[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.

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Bellwin Funding

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Hon Friend the Minister for Local Government (Rishi Sunak) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

On 3 January 2017, there was a tidal surge on the east coast of England which caused damage to flood defences and led to affected families having to evacuate their homes. I am satisfied that financial assistance under the Bellwin scheme is justified to cover eligible costs incurred by three councils in respect of this flooding.

A scheme will therefore be established under section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Grant will be paid to the authorities to cover 100 per cent of their eligible costs incurred above a threshold.

The local authorities are:
Scarborough Borough Council
North Norfolk District Council
Waveney District Council

Business Rates

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Hon Friend, the Minister for Local Government (Rishi Sunak) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

On 30 March 2017 the member for Nuneaton, and then Minister for Local Government Mr Marcus Jones in a Written Ministerial Statement set out the Government’s policy on the treatment of plant nurseries in England for the purposes of business rates stating that:

“Since at least 1928, plant nursery grounds have been treated by the Valuation Office Agency as exempt from business rates as part of the general exemption for agriculture. However, following a recent Court of Appeal decision, the Valuation Office Agency has started to bring into business rates buildings at nursery grounds including structures such as poly-tunnels. The exemption for agricultural properties is an important part of the rating system. It ensures that large areas of agricultural land and buildings are not liable to a property tax which could have a significant impact on the cost of farming.”

I can confirm to the House that the Government’s policy remains that land and buildings at plant nursery grounds should benefit from the agricultural exemption for business rates.

The Government will, therefore, amend the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to ensure both agricultural land and buildings at plant nursery grounds are exempt from business rates. We will bring forward legislation at the next suitable opportunity to meet this commitment. In doing so the legislation will be amended retrospectively, with effect from 1 April 2015. This will allow the Valuation Office Agency to remove from the rating list with effect from 1 April 2015 any plant nurseries which then fall to be exempt from that date.

This change will ensure that agricultural land and buildings are not liable for a property tax which could otherwise have an impact on the cost of farming and produce. It supports the Government’s commitment to a vision for a productive, competitive, sustainable UK agricultural sector.


Cross-Government Funds Review

Lord Young of Cookham: The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I wish to update the House on how the Government has reviewed the cross-Government Funds in order to better support poverty reduction, as well as global and UK security and prosperity.

The major cross-Government Funds supporting our National Security Strategy are the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) and Prosperity Fund (PF). They are a flexible instrument of government policy overseas. The Funds use part of the UK’s aid budget to support developing economies, fragile states and regions to prevent conflict and to promote the conditions that drive global prosperity.

As part of the National Security Capability Review (NSCR), the National Security Adviser (NSA) commissioned a Review of the Cross-Government Funds. The Review covered the CSSF, the PF and the Empowerment Fund (EF). The Government is committed to ensuring accountability and transparency in our aid spending and this review forms part of our ongoing work to ensure we’re delivering value for taxpayers and results for the world’s poorest. The report on this Review provides more detail on the NSCR’s specific recommendations and findings for the Funds.

The Review found that the CSSF and PF were effective mechanisms for making strategic, co-ordinated, prioritised and integrated use of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and non-ODA resources. They drive greater flexibility, broader geographic and thematic reach, and greater diversity in programming than could be achieved through departmental allocations alone.

The Review noted that the Funds gain greater strategic importance as delivery mechanisms for the National Security Council (NSC) as a result of the UK’s decision...
to leave the European Union. Redefining Britain’s place in the world will require us to use our diplomatic, development and defence assets to best effect, which the Funds can help deliver. The Funds are particularly innovative given their secondary benefits: creating opportunities for international business, including UK business, enhancing UK soft power, and reducing domestic threats.

The Empowerment Fund was set up to improve links with emerging economies, help tackle extremism globally and support good governance. The Review found that the EF’s proposed geographic focus overlapped with that of the CSSF and PF. Integrating its aims into the other two Funds would improve efficiency, simplify governance and strengthen delivery. Soft Power objectives in support of NSC priorities will therefore now be delivered through the CSSF and PF as well as through other departmental funding mechanisms.

As a result of the Review, we will enhance the cross-Government Funds by improving strategic direction through the new national security doctrine, the Fusion Doctrine, governance through a new Ministerial committee, and efficient administration by merging the secretariats into a single Funds Unit.

Implementation of the recommendations of the Review across the areas of strategic direction, governance and delivery and capability is now fully underway. I have agreed to chair the new Ministerial committee that will set the Funds’ strategic direction. A new Joint Funds Unit will be launched in April 2018. All these measures will streamline governance and drive greater coherence. More on the recommendations of the Review can be found in the accompanying report.

Further updates on the cross-Government Funds will be available on the Funds’.GOV.UK pages:


Double Taxation Convention: UK and Cyprus

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

A Double Taxation Convention with Cyprus was signed on 22 March 2018. The text of the Convention is available on HM Revenue and Customs’ pages of the Gov.uk website and will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. The text will be scheduled to a draft Order in Council and laid before the House of Commons in due course.

Foreign Affairs Council

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

My Rt Hon Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs attended the Foreign Affairs Council on 19 March. The Council was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Federica Mogherini. The meeting was held in Brussels.

Foreign Affairs Council

Current Affairs

The Council discussed the Salisbury attack and adopted a statement expressing the European Union's (EU) unqualified solidarity with, and support for, the UK, including for our efforts to bring to justice those responsible for this crime. The EU takes extremely seriously the UK Government’s assessment that it is highly likely that the Russian Federation is responsible.

Ukraine

The Council discussed recent developments, in particular, in Ukraine’s reform process. Ahead of the Ukraine Reform Conference that will take place in Copenhagen on 27 June, Ministers welcomed the progress on economic reform but underlined the need for increased efforts in other areas, including the judiciary and anti-corruption.

The Council reiterated its commitment to its policy of non-recognition and support for the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. Ministers expressed their concern over humanitarian issues in eastern Ukraine and reiterated their full support for the work of the OSCE in the region.

Syria

The Council discussed the latest developments in Syria with the Secretary General of the United Nations’ Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura. Ministers commended his tireless efforts to push for a political solution to the conflict and recalled that the EU has clearly stated there can be no military solution to the conflict. Ministers expressed their concern over the continued deterioration in the humanitarian situation, in particular in Afrin and Eastern Ghouta. They urged all those involved to fully and immediately implement UN Security Council resolution 2401. They also discussed possible repercussions of the situation in Syria for the wider region.

Finally the Council discussed the forthcoming second Brussels conference on 'Supporting the future of Syria and the region' on 24-25 April 2018, which will be co-chaired by the EU and the UN.
Informal lunch on the Korean Peninsula

Ministers and the HRVP discussed the situation on the Korean Peninsula over an informal lunch with the South Korean Foreign Minister, Kang Kyung-wha. Ministers looked ahead to the summit between Kim Jong-un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in that is scheduled for April and the meeting announced between Kim Jong-un and US President Donald Trump. Iran

The Council discussed Iran. Ministers underlined the importance of the Iran nuclear deal – the JCPOA – for the security of the region and beyond. They highlighted the need to ensure continuous commitment of all parties involved to the Agreement.

Ministers also discussed other issues outside the scope of the JCPOA, in particular Iran's ballistic missiles programme, as well as Iran's role in the increasing tensions in the region, including in Syria and Yemen.

Ministers agreed a number of measures without discussion:

- The Council lifted the restrictive measures against three persons who had perpetrated violent acts during the incidents in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) on 10 February 1997.
- The Council prolonged, for 12 months, the validity of the Council decision of 21 March 2011 concerning restrictive measures, making it possible to impose an asset freeze and a travel ban on persons whose activities undermine the sovereignty, territorial integrity and constitutional order of Bosnia and Herzegovina or seriously threaten its security situation.
- The Council added four persons to the list of those targeted by EU restrictive measures against the Syrian regime.
- The Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations, on behalf of the Union, on an international legally-binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

General Affairs Council

[HLWS575]

Lord Henley: A meeting of the General Affairs Council (Cohesion) will be held in Brussels on 12 April 2018.

The General Affairs Council will discuss the future direction of Cohesion Policy in the next Multiannual Financial Framework. Ministers from Member States will present their positions on the strategic context and priorities for post-2020, with a view to influencing the Commission’s proposals. A follow on discussion will cover how Cohesion Policy could be better communicated to the citizens of Europe.

The Bulgarian Presidency will provide an update on non-legislative and legislative items.

Government Property Agency

[HLWS582]

Lord Young of Cookham: The Minister for Implementation has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I wish to update the House on the establishment of the Government Property Agency as an Executive Agency of the Cabinet Office.

Government is delivering a modern, innovative Public Estate strategy that drives a step-change in our property ambitions - broadening from a primary focus on efficiencies and savings to one that uses assets as an enabler to deliver our priorities for excellent public services; economic growth; and more land for housing across the UK.

The previous Chancellor set out some of that ambition at the March 2015 Budget where he announced that Government would implement a new commercially driven approach to land and property asset management across the central government estate and that it would create a new central body which would own and manage relevant property assets.

I announce today a significant step forward in creating a modern, effective and efficient civil service fit for the 21st Century, positioning property as a strategic enabler of wider Civil Service transformation, through the creation of a Government Property Agency.

The Agency will be a new Executive Agency of the Cabinet Office from the 1st April 2018 and will provide the centralised ownership, control and delivery infrastructure needed to unlock benefits across organisational boundaries. It further positions Government to deliver workforce change and wider business transformation, delivering efficiencies and releasing land and property for productive use, including building new homes.

The assets in scope to transfer to the Agency at this stage are general purpose assets (offices, warehouse and depots), plus non-specialist science assets. Specialist assets such as courts, prisons and specialist science assets will remain on departments’ balance sheets and the model also excludes devolved administrations, local governments, schools, NHS clinical estates, HCA regeneration assets, MOD estate and overseas estate.

The Government Property Agency has been running in shadow form since January 2017, working with a small number of departments to test structures and processes before launch in April 2018. The Agency will initially deliver the Government Hubs programme with HM Revenue & Customs and manage non-specialist properties for Cabinet Office and Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy - before expanding its scope to the non-specialist properties of other government departments in subsequent years.

Creating the Agency will bring benefits to departments and their Arms’ Length Bodies through more effective management of the assets they occupy and own. It will
establish a single Agency providing the basis for a joined-up approach to the management of Government property assets. And the taxpayer will also benefit from reduced cost and improved efficiency of the estate.

**Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation: Operation Classific**

[HLWS579]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

In accordance with section 36(5) of the Terrorism Act 2006, Max Hill QC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, has prepared a report on the use of terrorism legislation in Operation CLASSIFIC, the investigation into the Westminster Bridge attack.

I am today laying this report before the House, and copies will be available in the Vote Office. It will also be published on GOV.UK.

I am grateful to Max Hill QC for his report. I will carefully consider its contents and the recommendations he makes, and will respond formally in due course.

**Industrial Strategy**

[HLWS574]

**Lord Henley:** My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Greg Clark) has today made the following statement:

As part of the Industrial Strategy, the Government committed to making the most of the UK’s strengths so we can be at the forefront of emerging technologies and industries in the years ahead. The creative industries, from film to fashion, and from arts to video games, are an undoubted strength of our economy; indeed, they are at the heart of the nation’s competitive advantage. It was to build on this strength that the creative industries were identified as a priority for an early sector deal.

Sector Deals, where industries are invited to come forward with plans for their future, embody the ethos of our collaborative approach. They show how industry and the Government, working in partnership, can boost the productivity and earning power of specific sectors. We have already struck ambitious sector deals with the life sciences, and the automotive sectors, and we will be publishing deals with the construction and artificial intelligence sectors shortly.

Last year Sir Peter Bazalgette undertook an independent review of the sector. The Creative Industries Council with critical input from the Creative Industries Federation and other leading voices across the sector have championed their industry through the process. Today’s Deal represents a key milestone in this journey but it is just the beginning; the first iteration of an agreement that will develop over time.

The Deal contains mutual commitments to invest more than £150m across the lifecycle of creative businesses including by: boosting the places of the future by funding leading creative clusters across the UK to compete globally; enhancing innovation in technologies and content of the future via research into Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality; and ensuring that firms can access the creative skills of the future via a careers programme that will open up creative jobs to people of every background. There are further commitments to establish a new industry-led Trade and Investment Board to ensure the sector can better take advantage of international opportunities, a new commercial investment programme to provide business and investment support to creative businesses and new measures to strengthen copyright protection for Intellectual Property generating Creative businesses.

The creative industries account for £92bn of GVA, two million jobs and are growing twice as fast as the economy as a whole. This Deal will help generate an environment in which the creative industries continue to thrive.

Today I will place a copy of the document in the Libraries of the House.

**Lower Emission Lorries**

[HLWS580]

**Baroness Sugg:** My Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Jesse Norman), has made the following Ministerial Statement.

The Government is today announcing new measures to change the rates paid by hauliers of less polluting lorries, as part of our plans to improve air quality across the UK.

The newest lorries generate 80% less nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions than older ones. From February next year, lorries that meet the latest Euro VI emissions standards will be eligible for a 10 per cent reduction in the cost of the Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) levy. Euro V and older vehicles, which do not meet these emissions standards, will pay 20% more.

The HGV Road User Levy, introduced in 2014, was brought in as a first step to ensure lorries pay a charge to cover the greater wear and tear they cause to road surfaces than other vehicles. This change to the levy will incentivise the industry to choose less polluting lorries.

The Government will make the first changes to the levy to implement the reductions for Euro Class VI vehicles through a Statutory Instrument being laid today, with the remaining changes to increase the rates for Euro V and older vehicles expected to be included in the Finance Bill in the autumn.

Levy rates will continue to comply with the relevant maximum levels set under European law, which for Euro 0-V rates will be determined at the time of the Finance Bill.
Changes to the levy

Note that the following shows the maximum levy rate. Levy rates depend on vehicle weight and number of axles.

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<th>Current rate (Band G vehicles)</th>
<th>Euro VI rate from Feb 2019</th>
<th>Euro 0- V rate from Feb 2019</th>
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<td>£1,000</td>
<td>£900</td>
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National Security Capability and Strategic Defence and Security Reviews

[HLWS586]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: My Rt Hon. Friend the Prime Minister has made the following statement to the House of Commons:

I am pleased to announce the combined publication of the National Security Capability Review (NSCR) and the 2017 annual report of the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). I have placed a copy in the House of Commons Library.

The 2015 National Security Strategy and SDSR set out our vision and three overarching National Security Objectives: Protect Our People; Project Our Global Influence; and Promote Our Prosperity. The framework of the National Security Strategy and the SDSR remains right and we are focused on implementing it. The National Security Council (NSC) commissioned the NSCR to identify how we could develop, deliver and deploy our considerable national security capabilities to maximum collective effect.

In the SDSR, we committed to giving Parliament an annual update on implementation of the strategy. This combined publication of the NSCR and second annual report on the SDSR sets out the conclusions from the NSCR and our progress in delivering on our SDSR commitments.

The NSCR updates the SDSR’s assessment of the challenges likely to drive UK security priorities over the next decade. These challenges have become more complex and intertwined as the world has become more uncertain and volatile. Domestic, overseas and online threats are increasingly integrated as adversaries develop capabilities and exploit vulnerabilities across borders and between the cyber and physical worlds. We should be confident of the United Kingdom’s ability to rise to these challenges, drawing on our great strengths as a nation, and the strength of our National Security Strategy.

The NSCR focused on capabilities that are critical to our national security to support implementation of the SDSR. As a result we will deliver better military capability through the Modernising Defence Programme, designed to ensure our defence capabilities meet the changing threats we face. We will publish a new counter-terrorism strategy, which will include measures to improve our ability to disrupt terrorist plots in their early stages and improve frontline integration of our counter-terrorism response. We will expand and deepen our overseas network to deliver our ambitions for a truly global Britain, and ensure our development capability responds to changes in global poverty and national security. We will improve assurance of resilience and readiness of local and national capabilities and continue to develop a holistic approach to supporting victims of emergencies. We will take a whole-of-government approach to serious and organised crime, including a National Economic Crime Centre in partnership with the private sector. Furthermore, we will produce comprehensive strategic threat assessments for the border, and the National Security Communications Team will be significantly expanded. We will continue to implement the National Cyber Security Strategy and ensure it keeps pace with the threat. The cross-government funds will be strengthened with a new Ministerial committee and more efficient administration. Supporting this will be a new national security doctrine, the Fusion Doctrine, which will improve our collective approach to national security, building on the creation of the NSC eight years ago.

We have long been at the forefront of shaping international cooperation on security and the UK is a leading contributor to international missions around the world. The NSCR, alongside successful implementation of the SDSR, will ensure we use our world-leading national security capabilities to greatest effect to protect our people at home and abroad.

NHS Winter Performance

[HLWS581]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has made the following written statement:

I would like to update the House on the winter pressures on the NHS following the opposition day debate held in January.

This winter we have seen worse weather than in many recent years, with sustained drops in temperature known to increase heart attacks, stroke and respiratory conditions. This has been coupled with prolonged pressure on hospitals from beds occupied by patients with norovirus and also flu, having experienced the worst flu season since 2010.

However, despite these extra pressures, thanks to the hard work of NHS staff:

• over 55,000 people were seen within four hours per day in February. This is 1,000 more people per day than in the same month last year.
• NHS 111 offered 150,000 extra calls each month over winter with the amount of callers receiving clinical advice increased to nearly half; and
• over one and a half million more people have been vaccinated against flu compared to the same period last year, with the highest ever uptake amongst healthcare workers at 68.7%.

Last year’s spring budget allocated £100 million of capital to help hospitals set up GP streaming services with
99% of NHS trusts now having this in place. In addition, at the Autumn Budget, the Government provided £337m for NHS winter funding; this funding has helped the NHS to open over 2,600 acute beds over the winter period.

In order to support emergency care across the NHS, national clinical leaders advised that non-urgent operations should be postponed in January. NHS England has published the information showing that this freed up around 1,400 beds across hospitals in England. This represents around 3% fewer planned admissions this January compared to last year.

The Government remains firmly committed to ensuring that patients are seen promptly when they need urgent and emergency care. The NHS will receive an additional £2.8 billion between 2017/18 and 2019/20. The NHS England Mandate for 2018/19 sets out the milestones for improved A&E performance during 2018/19.

**State of the Estate**

**[HLWS577]**

**Lord Young of Cookham:** The Minister for Implementation has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I have today laid before Parliament, pursuant to Section 86 of the Climate Change Act 2008, the “State of the Estate in 2016-17”. This annual report describes the efficiency and sustainability of the Government’s Civil Estate and records the progress that Government has made during the financial year 2016-17. Since 2010 we have delivered savings of over one billion pounds in annual operating costs and a 25% reduction in the size of the estate (2.8 million square metres).

We have also made significant progress on other key areas including achieving a 33% reduction in emissions by the end of 2016-17, which exceeds the 2020 target of 32%.

Looking ahead, our aim is to ensure that our estate not only delivers value for the taxpayer but also acts as an enabler to the delivery of the Government’s wider commitments - from releasing surplus government land to building new homes, to delivering public services that are more accessible and responsive to citizens’ needs and to ensure our estate showcases best practice in mobile technology and workplace design.

**Universal Broadband**

**[HLWS584]**

**Lord Ashton of Hyde:** My Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, has today made the following statement in the House of Commons.

The Government’s manifesto said that “our Universal Service Obligation (USO) will ensure that by 2020 every home and every business in Britain has access to high speed broadband”.

Last year we took the first step towards delivering that commitment when the Digital Economy Act 2017 introduced powers enabling the introduction - and review - of a broadband USO with a download speed of at least 10Mbps.

Today I am pleased to announce that we have taken another important step. Following consultation on the design of the USO last year, we are laying our Universal Service Order, setting the design for our 10Mbps broadband USO. Ofcom will now implement the USO in line with the parameters set out in the Order.

We have also published today the Government’s response to our consultation on the design of the USO, which sets out our plans in detail. It can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/broadband-universal-service-obligation-consultation-on-design.

**Workless Households and Educational Attainment**

**[HLWS585]**

**Baroness Buscombe:** My honourable Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Family Support, Housing & Child Maintenance (Kit Malthouse MP) has made the following Written Statement.

Later today I will publish “Workless households and educational attainment statutory indicators”, an annual report pursuant to Section A1A of the Life Chances Act 2010 as amended. “Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families”, published on 4th April 2017, set out this Government’s vision to improve outcomes for children who grow up in workless families and face multiple, associated disadvantages. To track our collective progress in improving outcomes for disadvantaged families, my department made a commitment to publishing the latest data on seven additional non-statutory national indicators each year.

The annual report “Workless households and educational attainment statutory indicators” will be available here later today:


The Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families indicators will be available here later today:

Academies

**Asked by Lord Storey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance is provided to Multi-Academy Trusts on the appointment of members. [HL6387]

**Asked by Lord Storey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the appointment and resignation of members of Multi-Academy Trusts are referred to Companies House; and if not, why not. [HL6388]

**Asked by Lord Storey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance is provided to Multi-Academy Trusts on the publication of minutes of meetings of members and trustees. [HL6389]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The department does not provide specific guidance on the recruitment of members, but as members are responsible for the appointment of trustees, it is important that they understand the skills, behaviours and knowledge that trustees need to deliver effective governance.

Guidance sets out that members may be appointed by special resolution by existing members or the foundation or sponsor of the multi-academy trust (MAT).

The guidance is attached and available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook.

The articles of association of each individual trust set out the specific arrangements for the appointment of members to each trust.

Companies House specify their own requirements for MATs, as companies limited by guarantee, with regard to appointments and resignations. It is for individual MATs to ensure they follow these requirements.

There is no requirement for MATs to publish the minutes of meetings of members and trustees. However, the department’s Model Articles of Association state that the trust board must, as soon as is reasonably practicable, make available for inspection by any interested person, copies of the agenda, signed minutes of every such meeting and any report or other paper considered at such meeting.

The Answer includes the following attached material:


The material can be viewed online at: http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-14/HL6387

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**Armed Forces: Mental Health Services**

**Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve mental health support for (1) veterans, and (2) serving military personnel. [HL6535]

**Earl Howe:** The Ministry of Defence is absolutely committed to the mental health of our Service personnel, providing robust training, welfare support and development opportunities. When necessary, we ensure that both serving personnel and veterans are given the mental healthcare and treatment they need. We do this by working in close partnership with a variety of different organisations, including the NHS (which is responsible for the provision of healthcare, including mental healthcare, for veterans) and Service charities such as Combat Stress.

Recent initiatives include the Defence People Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, launched in July 2017, which covers all Defence people and identifies the need for strong partnerships with the Department of Health, the NHS in England and the Devolved Administrations and the charitable sector, and a new operating model focusing on Promote, Prevent, Treat and Detect.

In October 2017, we announced a new partnership with the Royal Foundation, aimed at helping maintain and develop good mental fitness. And on 25 February this year, the Secretary of State for Defence announced that we have built on our existing partnership with Combat Stress to provide a new MOD-funded Military Mental Health Helpline for Serving personnel and their families, providing out-of-hours advice and assistance and running in conjunction with the charity's existing helpline for the veterans' community. We will also be providing an additional £2million of annual funding for military mental health services, on top of the £20million a year we already spend.

Mental health services are already provided for serving personnel through a network of 20 permanent locations, comprising 11 Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMHs); six Mental Health Teams (MHTs); and three locations with a permanent Community Mental Health Nurse. These support the provision of healthcare that is available through Service primary care facilities. Inpatient care is provided in dedicated psychiatric units through a central contract MOD has with a partnership of eight NHS Trusts.

Personnel leaving the Armed Forces who have had mental health issues during their Service are eligible to access services at a local DCMH for up to six months after discharge, to help them during the transition period. A Veterans' Transition Protocol ensures any Service person discharged with a diagnosed mental health disorder is handed over appropriately to the NHS in England.

Where a Service person leaving the Armed Forces has an enduring need for mental healthcare, we work in partnership with NHS England through the Veterans...
Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (VMH-TILS), to ensure continuity of care. The VMH-TILS service provides a range of treatment and support for veterans, as well as Armed Forces personnel approaching discharge. It will arrange for veterans to be referred if necessary to the NHS England Veterans’ Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (VMH-CTS) which launches on 1 April 2018.

Other services available from MOD to veterans include the Veterans and Reserves Mental Health Programme (VRMHP), for veterans that have served since 1982 and Reservists with operational service since 2003 (provided through the DCMHs), and the Veterans UK and Veterans Welfare Service.

**Asylum: Sri Lanka**

*Asked by Lord Naseby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Sri Lankan nationals have sought asylum in each year since 1 January 2007; and how many were successful. [HL6460]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office publishes data on the number of applications and initial decisions, broken down by nationality, in the quarterly *Immigration Statistics* publication. The latest figures, up until 2017, are available at the following link:  

Table as_01 (asylum tables, vol. 1) contains the number of asylum applications, from main applicants, and initial decisions each year, broken down by nationality.

Data in table as_01 relate to initial decisions only. The number of 'successful' applications will increase when taking into account those granted after appeal. Table as_06 shows the number of decisions in a given year that have led to an appeal, by appeal outcome. Data in this table are not directly comparable over time as more recent years will have a high number of cases where a final decision has not yet been made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Country of nationality</th>
<th>Total applications</th>
<th>Total initial decisions</th>
<th>Total grants</th>
<th>Percentage granted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1,473</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1,115</td>
<td>1,251</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1,357</td>
<td>1,612</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1,756</td>
<td>1,604</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1,744</td>
<td>1,384</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1,811</td>
<td>1,287</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1,292</td>
<td>1,217</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Grants include grants of asylum, discretionary leave, humanitarian protection, and grants under family and private life rules.

2. Decisions made in a given year does not necessarily relate to the number of applications in the same year. Applications are based on the date of application and decisions are based on the date of initial decision.

**Brexit**

*Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likelihood of finalising a UK–EU Brexit agreement by October 2018; and if such an agreement were reached, whether the date of withdrawal will be brought forward. [HL6383]

**Lord Callanan:** We have made rapid progress on the Withdrawal Agreement from the EU, agreeing the majority of the legal text including all of the chapters on the implementation period, citizens’ rights and the financial settlement.

We will carry this momentum forward as we work to agree the remaining areas and conclude the Withdrawal Agreement by October 2018, before we leave the EU at the end of March 2019.

*Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask the Leader of the House how much time she proposes that the House will allocate to the debate of the final draft of the Brexit agreement. [HL6478]

**Baroness Evans of Bowes Park:** Business in the House of Lords is arranged through consultation with the Usual Channels. For its part, the Government will ensure that sufficient time is offered to consider the final deal in Parliament, including in the House of Lords.

**British Overseas Territories**

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to assess the views and concerns of all the UK Overseas Territories regarding the UK’s departure from the EU. [HL6548]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The British Government is fully committed to involving all the UK Overseas Territories in our planning as we leave the EU, and ensuring that their interests are properly taken into account. UK Ministers and leaders of the Overseas Territories discuss EU Exit in the UK Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council on EU Exit Negotiations, which will meet for the fourth time on 14 June this year. The British Government has also
considered and responded to the evidence presented by Overseas Territories' representatives to the European Union Select Committee on the impact of EU Exit in July of last year.

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what economic and logistical plans they are making to assist the UK Overseas Territories following the UK’s departure from the EU. [HL6549]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK and Overseas Territory governments share a responsibility to the British citizens living in those territories to help enable them to lead secure, stable and more prosperous lives. We are fully committed to involving the Overseas Territories as we prepare for exiting the EU and establishing new trading relations with the world, in order to ensure their priorities and interests are taken into account. UK Ministers and leaders of the Overseas Territories discuss EU Exit in the UK – Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council on EU Exit Negotiations, which will meet for the fourth time on June 14th this year. These discussions will continue to include consideration of ways of assisting the Overseas Territories in analysing potential trade and economic impacts, as a consequence of EU exit. The UK Government will also consider options through which UK Overseas Territories could benefit from future UK Free Trade Agreements with Third Countries.

### Crown Prosecution Service

*Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) men, and (2) women, are employed by the Crown Prosecution Service; and how many (a) men, and (b) women, hold senior posts. [HL6385]

**Lord Keen of Elie:** As at 28 February 2018 the Crown Prosecution Service employed (1) 2,083 men and (2) 3,987 women. In senior posts (graded at Senior Civil Service or equivalent) the Crown Prosecution Service employed (a) 34 men and (b) 40 women, with women making up 54% of the workforce in these grades.

### Deportation

*Asked by Lord Beecham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they took into account the visa humanitarian exemption in the case of Ernesto Schwartz-Marin and his wife Arely Cruz-Santiago who have been ordered to leave the country after exceeding the time permitted to be abroad by undertaking humanitarian work in Mexico; and if not, why not. [HL6435]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The applications submitted for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) by Mr Ernesto Schwartz-Marin, for himself, his wife and child have been reconsidered. In light of the information provided about his work in Mexico these have now been approved.

### Electricity: Prices

*Asked by Baroness Featherstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the decision to replace net demand with gross demand in calculating Capacity Market charges for suppliers. [HL6491]

**Lord Henley:** The decision to change the basis for calculating the Capacity Market Supplier Charge from being based on net demand to being based on gross demand was published on 22 March 2017 in the Government’s response following its consultation on various proposed amendments to Rules and Regulations that govern the Capacity Market. An assessment of the impact of the change from net to gross was contained in an Analytical Annex to the Government Response.[1]


The Answer includes the following attached material:

Capacity Market Analytical annex [Analytical_Annex.pdf]


The material can be viewed online at: http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-20/HL6491

### Electricity: Storage

*Asked by Baroness Featherstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to classify grid-scale storage as electricity generation. [HL6492]

**Lord Henley:** In our Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan, published last July, the Government committed to define electricity storage as a distinct subset of generation in primary legislation, when parliamentary time allows. This will improve regulatory clarity for electricity storage – in particular, its treatment for licensing and planning purposes.

The regulator is also taking steps in line with this commitment. In October last year, Ofgem launched a consultation on proposals to modify the generation licence to include electricity storage. A response to this consultation will be published in due course.

*Asked by Baroness Featherstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on the electricity market of system operators and network owners owning and operating electricity storage. [HL6493]
Lord Henley: In the Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan, published last July, the Government and Ofgem said that measures should be taken to limit the ownership and operation of electricity storage by distribution network operators. This is to prevent competitive activities being carried out by monopoly network operators, which would inhibit fair competition in the market. Ofgem subsequently consulted on limiting the ownership and operation of storage by distribution network operators in October last year, and we expect Ofgem to finalise their position in the coming months.

Environment Protection: EU Law

Asked by Baroness Young of Old Scone

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, and if so, when, they will publish a list of the statutory instruments that will be laid subsequent to the passing of the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill, in order to complete the transfer of EU law covering environmental issues; and which of those statutory instruments will be laid under (1) the negative procedure, and (2) the affirmative procedure. [HL6392]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government is still making detailed assessment of what corrections will be required to make that law function appropriately on exit day. Our current assumption is that we will require 26 SIs to be laid in order to complete the transfer of EU law covering environmental issues, 12 of which will require the affirmative procedure.

We are currently not in a position to publish the list of these SIs as it is subject to change. In particular, the SIs rely on powers and procedures set out in the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill which is still being considered by Parliament. There will, however, be consultation where appropriate on the detail of the proposed changes.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Asked by Baroness Featherstone

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether there is a loophole for electricity generating units of 3MWTh (MW thermal) under the EU Emissions Trading System. [HL6490]

Lord Henley: The government does not believe the 3MW (thermal) threshold constitutes a loophole. The current inclusion criteria of the EU ETS offer a good balance between environmental integrity of the System and avoiding disproportionate administrative burden for operators and administrators.

Ferries: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Eames

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the sufficiency of the frequency of sailings of ferry services between Northern Ireland and the UK mainland; and how often such services are reviewed in consultation with the Confederation of British Industry in Northern Ireland and other relevant bodies. [HL6358]

Baroness Sugg: Ferry services between Northern Ireland and Great Britain are provided commercially by the relevant ferry operators. We would expect those operators to respond to market demand engaging as appropriate with relevant stakeholders and bodies.

Fire Prevention

 Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish the advice they have provided to public bodies, local authorities and housing associations following the fire and safety test failure of the type of fire door used at Grenfell Tower. [HL6431]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Independent experts have advised that the risk to public safety is low, and that evidence from the test and investigation to date does not change this assessment. The Fire safety advice, which remains unchanged, is that:

• Smoke alarms save lives but only if they’re working and in the right place. Ensure you have at least one on every level of your home and test them regularly – monthly is best.
• Keep fire doors shut to help prevent the spread of fire and smoke.
• Understand and follow the fire safety advice for your building. If in doubt, discuss with the landlord or building owner.

Following independent expert advice, the Government is acting at pace to carry out further investigations to establish the full circumstances.

Fisheries: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Eames

To ask Her Majesty's Government what conversations they have had with the government of the Republic of Ireland on the rights of Northern Ireland-based fishermen after Brexit. [HL6356]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: We place great value on our close relationship with Ireland and our shared values in relation to fisheries matters, including our strong commitment to sustainable fishing. The Government is engaging regularly with Ireland on these matters. The Fisheries Minister discussed the Voisinage agreement with Michael Creed, the Irish Fisheries Minister, last year.

We will be working to secure the best deal in the negotiations for the whole of the UK fishing industry.

Gaza: Ports

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 7
March (HL5727), what progress has been made on easing movement and access into and out of Gaza, particularly through EU assistance in establishing a sea-link from Gaza to another international port, currently envisaged in Cyprus. [HL6390]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are not aware of progress towards establishing a sea-link from Gaza to another international port. The UK continues to call on the Governments of Israel and Egypt to ease movement and access restrictions into and out of Gaza. Most recently British officials encouraged an easing of restrictions and improvement in the humanitarian situation in Gaza at the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee on 20 March.

**Gibraltar: Spain**
*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the number of incursions by Spanish state vessels into the British waters around Gibraltar in the last 12 months. [HL6465]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** There were 602 incursions by Spanish State vessels into British Gibraltar Territorial Waters from 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018.

Incursions are a violation of sovereignty, not a threat to it. They do not weaken or undermine the legal basis in international law for British sovereignty over Gibraltar, including British Gibraltar Territorial Waters. The Royal Navy continues to challenge all incursions into British Gibraltar Territorial Waters. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office backs this up politically by making formal diplomatic protests to the Spanish government.

**Golan Heights: Elections**
*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, on 5 March (HC130079), whether they will now make an assessment of the implications of Israel’s plans to hold local elections in the Golan Heights. [HL6391]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have not made an assessment of the Israel’s plans to hold local elections in the Golan Heights. The UK considers the Golan Heights to be Occupied Territory and we call on Israel as the occupying power to uphold its obligations under international law.

**Grenfell Tower: Fire Regulations**
*Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to undertake further tests to determine whether the type of fire doors installed at Grenfell Tower in 2013 conformed to the appropriate fire standard. [HL6432]

**Lord Bassam of Brighton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Kensington and Chelsea Council regarding (1) whether the type of fire doors installed at Grenfell Tower in 2013 were fire and safety tested prior to installation, (2) whether the contract for the supply of the fire doors was subjected to competitive tender, (3) who undertook the installation of the fire doors, (4) what checks were undertaken following installation to ensure that the doors were fit for purpose, (5) which fire door options were considered for installation, and (6) on what basis the decision to install those particular fire doors was made. [HL6433]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** The Government is carrying out investigations, including testing in relation to public and product safety. This work is being taken forward at pace. The Independent Inquiry into Grenfell, led by Sir Martin Moore-Bick, is examining the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire at Grenfell and a criminal investigation is being led by the Metropolitan Police into the fire at Grenfell Tower. Both these must be allowed to complete and establish the facts behind the fire.

**Help to Buy Scheme**
*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of Help to Buy loans have been repaid before the end of the five year interest free period. [HL6362]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** This data is not currently published due to commercial sensitivity.

**Higher Education: Qualifications**
*Asked by Lord Smith of Clifton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total number of domiciled students in England in (1) 2015–16, and (2) 2016–17, aged (a) 18 to 24, and (b) 25 and over, who were taking (i) full-time foundation degrees, (ii) part-time foundation degrees, (iii) full-time Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Higher National Diploma (HND) courses, and (iv) part-time HNC and HND courses; and of those, how many were studying at further education colleges. [HL6379]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has prepared information on students domiciled in England enrolled on foundation degrees, higher national diplomas, or higher national certificates. The figures cover HEFCE-funded higher education institutions and further education colleges in England, as well as enrolments at alternative providers in England. Figures for the academic years 2015/16 and 2016/17 have been provided in the attached table.
Baroness Williams of Trafford: Any property occupied for domestic purposes will be valued for council tax. The Answer includes the following attached material:

Students domiciled in England enrolled FD/HNC/HND [HL6379 Attachment.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-14/HL6379

Housing: Students

Asked by Baroness Byford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what rules govern council taxes and business rates on (1) blocks of flats for university students, (2) houses in multiple occupation let to university students, and (3) other dwellings let to university students. [HL6354]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Any property occupied for domestic purposes will be valued for council tax. Decisions on valuations are a matter for the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).

Halls of residence which comprise solely of living accommodation or other services used only by residents will be valued for council tax, rather than business rates. Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) are also subject to council tax, as are dwellings let to university students.

Immigration: Fraud

Asked by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have issued any policy guidance to help immigration caseworkers assess the character and conduct of highly-skilled migrants applying for visas to work in the UK. [HL6528]

Directed by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to put in place processes enabling action to be taken against those whose immigration applications have been refused on the grounds of deception. [HL6529]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Guidance on character and conduct issued to caseworkers and visa officers considering applications from highly skilled migrants wishing to work in the UK is published on Gov.uk.

For those in the UK whose applications have been refused on the grounds of deception, processes are already in place to enable removal action to be taken against them.

Insolvency

Asked by Lord Hunt of Chesterton

To ask the Leader of the House what plans she has to propose a debate in the House of Lords on their consultation on Insolvency and Corporate Governance, announced on 20 March. [HL6544]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: My Noble Friend the Chief Whip has no immediate plans to schedule such a debate but I have made him aware of this question. It is of course open to the Noble Lord to use the established routes to seek a backbench debate.

Iraq: Minority Groups

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of recent criminal and terrorist acts targeting members of minority communities in Iraq; and what discussions they have had with the government of Iraq about the protection of Yezidi, Christians, Shabak, Sabean Mandaeans, and other minorities. [HL6278]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of credible reports of human rights abuses and violations perpetrated against minority communities in Iraq. The UK condemns all such acts.

We regularly raise the protection needs of minorities with the Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government regularly. We have made clear, through our Embassy in Baghdad and our Consulate General in Erbil, the importance of protecting civilians and of Iraq meeting its human rights responsibilities, including ensuring the rule of law. We welcome the commitments of Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi to investigate all allegations of human rights abuses and violations, including those committed against minorities, and to hold those responsible to account, including those committed against minorities. We will continue to make clear that we expect the Government of Iraq to act on that commitment.

On 2 and 3 March, I (the Minister for The Commonwealth and UN, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) met the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Nechirvan Barzani and raised the importance of tolerance and protecting and safeguarding the rights of Christians, Yezidis and other minority groups. The Prime Minister also emphasised this message with Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi during her visit in November.

Jerusalem: Religious Buildings

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel to protect the status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem. [HL6336]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We recognise that Jerusalem holds huge religious significance for Jews, Muslims and Christians. We have made representations to all parties, including Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan, reiterating the fundamental necessity of
maintaining the status quo at the Holy Sites, including at Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif.

Lauren Southern  
*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why Lauren Southern was detained under the Terrorism Act 2000 in Calais in March; and why she has been denied entry to the UK. [HL6552]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: It is longstanding policy not to disclose details of records which may be held in relation to individuals’ arrival in the United Kingdom, as to do so would not be in the interests of national security.

Schedule 7 helps maintain public safety by allowing an examining officer to stop and question and, when necessary, detain and search individuals travelling through ports, airports, international rail stations or the border area to determine whether an individual appears to be someone who is or has been involved in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism.

The decision to examine an individual using Schedule 7 is an operational one, undertaken independently by the police. You will understand that the Home Office cannot comment or provide any more specific information about why Ms Southern was stopped and examined.

Legislatures  
*Asked by Lord Jopling*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker, further to the Written Answers by Lord McFall of Alcluith on 5 February (HL5378) and on 6 March (HL5733) and by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 5 February (HL5379), how the number of Peers would be adjusted if their positions as full members of UK parliamentary delegations reflected the total cost represented by Peers of (1) 50.58 per cent for the Council of Europe, (2) 35.01 per cent for the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and (3) 14.41 per cent for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. [HL6406]

Lord McFall of Alcluith: Further to my Written Answers on 5 February (HL5378) and on 6 March (HL5733) and the Written Answer from Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 5 February (HL5379), the percentage of the total cost in each case represented by members of the House of Lords is dependent on the overall number of Peers on the delegations concerned, and other factors, notably the amount of time spent on their work as members of the delegations. Allocation of places on the delegations is a matter for the political parties and it would be up to them to decide what account to take of these costs in allocating places on the delegations.

Liquefied Natural Gas: Imports  
*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much liquefied natural gas has been imported into the UK since 1 January; and from which countries. [HL6363]

Lord Henley: The Department’s Energy Trends Table 4.4 includes an extensive monthly breakdown of all gas imports, including liquefied natural gas, by country of origin. Due to the large amount of data in Table 4.4, I have included a copy of it as an attachment: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682882/ET_4.4.xls](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682882/ET_4.4.xls)

The latest data in Energy Trends is for two months prior to the publication month, and the publication on 29th March will include new data for January 2018.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

- Supplementary info on origin of UK gas imports [Copy of ET_4.4.xls]

The material can be viewed online at: [http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-14/HL6363](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-14/HL6363)

Livestock Industry: Licensing  
*Asked by Baroness Byford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 20 February (HL5471), how the remaining 20 per cent proposed charge for permit variation that does not relate to staff or IT costs is made up. [HL6351]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The remaining costs are made up of a wide variety of expenditure which includes property costs, finance, HR, shared services (transactional processing), procurement, administration, insurance, transport and plant, utilities, and travel. The Environment Agency’s consultation response document will provide more information on the make-up of charges. This is due to be published in March.

Pakistan: Religion  
*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Pakistan about the recent ruling that all Pakistani citizens must declare their religion when applying for identity documents or government jobs. [HL6300]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Whilst we have not raised the specific issue of the ruling by the High Court in Islamabad on 9 March about inclusion of religion on ID cards. However, we remain deeply concerned about restrictions on freedom of religion or belief in Pakistan. It is vital that Pakistan upholds and protects the rights of all its citizens, regardless of their faith, gender or ethnicity. As such we have called for specific action from Pakistan
on establishing all inclusive electoral registers without religious bias, during the UPR process on Pakistan at the HRC.

We also regularly raise the issues of freedom of religion and belief, and the protection of minority Muslim and non-Muslim religious communities, with the government at a senior level.

We continue to urge Pakistan to take the steps necessary to comply in full with its human rights obligations, including engaging with the UN and other international bodies, and to ensure that the rights of minorities are respected.

**Police: Firearms**  
*Asked by Lord Harris of Haringey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the review into the legal position of police firearms officers will be concluded; and whether they intend to publish the findings of that review. [HL6495]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** I refer the noble Lord to the answer I gave to Lord Hogan-Howe on the 12th March 2018, UIN HL5908.

**Regional Electricity Companies**  
*Asked by Baroness Featherstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to set a deadline for distribution network operators to transition to distribution system operators. [HL6494]

**Lord Henley:** In our Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan, published with Ofgem last July, we set out our expectation that distribution network operators (DNOs) would transition to being distribution system operators (DSOs). This involves more active management of networks, ensuring they compete network requirements (so flexible technologies like storage are deployed where they are more cost effective than network reinforcement), and greater coordination between the transmission and distribution system operators to improve efficiency.

The Energy Networks Association published a report in December 2017 outlining progress to date and a roadmap for future work. The Government welcomes in particular the commitment from the network companies to open up network requirements to competition, and notes that some DNOs are already doing this. As different parts of the network face different levels of congestion, other DNOs are expected to follow suit as and when they need to overcome network constraints.

**Runaway Children**  
*Asked by Baroness Doocy*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the number of children being re-trafficked after going missing from local authority care. [HL6489]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Local authorities are required to report data on all children missing from care or away from placement without authorisation regardless of their immigration or trafficking status.

The National Crime Agency is working with the relevant police leads to ensure the consistent recording of figures on the number of children reported missing to them who were trafficked or unaccompanied.

Working alongside our NGO partners, we have trained thousands of foster carers, so that they are more aware of the specific needs of children who have been trafficked. The Department for Education has recently commissioned 1,000 training places for foster carers and support workers of unaccompanied children to help them support children and prevent them from being re-trafficked.

**Russia: Crimea**  
*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to make representations to the government of Russia regarding reasonable local autonomy for ethnic and cultural groups in the Crimea, including respect for their traditional institutions, culture and heritage; and whether they will enquire as to any proposals for restoring the previous level of economic activity in the region. [HL6360]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Four years since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, the human rights situation on the peninsula continues to worsen and access is denied to international human rights organisations. The British Government regularly highlights Russia's illegal annexation, publicly and multilaterally, raising concerns about human rights abuses committed by the de-facto Russian authorities. This includes abuses against the Crimean Tatars. The Foreign Secretary met with representatives of the Crimean Tatars in London on 14 March.

**Sharing Economy**  
*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to improve workers’ rights for the self-employed and workers in the gig economy. [HL6423]

**Lord Henley:** In the Government Response to the Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices we committed to firm action and future legislation to enhance employment rights for those working in the gig economy, agency workers and those who work atypically. We are currently consulting on how best to achieve this change.

The Government Response also sets out a package of measures to better support the self-employed, including improved support on embarking on a self-employed career, encouraging pension savings and supporting people to pay the right tax.

Alongside this, from 6 April 2016, we have given self-employed people the ability to build their entitlement to
the new State Pension at the same rate as employed people.

Slavery

*Asked by Baroness Doocey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the inspection process and sanctions if a public authority fails to comply with section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. [HL6487]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** There is no formal inspection process relating to section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA). The Home Office works closely with a range of partners to increase awareness of public authorities' responsibilities under the MSA and as part of the National Referral Mechanism reforms announced by Home Office Ministers in October 2017 we will be reviewing the role of first responders.

Slavery: Children

*Asked by Baroness Doocey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether all positive reasonable grounds decisions made under the National Referral Mechanism for children result in the recording of a crime of modern slavery. [HL6484]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office has amended the crime counting rules in respect of modern slavery offences so that when a positive reasonable grounds referral is received from an NRM competent authority the relevant police force to whom the referral is made must record a crime of modern slavery.

This applies to both adults and children referred into the NRM.

*Asked by Baroness Doocey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many crimes of modern slavery involving children have been recorded since the Modern Slavery Act 2015 came into force. [HL6485]

*Asked by Baroness Doocey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which police forces have recorded crimes of modern slavery involving children since the Modern Slavery Act 2015 came into force. [HL6486]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office and regional police forces do collect information on how many modern slavery crimes are recorded. The information does not distinguish between adult and child victims.

The NCA publishes statistics on referrals into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) on a quarterly basis. This includes a breakdown of child referrals by nationality and exploitation type.

For more information: http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/national-referral-mechanism-statistics

*Asked by Baroness Doocey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children have requested re-consideration of a negative National Referral Mechanism decision in the past three years. [HL6488]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The National Crime Agency publishes statistics on referrals into the National Referral Mechanism on a quarterly basis. These statistics include referrals for children.

These reports are available via the following links:


The specific information you have requested is not currently published.

The Answer includes the following attached material:


The material can be viewed online at:

http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-20/HL6488

South Africa: Property Rights

*Asked by Lord Northbrook*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the motion passed in the Parliament of South Africa on 1 March to confiscate land without compensation from white farmers. [HL6374]

**Lord Ahmed of Wimbledon:** We welcome the South African Government's assurance that 'the process of land distribution would be orderly, within South African laws and taking into consideration both the social and economic impact.’ We further welcome President Ramaphosa's commitment that land reform will be carried out 'without negatively affecting economic growth, agricultural production and food security' and his assurance that he would 'not allow any smash and grab interventions'.

Statutory Instruments: Parliamentary Scrutiny

*Asked by Lord Forsyth of Drumlean*

To ask the Leader of the House whether statutory instruments before the House for approval following consideration in Grand Committee are debatable; whether there is any time limit on such debates; and what steps she intends to take to inform Ministers of the position. [HL6608]
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: Approval motions for affirmative instruments - whether they have previously been considered in a Grand Committee or not - are debatable and not normally time-limited.

Standing Order 28 sets out that debate on such motions, as with all other motions, must be relevant to the question before the House.

UK Relations with EU: Security

*Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 20 February (HL5442) concerning the future security partnership with the EU, whether they intend to consult Parliament on those proposals; and whether Parliament will be asked to give final approval. [HL6380]

Lord Callanan: The Government set out the UK’s approach to the future security partnership in the Foreign, Policy, Defence and Development paper of September 2017. The Prime Minister further expanded on this most recently in her Munich speech on 17th February.

The Government has committed to hold a vote on the final deal in Parliament as soon as possible after the negotiations have concluded. This vote will cover both the Withdrawal Agreement and the terms of our future relationship.

Undocumented Migrants: Northern Ireland

*Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people have been apprehended when illegally entering the UK via Northern Ireland's land border with the Republic of Ireland during the last twelve months, broken down by month. [HL6534]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office does not hold the information requested.

USA: Asia

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they support the United States administration’s vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific; and what assessment they have made of the risks and benefits of such a policy. [HL6306]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has held discussions with the US on their Indo-Pacific strategy. The Prime Minister also discussed Japan’s Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy during her visit to Japan in November 2017.

The UK welcomes the US commitment to a transparent, rules-based international system and support for free and open access to the oceans in accordance with international law. The government also believes there is significant scope for improving regional connectivity, specifically through greater infrastructure investment. The UK will continue to engage as these initiatives develop further to maximise the benefits for the region and the UK.
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