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HOUSE OF LORDS

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Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
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Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Wolfson of Tredegar	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
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Written Statements

Tuesday, 18 May 2021

Canada and Mexico Trade Deals: Call for Input

[HLWS34]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade (Liz Truss MP) has today made the following statement:

The Call for Input on future Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with Canada and Mexico will formally be launching as of today.

The UK has set its sights on the next generation of British-shaped trade deals to secure closer economic ties with major economies of today and tomorrow, with Canada currently being the 9th largest economy in the world, and Mexico forecast to become the 7th largest by 2050. These deals will secure more access for British goods and services, opening significant new opportunities for UK business by boosting trade with Canada and Mexico, already worth £22.8bn and £5.1bn respectively in 2019. They will cement the UK's position as a world-leader in digital and services trade, and constituent key building blocks to UK membership of CPTPP as well as delivering benefits to the whole of the UK.

The UK signed Trade Continuity Agreements (TCAs) with both Canada and Mexico before the end of the Transition Period and committed to start negotiating the new trade deals later this year. Building on the deals signed in 2020, which secured tariff-free exports on 98% and 88% of goods to Canada and Mexico respectively, this next generation of trade deals provides the opportunity to set new benchmarks in areas like digital trade, climate and women's economic empowerment, and cement the UK's position as world-leader in digital and services trade.

The Call for Input will provide businesses, public sector bodies, individuals and other interested stakeholders with the opportunity to give valuable feedback and highlight their priorities for our future trading relationship with these two countries.

The feedback received from stakeholders will be crucial when shaping our mandate, and will inform detailed negotiations preparation, and policy positions. The Department for International Trade is committed to ensuring future FTAs and their provisions are informed by stakeholder needs and shaped by the demands of the British economy.

The UK is to begin negotiations for upgraded trade deals with Canada and Mexico this year focused on creating even greater opportunities for UK businesses. Our new negotiations will allow us to go further to boost trade with these economies. Canada was the UK's 15th largest export market in 2019, and according to IMF data, Mexico ranks as the 15th largest economy worldwide, with a market of over 130 million consumers. Offering

significant opportunities for UK businesses in industries including automotive manufacturing and food and drink.

Forging stronger trade links with Canada and Mexico will also support the UK's accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), as they are both members. CPTPP is at the cutting edge of global trade and will remove barriers, raise standards and support jobs, putting the UK at the centre of an increasingly influential and modern trade network of 11 economies in the Indo-Pacific region with a combined GDP of almost £9 trillion in 2019. Joining will help open up a new horizon of opportunities for British businesses, particularly in services and digital and data provisions. Canada and Mexico also represent the 2nd and 4th largest economies out of the CPTPP countries, which in total account for 13% of global GDP. This would increase to more than 16% if the UK were to join.

The UK and our partners in Canada and Mexico share a desire to launch negotiations later this year. The Call for Input will strive to support the goal of greater economic prosperity for businesses and it will ensure that their needs are heard. The Government is committed to transparency and will ensure that Parliament, the devolved administrations, UK citizens and businesses have access to information on our trade negotiations.

The call for input can be accessed using the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/trade-with-canada-and-mexico-call-for-input>.

Plans to Restore Nature

[HLWS36]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: My Right Hon Friend the Secretary of State (George Eustice) has today made the following statement:

The events of the last twelve months have led people to appreciate the difference that nature makes to our lives more than ever before. Restoring nature will be crucial as we seek to build back greener from this pandemic, and in what is a huge year for the environment we will use our COP26 and G7 presidencies to take a leading role on driving a global green recovery on the world stage.

As a core part of our commitment to leave the environment in a better state than we found it, and acting on the recommendations of the Dasgupta Review, we are announcing today that we will be amending the Environment Bill to require a historic, new legally binding target on species abundance for 2030- aiming to halt the decline of nature in England. We hope that this world leading measure will be the Net Zero equivalent for nature, spurring action of the scale required to address the biodiversity crisis.

We will develop this target alongside the longer term legally-binding targets we are already developing in the Environment Bill, and set the final target in secondary legislation following the agreement of global targets at the UN Nature Conference CBD COP15 in autumn 2021. This amendment will be tabled at Lords Committee Stage.

We shouldn't underestimate the scale of the challenge ahead in halting the decline of nature. Over the last 50 years, much of the UK's wildlife-rich habitat has been lost or degraded, and many of our once common species are in long-term decline. We have also come to better understand the link between our own health, and economic prosperity, and that of the planet. The independent, global Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity, led by Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta, has shown us that a healthy natural world, measured in its diversity of life, underpins so much of our economic prosperity and resilience.

To achieve our new target, alongside others in the Bill, we will also need measures that go beyond what is in the Bill.

We are also announcing today:

- An England Peat Action Plan to restore, sustainably manage and protect our peatlands. We will restore at least 35,000 ha of peatland by 2025, investing £50 million through the Nature for Climate fund and phasing out the most damaging practices to our peatland.
- An England Trees Action Plan to better protect our existing trees and expand woodland coverage, aiming for 12% woodland cover by the middle of the century. Over £500 million of the £640 million Nature for Climate Fund is dedicated to trees. Tree planting rates in England will treble by the end of this Parliament to benefit our local communities, nature and climate.
- Species reintroduction measures to recover threatened species and continue to provide opportunities for successful reintroductions. We want to see a more nature rich Britain, with further action to bend the curve of species loss in this country.

If we are to deliver this ambitious new target and reverse the downward trend we have seen in recent decades, we need to change our approach. We must move the emphasis away from processes that simply moderated the pace of nature's decline, and instead put in place the governance regime that can deliver nature's recovery. We need to create space for the creative public policy thinking that can deliver results, rather than relying on change being set by litigation and case law.

I am therefore also announcing today that I will be tabling an amendment to the Environment Bill to provide for a power to re-focus the Habitats Regulations to our domestic priorities. We want to ensure our legislation adequately supports our ambitions for nature, including our new world leading targets, rather than remaining tied to legacy EU legislation. We have already set out some important measures in the Environment Bill to switch the focus to nature recovery. We have the requirement for environmental targets on wider areas, for example water quality; a requirement for an Environment Improvement Plan; Local Nature Recovery Strategies to steer habitats delivered through biodiversity net gain; and Natural England are making progress with a more strategic

approach to nature recovery through their support for delivering the Nature Recovery Network.

We will take a measured approach to reform. We will also consult with the new Office for Environmental Protection, and work with conservation groups on any proposals we develop before any regulatory changes are made. In addition, later this year, I intend to bring forward a Green Paper setting out how we plan to deliver a regulatory framework that is fit for purpose in driving forward our domestic ambitions now that we have left the EU, including our objective of protecting 30 percent of terrestrial land by 2030. We need a revised approach to deliver this new species abundance target and better support iconic and much-loved native species like the hedgehog.

As announced in the Queen's Speech on 11 May, we will also be bringing forward amendments in the Lords to reduce the harm from storm overflows to our rivers, waterways and coastlines. New duties will require government to publish a plan to reduce sewage discharges from storm overflows by September 2022 and report to Parliament on the progress towards implementing the plan. Water companies and the Environment Agency will be required to publish data on storm overflow operations annually.

These new measures will complement the existing provisions in the Environment Bill, which will tackle air, water and waste pollution, which are critical to meeting our goals of net zero emissions, stemming and reversing biodiversity loss and improving public health.

Work on implementing measures in the Environment Bill has continued since it was last in the Commons. We have appointed the first chair of the Office for Environmental Protection, Dame Glenys Stacey. We have published a draft Principles Policy Statement, started work on developing legally binding environmental targets, launched consultations on the deposit return schemes for drinks containers, and extended producer responsibility for packaging and consistent recycling collections.

The Environment Bill will have its final day of Report and Third Reading in the Commons on 26 May, before moving to the Lords. We are aiming for Royal Assent in the Autumn. In the year of COP26, the Environment Bill is at the core of delivering the Government's manifesto commitment to deliver the most ambitious environmental programme of any country on earth and leave our environment in a better state than we found it.

Public Consultation on the National Data Strategy and the Data Sharing Code of Practice: Government Response

[HLWS35]

Baroness Barran: My Right Honourable Friend the Minister of State for Media and Data, John Whittingdale MP, has made the following Statement:

I am pleased to inform the House that the Government is today publishing our response to the public consultation on the UK National Data Strategy and laying the Information Commissioner's Office, Data Sharing Code of Practice.

Government response to the public consultation on the National Data Strategy

The National Data Strategy, published in September 2020, set out a framework for action to maximise the power of responsible data use across the UK. It also launched a 13-week consultation which closed in December 2020. We received 282 unique responses from across the public sector, civil society, industry and academia, as well as from members of the general public. Consultation feedback has confirmed that our framework is fit for purpose. Many respondents also recognised the need to rebalance the narrative, moving away from thinking about data use primarily as a threat to be managed, and instead recognising data as an asset that, used responsibly, can deliver economic and public benefits across the UK.

The government response to the consultation builds on the insights we received, and details how we will deliver across our priority areas of action in such a way that builds public trust and ensures that the opportunities from better data use work for everyone, everywhere. This includes setting out our plans to create a National Data Strategy Forum which will ensure that a diverse range of perspectives continue to inform the strategy's implementation. The response also reflects on the crucial role of data in building back better after the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the coming months, we will publish focused updates on progress in delivering specific missions and/or actions within the National Data Strategy.

Data Sharing Code of Practice

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the UK's independent data protection regulator and has a statutory duty under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) to produce a code of practice that provides practical guidance on data sharing. Today, the government has laid the ICO's data sharing code in Parliament. Alongside the laying of the code, the ICO has launched a data sharing information hub on its website, where organisations and

businesses can find clear guidance and practical tools on how to share data fairly, lawfully and transparently, while protecting people's personal information.

The Government is committed to working with the ICO to promote responsible data sharing which can have benefits for the economy and the delivery of public services. The National Data Strategy recognised that better use of data can help organisations of every kind succeed – across the public, private and third sectors. Data can be a driver of scientific and technological innovation, and central to the delivery of a whole range of vital public services and societal goals, from tackling climate change to supporting the National Health Service.

A copy of each document will be placed in the library of the House today.

Transport for London Funding Deal

[HLWS33]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

The Government and the Mayor of London have agreed to extend the current Transport for London (TfL) funding deal. The deal was due to expire on 18 May 2021 but this extension will continue to support the capital and the transport network until 28 May 2021 on the same terms as now. The extension will provide certainty while we finalise the terms of the next funding deal which will get TfL onto a more financially sustainable footing.

The extension comprises an additional funding payment of £65m with a top up grant available based on actual passenger revenues.

The Government has repeatedly shown that it is committed to supporting the running of essential services across the capital with over £3bn emergency funding provided since the start of the pandemic. Support for London needs to be balanced with the national recovery and ensure fairness and value for money for the taxpayer. The Government will continue to work with TfL and the Mayor so TfL can be financially sustainable as soon as possible.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 18 May 2021

Channel Tunnel: Freight

Asked by **Lord Bradshaw**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any scheme to encourage freight traffic to use the Channel Tunnel and HS1 rail link in order to reduce pressure on (1) the short sea crossing routes, and (2) the roads of Kent. [HL15]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government supports the growth of the rail freight sector, both domestically and through the Channel Tunnel, and remains committed to unlocking the economic and environmental benefits rail freight can deliver through its better environmental performance and contribution to alleviating congestion on Britain's roads.

The Mode Shift Revenue Support Scheme (MSRS) supports the carriage of freight by rail and water on routes where road haulage has a financial advantage, incentivising modal shift. In 2020/21, the Department allocated up to £20m to mode shift grants, a 28% increase in funding compared to 2019/20. These grants help to remove around 900,000 HGV journeys off the road each year.

It is ultimately a commercial decision for rail freight operators as to whether to facilitate new services, but the Government is open to engaging with industry-led proposals and potential new operators where there is a commercial proposition.

Driving: Disqualification

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 29 April (HL15320), how many times the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency revoked the driving licence of a driver who reached 12 points on their driving licence in each of the last 10 years. [HL5]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Only a court can disqualify an individual from driving under the "totting up" provisions whereby a driver can be disqualified by accruing 12 or more penalty points. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's role is to update the drivers' database with endorsement information received from courts.

The table below shows the number of totting up disqualifications since 2017. Information is not available for the full period requested as endorsements are removed from drivers' records after set periods of time in line with the requirements set out in law. As such, records for 2017 and 2021 are partial years.

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
17,326	38,867	39,205	34,020	15,690	145,108

Driving: Mobile Phones

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what data they hold on the use of hand-held mobile phones by drivers; and what public information programmes, if any, they are planning to remind drivers of the laws on mobile phone use. [HL135]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Drivers who use a hand-held mobile phone constitute a serious danger both to themselves and to other road users. According to the Department's most recent observational survey in 2017, 1.1% of drivers were observed using a hand-held mobile phone while driving on weekdays in Great Britain. The Government has consulted on changing the law to broaden the offence and make it easier for the police to enforce it.

It is important that we get the message across that using a hand-held mobile phone while driving is unacceptable. This summer THINK! will launch a large-scale campaign which will highlight the respect young men have for their friends who don't take risks when driving; they are planning a mobiles-specific campaign based on this theme later in the year.

Swinderby Station

Asked by **Lord Bradshaw**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 28 April (HL15243), what plans they have to improve rail journey times to improve the competitiveness of rail compared to road journeys. [HL16]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Midlands Connect are currently developing a proposal for line speed improvements between Lincoln and Nottingham, as part of their role promoting strategic transport investment across the Midlands region.

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