a bi-annual basis.

The latest available data are published in the 'Police workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2016' statistical bulletins.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table - HL569 [ePQ6917 Lord Kennedy Table2.xls]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-07-06/HL569>

Street Cleaning

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what plans they have to encourage local authorities to consider washing their high streets and shopping parades on a regular basis, in addition to sweeping and other cleaning measures. [HL263]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Local authorities and other land managers are responsible for keeping their "relevant land", which includes high streets and shopping parades, clear of litter and refuse. The statutory Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse sets out the standards of cleanliness that they are expected to be able to achieve on different types of land. The Code places the emphasis on the consistent and appropriate management of an area to keep it clean, rather than on how often it is cleaned or the use of specific approaches.

It is up to councils to decide how best to meet their statutory duty to keep their relevant land clear of litter and refuse, and how to prioritise this against other local services.

Taxation: EU Nationals

Asked by Lord Green of Deddington

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many people, who at the time of issue of their National Insurance number were recorded as being of (1) Romanian nationality, and (2) Bulgarian nationality, were known to (a) the Real Time Information system, and (b) the self assessment system, by HM Revenue and Customs, in the financial year 2015–16. [HL346]

Lord Bates: The information is not available as the nationality of individuals is not a reporting requirement of PAYE Real-Time Information or the Self-Assessment system.

The latest information on the National Insurance number allocations to adult overseas nationals including Bulgarians and Romanians has been published by the Department for Work and Pensions on GOV.UK^[1].

^[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-insurance-number-allocations-to-adult-overseas-nationals-to-march-2017>

UK Consumer Product Recall Review

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what progress has been made by the Steering Group set up following the Government's Response to the independent review by Lynn Faulds Wood, UK consumer product recall, published on 18 February 2016. [HL348]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Government set up a new Working Group on Product Recalls and Safety in October 2016 to build on the initial work of the Steering Group with a broader remit, a shorter timetable, a permanent Chair and a wider group of experts. The Working Group's initial recommendations were delivered within three months and a number of these have already been taken forward, including the creation of a new central recalls website; the commissioning of the British Standards Institution to create a new code of practice on recalls; improved organisational mapping and support for better sharing of product safety data; and work to better understand consumer behaviour so that safety messages are more effective.

The Working Group submitted its final report in April 2017. We had intended to publish the report then. However, the announcement of the General Election prevented us from doing so. In light of the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy, Ministers have also asked the Working Group to review their findings to consider any further action that may be required. We will publish that report before the summer recess.

UK Trade with EU

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they intend that the UK will continue to have access to the Internal Market Information System database. [HL387]

Lord Prior of Brampton: In leaving the EU, we want to achieve the best possible outcome and the strongest possible partnership – one that works for the UK and the EU. Good communication between our respective authorities will be important to securing this partnership. The future relationship between UK authorities and information sharing mechanisms such as the Internal Market Information System, will be determined in the course of our negotiations with the EU.

United Nations: Human Rights

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they will encourage the United Nations to set up more Human Rights Advisory Panels to investigate alleged violations of human rights by UN personnel. [HL254]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains committed to ensuring the UN has appropriate and robust mechanisms in place to address all alleged violations by UN personnel. The UK hosted a UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in London in September 2016, which among other things, specifically called for all UN personnel deployed in UN peacekeeping operations be committed to the highest standards of conduct. The UN Mission in Kosovo's (UNMIK) Human Rights Advisory Panel was established in response to specific circumstances related to the international administration

of Kosovo and is not a model that has applied to regular peace operations.

UN Mission in South Sudan

Asked by The Earl of Sandwich

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the work of the UN Mission in South Sudan during the July 2016 conflict in Juba; and whether the mission has sufficient capacity and capability to fulfil its role. [HL278]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK strongly supports the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). We are encouraged by the Mission's response to the recommendations following the independent review into the events of July 2016 by Major General Patrick Cammaert, and welcome the strong start made by the new Special Representative of the Secretary General, Mr David Shearer.

We continue to lobby the Government of South Sudan to allow UNMISS to effectively fulfil its mandate to protect civilians, support the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and monitor and investigate human rights; and for the swift deployment of the UN Regional Protection Force.

We have contributed up to 400 medical and engineering troops to UNMISS, to help improve the successful

delivery of the Mission. This is the UK's largest global deployment of UN peacekeeping troops.

Wetlands: Conservation

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what protections are in place to safeguard wetlands from the effects of dredging. [HL296]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: There are a number of protections in place to safeguard wetlands from the effects of dredging, these vary dependent on the type of wetland, its environmental classification and under whose jurisdiction it falls.

Main rivers are regulated by the Environment Agency under the Environmental Permitting Regulations, allowing the Agency to fulfil its environmental duties under the Environment Act 1995 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Ordinary Watercourses are managed by local Risk Management Authorities such as Internal Drainage Boards and District Councils¹, who can protect wetlands using byelaws, under the Land Drainage Act 1991. Controlled waters, are also protected from harm to their physical structure under the Water Resources Act 1991.

¹ County Councils which are RMAs cannot write byelaws for the purpose of regulating effects on the environment. see Land Drainage Act 1991 section 66 (1A).

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