

Session 2017-19
No. 116



Thursday
24 May 2018

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements 1

Written Answers.....6

[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/>

Members who want a printed copy of Written Answers and Written Statements should notify the Printed Paper Office.

This printed edition is a reproduction of the original text of Answers and Statements, which can be found on the internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>.

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 Agnew of Oulton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Wales Office
Baroness Buscombe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Callanan	Minister of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Duncan of Springbank	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office and Scotland Office
Baroness Fairhead	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Henley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Baroness Manzoor	Whip
Lord O'Shaughnessy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Whip
Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport, Whip
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Young of Cookham	Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Lords 2018

This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament licence,
which is published at www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/

Written Statements

Thursday, 24 May 2018

Bovine TB

[HLWS696]

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

I wish to update the House on the Government's strategy to eradicate bovine TB (bTB) in England by 2038. The measures I am announcing today will help to strengthen disease control and expand our options to tackle new outbreaks of bTB.

Following the recent consultation on the principle of allowing badger control in the Low Risk Area (LRA) of England, I am announcing my intention to enable badger control measures in the LRA in the rare event that disease in badgers is linked with infected herds. This will allow any such outbreaks to be tackled rapidly to prevent bTB from spreading further within the wildlife and cattle populations. It will also help preserve the LRA's low incidence status.

Badger control in the LRA is expected to be permitted only in very exceptional circumstances where veterinary epidemiologists judge an area to meet the published criteria for a bTB 'hotspot'. Any decision on whether to implement badger control in a specific LRA location will be taken by the Defra Secretary of State after considering all relevant scientific and veterinary advice. All the stringent licensing criteria set out in Defra's Guidance to Natural England will need to be met by the cull company.

In summer 2017 we consulted on a proposal to pay compensation at 50 per cent of the average market price for any animal brought into a TB breakdown herd which then fails a TB test whilst that breakdown is still ongoing. This already happens in Wales and I have decided that it should apply in England from 1 November 2018. The proposal is intended to encourage herd owners to take further steps to improve their disease controls in a sensible and proportionate manner. One way they can do this is to seek accreditation under a scheme based on the standards laid down by the Cattle Health Certification Standards (CHeCS) body. Herds which are accredited at the time of the breakdown will continue to receive 100 per cent compensation for all compulsorily slaughtered cattle.

In a further strengthening of our testing regime, in December 2017 we confirmed that surveillance testing for most herds in the High Risk Area will take place at six monthly intervals to improve early detection and eradication of disease, and to prevent it spreading to new areas. We have decided that this change should take effect from early 2020, when the next generation of TB testing contracts with veterinary delivery partners will be put in place.

The TB strategy review led by Professor Sir Charles Godfray, announced in February, is considering how to take the strategy to the next phase, so we are able to deploy all tools to tackle this terrible disease. Currently in their evidence-gathering phase, the reviewers are examining progress with implementation and how we can improve, enhance or accelerate our approach.

Copies of the summary of consultation responses and way forward document have been placed in the Library of the House.

Competitiveness Council

[HLWS701]

Lord Henley: My hon Friend the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (Sam Gyimah), has today made the following statement:

The Competitiveness Council will take place on 28 and 29 May in Brussels.

Day one – Internal Market and Industry

The Council will receive a presentation from the Commission on the 'Competitiveness check-up' examining linkages between the Internal Market and industrial competitiveness from a sectoral perspective. The Council will discuss the Regulation on Mutual Recognition (part of the 'goods package') with the Presidency hoping to reach a general approach. The Council will also hold a policy debate on the Regulation on platform to business relations.

Under AOB the Commission will provide information on recent initiatives in the Digital Single Market, the Copyright Package, the New Deal for Consumers Package, the Company Law Package, Supplementary Protection Certificates for medicinal products and the supplementary protection certificate for medicinal products. The Commission will also provide information on the outcome of initiatives and conferences in the field of tourism and provide an update on the current state of play on the Unitary Patent and Unified Patent Court.

Day one will conclude with information from the Austrian delegation on their incoming Presidency work programme.

Day two – Space and Research

Day two of the Competitiveness Council will start with a policy debate on the future of European space policy.

The Research sessions will begin with a progress report on the Regulation on establishing the European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking. The Council will then adopt Council Conclusions on accelerating knowledge circulation in the European Union and Conclusions on the European Open Science Cloud.

During the afternoon session the Council is expected to agree on the Regulation on the Regulation on the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2019-2020). This will be followed by a policy debate on research and innovation within the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

Under AOB, the Commission will provide information on the outcome of the Presidency event dedicated to Space (held in Sofia on 17-19 April 2018).

Day two will conclude with information from the Austrian delegation on their incoming Presidency work programme.

ECOFIN

[HLWS698]

Lord Bates: My right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Philip Hammond) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

A meeting of The Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) will be held in Brussels on 25 May 2018. EU Finance Ministers will discuss the following:

Early Morning Session

The Eurogroup President will brief the Council on the outcomes of the 24 May meeting of the Eurogroup, and the European Commission will provide an update on the current economic situation in the EU.

Banking Package

The Council will be invited to agree a general approach to the Banking Risk Reduction Package including proposals for legislative amendments to the Capital Requirements Regulation (CRR) and Directive (CRD), Single Resolution Mechanism Regulation (SRMR), and the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD).

Strengthening Administrative Cooperation

The Council will be invited to agree a general approach to strengthen administrative cooperation in the area of VAT.

General Reverse Charge Mechanism

The Council will be invited to agree a general approach on the VAT General Reverse Charge Mechanism.

E-Publications

The Council will be invited to agree a general approach on reduced rates for VAT e-publications.

Current Financial Services Legislative Proposals

The Bulgarian Presidency will provide an update on current legislative proposals in the field of financial services.

European Semester

The Council will be invited to adopt Council conclusions on the In-Depth Reviews of macroeconomic imbalances in Member States as part of the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure, and the implementation of 2017 Country-Specific Recommendations as assessed in the Commission's Country Reports, published on 07 March.

2018 Ageing Report

The Council will be invited to adopt Council conclusions on the 2018 Ageing Report on age-related spending and the sustainability of public finances.

EU Exit

[HLWS703]

Lord Callanan: 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:

Today we are publishing four documents produced by the UK negotiating team for discussion with the EU.

These cover:

- i) External Security
- ii) Internal Security
- iii) Galileo
- iv) Economic Partnership

These will be available on Gov.uk and copies will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Tomorrow we will be publishing a document on the Exchange of Classified Information, which was produced by the UK negotiating team for discussion with the EU. This will be available on Gov.uk and a copy will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Europol: Personal Data

[HLWS697]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service (Nick Hurd) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Until the UK leaves it remains a full member of the European Union with all the rights and responsibilities this entails. The Government will continue to consider the application of the UK's right to opt in to, or opt out of, forthcoming EU legislation in the area of Justice and Home Affairs on a case by case basis, with a view to maximising our country's security, protecting our civil liberties and enhancing our ability to control immigration.

The Government has decided to opt-in to Council Decisions authorising negotiations between the EU and Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Algeria to conclude agreements on the exchange of personal data with Europol.

The UK values the role of Europol in helping law enforcement agencies coordinate investigations in cross border serious and organised crime and terrorism. As Europol doesn't currently have data sharing agreements with any other countries in the Mediterranean and North African region, these agreements could help to increase the security of the UK through helping to improve counter-terrorism, organised crime and illegal migration efforts in that region.

Opting in provides an opportunity for us to influence the negotiation of these agreements, including to ensure that UK concerns around human rights are reflected.

Foreign Affairs Council

[HLWS695]

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:

I will attend the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) on 28 May. The Foreign Affairs Council will be chaired by the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Federica Mogherini. The meeting will be held in Brussels.

The FAC will discuss current affairs, Iran, DRC, Post-Cotonou and Venezuela and possibly the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP).

Foreign Affairs Council.

Iran

Ministers will have a substantive discussion on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) following the decision of the US to withdraw from the agreement. The FAC will consider a package of economic measures being drawn up by the EU that aim to protect European business interests and enable the EU to continue to meet commitments to sanctions relief to Iran under the JCPOA. The UK continues to view the Iran nuclear deal as important for our shared security, and therefore remain firmly committed to ensuring it is upheld. To this end, we are working with the remaining parties to the deal.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Ministers will have an initial discussion on the political situation in the DRC. They will consider progress towards overdue Presidential elections, now scheduled for 23 December 2018, which we hope will see the first peaceful transition of power in the independent history of the country. The UK is a leading voice in international efforts to ensure these elections take place as planned. We will focus on the need to ensure that the international community remains united in putting pressure on the Government of the DRC to meet the democratic aspirations of its people.

Post-Cotonou

The FAC will adopt the negotiating mandate for a post-2020 agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of countries. The FAC will give an initial political steer to the Commission ahead of the negotiations, which will be formally launched at the EU-ACP Council of Ministers in Togo on 31 May.

Venezuela

Ministers will discuss the political situation in Venezuela following Presidential elections held on 20 May. The FAC will also consider how to respond to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Venezuela and its impact on the region.

MEPP

Following the opening of the US Embassy to Israel in Jerusalem and recent violence along the Gaza border,

Ministers will have an exchange of views on prospects for the Middle East Peace Process.

Any other business (AOB)

Under AOB, the UK and France are planning to update the FAC on their ongoing efforts to strengthen compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Council Conclusions

The FAC is expected to adopt Conclusions on strengthening civilian CSDP, enhanced EU security engagement in and with Asia, the special report by the European Court of Auditors: "Election Observation Missions - Efforts made to follow up recommendations but better monitoring needed", and on small arms and light weapons.

General Affairs Council

[HLWS700]

Lord Callanan: I represented the UK at the General Affairs Council (GAC) meeting in Brussels on Monday 14 May 2018. The agenda covered the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) post-2020, the Annotated draft agenda for the European Council on 28-29 June 2018, and Rule of Law in Poland / Article 7(1) Treaty on European Union (TEU) Reasoned Proposal.

A provisional report of the meeting and the conclusions adopted can be found on the Council of the European Union's website at:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/gac/2018/05/14/>

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) post-2020

Günther Oettinger, European Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, presented the Commission's proposal for a post-2020 MFF. He set out the political context and the need for funding for new priorities, such as migration and defence. I expressed the UK's interest in participating in programmes promoting science, education and mutual security.

Annotated draft agenda for the European Council on 28-29 June 2018

The Presidency presented the annotated draft agenda for June European Council (JEC), which included: Migration; Security and Defence; Jobs, Growth and Competitiveness; Innovation and Digital; and External Relations. Trade and Enlargement may also be added to the agenda.

I intervened on the Security and Defence item to highlight the importance of maintaining momentum in facing challenges like terrorism and organised crime. I also welcomed discussion on a continued response to the attack on Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury on 4 March. On Trade, I expressed that the UK remained concerned over US proposals to introduce tariffs for aluminium and steel imports and continued to press for an EU-wide exemption. I also stated that the UK would welcome discussion of this issue at JEC.

Rule of Law in Poland / Article 7(1) TEU Reasoned Proposal

Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans updated Ministers on the ongoing dialogue between the Commission and Poland. He concluded that Poland's recent reforms were insufficient to remove the risk of a threat to the rule of law and that more progress was needed. Ministers highlighted the need for continuation of dialogue and further reforms by Poland. The Commission indicated its intention to continue dialogue with Poland and provide a final opinion on the matter at the June GAC.

I intervened to highlight the importance of the rule of law, welcomed the progress so far, and emphasised that the best solution was one reached through constructive dialogue.

Immigration

[HLWS699]

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

I have been very clear that the Government deeply regrets what has happened to some of the Windrush generation and our determination to put it right. Both my predecessor as Home Secretary and I have set out to Parliament the immediate steps that we took to assist those in the Windrush generation but were clear that this was simply a precursor for a more formal arrangement.

I have today laid a statutory instrument which will bring into force the "Windrush scheme" which will ensure that members of the Windrush generation, their children born in the UK and who arrived in UK as minors, and others who have been in the United Kingdom for a long period of time, will be able to obtain the documents to confirm their status and, in appropriate cases, be able to obtain British citizenship free of charge.

The Windrush Scheme, which will be a distinct scheme, will make it easier for those concerned to receive the support they need and to understand what is on offer. Those applying under the scheme will benefit from the services of the taskforce which help people to navigate the immigration system and will continue to take a sympathetic and proactive approach when assisting people in confirming their status.

The new scheme will come into operation next Wednesday, 30 May. Breaching the normal 21 day rule between laying a Statutory Instrument and its commencement is not something which I have done lightly and I am very mindful of the need to observe normal Parliamentary protocols. However, my judgement is that the imperative to get the new scheme up and running as swiftly as possible requires this course of action. The immigration Minister has written to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments and the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee to explain further our reasoning.

The new scheme will ensure that members of the Windrush generation – Commonwealth citizens who were settled in the UK before 1973 - will be able to apply to become British citizens more easily. They will be deemed to have met the normal requirement for knowledge of language and life in the UK and will not be required to attend a citizenship ceremony, unless they want to. There will be no fees to pay.

Commonwealth citizens who were settled before 1973 but who do not wish to become British citizens, those who are not eligible, and citizens of other nationalities who were settled before 1973 will be provided with documents which confirm their right to remain permanently in the UK and to access services. Again, there will be no fees payable.

Children of the Windrush generation who were born in the UK will themselves be British, though in some cases they may want a document to confirm that status. Others will have the right to register as British. We will facilitate that through the taskforce and waive any application fees involved.

We are providing that a child of a member of the Windrush generation who was born abroad and who came to live in the UK before they were 18 and is still here is eligible for a free application for a document confirming their status or, if they wish, a free application for citizenship.

My predecessor undertook to consider the position of those who came to the UK between 1973 and 1988, when immigration and nationality law changed. Unlike the earlier generation, these people should have had documentary evidence of their entitlement to be in the UK but may no longer be able to prove it. Where they are lawfully in the UK, they can apply for the necessary documentation confirming that free of charge.

There is already provision in the immigration system for people whose permanent residence status has lapsed, through a prolonged absence from the UK, to resume their residence here, by obtaining a returning resident visa. It is limited to people who have spent most of their lives in the UK. I am adjusting the visa rules to ensure they are interpreted generously in respect of the Windrush generation, who spent a considerable time in the UK and who may have been unaware that they were forfeiting residence here when they left, for example because they considered themselves British. Again, that application will be made available free of charge.

Equally, there are those of the Windrush generation who retired to another country but want to return to the UK temporarily as visitors to see friends and family. I believe we should make a generous offer to the Windrush generation, recognising their special position and relationship with this country and that those who qualify can apply for a visit visa free of charge, valid for 10 years.

In my Written Ministerial Statement of 10 May, I announced the opening of the call for evidence on compensation. I am pleased to say that there has been a good response with almost 100 responses received to

date. In addition, the Home Office has started an active programme of outreach to understand better the experiences of individuals and help inform the design of the compensation scheme. My officials have made contact with a number of community organisations and their representatives, and have attended events in a number of Hon Members' constituencies. This programme will continue and expand in the weeks ahead, working with Martin Forde QC, the Independent Person that is overseeing the design of the scheme.

All of this is about swiftly putting wrong the injustices that have been done to the Windrush generation. However, it is also fundamentally important that the lessons from this episode are learned for the future, so that this never happens again.

As I made clear to the House on 2 May, I will therefore ensure that a thorough review is conducted of what happened and why, looking particularly at:

- how members of the Windrush generation came to be entangled in measures designed for illegal immigrants;
- why that was not spotted sooner; and
- whether the right corrective measures are now in place.

I will also be taking steps to ensure that the review is subject to robust independent oversight and challenge.

Prison Education and Employment

[HLWS702]

Lord Keen of Elie: My right honourable friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (David Gauke) has made the following Written Statement.

"Today, the Government is launching the Education and Employment Strategy for adult prisoners. It builds on the ambitions of the November 2016 White Paper *Prison Safety and Reform*.

Work has the power to change people's lives, especially those of ex-prisoners. A prison sentence rightly serves as a punishment, depriving someone of their liberty. However, for those offenders who want to turn their backs on crime, prison should also be a catalyst for change. The vision at the heart of this strategy is that when an offender enters prison they should be put, immediately, on the path to employment on release.

We know that people with criminal convictions face significant barriers on release from prison, with access to employment and education being at the forefront. Not only are many ex-prisoners often unprepared for employment on release in terms of their skills and training, there remains a stigma among some employers

about hiring people with a criminal conviction. With reoffending costing the UK billions each year, this strategy sets out to help break down the barriers and prejudices offenders often face in trying to secure employment.

Our reforms to prison education will give governors the tools they need to tailor provision to the requirements of employers and the needs of their prisoner populations. This approach builds on the commitments we made in the White Paper *Prison Safety and Reform*, putting into practice the key principles of governor empowerment and accountability that underpinned the recommendations in Dame Sally Coates' seminal review. Governors will control their education budget, will decide what curriculum is most appropriate for their learner population, how it is organised and, crucially, who delivers it. These are far-reaching changes that governors themselves demand.

It is essential that prisoners develop their skills and gather experience through work during custodial sentences. Prison jobs are a key part of this, as is release on temporary licence (ROTL), which enables prisoners to undertake work in real workplaces. Evidence published today underlines the link between increased use of ROTL and reduced re-offending and we are also today consulting those who make ROTL decisions and those who provide ROTL placements on how to get more risk-assessed prisoners out of their cells and into real workplaces.

For offenders who play by the rules, we want to use incentives like workplace ROTL to encourage continued good behaviour and help support a turn away from violence and disorder in our prisons. We will develop a new operational policy framework that will allow prison governors to better tailor their ROTL regime to the circumstances of each offender and the opportunities available.

The strategy also sets a range of commitments to boost employment for prisoners once they are released. These include:

- The New Futures Network (NFN) will engage and persuade employers to take on ex-prisoners, with experts placed in every geographical prison group in a phased roll-out across England and Wales.
- The Civil Service will recruit ex-prisoners, providing jobs and acting as a role model for other employers.
- The DWP and MoJ will work together to explore new ways to deliver enhancements to the current benefit claim service, so that prison leavers have immediate easier access to financial support on the day of release."

Written Answers

Thursday, 24 May 2018

Air Passenger Duty: Northern Ireland

Asked by **Lord Empey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government by how much the Northern Ireland Block Grant was reduced to allow the Northern Ireland Executive to set a nil rate of Air Passenger Duty on transatlantic flights from Northern Ireland in the last three financial years for which figures are available. [HL7936]

Lord Bates: Reductions to the Northern Ireland Executive's Block Grant to reflect the devolution of long haul Air Passenger Duty in Northern Ireland for 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 are set out in the table below:

2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
£2.269 m	£2.166 m	£ 2.224m

These figures are not cumulative.

Alex Smiles: Sunderland

Asked by **Lord Shipley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations (1) the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and (2) the Environment Agency received from (a) Sunderland City Council, and (b) Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority about requests for assistance to make the site of the Alex Smiles waste and recycling centre on Deptford Terrace in Sunderland safe to members of the public, and the local environment following that company's insolvency in May 2015. [HL8014]

Asked by **Lord Shipley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assistance (1) the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and (2) the Environment Agency can give to (a) Sunderland City Council, and (b) Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority in clearing up the site of a recent waste fire at the former Alex Smiles waste and recycling centre on Deptford Terrace in Sunderland. [HL8015]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Environment Agency (EA) has worked closely with Sunderland City Council (SCC) and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) to look at all opportunities to remove the waste at the former Alex Smiles site in Sunderland.

During the company's administration process, hazardous and inert waste were removed from the site. However, the company's lack of funds resulted in large quantities of combustible waste remaining on site. At that time the EA served an Enforcement Notice on the administrator to ensure the site was secure. The EA believes that had these measures not been undertaken the

risks to public health and the environment from this fire would have been greater.

Prior to the start of the fire on Monday 14 May, the EA was working with SCC on a remediation plan involving contributions from SCC and a manufacturing firm located adjacent to the site. This plan remains the preferred solution of all partners and will be further assessed and developed once the fire is out. As part of this process, the EA would have adopted an enforcement position involving some waste material being capped on site.

Since the fire broke out the EA has been working closely with SCC and the FRS to respond to the waste fire in order to minimise the risk to public health and the environment. This included a joint tactical approach to both tackling the fire and media and communications.

The EA is working with waste contractors to ensure all waste that is removed to tackle the fire is disposed of properly and any necessary permissions are in place in time for removal work. The EA provided the initial air quality monitoring and continues to provide water quality monitoring to assess the environmental impact and inform Public Health England's advice to the public.

The EA will continue to work with all relevant partners to explore opportunities to remove the entirety of the waste on site once the fire has been extinguished.

Defra has not received any requests for assistance from Sunderland City Council or Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority. The EA are the body responsible for the waste enforcement and operational issues.

Children's Centres: Closures

Asked by **Lord Storey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many and which Children's Centres closed in 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017 to date. [HL7778]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Since 18 September 2017, data on children's centres has been supplied by local authorities via the department's Get Information about Schools database portal at: <https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>.

The figures in the table below are based on information supplied by local authorities as at 11 May 2018^[1].

Financial Year	Number of children's centres closed
2015-16	182
2016-17	135
2017-18	12
1 April to 11 May 2018	1

A list of the children's centres that have closed in each financial year since April 2015 is attached.

Councils are reconfiguring services to deliver them more efficiently. If a council decides to close a children's centre, statutory guidance is clear that they should demonstrate that local children and families would not be

adversely affected and that local areas continue to have sufficient children's centres to meet their needs.

Over the same period, the number of two, three and four years olds in good and outstanding early years provision has increased, as set out in the attached table.

[1] Based on information supplied by local authorities as at 11 May 2018, 11:30 am. These figures may be different to previous answers, and could change again in future, since local authorities may update the database at any time.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

2_3_and_4_year_olds_in_good_or_outstanding_EY
[HL7778_2_3_and_4_year_olds_in_good_or_outstanding_early_years_provision.docx]

Childrens_Centres_closures_since_April_2015
[HL7778_Childrens_Centres_closures_since_April_2015.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-05-10/HL7778>

Corruption

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the conclusion in the National Crime Agency's National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime 2018 that there is an increased likelihood of British businesses coming into contact with corrupt markets and being drawn into corrupt practices after Brexit; and what steps they are taking to safeguard against those risks. [HL7862]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office is reviewing the conclusions of the National Crime Agency's National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime 2018. The government is committed to supporting businesses which operate overseas. The UK Anti-Corruption Strategy, which runs from 2017-2022 sets out 18 clear commitments from across government to improve the global business environment.

Customs

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the EU chief negotiator's comments that the UK's custom deal proposals are not realistic. [HL7918]

Lord Callanan: The final form of the new customs relationship with the European Union will be discussed with the Commission, and form part of the negotiations. We are confident that a positive deal can be reached. The UK is fully committed to negotiating a deep and special partnership with the European Union, which is in the mutual interest of the EU and UK.

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the uncertainty

regarding their customs proposals on the progression of Brexit negotiations. [HL7919]

Lord Callanan: The Government has put forward two approaches that most closely meet our objectives. The final form of the future customs relationship with the European Union will be discussed with the Commission, and form part of the negotiations. We are confident that a positive deal can be reached.

Drugs: Crime

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children and young people have been convicted of drug offences in (1) 2015, (2) 2016, (3) 2017, and (4) 2018. [HL7978]

Lord Keen of Elie: The number of children and young people (aged 10-17 years old) who were found guilty of drug offences in England and Wales from 2015 to 2017 can be viewed in the below table:

Age	2015	2016	2017
Age 10-17 (Juveniles)	2480	2291	2254

(1) The figures given in the table relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

(2) Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

Data for the number of children and young people convicted of drug offences in 2018 will be available in May 2019.

EU Grants and Loans

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likelihood of the UK being required to repay EU funding awarded to British organisations following the UK's withdrawal from the EU; and what guarantees they require from recipients of such funding that they will reimburse the Government for any funds that the Government have to repay to the EU. [HL7934]

Lord Bates: Under the terms of the financial settlement, set out in a draft Withdrawal Agreement and

welcomed by the EU-27 at March European Council, the UK will continue to participate in all EU programmes funded by the 2014-20 Multiannual Financial Framework. Under this agreement, funding for UK participants and projects will, therefore, be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the Union for the entire lifetime of such projects.

Foreign Relations

*Asked by **Baroness Helic***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what provision there is in UK law for all agents representing the interests of foreign powers in a political or quasi-political capacity to disclose their relationship with a foreign government and information about their activities and finances. [HL7742]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: UK law does not currently require such disclosure. However, as my Rt. Hon Friend the Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons on 14 March (Hansard col. 856), as part of an update on the Salisbury incident, the Government is reviewing whether there is a need for new counter-espionage powers.

Gaza: Health Services

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Southwark***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Israel about the scale of acute and long-term medical care available to those injured in the protests at the border with Gaza between 30 March and 14 May, including the provision of increased resources in Gaza and access to facilities on the West Bank and in Israel. [HL7951]

Lord Bates: The UK maintains regular contact with the Israeli authorities, and we most recently raised our concerns about the situation in Gaza with the office for the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) last week. UK officials expressed concern about the health system in Gaza, and reiterated the importance of unimpeded access and protection for humanitarian goods and personnel. Officials also urged COGAT to allow fuel to enter through the Kerem Shalom crossing and to approve medical permits for the injured.

Hearing Impairment: Telecommunications

*Asked by **Baroness Thomas of Winchester***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received from (1) sign language users, and (2) organisations representing deaf people, concerning a free to access video relay service. [HL7783]

Baroness Buscombe: Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has received representations on access to a video relay service. This includes recent

correspondence from Jim Fitzpatrick MP (Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Deafness) in relation to changing existing legislation to expand Ofcom's remit to include the regulation of Captioned Telephone Relay and Video Relay Services.

House of Lords: Telecommunications

*Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering***

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker how much the move to Skype for Business (1) has cost so far, and (2) is anticipated to cost; and what are the anticipated benefits of the change. [HL7845]

Lord Laming: The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chairman of the Services Committee, to respond on his behalf.

Parliament's telephone system was installed in 1985 and – like much of the Palace of Westminster's core infrastructure – is at the end of its supportable life and at significant risk of failure. Replacement parts for the system are no longer made and the organisation has been buying second hand parts for the last ten years. There are no longer providers in the marketplace that support the corresponding software. If the system were to fail we could not reliably restore the service.

Given this situation, a project was initiated in 2014 to examine the options to replace the telephone system, whilst also meeting the needs of Parliament's mobile workforce and the impending estates challenges associated with the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster. That project identified Skype as the most suitable solution to meet these needs.

The implementation costs, to March 2018, are £2.7 million (revenue) and £1.7 million (capital). It is forecast the total spend will be £5.1 million (revenue) and £2.6 million (capital).

The primary driver (and benefit) for the change is the continued provision of a reliable telephone system throughout Parliament. That being so, Lords Members will have the option to use Skype through provision of an at-desk telephone handset which operates independently of their computer. There are also a number of other benefits in moving to Skype for Business. Skype allows people to join meetings virtually from any location, and therefore opens up many opportunities for flexible and remote working. Users will be able to take advantage of conferencing and video calling, online meetings and document sharing capabilities. Traditional copper telephony requires re-routing and cabling work whenever a member of staff or a member of either House moves office. Skype offers a "lift and shift" approach, an easy way to facilitate the relocation of staff or members without the necessary re-routing work associated with traditional telephony. Looking ahead to the challenges of the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster, the move to Skype will enable our telephone service to move with our users, wherever they are working. Finally, the advantage from a security point of view is that voice

data on our network will have the same type of security protocols and protection as other digital data.

Immigration: Caribbean

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of Windrush immigration failures on the pensions of those affected by those failures; and whether they will take this into consideration when considering the level of compensation that affected individuals will receive. [HL7729]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is clear that where the Windrush generation have suffered loss, they will be compensated and the Home Office is setting up a new scheme to deliver this, which will be overseen by an Independent Person.

As a first stage, the Home Office has launched a Call for Evidence which is an opportunity for those who have been affected, and their families, to tell us what happened, how it has affected them and what they believe the compensation scheme needs to address.

The information supplied as part of the Call for Evidence will be used to inform the design options and scope of a compensation scheme.

Islamic State: Internet

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to block access to internet archive sites that disseminate material including ISIS bomb making manuals and videos of the execution of opponents and non-compliant members of minority communities. [HL7872]

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what further action they intend to take in response to the call by Andrew Parker, Director-General of the British Security Service, to secure the support and cooperation of social media firms to combat the spread of ISIS ideology. [HL7873]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK has been at the forefront of the battle against online terrorist material. We have worked closely with a variety of Communications Service Providers (CSPs), including archive sites, to improve their response to terrorist exploitation of their platforms. This has included helping to set up the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), an international, industry-led forum to prevent terrorist use of the internet.

We want to see the GIFCT leading the cross industry response to reduce the availability of terrorist content on the internet, so there are no safe places for terrorists online. This includes removing content within one hour of upload; securing the prevention of re-uploads; and

ultimately preventing new content being made available to users in the first place. There is still more to be done in engaging smaller platforms, but we have made a good start.

Separately, on behalf of the Home Office, the Metropolitan Police produces a list of URLs of unlawful terrorist content that have not been removed by CSPs. This list is shared with filtering companies whose products are used across the public estate, such as schools, to establish appropriate levels of filtering, thereby limiting access to terrorist and extremist material.

Leasehold

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the adequacy of protection in place for people and organisations that have leasehold interests in land from freeholds being sold by local authorities to third parties. [HL7983]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: We are constantly working to ensure that protection for leaseholders is adequate. That is why on 21 December 2017, the Government set out a package of measures to tackle abuses and unfair practices in the leasehold market. This includes introducing legislation to prohibit the development of new build leasehold houses, other than in exceptional circumstances, restricting ground rents in newly established leases of houses and flats to a peppercorn (zero financial value) and working with the Law Commission to support existing leaseholders - including making buying a freehold or extending a lease easier, faster, fairer and cheaper. As part of the reform, we will consider extending the existing Right of First Refusal for flat lessees (Part 1 of the Landlord Act 1987) to house lessees. In general, the provision states that where a landlord is proposing to sell his interest in a building containing flats in relation to which the Right of First Refusal exists, they must, by law, first offer it to the tenants before offering it on the open market.

Lebanon: Elections

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the results of the Lebanese parliamentary election which took place on 6 May; and what impact results will have on their foreign policy approach in the Middle East. [HL7755]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We were pleased to see and we welcome the fact that Lebanon's elections took place peacefully and in an orderly way on 6 May. This was an important step for democracy. We now look forward to the swift formation of a new government capable of addressing the crucial issues facing the country. The United Kingdom remains steadfast in its commitment to Lebanon's stability, security and prosperity.

Local Government: Constituencies

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government which local authorities in England that are due to hold elections in May 2019 have been subject to boundary reviews conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England; which of those boundary reviews have already received parliamentary approval; and when they expect to lay the remaining orders before Parliament. [HL7771]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: There are 52 local authorities in England due to hold local elections in May 2019 that have been subject to, or are currently the subject of, an electoral review conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. Those authorities are: Allerdale; Ashford; Babergh; Basingstoke and Deane; Bath and North East Somerset; Bolsover; Carlisle; Cheshire West and Chester; Chichester; Copeland; Crawley; Dartford; Dover; East Cambridgeshire; East Devon; East Hampshire; Eastbourne; Forest of Dean; Harborough; Hertsmere; Horsham; King's Lynn and West Norfolk; Lewes; Mid Suffolk; North Devon; North East; Derbyshire; North Norfolk; Norwich; Nottingham; Preston; Redcar and Cleveland; Reigate and Banstead; Ribble Valley; Richmondshire; Rother; Runnymede; Rutland; Scarborough; South Gloucestershire; South Norfolk; South Somerset; Surrey Heath; Teignbridge; Tendring; Test Valley; Tewkesbury; Torbay; Torridge; Warwick; Wealden; West Berkshire; and Windsor and Maidenhead.

Full details of all current and previous reviews are published on the Commission's website www.lgbce.org.uk/

The Commission intends to lay any outstanding orders for Parliamentary approval by, at the latest, Christmas recess.

In addition, there is an expectation that the Commission is likely to undertake electoral reviews of the five new district councils – Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole; Dorset; East Suffolk; Somerset West and Taunton; and West Suffolk – which would be established by the secondary legislation that Parliament has recently approved, and which provides for their first elections to be held in May 2019.

Overseas Trade

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have secured continued recognition from any third countries that the UK will be treated as an EU member state for trading purposes during the transition period. [HL7762]

Baroness Fairhead: The UK and EU have agreed that the UK is to be treated as a Member State for the purposes of international agreements during the Implementation Period. This is a positive and significant step to secure

continuity in our international trading relationships as we leave the EU.

Discussions on this approach are taking place with our trading partners, and many have already issued public statements in support of the approach.

Pensions

Asked by Baroness Burt of Solihull

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recommendations in the Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation's report *The Dependency Trap*—are we fit to face the future? that (1) a working partner should be allowed to contribute to a non-working partner's pension fund, and (2) couples should be able to contribute to a joint pension fund if they so wish. [HL7877]

Lord Bates: Individuals can make contributions of up to £2,880 each year to a personal pension, self-invested personal pension, or stakeholder pension and receive basic rate income tax relief at, currently, 20% or £720 on their contribution. Those contributions can be funded by a working partner.

Regarding the proposal of a joint pension, since 1990, the UK's income tax system has been based on the principle of independent taxation. This provides that each individual is taxed on their personal income and has their own tax-free personal allowance, and their own set of tax thresholds. This fundamental principle provides everyone with absolute confidentiality for their personal tax affairs. For this reason, the Government is not currently considering changing this policy. A joint pension fund would not be consistent with the system of independent taxation.

Pensions Regulator

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many contribution schedules to a pensions scheme have been issued by the Pensions Regulator since it was established in 1996; and what assessment they have made of the number of schedules issued. [HL7995]

Baroness Buscombe: The independent Pensions Regulator was established by the Pensions Act 2004. Its predecessor, the Occupational Pension Regulatory Authority did not have the same level of powers as the Regulator does now and was not able to issue a schedule of contributions.

The legislative framework within which the Regulator operates gives it a range of powers to protect the benefits of members of occupational pension schemes. It is down to the Regulator to decide which of its powers are appropriate in each investigation it undertakes.

Contribution schedules are required to be agreed by the trustees of the pension scheme and the sponsoring employer. However, where agreement cannot be reached, the Pensions Regulator has the power to set the schedule

of contributions in relation to a recovery plan. Since this power was introduced, the Pensions Regulator has issued one warning notice, but has never been required to exercise the power to issue a schedule of contributions.

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the Pensions Regulator. [HL7996]

Baroness Buscombe: The Pensions Regulator was established by the Pensions Act 2004. The assessment of the performance of the Pension Regulator was decided by the previous government as follows: The Pensions Regulator has a broad set of responsibilities across occupational pension schemes. Its performance, as measured by Key Performance Indicators, has been steadily improving since 2015. In 2015/16, it fully met 10 out of 17 of these indicators, whereas in 2017/18 it met 17 out of 18.

Working collaboratively with the Department for Work and Pensions, the Pensions Regulator has successfully implemented one of the most significant reforms in recent years, the introduction of Automatic Enrolment. To date, 9.6 million workers have enrolled into a pension by over 1.2 million employers. This is being achieved at a time of great change and challenge in the pensions landscape, with changes in longevity and structural changes in the workplace.

Since 2005, the Regulator has secured more than £1 billion for pension schemes through settlements and the use of its anti-avoidance powers. Notwithstanding this, the Regulator has also recognised the need for it to change and adapt to the world as it is now, and since 2016 has been engaging with industry on how best to be a clearer, quicker and tougher Regulator. The Government's Defined Benefit White Paper proposals will provide the Regulator with additional tools needed to effectively respond to today's challenges.

Philippines: Human Rights

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of the Philippines about (1) the murder of Father Mark Ventura, and (2) the large number of extrajudicial killings that have taken place in the Philippines during the current presidency; and what was the outcome of those discussions. [HL7800]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are committed to the promotion of human rights, including tolerance and freedom of religion and belief. Whilst we have not discussed the specific case of the murder of Father Mark Ventura, we have continued to call on the Government of the Philippines to promote a safe and enabling environment for human rights defenders. Furthermore, we regularly raise concerns with the Government of the

Philippines over the high death toll associated with the "war on illegal drugs", and stresses the need for prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into killings. Most recently the Minister for Asia and the Pacific (Mr Field) raised this issue with the Philippines Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs in December 2017 and with the Philippines Ambassador in April 2018.

Police: Bahrain

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have provided financial or any other types of support to the University of Huddersfield's new masters course in Security Science for Bahrain's Royal Academy of Policing. [HL7777]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: As the Noble Lord, Lord Scriven, notes, the University of Huddersfield is an independent, autonomous body responsible for the development of the courses it offers. The university was selected by Bahrain's Royal Academy of Policing to provide an MSc course in security science and this is a private arrangement between these parties.

I can confirm, however, that support for the MSc in security science has not been provided by the Department for Education, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or the Home Office.

Prisons: Ministers of Religion

Asked by Lord Murphy of Torfaen

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Keen of Elie on 4 January (HL4280), what meetings they have had about the development of the assurance and compliance process for the future delivery of chaplaincies in prisons; and which faith leaders have been involved in any such discussions. [HL7767]

Lord Keen of Elie: The future of the Assurance and Compliance process for Chaplaincy will be discussed with those Faith Advisers who sit on Chaplaincy Council at the joint meeting with the Chaplaincy HQ Team on the 12th June 2018. This will be followed by an invitation for those Faith Advisers not present at the meeting to comment by post or email.

We recognise the importance of faith and the positive impact that it can have on the lives of offenders, which is why there are multi-faith chaplaincy teams in every prison.

Asked by Lord Murphy of Torfaen

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the current requirement for a prisoner to receive a pastoral visit from a chaplain within 24 hours of requesting one will be carried into any future policy framework. [HL7768]

Lord Keen of Elie: Whilst the future policy framework(s) in relation to chaplaincy have not yet been agreed, HM Government recognises the value of the pastoral care offered by Chaplains. Any new policy will ensure such care is available in a timely manner which reflects its importance in the overall care of those in prison.

Refugees

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 8 May (HL7459), how many Liaison Officers they have in (1) Italy, and (2) Greece; and how many experts and interpreters the European Asylum Support Office and the European Commission have sent to the Greek islands. [HL7799]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK (Home Office) has deployed two Liaison Officers to Greece and one Liaison Officer to Italy. The UK also continues our long-running specialist deployments to the EU Commission and EASO to support their work in Greece (UK officers included in numbers stated in the below reports).

The number of experts and interpreters deployed to Greek islands by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) is available in their annual report. The most recent annual report was published in September 2017 and covers 2016 and can be found here: <https://www.easo.europa.eu/easo-annual-report>. In 2016 there were 543 experts deployed in Greece. EASO also deployed interpreters/cultural mediators to conduct its operations. Published figures for 2017 are not available yet.

In terms of European Commission staff in Greece, this can be found in the European Commission's Annual Activity Report on DG Migration and Home Affairs. The most recent report covers 2016 and can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/annual-activity-report-2016-migration-and-home-affairs_en

Small Claims

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what basis they decided to propose an increase to the limit to small claims to £2,000 despite the recommendation by Lord Justice Jackson in his 2009 Review of Civil Litigation Costs that a rise to £1,500 would be sufficient to account for inflation. [HL7673]

Lord Keen of Elie: The upper limit for personal injury claims to enter the small claims track has been set at £1,000 since 1991.

Using the Retail Price Index to adjust for inflation since 1991, the uprated limit for small personal injury claims would be around £2000 in 2017/2018 prices. In line with this, the Government is proposing by secondary legislation to raise the small claims limit for all non-road traffic accident personal injury claims to £2000.

St Helena: Airports

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total cost of construction and bringing into operation of the airport at St Helena; what restrictions in aircraft types and passenger numbers are in place to enable them to be used without aircraft being endangered by wind shear. [HL7965]

Lord Bates: In April 2016, when the airport was brought into operation the project spend was £238.9 million.

St Helena is a remote location and its airport is classified as a Category C aerodrome. Prior to flight operations, all required members of the flight crew must have received specific training with respect to operations into Category C airports, including the effect of adverse weather conditions, severe turbulence and recovery from wind shear conditions. In addition, a specific airport briefing is required prior to the flight and a Category C St Helena Operating Pack is issued to the crew. The ability to operate is determined by the Aircraft Operator in conjunction with the appropriate Aeronautical Authority Regulator. Passenger numbers will be determined by the Operator's Aircraft Operating Certificate and fuel requirements for Island Holding in the event of adverse weather. The full terms of use for St Helena Airport are published in its Aeronautical Information Publication.

St Helena: Aviation

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many commercial flights to St Helena a week are currently operated; what is the average fare from mainland destinations; and whether these services are subsidised. [HL7966]

Lord Bates: There is currently one scheduled commercial flight each week from Johannesburg to St Helena. This service will be expanded later this year with an additional midweek flight.

The current fares policy agreed between the St Helena Government and the operator (SA Airlink) is published by the St Helena Government and can be found on their website. The sale of tickets is the responsibility of the air operator, fares vary depending on demand and the average fare is commercially sensitive.

The UK government underwrites the service to ensure continuity of air access.

Taxation: Domicil

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to continue to adhere to the OECD residency criteria for tax purposes post-Brexit. [HL7957]

Lord Bates: The UK will continue to adhere to the OECD's tax standards after Brexit. These include the provisions relating to residence in the OECD model treaty that the UK uses as the basis for bilateral double taxation agreements.

Thailand: Refugees

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Thailand about ensuring the safety of newly arrived refugees from Burma. [HL7796]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of recent reports of refugees arriving in Thailand following increased violence in Karen State and our statement on 11 May 2018. Refugees have been crossing from Burma into Thailand for nearly 30 years, and there are established camps and international support for them in Thailand. Our Embassy in Bangkok is following developments along the border with Burma: it has not made representations to the Thai government about the safety of newly arrived refugees but stands ready to do so if we judge this necessary.

Trade Promotion

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money will be granted to the Department of International Trade in order to safeguard trade promotion jobs; and whether this figure will be enough to ensure that the Department has the resources necessary to fulfil its responsibilities. [HL7724]

Baroness Fairhead: The Department for International Trade inherited a Spending Review 2015 settlement that requires it to generate efficiencies in its services. This includes trade promotion activity.

On top of this settlement, the Department received additional funding of £79.4m over four years at the 2016 Autumn Statement to fund an expansion of the Trade Policy Group. This year the Treasury has allocated additional funding of £74m to cover essential EU exit spending to transition existing EU trade agreements with third countries, build capability for negotiating new trade deals in the future and for dealing with market access, trade disputes and trade remedies issues. This will also fund the digital systems and infrastructure to support this activity. This amounts to a total of up to £97.3m of additional funding in 2018-19.

The Department is carefully prioritising its work to ensure it can fulfil its responsibilities and is working with the Treasury as it does this.

Trade Remedies

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have set up the appeal mechanism required under World Trade Organization rules which will enable the UK to challenge trade defence measures taken by other countries against UK goods. [HL7780]

Baroness Fairhead: The UK is committed to a rules based international trade system and is in the process of establishing the Trade Remedies Authority to ensure that UK businesses continue to be protected from unfair and injurious trade practices once we leave the EU.

The UK, will be able, as the EU currently can, to pursue an appeal against trade remedies measures imposed on UK goods, in line with the domestic processes in the country imposing measures against UK goods.

The Government will also be able to bring a case to WTO dispute settlement over measures that are not compliant with WTO agreements.

Trade Remedies Authority

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether a Trade Remedies Authority will be set up before the UK leaves the EU. [HL7779]

Baroness Fairhead: This Government recognises the crucial role which UK manufacturers and producers play in our economy. We are committed to ensuring that UK industry has the protections it needs against injury caused by unfair trading practices. We are working to set up the Trade Remedies Authority by the time the UK leaves the EU – to ensure that the UK can continue to provide a safety net to domestic industries.

USA: Foreign Relations

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have contacted the White House in response to President Trump's comments on knife violence in London in his speech to the National Rifle Association convention on 4 May. [HL7756]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not discussed knife violence in London with the White House following the President's remarks. We are confident that the US Government is aware via its Embassy of the action we are taking action to restrict access to offensive weapons as well as working to break the deadly cycle of violence and protect our children, families and communities.

Visas: Kosovo*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to call for an improved and simplified EU visa regime for students and professionals from Kosovo.
[[HL7829](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK does not participate in EU visa regimes with third countries as we do not participate in the relevant aspects of the Schengen agreement. It would not be appropriate for the UK to call for an improved EU visa regime with Kosovo. The UK has its own visa arrangements with Kosovo.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1	St Helena: Aviation 12
Bovine TB1	Taxation: Domicil..... 13
Competiveness Council.....1	Thailand: Refugees 13
ECOFIN.....2	Trade Promotion..... 13
EU Exit.....2	Trade Remedies 13
Europol: Personal Data.....2	Trade Remedies Authority..... 13
Foreign Affairs Council.....3	USA: Foreign Relations..... 13
General Affairs Council3	Visas: Kosovo..... 14
Immigration4	
Prison Education and Employment5	
Written Answers.....6	
Air Passenger Duty: Northern Ireland6	
Alex Smiles: Sunderland.....6	
Children's Centres: Closures6	
Corruption7	
Customs.....7	
Drugs: Crime7	
EU Grants and Loans.....7	
Foreign Relations.....8	
Gaza: Health Services.....8	
Hearing Impairment: Telecommunications8	
House of Lords: Telecommunications.....8	
Immigration: Caribbean.....9	
Islamic State: Internet.....9	
Leasehold.....9	
Lebanon: Elections9	
Local Government: Constituencies10	
Overseas Trade10	
Pensions.....10	
Pensions Regulator10	
Philippines: Human Rights.....11	
Police: Bahrain11	
Prisons: Ministers of Religion11	
Refugees12	
Small Claims12	
St Helena: Airports.....12	