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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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

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<b>Earl Howe</b>	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<b>Lord Agnew of Oulton</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office and Treasury
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Baroness Barran</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Baroness Berridge</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Bethell</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care and Whip
<b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
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<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
<b>Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park</b>	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Greenhalgh</b>	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
<b>Lord Grimstone of Boscobel</b>	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Penn</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Stedman-Scott</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Baroness Sugg</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord True</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

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# Written Statements

*Monday, 28 September 2020*

## Contingencies Fund Advance

[HLWS467]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** My right honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jesse Norman) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

HM Revenue and Customs will incur new expenditure in connection with the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-21.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £100,000,000 for this new expenditure will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for HM Revenue and Customs. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £100,000,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

In line with the OBR forecasts, further requests to the Contingencies Fund may be made as necessary to fund Covid-19 activity delivered by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

## Electoral Commission and Association of Electoral Administrators Reports

[HLWS466]

**Lord True:** The Government has published its responses to the Electoral Commission's reports on the administration of the December 2019 UK Parliamentary General Election and May 2019 European Parliamentary (and Local) Elections.

We have combined our response to the report on the General Election and European Parliamentary (and Local)

Elections with the recommendations made in the positions statements of the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) where they are relevant to those polls.

We are grateful for the recommendations produced by all these organisations and thank them for their work. These reports aid the Government in monitoring the effectiveness of electoral legislation; help us to make improvements and to identify future policy challenges and possible resolutions.

The Government will continue to work with these organisations, as well as electoral administrators and other partners, to improve our electoral system and ensure the effective running of elections. The Electoral Commission research found that people were very satisfied with the process of registering to vote and voting at the 2019 UK General Election. These were similar to positive levels of satisfaction that were found at other recent UK-wide elections or referendums.

The Government is committed to ensuring a flourishing and secure democracy and through these measures it is acting to promote the integrity of our electoral system. The Government takes the integrity and security of our democratic processes very seriously. We will continue to safeguard against future risks, strengthen our resilience and ensure that the regulatory framework is as effective as possible.

Copies of these Government responses will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Government response to EC and AEA reports [20200805 Gov response to EC & AEA Reports FINAL.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2020-09-28/HLWS466/>

## Written Answers

Monday, 28 September 2020

### Accident and Emergency Departments: Acute Beds

Asked by **Baroness Finlay of Llandaff**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further (1) to reports of overcrowding in accident and emergency departments, and (2) to the COVID-19 pandemic, what action they are taking with NHS England (a) to increase the availability of acute hospital beds for those patients needing admission, and (b) to decrease overcrowding in such departments. [HL8021]

**Lord Bethell:** £150 million capital funding has just been awarded to expand and upgrade 25 more accident and emergency departments (A&Es), to reduce overcrowding and improve infection control ahead of winter. This is on top of the £300 million we announced recently, to upgrade A&Es across 117 trusts, bringing total funding to £450 million. This funding will expand waiting areas and increase the number of treatment cubicles, helping boost A&E capacity by providing additional space and reducing overcrowding.

In addition to this, the Prime Minister has announced £3 billion of extra National Health Service funding, which includes plans to maintain the use of the Nightingale hospitals, continue access to independent hospitals capacity and improve hospital discharge arrangements.

Plans are also in place for a significantly expanded influenza vaccination programme and the introduction of the NHS 111 First model which both should help prevent visits to A&E. Overall, these measures will help increase capacity in the NHS and prevent overcrowding.

### Air Pollution: Disclosure of Information

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans are in place for Highways England to share real time data from its National Air Quality Monitoring Network; and when they estimate those data will be publicly available. [HL8320]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Highways England has no plans in place to make real-time air quality monitoring data from its network publicly available. When Highways England developed its network, it worked with both Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Environment Agency to explore opportunities to integrate its air quality monitoring network with DEFRA's online real-time monitoring. Health and safety issues associated with the placing of air quality monitoring stations next to strategic roads meant they were not consistent with the requirements of DEFRA's system and consequently it was not possible to

integrate the Highways England monitoring in to their online reporting.

Highways England produces annual reports of all data collected by its monitoring stations, which are available on request.

### Armoured Fighting Vehicles: Driving Tests

Asked by **Earl Attlee**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency permits the use of armoured or automatically commanded vehicles for H licence driving tests; and if so, what assessment they have made of any such policy. [HL8358]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Tests conducted in commanded armoured vehicles are currently under review. The Department for Transport and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency are in discussions with the Ministry of Defence and the Vehicle Certifications Agency about what military vehicles are suitable for category H practical driving tests. This includes an assessment of the legality of such vehicles, notably in relation to the Construction and Use Regulations, and the safety implications given that the requirement is for the test to be conducted on public roads.

### Asif Pervaiz

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Pakistan about the case of Asif Pervaiz. [HL8250]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of the case of Asif Pervaiz and are closely following developments. We regularly raise at a senior level the issue of the blasphemy laws with the authorities in Pakistan. The UK's position on the death penalty is well known - we are firmly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances. We will continue to urge the Government of Pakistan to guarantee the fundamental rights of all its citizens, in accordance with international standards. I last raised our human rights concerns with Pakistan's Minister for Human Rights, Dr Shireen Mazari, on 27 August.

### Asylum

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what plans they have to make new arrangements for the welfare of asylum seekers following the UK's departure from the EU. [HL8087]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Adult asylum seekers and their children who would otherwise be destitute are supported by the Home Office under arrangements set out in the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children are supported under arrangements provided for in the Children Act

1989, or equivalent legislation in the devolved administrations. As the support arrangements are provided for in domestic legislation there is no need to make changes to them as a result of our departure from the EU.

### Aviation

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to waive the rules applying to the use of slots by airlines; whether they plan to make a statement to this effect; and if so, when. [HL8083]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** On 14 September, the European Commission published their intention to extend the current airport slot waiver for the 2020/2021 winter season, until 27 March 2021.

### Brexit

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the transition period for the UK's departure from the EU beyond 31 December, in the light of the progress of negotiations. [HL8086]

**Lord True:** There are no plans. At the second meeting of the WAJC on 12 June, the UK formally notified the EU that it will neither accept nor seek any extension to the Transition Period.

The deadline for extension has now passed.

The UK will regain its economic and political independence on 31 December at the end of the transition period and uphold a key demand of the British people.

### British Nationals Abroad: Hong Kong

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether a British national (overseas) citizen who is ordinarily resident in Hong Kong but is in the UK for a permitted six-month, visa-free stay would be allowed to remain in the UK for the duration of their application process for a new Hong Kong BN(O) Visa, even if this exceeded the initial six-month period. [HL8058]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** BN(O) citizens whose current grant of leave in the UK is due to expire before the new Hong Kong BN(O) Visa is launched, should look to extend their leave in line with the rules of their existing route and then apply for the Hong Kong BN(O) Visa when it is available. Those who apply to the scheme before their leave expires will be able to remain in the UK whilst their application is considered.

We are considering options for those individuals whose leave is due to expire and who are unable to extend their leave before the new route is launched. We will set out further details in due course.

### Bus Services: Carbon Emissions

*Asked by Lord Oates*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential role of hydrogen in the decarbonisation of bus and coach transport. [HL8138]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** In 2018, the Department for Transport published the outputs of the Transport Energy Model. The model provides a clear assessment of the relative environmental impacts of a range of fuel and powertrain options for cars, vans, buses and heavy goods vehicles over the period to 2050, including hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

### Commonwealth

*Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for conducting a reconciliation process for Commonwealth countries about their historic treatment by the UK; and what plans they have, if any, to undertake such a process. [HL8260]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have no plans to undertake such a process. Our strong relationships with our 53 fellow and equal Commonwealth members are grounded in mutual respect and common values, and in recognition of our shared history. We continue to work together in close partnerships bilaterally, within the Commonwealth, and in other international fora across a wide range of issues, including rule of law, human rights and shared global challenges. Commonwealth collaboration helps all its members build a better future.

### Coronavirus: Disease Control

*Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they involve members of both Houses of Parliament in their decisions to instigate local lockdowns in their constituency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL7931]

**Lord Bethell:** We have encouraged local authorities to discuss with local hon. Members proposals for changes to restrictions applying in their areas. Our Contain Framework sets out how we will work with local authorities to respond to local outbreaks. Local authorities now have powers to give directions, in particular to close premises, to protect residents from the threat of coronavirus, and we will report on use of these powers to Parliament. Where more serious restrictions are needed, those would be implemented through regulations laid before and, in due course, debated in Parliament.

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the number of people who can meet indoors ahead of the Christmas period. [HL8085]

**Lord Bethell:** We are taking early action, at the beginning of autumn and as infections are starting to rise. By taking this action now we hope we can control the virus so as we get into winter, we will not have to take more drastic action.

Christmas is three months away and we keep all aspects of our response to COVID-19 under review and responsive to the changing number and composition of cases in the country.

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reasons why (1) the Scottish Government, and (2) the Welsh Government, have excluded children under the age of twelve from the rules which prevent groups of more than six gathering socially during the COVID-19 test; and what plans they have, if any, to exclude such children in England from those rules for (1) family visits, and (2) support from grandparents. [HL8105]

**Lord Bethell:** Health is a devolved matter and each administration has the discretion and flexibility to find the right balance between managing risks and relaxing measures.

The Government is keeping its social distancing measures under continual review. The Government will only make changes when we are confident, we can do so safely. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care keeps the restrictions and requirements under constant consideration, to ensure the measures continue to be both proportionate and necessary.

The new limit from 14 September does not prevent anyone from seeing their grandparents, but those who live in larger households will need to think carefully about how to organise their social interactions to remain within the law. We know this is difficult, but we know people will understand the need to take those steps which are necessary to keep their loved ones safe. These rules have been simplified and strengthened so they are easier to understand, and so the police can identify and disperse illegal gatherings. We are also acting now to get the virus under control and, if we achieve that, we may be able to make changes and potentially lift the restrictions.

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what scientific advice was used to inform the rules which prevent groups of more than six people gathering socially; and what if anything that advice said about the risk of grandparents meeting with families consisting of six people or more. [HL8106]

**Lord Bethell:** As the Prime Minister set out, if we are to beat the virus then everyone, at all times, needs to limit social contact as much as possible. We are seeing daily case numbers rise rapidly and across the country, which is why the Government, the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Adviser jointly agreed the changes we announced.

The rules have been simplified and strengthened so they are easier to understand, and so the police can identify and disperse illegal gatherings. We are also acting now to get the virus under control and, if we achieve that, we may be able to make changes and potentially lift the restrictions.

The new limit from 14 September does not prevent anyone from seeing their grandparents, but those who live in larger households will need to think carefully about how to organise their social interactions to remain within the law. We know this is difficult, but we know people will understand the need to take those steps which are necessary to keep their loved ones safe.

*Asked by Lord Pendry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the rules which prevent groups of more than six gathering socially, including whether those rules are fit for purpose. [HL8142]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government is keeping its social distancing measures under continual review. The Government will only make changes when we are confident we can do so safely. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care keeps the restrictions and requirements under constant consideration, to ensure the measures continue to be both proportionate and necessary. The Government continues to issue guidance to support the public.

## Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the National Centre for Social Research Wellcome Monitor 2020: COVID-19 study, published in August, which concluded that (1) the BAME population were "less likely to receive information about staying safe from COVID-19 that they find clear or that they trust", and (2) "consideration should be given to how health information engages people from BAME groups"; and what steps they intend to take in response. [HL7895]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government is working with COVID-19 teams across departments and agencies to communicate and engage directly with ethnic minority communities across the country.

This includes a national campaign that spans owned, earned and paid-for channels to maximise reach and engagement. To increase accessibility, Government advice, guidance, legislation, and the support measures announced were translated into over 25 different languages.

The Race Disparity Unit has been working closely with faith leaders, the voluntary sector, community representatives and black, Asian and minority ethnic business leaders to ensure that advice and relief measures announced are available to those who need it.

*Asked by Lord Boateng*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people; and what action has been taken by (1) Public Health England, and (2) the NHS, taken to address any such impact. [HL8015]

**Lord Bethell:** Public Health England (PHE) has been monitoring the mental health and wellbeing impacts of COVID-19, including the impact on people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. The latest report concluded that the evidence of association between ethnicity and pandemic related impacts on mental health and wellbeing remains inconclusive; some studies report disproportionate effects on some but not all BAME groups, and others reporting no relationship. PHE continues to track and report on the impact as more evidence becomes available.

NHS England is working closely with ethnic minority experts by experience, health professionals, voluntary and community partners and others to support rapid knowledge and information sharing to encourage timely access to National Health Service mental health services, and just as importantly, good ethnic minority experiences within those services.

PHE is running the Better Health-Every Mind Matters campaign to support children and young people's mental wellbeing. It is working with BAME organisations and experts to deliver campaign messages in culturally-appropriate ways, through dedicated BAME media channels, translated into other languages, where required.

### **Coronavirus: Northern Ireland**

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to work with the Northern Ireland Executive to support the recovery of the Northern Ireland economy in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL8155]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The Government has worked closely with the NI Executive to support the businesses and employees of Northern Ireland throughout the pandemic by offering unprecedented levels of financial support to ensure their survival and to protect the productive capacity of the economy. The Government remains committed to supporting local economies to not only recover from the impacts of the pandemic but to thrive and grow as we emerge from the lockdown.

In the short term we have provided as much support as possible through UK-wide schemes, including the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS), the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and government-backed loans. In NI, at least 330,000 individuals and companies have benefited from these schemes to date.

The Winter Economy Plan of 24 September has extended SEISS until 21 April 2021. It introduced a new Job Support Scheme, which will ensure an employee who is working 33% of their normal hours will receive 77% of their pay. A reduced 5% rate of VAT for hospitality and leisure firms has been extended until 31 March 2021. The coronavirus government-backed loan schemes have been extended to 30 November, with greater flexibility introduced for the repayment of Bounce Back Loans.

In addition to this UK-wide support, £2.2bn of additional departmental funding has been allocated to the NI Executive to enable a strong and sustainable recovery from this crisis.

As we look forward, we will continue to do all we can to support the Executive to grow the NI economy: driving up innovation and productivity, making sure NI is well-connected to the rest of the UK and the world, and promoting Northern Ireland and its exports and talents as we level up opportunities for all.

### **Coronavirus: Protective Clothing**

*Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Bethell on 14 September (HL Deb, col 1007) that they "are looking at making up to half of our personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements in the UK", why they do not plan to manufacture more than half of PPE in the UK; and what plans they have to increase the amount of PPE requirements manufactured in the UK to more than half. [HL8222]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government has been working to build a resilient, diversified supply chain of personal protective equipment (PPE). We have therefore massively expanded both our supply of PPE from overseas and our domestic manufacturing capability. This has helped to build resilience for our supply of PPE into the future.

The proportion of United Kingdom-based PPE manufacturing is rising all the time and we are increasingly confident of achieving more than 50% for most lines this year.

The Government is hugely grateful to all the UK-based manufacturers that came forward during a time of unprecedented global supply chain demand. This has ensured we build and maintain a domestic base for the future.

### **Department of Health and Social Care: Staff**

*Asked by Lord Naseby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of Department of Health and Social Care staff based in central London were working from their office desks on 2 September. [HL7693]

**Lord Bethell:** On 2 September the Department had 1,370 staff registered as working in central London. The building pass system show that 310 staff worked in the Department's London headquarters on that date.

## Driving Licences: Defence

Asked by *Earl Attlee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect changes to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's vehicle requirements for H licence driving tests have had on defence contractors' H licence acquisitions. [HL8359]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** There have been no statutory changes in the last 5 years to the requirements regarding vehicles and locations. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency meets regularly with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to discuss a range of matters, including the requirements for its defence contractors. The MoD is closely involved in an on-going review of the suitability of armoured vehicles for category H driving tests.

## Driving Tests

Asked by *Earl Attlee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultation they have conducted with industry regarding suitable vehicles for H licence driving tests. [HL8356]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency consults with driving test customers on a regular basis regarding the suitability of vehicles for a practical Cat H test; most cases are from the farming industry - tracked crawlers being the preferred vehicle.

Asked by *Earl Attlee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many changes to the H licence driving test requirements regarding (1) vehicles, and (2) locations, have been communicated to the relevant training providers in the last five years. [HL8357]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** There have been no statutory changes in the last 5 years to the requirements regarding vehicles and locations.

## Electric Scooters: Pedestrian Areas

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to encourage members of the public to perform citizens' arrests if they witness dangerous use of e-scooters on pavements. [HL8273]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Trials of e-scooters must find the correct balance between maximising the benefits they offer and keeping pedestrians and road users safe. We are working with local authorities and e-scooter operators to ensure compliance with legal requirements, that the rules of operation are understood and that local Police officers are fully aware of their enforcement powers if they are needed. Operators are deploying staff to help instruct users in the safe operation of e-scooters as well as offering digital training to all new users, and we

will expect them to act on feedback from the public about how scooters are used.

## Eritrea: Development Aid

Asked by *Baroness Goudie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what development assistance they provided to Eritrea in (1) 2019, and (2) 2020; and what development assistance they plan to provide to that country in future. [HL8312]

**Baroness Sugg:** UK Aid provided £3.24 million to UNICEF in 2018/19 and £4.00 million in 2019/20 to treat malnutrition in under-fives and provide access to safe hygiene and sanitation services in Eritrea. We will continue to support UNICEF Eritrea in 2020/21. We are deeply concerned about the worsening humanitarian situation in Eritrea and will continue to monitor needs.

## Eritrea: Overseas Aid

Asked by *Baroness Goudie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what aid they provided to (1) the government of Eritrea indirectly through multilateral organisations, and (2) for use in Eritrea through multilateral organisations, in (a) 2019, and (b) 2020; and what aid they plan to provide in 2020/21. [HL8311]

**Baroness Sugg:** UK Aid provided £3.24 million to UNICEF in 2018/19 and £4.00 million in 2019/20 to treat malnutrition in under-fives and provide access to safe hygiene and sanitation services in Eritrea. The majority of these funds are for the procurement of nutrition supplies and vaccines, with none of the funding allocated to the Government of Eritrea. UNICEF works with the Eritrean Ministry of Health and at all levels of the local community to build the capacity of the health service in Eritrea and encourage a long-term, sustainable response to undernutrition.

We continue to support UNICEF Eritrea in 2020/21. We are deeply concerned about the worsening humanitarian situation in Eritrea and will continue to monitor needs.

## Freight: Roads

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the state of preparedness of the Smart Freight Service; and when they expect to be in a position to start testing the system. [HL8082]

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the effectiveness, and (2) the impact, of the Border Operating Model in helping the logistics sector to understand the requirements of new procedures. [HL8295]

**Lord True:** As the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster set out on 23 September, the Government has invited businesses to participate in user testing for the Smart Freight Service, and continues to engage regarding preparations for the end of the Transition Period.

Since the publication of the Border Operating Model in July, the Government has engaged extensively with industry to understand what more they need to be ready for the end of the Transition Period. Feedback received has been reflected in the updated Border Operating Model, due to be published shortly.

### Georgia: Investment

*Asked by Lord Harries of Pentregarth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) changes to the law in Georgia which discriminate against foreign investors in that country's digital telecommunications network, (2) reports that such changes were due to pressure from the government of Russia, and (3) the impact of any such changes on Georgia's membership of international bodies. [HL8057]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are aware of the concerns raised by some local telecoms companies and civil society organisations regarding the Georgian Parliament's recent amendment to the electronic communications law, giving more authority to the communications regulator, on Georgia's media and telecommunications sector. Through our Embassy in Tbilisi we are carrying out a full assessment of the amendment, including its implications for foreign investors. The UK and other international partners work to promote continued democratic and economic reforms in Georgia that support strong governance, media freedom and an open business environment.

As we are still assessing the amendment, it would not be appropriate for us to comment on reports speculating about its origins. Similarly on Georgia's membership of international bodies, it would be for the relevant organisations to review these developments in line with their membership rules.

### Government Assistance: Northern Ireland

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish any advice or briefings prepared by the civil service on the impact of the provisions of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland relating to state aid. [HL8077]

**Lord True:** In line with the practice of successive administrations, details of internal briefings are not normally disclosed.

### H2O Asset Management

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the potential risks for UK investors by H2O Asset Management's approach to valuing unlisted investments held in open-ended funds, and (2) whether any group of investors, including associates and other clients of H2O Asset Management and its executives and owner, have been treated preferentially. [HL8079]

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have received any requests for information from the Autorité des Marchés Financiers in connection with the Financial Conduct Authority's supervision of the valuation of investments in public funds managed by H2O Asset Management. [HL8080]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** This is a matter for the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), which is operationally independent from Government. The question has been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply directly to the noble Lord by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

### Health Services: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what extra funding has been made available in 2020 to (1) GPs, (2) NHS community health services, and (3) Public Health England, to address the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL6742]

**Lord Bethell:** Public safety remains the Government's top priority and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been clear from the outset that the National Health Service will get whatever funding it needs to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

£31.9 billion of support for healthcare was set out in the summer economic update. This includes over £15 billion for personal protective equipment (PPE), and £10 billion for NHS Test and Trace. The Government has also confirmed a further package of £3 billion for the NHS as part of the COVID-19 recovery strategy, covering support for winter. The total level of funding that is needed may change further.

Details on a funding package for general practitioners (GPs) of nearly £200 million have been confirmed. This covers the legitimate additional costs of the response borne by GP practices due to the pandemic. NHS providers are currently able to claim for COVID-19 costs retrospectively under the temporary finance regime that has been put in place until the end of September. This is operating at trust/foundation trust level rather than for specific services such as community health services. Allocations totalling an additional £2.7 billion are then being made available to local systems for the rest of the

year. Funding specific to Public Health England forms part of the NHS Test and Trace budget and the PPE budget the specific distribution to PHE is currently being agreed.

### History: Education

*Asked by Lord Boateng*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the role of examination boards in promoting a better understanding of British history; and which such boards examine modules that cover (1) the history of migration, (2) the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, (3) the contribution of Black people to British history from the Roman invasion to the end of the 20th century, and (4) race relations in the UK. [HL8049]

**Baroness Berridge:** The department sets the content requirements for GCSE and A level history. Within this subject content, there is significant scope for modules that cover the history of migration, the transatlantic slave trade, and the contribution of black people to British history and race relations in the UK.

It is for awarding organisations themselves to develop specifications for GCSE and A level history that meet those requirements and for Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator, to ensure those requirements are correctly met. As such, the department does not make assessments of the modules or module content offered by awarding organisations.

Two of the three main awarding bodies in England, OCR and AQA, provide an option to undertake a thematic study on migration in Britain, and how this country's history has been shaped by the black and minority ethnic communities in the past. The 3rd main awarding body, Pearson, is currently developing a thematic study option on migration in Britain. Subject to Ofqual approval, this will provide more choice for schools.

### Home Office: Bullying

*Asked by Lord Young of Cookham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to conclude their investigation into allegations of bullying of officials by the Home Secretary; and when the report of that investigation will be published. [HL8102]

*Asked by Lord Campbell of Pittenweem*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the results of the inquiry into allegations of bullying of officials by the Home Secretary. [HL8177]

**Lord True:** To protect the interests of all involved the Government does not comment on the specifics of ongoing process.

The Prime Minister will make any decision on the matter public once the process has concluded.

### Hospital Beds: Private Sector

*Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the total bed capacity available to the NHS from private sector providers; and whether they will publish the most updated occupancy data for those beds. [HL7462]

*Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to utilise the private health sector as COVID-secure hospitals to help deal with the backlog of operations created by COVID-19. [HL7463]

*Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent conversations they have had with private healthcare providers around future provision of NHS treatment. [HL7464]

**Lord Bethell:** National Health Service patients are benefitting from an unprecedented partnership with private hospitals as we battle the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department and NHS England and NHS Improvement have worked with the independent sector to secure all appropriate inpatient capacity and other resource across England. The addition of around 6,500 additional beds has increased NHS capacity and ensured that facilities are available for patients diagnosed with COVID-19 whilst ensuring continuity of service for non-COVID-19 patients requiring elective activity, including cancer and other urgent treatment. The latest collected information shows that over 215,000 patient contacts had taken place under the contract. Independent providers have continued to provide urgent operations for their private pay or insured patients as well as for NHS patients. From the middle of May 2020, independent providers have also been able to provide more routine elective work to private pay or insured patients and where this has been agreed locally with the NHS.

Regarding future provision of NHS treatment, an invitation to tender will be issued by NHS England and NHS Improvement to the healthcare market in October 2020. It will invite providers of elective care services to put themselves forward to be appointed to a framework and, as such, available to deliver elective services to NHS patients, on a cost-per-case basis, at rates reflecting those paid to providers for the same services pre-COVID-19

As part of preparing for winter, the Government has provided an additional £3 billion to the NHS. This includes additional funding to the NHS to allow them to continue to use additional hospital capacity from the independent sector, and to maintain the Nightingale hospitals, in their current state, until the end of March 2021.

## Incontinence: Medical Equipment

Asked by *Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that people living with urinary incontinence have access to high quality medical devices after Brexit. [HL8071]

**Lord Bethell:** The Department, in consultation with the devolved administrations and Crown Dependencies, are working with trade bodies, suppliers, and the health and care system to make detailed plans to help ensure continued supply of medicines and medical products, including incontinence products, at the end of the transition period.

As set out in the attached letter from the Department to industry of 3 August, we are implementing a multi-layered approach, that involves asking suppliers to get trader ready, consider alternative routes away from potential disruption and stockpiling to a target level of six weeks on United Kingdom soil where this is possible.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Letter of 3 August [Letter to medicines and medical products suppliers.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-09-14/HL8071>

## India: Abortion

Asked by *Baroness Stroud*

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the research by Fengqing Chao et al Probabilistic projection of the sex ratio at birth and missing female births by State and Union Territory in India, published on 19 August, what representations they have made to the government of India about preventing sex-selective abortion. [HL8297]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have not made any representations to the Government of India about this.

The UK strongly opposes sex-selective abortion. The UK supports partner governments' efforts to prevent this discrimination through our programmes to promote gender equality, girls' and women's empowerment and rights. In India, the British High Commission in New Delhi and our network of Deputy High Commissions work closely with civil society and non-governmental organisations that are directly promoting women's awareness of their rights. We also continue to promote empowerment through events and campaigns such as "International Women's Day", the "International Day of the Girl Child" and the "Kick like a Girl" project which trained adolescent girls on leadership skills.

## India: Diplomatic Relations

Asked by *The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to receive a response from the government of India to their standing request for UK diplomats to visit Jammu and Kashmir; and whether they sought any clarification on why the UK was not included in the delegation of foreign envoys invited to visit that region in January. [HL8187]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK did not participate in the foreign envoys' visits to Indian-administered Kashmir in January. We continue to make clear to the Government of India that we wish to conduct independent visits to Indian-administered Kashmir once COVID-19 allows, and regularly raise our request with the appropriate authorities.

## Iran: Political Prisoners

Asked by *Baroness Goudie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the accounts of the wrongful arrest and torture of demonstrators and activists in Amnesty International's report Iran: Trampling Humanity - Mass arrests, disappearances and torture since Iran's 2019 November protests, published on 2 September. [HL8121]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The findings in Amnesty International's report about the November 2019 protests are deeply worrying. Iran's human rights record continues to be of serious concern to the UK. As we said at the time, we unreservedly support the right to peaceful protest, and call on Iran to uphold its commitments under international law to protect freedom of assembly and speech. The UK is committed to holding Iran to account on a wide range of human rights issues, through contact with the Iranian Government and internationally through the UN and our likeminded partners. We regularly raise human rights with the Iranians at all levels and we continue to take action with the international community to press Iran to improve its poor record on all human rights issues.

## Iran: Prisoners

Asked by *Baroness Goudie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Iran about the unlawful detention, torture and execution of prisoners, including Navid Afkari. [HL8120]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Iran's human rights record is of serious and longstanding concern to the UK. The execution of Navid Afkari by the Iranian authorities was deplorable and the UK Government made clear its public condemnation of the action on 12 September. The

UK Government is firmly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances and in every country, as a matter of principle, and we unreservedly support the right to peaceful protest. We also consistently and unreservedly condemn torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and it is a priority for us to challenge it wherever and whenever it occurs. We call on Iran to uphold its commitments under international law to protect freedom of assembly and speech, and treat all detainees in line with international standards. We regularly raise human rights with the Iranians at all levels and we continue to take action with the international community to press Iran to improve its poor record on all human rights issues.

### Marriage: Ceremonies

*Asked by Baroness Blackstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many religious denominations which had no registered places of worship for the purpose of solemnising opposite-sex marriages prior to 2013 have registered such places of worship since 2013; and to list those denominations and places by the date of their first registration. [HL8045]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Five denominations, which had no places of worship registered for the purpose of solemnizing marriages prior to 2013, have since registered. They are:

<i>Denomination</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Date of Registration</i>
Hillsong Church	Newcastle Upon Tyne	30/09/2013
Scientologist	London	18/12/2013
Universal Truth	Surrey	01/06/2014
Glorious Church	Milton Keynes	25/06/2014
Indian Orthodox	Bristol	31/05/2016

### Mental Health Services: Inspections

*Asked by Lord Patel of Bradford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the Care Quality Commission's policy on the number of inspection visits that should take place in a 12 month period to mental health facilities rated as (1) inadequate, (2) requires improvement, (3) good, or (4) outstanding; and how frequently providers should expect a full quality ratings review from the Care Quality Commission when rated as (1) requires improvement, or (2) inadequate. [HL7979]

**Lord Bethell:** Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) planned the frequency of routine inspections based on ratings, whilst retaining the ability to inspect at any time in response to risk. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the CQC paused routine inspections and adapted its regulatory model by using an intelligence driven approach, focusing on services where risk to

service users is greatest. This approach will continue to develop as the CQC learns from the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Nature Conservation

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to prevent species extinction, and (2) to work with other nations and international organisations to implement worldwide measures to protect species at risk of extinction. [HL8062]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** In England, the 25 Year Environment Plan (YEP) marked a step-change in ambition for wildlife and the natural environment. We are already taking action to fulfil this ambition. We have brought forward the first Environment Bill in over 20 years with ambitious measures to address the biggest environmental priorities of our age, including restoring and enhancing nature. The Bill will set the framework for at least one legally binding target for biodiversity.

Natural England's Species Recovery Programme supports the recovery of threatened and declining species in partnership with a number of stakeholder organisations. Natural England is also working with conservation organisations on the Back from the Brink programme. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and partners, it aims to save 20 of England's most threatened animals and plants from extinction, and benefit over 200 other species.

The UK is party to a number of international conventions and agreements aimed at protecting species and ecosystems. Under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UK is committed to playing a leading role in the development of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework containing ambitious and practical targets to protect species. The UK is leading the Global Ocean Alliance of countries in support of ambitious ocean action, in particular protecting at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030. We are also investing over £66 million between 2014 to 2024 to crack down on the illegal wildlife trade and we continue to work within the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) to ensure that any trade in wildlife is sustainable.

### New IRA: Weapons

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that the New IRA has imported weapons from Hezbollah. [HL8308]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The Noble Baroness will be aware that in August officers from the Police Service of Northern Ireland made a number of arrests under the Terrorism Act in connection with an ongoing investigation into the activities of the New IRA. Ten people have now been charged with a range of terrorism offences. To ensure that any subsequent prosecutorial

proceedings are not compromised, it would not be appropriate to comment further at this stage.

### **Pensions: Fraud**

*Asked by Baroness Warwick of Undercliffe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by Police Foundation and The People's Pension Protecting People's Pensions: Understanding and Preventing Scams, published on 7 September, what action they are taking to protect people from pension scams. [HL8100]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Government is committed to safeguarding consumer savings and we want individuals to better understand the choices they have and the risks that exist.

Since the introduction of the pension freedoms in 2015, we have made several legislative interventions to tackle scams. The Finance Act 2018 strengthened the HM Revenue & Customs process for registering pension schemes, thereby reducing the risk of fraudulent schemes being established. In 2019, HM Treasury introduced a ban on pension cold calling, to reduce the chance of individual's being enticed into such schemes. We are now introducing a clause in the Pension Scheme Bill that allows legislation to set conditions on members' statutory right to transfer, and thereby introduces two additional barriers to protect people. The clause sets examples of the conditions that must be applied to statutory transfers unless requests are to either a firm regulated and authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority or an authorised Master Trust. The legislation will require members to confirm they have obtained information or guidance of the associated risks of scams, and still want the transfer to go ahead.

We will also be bringing forward new information requirements from the age fifty to those with defined contribution pension savings, that will inform them in more simplified terms, about their retirement options and the availability of guidance to help with their decisions. We see accessing guidance as a natural part of the journey savers take, before making a decision relating to the pension freedoms. Following the recent trials, which showed a nudge to guidance during the application process is effective, we will be commencing section 19 of the Financial Guidance and Claims Act 2018, which amends the Pension Schemes Act 1993.

The Government has, and will, continue to work with industry and regulators to identify the circumstances that cause most concern ('red flags'), so that we can determine how best to use legislation that ensures members at high risk are protected.

The Department Work and Pensions (DWP) continues to work with other Government Departments, regulators, enforcement agencies and the pensions industry to monitor the evolution of the methods scammers use and raise awareness of these through coordinated campaigns. The pre-COVID campaign, July – November 2019,

resulted in over 222,000 visits to the ScamSmart website, to find out how to identify and report a scam.

DWP has also supported industry initiatives such as the Regulators and Money and Pension Service joint statement, to industry encouraging individuals not to make hasty decisions and endorsed equivalent initiatives by the Pension Protection Fund.

DWP has set out warning signs of scams on social media and made 18 posts referencing Pension Scams and ScamSmart in total across Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn in the period March to September 2020.

We continue to monitor the situation closely and will take necessary action to protect savers from scams.

### **Sanitation**

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports from the World Health Organisation and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme that (1) 785 million people do not have access to clean water close to home, (2) two billion people do not have a decent toilet, and (3) three billion people do not have basic handwashing facilities at home; and what plans they have to work with other governments to tackle those issues, particularly in view of the importance of sanitation during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL8319]

**Baroness Sugg:** The FCDO takes the data in these reports very seriously, and we are proud to support the WHO and UNICEF to produce them. If current trends continue, Sustainable Development Goal 6 targets for water supply, sanitation and hygiene will not be achieved. This will undermine the achievement of many other global goals, and our own commitment to end the preventable deaths of mothers, infants and children. Progress on hygiene and sanitation is needed to tackle COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Over the last five years, the UK has helped 62 million people gain access to water and sanitation services. We are working with Unilever and other partners to promote hand hygiene for up to a billion people in response to the current pandemic. We also need longer-term solutions. To maximise the impact of aid, we are shifting our focus to strengthen national health systems which can deliver and sustain access at a far greater scale - and which can attract additional financial resources.

### **Schools: Coronavirus**

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Leeds*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what extra financial provision they plan to make available to schools who do not have the budget to meet the requirements of operating safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL8068]

**Baroness Berridge:** Getting all children and young people back into school for the new academic year has

been a national priority. As of 10 September, over 99% of schools were open to some or all of their pupils. Schools have been able to claim additional funding for exceptional costs incurred due to COVID-19 between March and July, such as additional cleaning required due to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases and increased premises costs to keep schools open for priority groups during the Easter and summer half term holidays.

Schools have also continued to receive their core funding allocations throughout the COVID-19 outbreak. Following last year's Spending Round, school budgets are rising by £2.6 billion in 2020-21, £4.8 billion in 2021-22 and £7.1 billion in 2022-23, compared to 2019-20.

As stated in our guidance, schools should use their existing resources when welcoming all children back this autumn.

### Shipping: Carbon Emissions

*Asked by Lord Browne of Ladyton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by David G Victor et al, *Accelerating the Low Carbon Transition*, published in November 2019, in particular regarding the recommendation that developing countries with plentiful renewable energy sources could be well placed to attract investment in technology to decarbonise international freight shipping. [HL8237]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Government agrees that there is a unique opportunity for developing countries to play a key role in the decarbonisation of the international freight shipping sector, including through the production of alternative fuels. For example, according to a study conducted by EDF, the introduction of electrofuels in Chile could unlock investment worth up to 90 billion US dollars for the country.

Ahead of COP26, the Government is working with other States to explore the global landside infrastructure solutions that can unlock clean shipping for all. At the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the UK remains committed to being an ambitious voice at negotiations on the reduction of greenhouse gases from international shipping, and to working collaboratively with our peers to ensure that the specific needs of developing countries are being met.

### Suicide: Ethnic Groups

*Asked by Lord Boateng*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many suicides by Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people have there been in each of the last three years for which figures are available, by (1) gender, and (2) ethnic origin. [HL8016]

**Lord Bethell:** The information requested is not collected centrally.

*Asked by Lord Boateng*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is any disparity in the rate of suicide between different (1) ethnic groups, and (2) genders within those groups, in England; and what plans they have to address any such disparity in the implementation of the suicide prevention strategy for England. [HL8017]

**Lord Bethell:** We do not currently have official data on suicide rates broken down by ethnicity. We are exploring ways to improve the quality and timeliness of suicide and self-harm data, including for ethnic groups, to allow national and local partners to monitor rates, identify trends and develop effective prevention plans.

*Preventing suicide in England: Fourth progress report of the cross government outcomes strategy to save lives*, published in 2019, recognises that there are certain groups, including the black, Asian and minority ethnic community, with specific needs and characteristics that may expose them to more risk factors for suicide. We expect local agencies to work together to ensure that their plans are tailored to meet the needs of these groups.

### Suicide: Euthanasia

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the study *Does Euthanasia Have a Dampening Effect on Suicide Rates? Recent Experiences from the Netherlands*, published in the *Journal of Ethics in Mental Health* on 28 December 2017, (2) the study *How does legalization of physician-assisted suicide affect rates of suicide?*, published in the *Southern Medical Journal* in October 2015, and (3) the relationship between the legalisation of assisted suicide and the rate of suicide in the general population; and what plans they have to reflect the outcome of any such assessments in the suicide prevention strategy for England. [HL8007]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government has made no formal assessment of these studies and the Department has not made an assessment of the relationship between the legalisation of assisted suicide and the rate of suicide in the general population.

### Teachers: Pay

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report *Education at a Glance 2020*, published on 8 September, which suggests that the teacher pay gap in England is twice that of the OECD average. [HL8092]

**Baroness Berridge:** The government appreciates the hard work and dedication of all teachers, and recognises the need to recruit and retain good teachers and leaders.

For the 2020 teachers' pay award, the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) has recommended a 5.5% uplift to the minimum of the main pay range and 2.75% uplift to the maximum of the main pay range and the minima and maxima of all the other pay ranges and allowances. The STRB has also recommended advisory pay points on the main pay range and upper pay range. The department is accepting these recommendations in full.

This teachers' pay award is the largest since 2005 and provides for a substantial above-inflation increase to the pay ranges for all teachers and leaders and thanks to the flexible performance based pay system we have, schools can choose to give teachers and leaders a higher pay rise where this is appropriate to their local context and budget.

The government made a commitment to increase starting salaries to £30,000 by 2022/23 in order to place teaching where it belongs at the top of the graduate labour market. This pay award takes the first step to delivering this target with a 5.5% increase to starting salaries worth between £1,341 and £1,677 depending on location.

### **Trade Agreements: Pacific Rim Nations**

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to apply to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. [HL8081]

**Lord Grimstone of Boscobel:** Pursuing potential accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) is a

priority for the HM Government and is a key part of our trade negotiations programme. We have engaged with all eleven member countries, at both ministerial and official level. Most recently, on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020, my Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade addressed a United Kingdom-CPTPP Senior Officials' meeting and all CPTPP members have welcomed our interest in accession. Prior to that, on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020, the Secretary of State convened Heads of Mission from all CPTPP countries to discuss the United Kingdom's potential accession. We will continue to engage all members as we consider our application, an approach that aligns with the accession process for new CPTPP members, which encourages countries to engage informally with every CPTPP member.

### **Voi: Electric Scooters**

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what information they have requested from Voi about the illegal use of e-scooters; and what plans they have to publish any such information. [HL8272]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Officials are in close and regular contact with local authorities and e-scooter operators in live e-scooter trial areas. We are encouraging rapid action be taken to respond to operational issues as soon as they arise and ensuring that any lessons from early implementation are applied in subsequent trials.

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