



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 19 October 2021 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:37 P.M., 19 October 2021). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

CABINET OFFICE

■ United Nations: Treaties

Lee Anderson:

[\[49277\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the effect of the UK no longer being bound by common EU positions on British delegates' positions on domestic policy at Conferences of Parties within the UN treaty system.

Michael Ellis:

Leaving the EU and the agreement of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) means that the UK has full political and economic independence. The Government is using this opportunity to show what Global Britain means to the rest of the world and play our part as a global leader. We shall do so by advancing UK policies internationally, including through Conferences of Parties within the UN treaty system.

DEFENCE

■ Helicopters: Contracts for Services

Stephen Morgan:

[\[56262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to launch a competitive tender for the Army's new medium lift helicopter.

Jeremy Quin:

Whilst no final decision has been taken, the Department's expectation is that the procurement will be subject to a competition. Further information will be provided in due course.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Myanmar: Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[52444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Foreign Minister of Myanmar will be attending the G7 ASEAN Foreign Ministers 2021 meeting.

Amanda Milling:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: The UK has invited ASEAN to the G7 Foreign and Development Ministerial Meeting in Liverpool in December as a demonstration of our commitment to ASEAN and the Indo Pacific region. The UK has been clear that the military regime in Myanmar is not welcome to attend in person. We note ASEAN's

decision not to invite Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to attend the ASEAN Leaders' Summit. The UK Government condemns the military coup in Myanmar, the violence against the people of Myanmar and the detention of members of the civilian government and civil society, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint. The UK will continue to work closely with ASEAN on our shared ambition of ending the crisis in Myanmar.

■ Overseas Aid

Sarah Champion:

[\[53902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, which departments of the former Foreign and Commonwealth Office and former Department for International Development have been aligned to create her Department's new Western Balkans Department; which three Official Development Assistance (ODA) programmes administered through that new Department are in receipt of the highest values of funding in the financial year 2021-22; and what the value of that funding is for each of those ODA programmes.

Wendy Morton:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office's Western Balkans Department comprises the former Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Western Balkans Department and the Western Balkans Programme Unit, which includes staff who previously worked in a Department for International Development and FCO Joint Unit delivering programming in the Western Balkans. For financial year 2021-22 the three programmes administered through Western Balkans Department with the highest value allocations are as follows:

Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Stability Programme CSSF Media, Cyber and Defence Programme Good Governance Fund

Programme level funding is regularly updated on DevTracker. Final country data is published in the Statistics for International Development each year.

■ Travel: Coronavirus

Thangam Debbonaire:

[\[56164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the standard and adequacy of covid-19 quarantine arrangements for UK citizens on arrival in specific countries when publishing travel guidance on those countries.

Amanda Milling:

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Travel Advice provides information to help British nationals make informed decisions about foreign travel and remains under constant review to ensure it reflects our latest assessment of risks to British nationals. The border entry requirements in overseas destinations are the responsibility of host governments. FCDO Travel Advice pages have an entry

requirements section that reflects the current rules at each destination. We encourage British nationals to monitor our travel advice when planning their trip.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Jason McCartney:

[\[903661\]](#)

What recent assessment his Department has made of the progress of the covid-19 vaccine rollout.

Maggie Throup:

Due to our successful COVID-19 vaccination programme we have now delivered over 83 million doses to people in England, including 3.6 million booster and third doses to the most vulnerable since September.

This has reduced the link between case numbers and hospitalisation, preventing the National Health Service from becoming overwhelmed and provided additional protection ahead of the winter.

Over 24.3million infections have been prevented and more than 127,000 lives saved to date.

Patricia Gibson:

[\[903662\]](#)

What steps his Department is taking to control the covid-19 outbreak during winter 2021-22.

Sajid Javid:

On 14 September, we set out our plan to sustain the progress made in combatting the virus and prepare the country for future challenges.

The high level of vaccine protection has allowed us to live with COVID-19 without stringent restrictions. However, if the data suggests the National Health Service is likely to come under unsustainable pressure, the Government has prepared a Plan B.

The NHS is working to ensure appropriate operational plans are in place, including to meet potential increases in demand for emergency care.

James Duddridge:

[\[903663\]](#)

What recent assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of continual glucose monitors in treating diabetes.

Maggie Throup:

The Department has not made any recent assessment. Commissioning decisions for the adoption of technology products in diabetes are guided by authoritative, evidence-based guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

NICE has made a number of recommendations on continuous glucose monitoring in its suite of guidelines on diabetes, which are currently being updated. NICE will consider the evidence on and expects to publish its updated guidance in March 2022.

Andrew Selous: [\[903665\]](#)

What steps he is taking to increase patient access to GPs.

Maria Caulfield:

On 14 October we published a comprehensive new plan to support general practitioners (GPs) and to make it easier for patients to see or speak to GPs and their teams.

Our plan is supported by a new £250 million Winter Access Fund to assist patients with urgent care needs to be seen by their practitioner on the same day, taking account of their preferences.

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[903667\]](#)

What steps his Department is taking to help ensure adequate investment in eating disorder research.

Gillian Keegan:

Mental health research is a strategic priority for the Departmental-funded National Institute for Health Research. We are increasing year on year spend in mental health research and invested £93 million in 2019/2020. We also fund the Eating Disorders Genetic Initiative, one of the largest eating disorders studies in England. In partnership with Beat, it aims to better understand what may lead to an eating disorder and how to improve treatments, both prevention and intervention.

Mark Pawsey: [\[903669\]](#)

What steps he is taking to increase the number of in-person GP appointments.

Maria Caulfield:

On 14 October we published a comprehensive new plan to support general practitioners (GPs) and to make it easier for patients to see or speak to GPs and their teams.

Our plan is supported by a new £250 million Winter Access Fund to assist patients with urgent care needs to be seen by their practitioner on the same day, taking account of their preferences.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Cat Smith: [\[53268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will upgrade the NHS App so that people who participated in the Novavax trial and who have subsequently been vaccinated by a NICE approved covid-19 vaccine are able to demonstrate their updated vaccination status.

Maggie Throup:

Clinical trial participants can obtain a NHS COVID Pass through the NHS App or NHS.UK based on their vaccine status where data has been uploaded to the national immunisation database by their trial sites or an exempt status where they remain on a blinded trial.

The 'travel' functionality within NHS COVID Pass shows the first and last vaccine dose an individual has received, with a maximum of two doses. The NHS COVID Pass of Novavax participants will display their first dose as Novavax and their second dose as the additional vaccination, which may not be accepted for international travel. A review is being conducted to determine whether and how these additional vaccination doses could be evidenced within the NHS COVID Pass.

Dr Luke Evans:[\[53358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent progress his Department has made on ensuring that participants in (a) vaccine trials and (b) the Novavax trial are able to have their vaccination status accurately recorded in the NHS Covid Pass.

Maggie Throup:

All clinical trial participants can now gain access to an NHS COVID Pass for domestic purposes.

As of 21 September, approximately two thirds of Novavax trial participants in England, access their vaccination information through the NHS COVID Pass for travel purposes. Work is ongoing to ensure that all clinical trial participants can access an NHS COVID Pass for travel in the near future.

Health Visitors: Finance**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**[\[53845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether Health Visiting services feature in his Department's submissions to the Spending Review.

Maggie Throup:

The forthcoming Spending Review will set out the Government's spending plans for health and social care for future years. This includes the local authority Public Health Grant, which funds health visiting services.

Integrated Care Systems**Rachael Maskell:**[\[52535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the reasons are for the determination of integrated care system population sizes; and what correlation there is between population size for those systems and improved (a) healthcare delivery and local (b) accountability and transparency.

Edward Argar:

Due to the variety in system complexity, particularly between rural and urban areas as well as population density, local authority boundaries and acute patient flows, the population size and footprint of integrated care systems (ICSs) vary across the country. System leaders will therefore engage and support partnership working across all boundaries to best meet the needs of their populations. All ICSs will be locally accountable and transparent regardless of size.

■ **Members: Correspondence****Sir Mike Penning:**[\[46953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to reply to correspondence from the hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead of 19 April 2021, case no MP36023, on mystery disease in a care home.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the Rt hon. Member on 13 September 2021.

HOME OFFICE■ **Computer Misuse Act 1990****Damian Green:**[\[53155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of the Computer Misuse Act 1990 following the review announced in May 2021.

Damian Hinds:

The Integrated Review committed the UK to fortifying its position as a world-leading and responsible cyber power, taking a new, full spectrum approach to the UK's cyber capability through keeping our people safe, staying ahead of our enemies and improving the lives of the British people.

Robust domestic legislation is key to achieving this mission and whilst the Computer Misuse Act has proved to be an effective piece of legislation, we need to ensure that it remains able to tackle the ever-changing cyber threat. For this reason, on 11 May, the Home Secretary announced that the Government was to conduct a Call for Information, as part of a review of the Computer Misuse Act.

The Call for Information has now closed and the Home Office is reviewing the proposals made. We will provide an update to Parliament in due course.

■ **Cybercrime****Damian Green:**[\[53156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle cyber crime.

Damian Hinds:

As technology develops, so too do opportunities for cyber criminals to target the UK. The arrival of 5G and the Internet of Things will create multiple new vulnerabilities, including inside people's homes. 'Deep Fake' technology provides opportunities for fraud and identity theft or for exploitation and extortion. We need to confront these crimes and develop and improve technological safeguards so that citizens never become victims.

As we made clear in the Beating Crime Plan published earlier this year, we are working across government to deliver improvements to the UK's cyber resilience and ensure we stay ahead of cyber criminals. We have invested £195 million over the last five years to establish a specialist cyber law enforcement network to disrupt and prosecute cyber criminals and support victims in response and recovery. We are developing a campaign to confront the growing threat of ransomware and to disrupt cyber criminals based overseas.

We will publish a new National Cyber Security Strategy later this year. The Strategy will drive significant improvements in the UK's response to cybercrime. It will strengthen the Law Enforcement response and drive greater collaboration with the National Cyber Centre and the National Cyber Force.

■ Emergency Services**Debbie Abrahams:**[\[53899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles.

Damian Hinds:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) portfolio is continually reviewed to ensure it reflects the most recent learning and understanding. The JESIP Joint Doctrine is in its third edition, and each version incorporates learning from operational incidents and exercises as well as inquests and inquiries. The effectiveness of JESIP is dependent on how well it has been embedded within each emergency service organisation, and how well it is applied during an incident.

Debbie Abrahams:[\[53901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment the JESIP Ministerial Board has made of the potential merits of commissioning a new HMIC-led tri-service review of the level of JESIP embeddedness across the emergency services.

Damian Hinds:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: In recent months the Home Office has worked to increase the JESIP content in the current inspection regime undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), and further consideration will be made about the merits of commissioning another tri-service review of JESIP in the future.

■ Manchester Arena Inquiry**Debbie Abrahams:**[\[53900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by what mechanism the findings of the Manchester Arena Inquiry will be analysed in the JESIP Joint Doctrine Review 2021.

Damian Hinds:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: The third edition of the JESIP Joint Doctrine was published on 11 October 2021. The refreshed Doctrine incorporates learning from evidence heard during the Manchester Arena Inquiry. It has also incorporated key learning from the other terrorist attacks, and the Grenfell Tower fire.

The Joint Doctrine is updated as a process of continuous improvement and learning from the Inquiry's Phase 2 report will be taken into consideration as part of this process.

■ Overseas Students: Afghanistan**Dr Julian Lewis:**[\[53821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether scholars from Afghanistan who have been (a) validated by the Council for At-Risk Academics and (b) awarded funded research posts at UK universities will be required to pay in advance (i) visa fees and (ii) health surcharges if they are in hiding without access to funds in (A) Afghanistan and (B) hostile countries adjacent to Afghanistan whilst awaiting safe passage to the UK; and whether the dependants of such scholars will be required to provide in advance evidence of ability to support themselves for a specified period.

Victoria Atkins:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: The Government has issued a policy statement which gives further information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). The policy statement can be found on the GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement>

Those who were not called forward as part of Op PITTING, or who are not offered resettlement under the ACRS, will need to apply to come to the UK under the existing economic or family migration rules. They will be expected to meet the eligibility requirements of their chosen route, which includes paying relevant fees and charges, and providing biometrics.

Dependants are able to apply as a dependent on their partner or parents application. However, they must provide information to show they meet the specific requirements of the Immigration Rules.

The ACRS is not yet open and is being developed at pace. Further details will be released in due course.

Eligible people will be prioritised and referred for resettlement to the UK as set out in the policy statement.

More details, as soon as they are available, will be published on the GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

■ Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Tom Hunt:

[54022]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to bring forward legislative proposals to amend human rights legislation in order to prevent the unsafe crossings across the English channel by illegal immigrants.

Tom Pursglove:

The Nationality and Borders Bill, which is part of our New Plan for Immigration, seeks to build a fair, but firm asylum and illegal migration system.

The Bill will tackle unsafe crossings of the Channel by giving enhanced powers to Border Force, introducing longer sentences for illegal entry and increasing the maximum penalty for people smuggling to life imprisonment.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Climate Change: Trade Agreements

Caroline Lucas:

[56964]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will make it her policy to integrate firm climate commitments into all future free trade agreements and aligned with (a) the Paris Agreement and (b) the UK's climate and environmental goals.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

HM Government is committed to upholding our climate commitments in free trade agreements. We will seek to maintain the United Kingdom's high levels of environmental protection and sovereign right to regulate in pursuit of net zero by 2050, and affirm our commitments to multilateral environment agreements, including the Paris Agreement. As an example, such provisions were recently agreed with Australia and set out at Agreement in Principle.

■ Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership: China

Gareth Thomas:

[53171]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of China's application to join the CPTPP; and if she will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) is a group of economies which promotes free and fair trade and requires members to meet high standards, particularly against unfair trading practices.

As a non-member, the UK is not commenting on the specifics of other economies' interest in the agreement. It's for the members to consider China's application.

Once the UK has joined CPTPP it will have the same rights as other parties in respect of future applicants. There has to be a consensus of all the parties to admit any new economy.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

■ Criminal Behaviour Orders

Steve Reed: [\[52509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what data his Department holds on the number of criminal behaviour orders applied for by local authorities in England in each of the last ten years.

Kemi Badenoch:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: This data is not collected by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

■ Funerals

Steve Reed: [\[53245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if his Department will publish any data it holds on the number of community or municipal funerals provided by local authorities in England in each of the last ten years.

Kemi Badenoch:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: This data is not collected by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

■ Leisure

Steve Reed: [\[53904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what data his Department holds on the number of leisure centres operated by local authorities in England in each of the last ten years.

Kemi Badenoch:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: The Department does not hold data on the total number of leisure centres operated by local authorities in England in the last ten years.

■ Pedestrian Areas: Repairs and Maintenance

Steve Reed: [\[53246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if his Department will publish the figures it holds on the amount spent by local authorities in England on pavement maintenance in each of the last ten years.

Kemi Badenoch:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: Local authorities provide expenditure returns to the Department, but the most detailed of these do not have a specific category for pavement maintenance. They have broader categories relating to roads; these can be found in tables A1 and RO2 in the local authority data tables which are linked from www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-capital-expenditure-receipts-and-financing and www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing respectively.

■ **Roads: Lighting****Steve Reed:**[\[53903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish the data held by his Department on the amount spent by local authorities in England on maintaining street lights in each of the last five years.

Kemi Badenoch:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: The Department does not hold figures on the amounts spent by councils in England on maintaining street lights in each of the last five years.

■ **Street Trading****Steve Reed:**[\[53905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what data his Department holds on the number of instances of illegal street trading recorded by local authorities in England.

Kemi Badenoch:

[Holding answer 18 October 2021]: This data is not collected by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

WORK AND PENSIONS■ **Employment: Northern Ireland****Stephen Farry:**[\[53369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of the provision of financial restitution to people who (a) were working in Northern Ireland at ages 14 and 15 between 1947 and 1957 and (b) continue to be subject to a discrepancy as a result of having worked longer than their GB counterparts when the working age changed to 14 in 1947.

Guy Opperman:

No such assessment has been made. Following the fundamental reforms of the National Insurance scheme in 1975 the law provided that only paid contributions and credits from the year in which a person reached age 16 to the year before the one in

which they reached State Pension age should count for the purposes of entitlement to the State Pension. The Government has no plans to review the position reached by Parliament and which has been in place since 1975.

■ **State Retirement Pensions: Kilmarnock and Loudoun**

Alan Brown:

[\[53947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many State Pensions are being assessed by her Department as possible cases of underpayment in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency as at 23 September 2021.

Guy Opperman:

The information requested is not available.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

DEFENCE

■ Military Aid

John Healey:

[53186]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish (a) the number of open Military Aid to Civil Authorities (MACA) requests, (b) the number of personnel committed and on standby for MACA requests and (c) details of those MACA requests.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 18 October 2021. The correct answer should have been:

James Heappey:

As of 11 October there were 20 open Military Aid to Civil Authorities (MACA) tasks; further information on these tasks is included in the attached table. Those tasks with zero Defence personnel assigned in the table relate to the use of the Defence Estate by other authorities and no Defence personnel are specifically dedicated to the execution of the MACA. In addition to those personnel assigned in the table, 4,000 troops are held at readiness to further support a range of resilience operations at the request of the civil authorities.

Attachments:

1. [MACA Requests.docx](#)

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Climate Change Update

Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change (Greg Hands): **[\[HCWS325\]](#)**

I am today providing an update on the UK's CCUS Cluster Sequencing Process which was launched in May this year. Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage, or CCUS, will be essential to meeting our Net Zero ambitions and will be an exciting new industry to capture the carbon we continue to emit and revitalise the birthplaces of the first Industrial Revolution.

The Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan established a commitment to deploy CCUS in a minimum of two industrial clusters by the mid-2020s, and four by 2030 at the latest. Our aim is to use CCUS technology to capture and store 20-30 MtCO₂ per year by 2030, forming the foundations for future investment and potential export opportunities. CCUS will be crucial for industrial decarbonisation, low carbon power, engineered greenhouse gas removal technologies and delivering our 5GW by 2030 low carbon hydrogen production ambition.

Our cluster sequencing process, which has, through the CCS Infrastructure Fund, £1 billion to provide industry with the certainty required to deploy CCUS at pace and at scale, has completed the first phase of the evaluation of the five cluster submissions received by my Department.

I am today, confirming that the Hynet and East Coast Clusters have been confirmed as track 1 clusters for the mid-2020s and will be taken forward into Track-1 negotiations. If the clusters represent value for money for the consumer and the taxpayer then subject to final decisions of Ministers, they will receive support under the government's CCUS Programme. We are also announcing the Scottish Cluster as a reserve cluster if a back-up is needed. A reserve cluster is one which met the eligibility criteria and performed to a good standard against the evaluation criteria. As such, we will continue to engage with the Scottish Cluster throughout Phase-2 of the sequencing process, to ensure it can continue its development and planning. This means that if government chooses to discontinue engagement with a cluster in Track-1, we can engage with this reserve cluster instead.

Deploying CCUS will be a significant undertaking, these are new major infrastructure projects for a new sector of the economy and carry with them significant risks to deliver by the mid-2020s. Government will continue to play a role in providing long-term certainty to these projects to manage these risks and bring forward the UK's first CCUS clusters.

We remain committed to helping all industrial clusters to decarbonise as we work to reach net zero emissions by 2050, and we are clear that CCUS will continue to play a key role in this process. Consequently, the government continues to be committed to Track-2

enabling 10Mtpa capacity operational by 2030. This puts these places - Teesside, the Humber, Merseyside, North Wales and the North East of Scotland - among the potential early SuperPlaces which will be transformed over the next decade.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Engagement with Civil Society and Business Organisations on the Trade and Cooperation Agreement

Paymaster General (Michael Ellis): [\[HCWS328\]](#)

My noble Friend, the Minister of State in the Cabinet Office (the Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG), has today made the following written statement:

As the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is a broad Agreement that touches on the lives of people across the UK, the Government ran a public consultation on Government engagement with business and civil society groups on implementation of the TCA. The consultation was open for seven weeks from 9 August 2021 to 21 September 2021.

It focused on how to best use the Domestic Advisory Group and Civil Society Forum, the two formal engagement channels provided for in the TCA.

Today, after considering comments received from various stakeholders, including business associations and civil society groups, the Government is publishing its official response to the consultation in Parliament and on [GOV.UK](#).

The Government has also launched an Expression of Interest campaign to determine membership of the Domestic Advisory Group and Civil Society Forum. The Expression of Interest, published today on [GOV.UK](#), will run until 9 November.

We are preparing for the Domestic Advisory Group to meet for the first time this year, shortly after the closure of the Expression of Interest campaign. The Government is in discussions with the European Commission to finalise the date for the first Civil Society Forum. We are prepared for the Forum to meet at the end of this year but acknowledge that it can take place in February 2022 if both parties agree.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces Update

Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Ben Wallace): [\[HCWS329\]](#)

I am today announcing the Government's decision on pay for the Armed Forces for 2021-22.

The Government recognises that public sector workers play a vital role in the running of our public services, including in their remarkable commitment to keeping the public safe in the continuing fight against Covid-19.

The Government received the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body (AFPRB) report on 2021 pay for Service Personnel up to and including 1-star rank on 21 July 2021. This has been laid before the House today and published on GOV.UK.

The Government values the independent expertise and insight of AFPRB and takes on board the useful advice and principles set out in response to the Government's recommendations outlined in the report.

As set out at the Spending Review (2020), there will be a pause to headline pay rises for the majority of public sector workforces in 2021-22. This is in order to ensure fairness between public and private sector wage growth, as the private sector was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic in the form of reduced hours, suppressed earnings growth and increased redundancies, whilst the public sector was largely shielded from these effects. This approach will protect public sector jobs and investment in public services, prioritising the lowest paid, with those earning less than £24,000 (Full Time Equivalent) receiving a minimum £250 increase. The pause ensures we can get the public finances back onto a sustainable path after unprecedented government spending on the response to Covid-19.

The AFPRB have recommended the following:

- a £250 uplift for all members of the Armed Forces earning less than £24,000, where X-Factor is excluded from this salary calculation;
- an increase in accommodation charges of 1.7% in line with the increase in the actual rents for housing component of CPI, not to be backdated; and
- other targeted eligibility changes to some categories of recruitment and retention payment.

The Government accepts the AFPRB's recommendations on accommodation charges and recruitment and retention payments in full.

However, the Government does not accept the AFPRB's recommendation to exclude X-Factor from the low earner salary calculation as X-Factor is a component of the overall military salary. Instead the Government will implement a £250 pay uplift for all regular and reserve Service Personnel earning less than the equivalent of £24,000 per year inclusive of X-Factor. This rise will be implemented in November 2021 salaries, and be backdated to 1 April 2021. Service Personnel have also continued to have access to annual incremental progression where appropriate.

The Government recognises that there is a further discussion to be had over the use of the X-Factor for pay and salary comparability work. The Armed Forces Reward and Incentivisation Review, recently announced in the Integrated Review's [Defence in a competitive age command paper](#), along with the AFPRB's planned review of X-Factor in the 2023 Pay Round will provide the opportunities to explore this topic in much greater depth.

The year 2021-22 has seen no waning in the important outputs our Armed Forces. From continuing to support the national response to Coronavirus, to the exceptional work of all those involved in the Afghanistan evacuations, all whilst maintaining our critical national

Defence outputs. It is for this reason I am pleased that, despite the unprecedented impact the pandemic has had on the nation's finances, the Government has been able to act in the spirit of the AFPRB's recommendations and demonstrate its commitment to looking after those who look after us.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Soil Health Action Plan for England

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Domestic Environment)

(Rebecca Pow):

[\[HCWS326\]](#)

This statement follows the recent [announcement](#) made by my Noble Friend Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 8 September 2021 on the government's commitment to publish a new Soil Health Action Plan for England and to outline further details on this upcoming plan.

Soil is a rich ecosystem and the Soil Health Action Plan will take a natural capital approach to improving its health by considering the numerous biological, chemical and physical attributes of soil. It will support sustainable management of soil by bringing together a range of actions to improve and protect the health of our soil. This will include delivering key ecosystem services and wider benefits and outcomes such as increased biodiversity, carbon storage, food production and flood mitigation. It will also provide certainty to farmers and land managers around the acceptable condition of all soil types.

The Action Plan will ensure England's soil is sustainably managed by 2030 demonstrating leadership in delivering a coherent plan for soil health. It will focus on preventing soil degradation and improving soil health, and look at how land management practices and planning can be adapted to help protect soil from the impact of climate change.

The Sustainable Farming Incentive is a key focus of the Action Plan and will support sustainable approaches to farm husbandry that deliver for the environment and improve soil health. This could include the introduction of herbal leys, and the use of grass-legume mixtures or cover crops. Healthy soil can also support farm productivity.

The Action Plan will include the development of a healthy soil indicator, soil structure monitoring methodology and a soil health monitoring scheme to help land managers and farmers track the health of our soil over time and the impact of their management practices. These actions will create a robust baseline from which we can monitor improvements in soil health, identify trends and support informed policy decisions, including any future environmental targets for soil health. The Action Plan will also outline how soil health improvements will help deliver against our wider environmental targets, including our historic 2030 target to halt the decline in species abundance.

The Soil Health Action Plan for England will provide a single, strategic approach to achieving these multiple outcomes and driving improved soil health across England, and we currently intend to consult on the framework next Spring.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Coronavirus Test Device Approval Update**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Vaccines and Public Health) (Maggie Throup): [\[HCWS324\]](#)

The UK is developing one of the most rigorous regulatory regimes in the world for coronavirus tests. The CTDA regulations have set high bars of specificity and sensitivity to ensure only high quality tests are available on the UK market.

Secretary of State and I have been impressed by the number of applications the regulator has received. This is a testament to the willingness of businesses to rise to the public health challenges set by this pandemic. However, some manufacturers have struggled to provide sufficient evidence in time. As things stand, this would mean they would have to be temporarily removed from the market whilst they complete their validation. This would create an unexpected contraction in supply at the start of winter. This could be particularly problematic for testing returning travellers.

In order to protect public health by ensuring availability of tests, the Secretary of State has decided to exercise the power under regulation 39A of the Medical Devices Regulations 2002. He will publish a protocol today listing certain tests that have both passed a public sector validation, and have a pending application awaiting validation, to remain on the market up to 28 February 2022 or until their validation application is determined. This protocol is a short term, proportionate and targeted measure to minimise a risk of serious harm to public health by ensuring a supply of tests most likely to be of high quality, having passed validation as part of DHSC procurement or other public sector process, remain on the market on an interim basis.

Copies of the protocol will also be deposited in the libraries of both Houses and it will be published on the GOV.UK website.

HOME OFFICE

■ The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse's (IICSA) Investigation reports on: 'Children in the Care of Lambeth Council'; 'Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings' and 'Institutional responses to allegations of child sexual abuse involving the late Lord Janner of Braunstone QC'

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel): [\[HCWS332\]](#)

On the 27 July 2021, 2nd September 2021, and today, the 19 October 2021, the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse published three of their investigation reports.

The reports relate to IICSA's investigations into the extent of any institutional failures to protect children in the care of Lambeth Council from sexual abuse and exploitation as well as reporting on their investigation into Child Protection in Religious Organisations

and Settings. Today, they have also published a report regarding the institutional responses to allegations involving the late Lord Janner of Braunstone, QC.

I pay tribute to the strength and courage of the victims and survivors who have shared their experiences to ensure the Inquiry can deliver its vital work.

Government will review these reports and consider how to respond to their content in due course. I would like to thank Professor Alexis Jay and her Panel for their continued work to uncover the truth, identify what went wrong in the past and to learn the lessons for the future.

I have today laid these reports before the House and they will also be published on www.gov.uk.

JUSTICE

■ Prisons Update

Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Dominic Raab):

[HCWS331]

I am today announcing the Government's decision on pay awards for prison staff.

The Prison Service Pay Review Body (PSPRB) has made its recommendations for the 2021-22 pay award. The Government values the independent expertise and insight of the PSPRB and takes on board the advice. Prison staff make an essential contribution to public service and their ongoing efforts, particularly in the challenging context of the Covid-19 pandemic, have been greatly appreciated.

As such, I am today announcing that we are accepting in full the recommendations made by the review body for implementation in this financial year. For clarity these are recommendations 2, 3 and 4 on which the Government provided evidence to the PSPRB.

Accepting recommendations 2, 3 and 4 will deliver a pay rise for over half of our prison service staff, according to internal estimates. This pay award will be paid this Autumn and will be backdated to 1 April 2021.

This award reflects the Government's original proposals to the PSPRB which were developed in the context of the public sector pay pause for 2021-22, announced at the Spending Review (2020). The pay pause has enabled Government to protect public sector jobs and investment in public services, prioritising the lowest paid. The pay pause aims to assist in getting public finances back onto a sustainable path after unprecedented Government spending on the response to Covid-19.

The PSPRB recommended that those with the lowest pay should be uplifted by £250. This means that all prison staff with a basic salary below £24,000 (on a full-time equivalent basis) should receive a consolidated pay award of £250. The Government has accepted this recommendation, recommendation 2, in full.

The Government has also accepted recommendations 3 and 4, meaning that eligible prison staff who have not reached the top of their pay band will also continue to receive

progression pay of up to 5%. Of this group, some of our lowest paid staff are also eligible for the £250 uplift under recommendation 2.

The PSPRB also made a further two recommendations, recommendations 1 and 5, which are not applicable to the current financial year. These recommendations concern matters on which fall outside of the PSPRB's remit for the 2021-22 pay round. In the circumstances, while the Government is grateful for these additional recommendations, there is no obligation on Government to formally respond, but we will consider them further.

The report has been laid before Parliament today, 19th October, and a copy is attached. I am grateful to the Chair and members of the Review Body for their report.

Attachments:

1. Prison Service Pay Review Body Report 2021 [[PSPRB Report 20-21.pdf](#)]

TRANSPORT

■ Draft Legislation: The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment) Regulations 2022

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Trudy Harrison):
[\[HCWS327\]](#)

I have today published as a draft the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 and an accompanying draft Explanatory Memorandum. The draft Regulations amend the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/2864) (the "1999 Regulations").

This Statutory Instrument has two purposes. The first is to permit drivers who passed certain driving tests using a vehicle with automatic transmission to acquire the manual entitlement for that sub-category, provided that they already hold a manual licence for another category, such as a car. This brings licence upgrades for sub-categories, including the car and trailer combination, medium sized lorries and minibuses, together with their trailer towing entitlements, into line with the full lorry and bus or coach categories.

The second purpose of this SI is to reduce the engine size of motorcycles that can be used by candidates taking their 'A2' category test. This is for medium sized motorcycles that have an engine power up to 35KW. Candidates will be able to take their 'A2' test on a wider range of motorcycles that is more representative of the 'A2' class.

These are sensible and pragmatic changes and received widespread support when a public consultation was held.

Through this instrument the Government is modernising the regulations in light of developments in engine technology. Especially the trend towards electric vehicles, that almost always have automatic or semi-automatic transmission, and the increasing power produced by relatively small motorcycle engines.

The shortage of qualified lorry drivers is a matter of national importance. Although the reduction in the number of medium sized lorry tests resulting from this instrument is likely to be small, it will help to ease test demand. It should also help riders pass the A2 motorcycle test first time because they will be able to use a motorcycle that they are more comfortable and confident riding.

The instrument is being published in draft for 28 days before being laid for affirmative debate. This is required under paragraph 14 of Schedule 8 to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 because part of the text in the 1999 Regulations which the draft Regulations amend include amendments previously made under the European Communities Act 1972. The amendments to the 1999 Regulations which were introduced under the European Communities Act were made by the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (the “2012 Regulations”) and the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences)(Amendment) Regulations 2014 (the “2014 Regulations”). Further details are contained in the Annex to the draft Explanatory Memorandum on GOV.UK

TREASURY

■ Finance Bill 2021-22

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Lucy Frazer):

[\[HCWS330\]](#)

The Finance Bill will be published on 4 November. Explanatory Notes on the Bill will be available in the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office and placed in the Libraries of both Houses on that day. Copies of the Explanatory Notes will also be available on GOV.UK.

As usual, a full copy of the Budget resolutions will be made available after the Chancellor’s Budget statement on 27 October. This includes resolutions made under the Provisional Collection of Taxes Act 1968 for those measures that are expected to come into effect ahead of Finance Bill Royal Assent.

In line with the approach to tax policy making set out in the government’s documents ‘Tax Policy Making: a new approach’, published in 2010, and ‘The new Budget timetable and the tax policy making process’, published in 2017, the Government published draft legislation for Finance Bill 2021-22 on 20 July 2021, which is available on GOV.UK. Further legislation was also published on 20 and 21 September 2021. The Government remains committed to legislating for these measures, subject to confirmation at Budget in the usual way.