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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements.....	1
Written Answers.....	2

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

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Stowell of Beeston	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office and Department for Transport
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Baroness Altmann	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Whip
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Bridges of Headley	Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change, Wales Office and Whip
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Whip
Lord Dunlop	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Whip
Lord Faulks	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
Lord Freud	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Deputy Chief Whip and Spokesman for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord Maude of Horsham	Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Lord O'Neill of Gatley	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
Baroness Shields	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture Media and Sport
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Verma	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for International Development
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Monday, 9 November 2015

Higher Education Green Paper

[HLWS291]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: My hon Friend the Minister of State for Universities and Science (Jo Johnson) has today made the following statement.

I am today laying before Parliament a Green Paper on Higher Education entitled *Fulfilling Our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*. The paper sets out a broad range of proposals to:

- raise teaching standards in higher education and encourage greater emphasis on graduate employability;
- make further progress on widening participation and improve outcomes for students from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- open up the higher education market to new high-quality providers so that students have more choice; and
- reshape the higher education landscape and move to a more risk-based system to reduce the cost of the regulatory burden on the sector and the taxpayer.

We committed in our manifesto to introduce a framework which recognised universities offering the highest quality teaching: the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The TEF will shine a spotlight on excellent teaching, ensuring parity of esteem with excellent research. The Green Paper sets out our proposed approach to the TEF, including its principles, design and high level operation.

In the July Budget, we announced that high quality higher education providers would be allowed to increase their fees in line with inflation from the 2017/18 academic year. We propose to use recent, successful review by the Quality Assurance Agency (or equivalent review) as the mechanism to deliver this in the first year, and TEF level assessments in subsequent years once the framework is operational.

As a One Nation Government we will continue to ensure that everyone with the potential has the opportunity to benefit from higher education. The consultation sets out how the TEF will recognise higher education institutions that welcome students from disadvantaged backgrounds and support them through to employment or further study.

The Green Paper proposes a new single gateway for entry to the sector and a faster and simpler process for obtaining degree awarding powers and university title. We will also reduce the overall burden of regulation and reform the regulatory landscape so that students are at the heart of the system. Funding for higher education courses now flows predominantly through students. That is why we are consulting on plans for a new Office for Students. The new body would bring together functions on market entry, fair access, quality and teaching excellence; have a duty to promote the student interest when making its decisions; and will be responsible for ensuring value for money for students and taxpayers.

The paper also considers the implications of these reforms for the research funding landscape.

A copy of the Green Paper will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and will be available on GOV.UK. The consultation is open until 15 January 2016.

Written Answers

Monday, 9 November 2015

Agriculture: Subsidies

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the European Union policy of requiring farmers to erect notices advertising the European Union if they receive grants; whether such notices require planning consent; and whether they will require that all such advertising notices should also indicate information about the ratio of United Kingdom contributions to the European Union budget and the sums returned by way of grants to farmers and others. [[HL3057](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: EU regulations require any business who receives over €500,000 for capital items to display a billboard setting out:

- The name of the project
- A description of the activity supported by the project
- The name of the funding stream: 'European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas'
- The full relevant EU logo

We expect less than 1% of all agreements will be large enough to meet this requirement.

However, the Minister of State for farming, food and marine environment will be considering how this requirement might be removed in future CAP regulations.

Air Pollution

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government which authorities are responsible for the monitoring of urban air. [[HL3038](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: In England, overall responsibility for monitoring ambient air quality lies with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. In addition the Environment Agency is responsible for monitoring emissions from large and complex industrial processes in England. This function is undertaken by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency in Scotland, Natural Resources Wales in Wales and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in Northern Ireland. Under the Local Air Quality Management System, local authorities are responsible for reviewing and assessing ambient air quality.

Air Pollution: EU Law

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government which European Union directives apply to urban air pollution; and how each is enacted in United Kingdom law. [[HL3037](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: There are two main pieces of European legislation applicable to urban air pollution:

- The Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe Directive 2008 ("the Directive") applies to urban air pollution. It has been transposed in England by the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland respectively, the Directive has been transposed by the Air Quality Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2010, the Air Quality Standards (Wales) Regulations 2010 and the Air Pollution and the Air Quality Standards Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010. The regulations reflect the legally binding limits set by the Directive for concentrations in outdoor air of major air pollutants that impact public health such as particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The Directive requires the undertaking of air quality assessments and the reporting of findings to the European Commission annually. The UK has statutory monitoring networks in place to meet the requirements of the Directive, with air quality modelling used to supplement the monitored data.

- The National Emission Ceilings Directive (2001/81/EC) (NECD) sets limits on total annual emissions of key air pollutants (sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds and ammonia) to help reduce transboundary air pollution. The NECD is transposed into UK law by the National Emission Ceilings Regulations 2002.

There is also further legislation aimed at delivering specific reductions in emissions from certain areas of the economy, which for competitive or single market reasons has been set at European level. This includes:

- The Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU)
- The Sulphur Content of Liquid Fuels Directive (1993/32/EC)
- Petrol Vapour Recovery Directive (94/63/EC)
- The Quality of Petrol and Diesel Fuels Directive (98/70/EC)

Air Pollution: Lambeth

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the impact of air pollution on the lung function of children in the London Borough of Lambeth. [[HL3039](#)]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Public Health England has not made any estimate of the impact of air pollution on the lung function of children in the London Borough of Lambeth.

Airports: Noise

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have plans to reform and improve the system by which noise associated with airports is measured in order to make it

more closely aligned with systems used across Europe. [HL3012]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Under the Environmental Noise Directive, major airports in the EU including the UK are required to map for noise every 5 years using the same noise metrics.

In addition, for Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted the Environmental Research and Consultancy Department of the CAA map the average summer day and night exposure contours annually. Other Airports in the UK, may map for noise using metrics they think the most appropriate.

Alexander Blackman

Asked by Lord Trefgarne

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect the Criminal Cases Review Commission to conclude its investigation and report on the case of Sergeant Alexander Blackman. [HL3156]

Lord Faulks: The Criminal Cases Review Commission has not received an application from Sergeant Alexander Blackman.

Asylum: North Korea

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bates on 8 June (HL179), whether they will continue to deport North Korean asylum seekers to South Korea, as detailed in the United Kingdom-South Korea Readmission Agreement; and whether North Korean asylum seekers can claim asylum in the United Kingdom if they co-operate with the South Korean Embassy in London to establish that they do not seek South Korean citizenship. [HL2882]

Lord Bates: All asylum claims made by those from North Korea are carefully considered on their individual merits. A factor in that consideration will be whether the person is unable to exercise their right to South Korea citizenship and avail themselves of the protection of South Korea. Those found to be in need of international protection are provided with it. Those who have been found by the Home Office and the appeals process not to be in need of international protection and have no legal basis of stay in the UK are expected to leave. If they do not do so voluntarily they may have their removal enforced including where relevant under the terms of the United Kingdom-South Korea Readmission Agreement.

Aviation: Training

Asked by Lord Stevens of Kirkwhelpington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are considering to allow flight training organisations based in the United Kingdom to train overseas student pilots for a professional pilot's licence. [HL3154]

Lord Bates: Flight training organisations can teach courses lasting up to six months to international students, under the short-term study visa route.

Alternatively, they may use the Tier 4 visa route where the course lasts longer than six months and they hold a Tier 4 sponsor licence. To qualify for a Tier 4 sponsor licence, an institution must have a track record of teaching UK or EEA students, and be teaching courses which meet Tier 4 requirements. To meet Tier 4 requirements, a course must lead to an approved qualification, as defined in the Tier 4 Guidance for Sponsors.

Cancer: Meat Products

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the World Health Organization research showing that eating processed meat increases the risk of cancer. [HL3071]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The World Health Organization published its conclusions on the carcinogenicity of eating red and processed meat on 26 October. The detailed evaluations will be published in the future; until these are available, we cannot assess them in detail.

Carbon Monoxide: Poisoning

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish their response to the report of the coroner David Hinchcliff, Inquests Touching the deaths of Christianne Shepherd and Robert Shepherd (Deceased), published on 18 September. [HL3159]

Lord Faulks: The decision whether or not to publish any responses is a matter for the Chief Coroner.

Catering and Retail Services (HL): Redundancy

Asked by Lord Palmer

To ask the Chairman of Committees how many members of staff in Catering and Retail Services are being made redundant. [HL3053]

Lord Laming: There have been no redundancies in House of Lords Catering and Retail Services this year. Three sous chefs left via a voluntary exit scheme following a restructuring of back of house services.

Civil Proceedings

Asked by Lord Falconer of Thoroton

To ask Her Majesty's Government in what proportion of cases heard in the Commercial Court in each of the last five years one or more of the parties was domiciled or registered outside the jurisdiction. [HL3117]

Lord Faulks: The attached table shows statistical information for the last 5 years that details the number of claims issued and the number of claims with one or more parties outside of England and Wales. Data for 2014/15 is not yet available.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
2009-2010	75.16%
2010-2011	81.78%
2011-2012	82.34%
2012-2013	80.76%
2013-2014	80.94%

Coroners

Asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government under what circumstances a coroner's investigation and court hearing is not necessary in the case of a sudden death. [HL3101]

Lord Faulks: Sudden deaths are always investigated by coroners in England and Wales.

Under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 the coroner has a duty to investigate a death that is reported to him or her if it appears that the death was violent or unnatural, the cause of the death is unknown, or the person died in state detention. If the investigation does not disclose the cause of death, indicates that the death was unnatural, or the coroner considers that there is good reason to continue the investigation, he or she has a duty to hold an inquest.

Where someone is to be prosecuted for causing a death, the coroner's investigation must be suspended and any inquest adjourned, until the criminal trial is over. The coroner may only resume the investigation after the trial if he or she considers there is sufficient reason for doing so. The coroner must also suspend an investigation where an inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2005 is to be held into the death. Again, the coroner may only resume the investigation after the inquiry has reported if he or she considers there is sufficient reason for doing so.

Courts: Debt Collection

Asked by Lord Falconer of Thoroton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Lord Faulks on 15 October (HLWS229), how much they have spent to date on the process for procurement of a new criminal court compliance and enforcement services provider; and how much will now be written off. [HL2745]

Lord Faulks: As the Minister for Courts told the House on 15 October 2015, we took the decision not to outsource HMCTS compliance and enforcement services to a single supplier because of the need to ensure that any contract we let provided the best value for the taxpayer.

The total cost of the Compliance and Enforcement Service Project as of end of September 2015 was £8,723,645.

Criminal Injuries Compensation: Offences against Children

Asked by Baroness Pinnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government why former foster children cannot claim for criminal injuries compensation against foster parents who have been abusive. [HL3054]

Lord Faulks: Former foster children can apply to the publically funded criminal injuries compensation scheme if they have suffered serious physical or mental injury as the direct result of a violent crime. Awards made under the scheme are paid for by tax payers and not the perpetrator of the violent crime.

If former foster parents were convicted of an offence that resulted in personal injury, loss or damage, when sentencing the court would consider making an order for compensation in favour of the victim which would be paid by the perpetrators.

Asked by Baroness Pinnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance they give to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board about best practice with respect to keeping open indefinitely cases relating to claimants who allege that they have been abused as children. [HL3055]

Lord Faulks: The criminal injuries compensation scheme recognises that children who have suffered injuries as a result of crime may require greater support in making an application for compensation. The scheme allows those injured as children to make an application up to their 20th birthday, or if the crime was reported after their 18th birthday a period of 2 years from that report in which to do so, providing the applicant includes supporting evidence which allows the case to be concluded without further extensive enquiries. These periods may be extended in exceptional circumstances, also subject to sufficient supporting evidence in respect of the claim being provided.

In addition, an applicant can also apply at any point to have their case medically reopened, should their condition change to such an extent that it would be unjust not to make a further award. A request to medically reopen the case should be made within 2 years of the case being finalised, but can be considered after this time, providing the applicant includes supporting evidence which allows the case to be concluded without further extensive enquiries.

This Government is committed to supporting victims of sexual abuse. As part of this the Ministry of Justice has instructed the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority to abide by an embargo on the destruction of files to ensure retention of anything that might be of relevance to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

Criminal Proceedings: Fees and Charges

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to bring forward their review of the mandatory criminal courts charge. [HL2968]

Lord Faulks: It is right that we find better ways to pay the costs of running our criminal courts, and the introduction of this charge has made it possible to recover some of the costs from offenders, which reduces the burden on taxpayers. The Government is keeping the operation of the criminal courts charge under review.

Cycleways

Asked by Lord Higgins

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the effect on air pollution of the construction and use of bicycle lanes, particularly in London. [HL3139]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Department for Transport has not completed any estimates specifically on the effect of construction and use of bicycle lanes on air pollution. But we recognise that encouraging car users to switch to alternative, more sustainable, forms of transport like cycling can generally have both health and carbon reduction benefits as well as improving local air quality.

When we appraise cycle schemes for funding, we apply WebTAG unit A5-1. This appraisal looks at outcomes only and does not consider impacts during the construction phase of a scheme. Where a scheme includes shifts away from mechanised modes and changes in congestion levels, we use marginal external costs, including air pollution. This is done at an individual scheme level and reported in the appraisal of each case; therefore no holistic study has been undertaken. This appraisal does not take account of potentially complex changes to motorists behaviour (such as speed and route choice) resulting from the introduction of cycle lanes.

Transport for London state that during the construction phase some localised short-term slight impacts on local air quality can be expected from the use of plant and vehicles. However, contractors are required to minimise dust and emissions to air and comply with the Greater London Authority and London Councils' Control of Dust and Emissions from Construction and Demolition Best Practice Guidance.

Transport for London undertake air quality modelling to ascertain the impacts during operation. Schemes such as the East-West Cycle Superhighway show that the likely impact of the introduction of cycle lanes and changes to the road layout on air quality ranges from adverse to beneficial. The study shows that changes in traffic will redistribute emissions across the study area but will not increase overall emission levels.

Cycling: Per Capita Costs

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they spend each year per capita on cycling initiatives. [HL3104]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: In the five years 2011/12 to 2015/16, the Department for Transport (DfT) has increased its spend on cycling in England from £1 per head to £3 per head. Local authorities also spend significant amounts on cycling and so over the same period, total spend on cycling in England has increased from around the £2 per head inherited from the previous Labour administration to £6 per head. Spend per head is over £10 per head in the eight Cycle Ambition Cities and London.

Cycling Programmes	Average spend in each year of program (£)		
	2011/12	2012/13	
DfT spend per head	£1	£2	
Total spend per head	£2	£4	
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
DfT spend per head	£2	£2	£3
Total spend per head	£5	£5	£6

All the figures above are to the nearest pound.

For investment plans beyond April 2016, the Department must act upon the Secretary of State for Transport's duty to set a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, with objectives.

Department of Health

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government who are the members of, and what are the terms of reference for, the Department of Health's Appraisal Alignment Working Group. [HL3140]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The current membership of the Appraisal Alignment Working Group is as follows:

Department of Health

Keith Derbyshire (Chair) Chief Analyst and Chief Economist

Danny Palnoch Senior Economic Adviser

Peter Bennett Senior Operational Research Scientist

Dr Mark Bale Deputy Chief Medical Officer

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Leeza Osipenko Associate Director

Meindert Boysen Associate Director

Public Health England

Prof Brian Ferguson Director for Knowledge & Intelligence

Dr Anne Mackie Director of Screening

Monitor

John Curnow Economics Project Director

Zephan Trent Impact Assessment Lead

NHS England

Dr Donald Franklin Senior Economic Adviser NHS England

Amy Lee Economic Advisor

Brunel University

Prof Martin Buxton Emeritus Professor of Health Economics

*London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Representing Joint Committee for Vaccines and
Immunisations and Safety of Blood Tissues and Organs*

Prof John Cairns Professor of Health Economics

The current Terms of Reference (agreed with ministers in February 2014) is replicated below:

Appraisal Alignment Working Group [AAWG] Terms of Reference & Objectives

The Appraisal Alignment Working Group (AAWG) is comprised of policy and analytic staff who work in, or give advice to, DH and its ALBs on the cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness of programmes, technologies and policies.

The purpose of the group is to share knowledge on the various techniques employed across the Health and Care sector, to discuss and debate the pros and cons of different approaches employed, to consider ways of rendering results comparable, and to understand the reasons for differences in approaches.

The working group is not a decision making body. Rather it is advisory. Individual members representing different organisations will take back recommendations and questions to their parent bodies for consideration.

It is proposed to have meetings every six to eight weeks to achieve the ‘Must Do’ (e.g. primary) objective described below.

The ‘Must Do’

Before the next Spending Review, (pencilled in for June to October 2015), it is essential the Department of Health (DH) and its Arm’s Length Bodies (ALBs) can present a consistent approach to HM Treasury (HMT) on the cost benefit of different programmes (e.g. vaccinations, screening new technologies). The cost benefit case for spending presented to HMT should follow public sector best practice as set out by HMT, in its Green Book. Therefore results of appraisals need to be capable of being expressed in HMT Green Book methodology terms (ie using the Green Book methodology as a “reference case”).

Having successfully achieved that, the Working Group will take stock and decide if the group (or some other forum) should continue and progress on three desiderata:

i) economic justification for methods employed in each area and clear rationale for when methods differ and/or diverge from HMT’s Green Book.

ii) achieve greater alignment of techniques between the different sectors and organisations

iii) serve as an expert panel to advise on the development and application of new techniques on an on-going basis.

This work would be less time critical and could be pursued by meetings every eight to twelve weeks.

Developing Countries: LGBT People

Asked by Lord Cashman

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what specific plans they have to ensure that plans to deliver the Global Goals for sustainable development agreed by the UN in September take account of the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people. [[HL3132](#)]

Baroness Verma: The Global Goals for Sustainable Development offer a historic opportunity to eradicate extreme poverty and ensure no one is left behind. To realise this opportunity we will prioritise the interests of the world’s most vulnerable and disadvantaged people including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people.

The UK will listen and respond to the voices of those left furthest behind, such as LGBTI people; hold ourselves and each other accountable for designing policies and building inclusive institutions; take steps to enable all LGBTI people to have opportunity and reach their full potential; challenge the social barriers that deny people opportunity and limit their potential, including discrimination and exclusion based on sexual identity, and, support a data revolution to assess whether targets are being met by all LGBTI peoples.

A note describing DFID’s specific approach to LGBTI rights, will be published on UK Government website by the end of 2015.

Diseases

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what assessment they have made of the discovery of an illness similar to Lyme Disease, caused by the tick-borne bacteria *Borrelia miyamotoi*, which is reported to be resistant to antibiotics. [[HL3094](#)]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Public Health England (PHE) regularly reviews the scientific literature and in response to reports of *B. miyamotoi* being present in ticks in other countries, PHE has studied relevant ticks in England, finding that three out of 954 ticks studied contained *B. miyamotoi*, compared to 40 that were positive for the bacterium responsible for Lyme disease. The public health significance of *B. miyamotoi* has been unclear, but accumulating published evidence from around 50 human cases, suggests it can cause disease in man, most commonly a febrile illness.

To date, no human infections with *Borrelia miyamotoi* have been reported in the United Kingdom. All cases of *B. miyamotoi* infection reported in the scientific literature to date made a full recovery following treatment with appropriate antibiotics.

Emergency Services: Telecommunications

Asked by Lord Paddick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to push for a global standard for mission-critical voice functionality over commercial 4G networks. [HL2956]

Lord Bates: The 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) is the international body that writes standards for 4G technology (<http://www.3gpp.org/>). The Home Office has been attending a number of working groups within 3GPP since November 2012.

In January 2015 a new working group within 3GPP, SA6 Mission-critical applications was created specifically to standardise mission-critical voice functionality over 4G networks. The Home Office supported the creation of SA6, currently funds the chairman of that working group, and sends other attendees to this, as well as related meetings within 3GPP.

EU Immigration

Asked by Baroness Helic

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether an invitation was extended to the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina to participate in the European Union leaders' meeting of 25 October to discuss the Western Balkans migratory route, and whether it is their policy that the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina should be invited to participate in future EU meetings on this subject. [HL3050]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The decision on which parties attended the Summit on 25 October to discuss the refugee flows along the Western Balkans route was taken by Commission President Juncker. The British Government supports the inclusion of affected countries in such meetings and considers it important that decisions which affect all Member States are taken by all 28 Member States.

Flour: Additives

Asked by Lord Rooker

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 22 July (HL1237) regarding a consultation on flour additives, what is the timetable for that consultation, whom they are consulting, and what options for possible change they are considering. [HL3080]

Asked by Lord Rooker

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 22 July

(HL1237), whether any proposed change to the Bread and Flour Regulations 1998 will be forwarded to the relevant scientific committee for consideration. [HL3081]

Asked by Lord Rooker

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 22 July (HL1237), whether the consultation in respect of the Bread and Flour Regulations 1998 includes the devolved administrations. [HL3082]

Asked by Lord Rooker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to move responsibility for flour fortification from millers to food manufacturers. [HL3083]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: In June this year the Government held an informal consultation in order to seek views on possible additions to the exemptions currently allowed under the Bread and Flour Regulations 1998 from the requirement to fortify flour with calcium, iron, niacin, and thiamine. The exemptions that were envisaged would allow more efficient and streamlined manufacturing operations for foods produced for export as well as for the home market, without compromising the public health benefits which accrue from fortification. A range of interested parties were consulted including millers, flour users, retailers, fortificant manufacturers and health professionals.

The options proposed in the consultation would allow millers to produce unfortified flour in England when used as a secondary ingredient which undergoes further processing, or is used in relatively small quantities in products. This approach was welcomed by most consultees and the Government is now considering how to take this forward.

The Department of Health and Public Health England has considered the proposals and concluded that it is unlikely that an exemption from fortification for flour used in such products will have a nutritionally significant impact on the intakes of calcium, iron, thiamine or niacin.

The changes proposed would apply to England only since food legislation is a devolved matter. The devolved administrations are aware of these proposals but have not yet made any decisions on whether to introduce similar changes.

Respondents to the consultation also asked for some additional flexibility around the point at which the fortificants are added to flour. At the moment flour must be fortified at the mill and the four fortificants are added as a premix at the end of the milling process. Many businesses which manufacture foods both for the home market and for export requested the flexibility to be able to add the fortificants at the bakery stage. They highlighted that the requirement for separate storage and handling for, both fortified and unfortified flour (which is used for exported products) was creating significant manufacturing complexities. That resulted in a more restricted product range and is having an adverse effect on

their export potential and their ability to diversify into new global markets. The Government is currently considering this.

Gangmasters: Licensing

Asked by Baroness Suttie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to increasing the Gangmasters Licensing Authority fees for licence applications, renewal and inspection for the top two bands of businesses, in order to raise income to cover that Authority's expenditure. [HL2962]

Lord Bates: We are currently consulting on the future role and remit of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, including the licensing regime and its operation. Any changes made to the GLA's licensing regime would be undertaken in line with the principles of Managing Public Money and would be subject to Her Majesty's Treasury and Home Office Ministers' approval.

Government Departments: Mass Media

Asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the estimated cost to answer a media query to the Government and whether they impose a limit on the number of questions a member of the media can ask in a week. [HL3064]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The Government receives a large number of media queries each day, which are received and managed by the relevant department.

The amount of time each media query takes depends on many factors and variables, so it is not possible to estimate an average cost or time. No restriction is placed on the number of queries a journalist can make.

Grammar Schools: Maidenhead

Asked by Lord Stevenson of Balmacara

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will support the proposal by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to invite the Sir William Borlase Grammar School to open a new grammar school in Maidenhead in the near future. [HL3063]

Lord Nash: Current legislation prohibits the introduction of a new grammar school. The government has been clear that we have not changed the law in this area.

The government is supportive of all good and outstanding schools that seek to expand, in order to deliver more school places and greater choice to parents. Any school proposing such an expansion would need to demonstrate that it was a genuine continuation of an existing school. Schools that have successfully proposed an expansion have met a high threshold and other schools would need to do the same.

Groceries Code Adjudicator

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will consider extending the remit of the Groceries Code Adjudicator in order to deliver fair prices for dairy farmers. [HL3007]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The jurisdiction of the Groceries Code Adjudicator is defined by the Groceries Supply Code of Practice. The Code governs the commercial relationships between the ten largest UK supermarkets and their direct suppliers, and reflects the findings of the Competition Commission's market investigation into the supermarket sector conducted between 2006 and 2008.

The Government has no plans to extend the powers of the Adjudicator at this time. There will, however, be a statutory review of the performance of the Adjudicator next year in accordance with section 15 of the Groceries Code Adjudicator Act 2013.

Health Hazards: Meat Products

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they are giving to consumers about the health risks of eating processed meat. [HL3072]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Public Health England's advice is that, on average, people should be eating no more than 70 grammes of red and processed meat a day. People who eat a lot of these meats are at higher risk of bowel cancer than those who eat small amounts. Therefore, people who eat more than 90 grammes of red or processed meat a day are advised to cut down.

Human Trafficking: Compensation

Asked by Baroness Suttie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to keep records on the amount of compensation received by victims of trafficking for labour exploitation through (1) the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, (2) civil claims for damages, (3) employment tribunal claims, (4) court-awarded criminal compensation, and (5) repayments for breaches of the National Minimum Wage. [HL2963]

Lord Bates: Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority does not provide data breakdown of compensation awarded to victims by crime type. This is because it awards compensation in line with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme tariff of injuries rather than by the type of incident that led to those injuries.

Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) administers civil claims, employment tribunal claims, and court-awarded criminal compensation. Civil claims and employment tribunal claims do not deal with cases where a crime has been alleged, so data is not recorded on

victims of modern slavery. For court-awarded criminal compensations, the sentence passed on offenders for each offence committed is recorded, including any compensation awarded. This data is not cross-referenced against compensation received by victims of the offence, so compensation received by victims of trafficking for labour exploitation is not recorded.

There are no plans to change the way data is collected by CICA or HMCTS that would provide the information sought about compensation received by victims of trafficking for labour exploitation.

HMRC work with the police, Home Office and local authorities in cases that may involve slavery and servitude. HMRC do not collate specific data on arrears identified but are currently reviewing ways to record any National Minimum Wage outcomes in Modern Slavery cases they undertake.

Immigration: Appeals

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the cuts in the budget of the Ministry of Justice on the ability of first-tier tribunals to hear and determine immigration and asylum appeals. [HL2704]

Lord Faulks: The Government is confident that there is sufficient funding to enable the First-tier Tribunal (Immigration & Asylum Chamber) to hear and determine the number of immigration and asylum appeals to be received during 2015-2016.

India: British Nationals Abroad

Asked by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to raise with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi the case of three British citizens murdered in Gujarat in 2002 when he visits the United Kingdom in November. [HL2947]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire), has previously raised this case with Prime Minister Modi in his former role as Chief Minister of Gujarat. We continue to raise consular matters with the Indian authorities at all levels. Our officials have provided consular support to the families since 2002 and will continue to provide assistance to them as needed.

Iron and Steel: Manufacturing Industries

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the steel industry in the light of the director of UK Steel's statement that the steel industry is in crisis. [HL2757]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: There is no straightforward solution to the complex global challenges facing the steel industry; however, the Government has been extremely active in advocating for, and supporting the sector. On 16th October, we held a Steel Summit, which was an important opportunity to bring the key players together and since then we have been taking urgent action to address the '5 Asks' of the steel industry, operating through three Ministerial led working groups. We are also supporting the metals sector more widely through the industry-led Metals Strategy, which will provide a platform for Government to work with the industry on some of the most pressing issues holding back the future growth of the sector.

Firstly, we are tackling unfair trade practices where clear evidence exists. We supported and voted for the renewal of EU anti-dumping measures on wire rod, and lobbied successfully for an investigation into cheap imports of Reinforcing Steel Bar. The Business Secretary had meetings with European Commissioners and spoke with key counterparts in other Member States on 28 October, calling for firmer, faster action against unfair trade practices. As a direct result, an extraordinary meeting to the European Competitiveness Council is taking place on steel.

In addition, the Prime Minister discussed steel with President Xi during his recent visit. The Chinese President recognised the UK's concerns and will be taking action to address Chinese overcapacity.

Secondly, the Government has confirmed to the steel industry that it will be able to take advantage of special flexibilities to comply with new EU rules on emissions. These are now awaiting final approval by the Commission.

Thirdly, the steel industry has been invited to present detailed evidence on issues affecting the business environment at the next meeting of the steel working group on competitiveness and productivity chaired by the Treasury Commercial Secretary.

Fourthly, with regard to energy costs, following the meeting between the Business Secretary and the Competition Commissioner on 23 October, we are now expecting to have state aid approval to provide relief to our Energy Intensive Industries for the cost of renewables policy by the end of this year. Further to that, the Prime Minister announced on 28th October that we will make an additional £45m available to commence compensation for the costs of the Renewables Obligation from the date of state aid approval, alongside providing relief to these sectors from the costs of the small Feed in Tariffs. An exemption for the costs of the Contracts for Difference will also commence early next year. This is on top of over £50 million of support already given to the steel industry to mitigate increasing electricity costs.

Finally, we are taking action to drive up the number of public contracts won by UK steel manufacturers and their partners through fair and open competition. The National Infrastructure Plan contains a significant number of projects which will use British steel, e.g. Crossrail – with

four UK based companies providing over 50,000 tonnes of steel; and HS2 - where Government has already given notice of the thousands of tonnes of steel that will be needed. Following the first meeting of the steel procurement working group chaired by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, the Government published on 30 October new guidelines for departments to apply on major projects when sourcing and buying steel. The new instructions will help steel suppliers compete on a level playing field with international suppliers for major government projects.

Junior Doctors: Conditions of Employment

Asked by Lord Turnberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the proposed new contract for junior doctors on (1) their average salary and the number of doctors who will be financially disadvantaged, (2) the number of hours they will be expected to work to receive overtime benefits, (3) the number of hours per week they will be expected to work, and (4) the overall levels of patient care. [HL3060]

Lord Prior of Brampton: On 4 November, the Government published a firm offer for a new contract published by NHS Employers alongside a new calculator that offers specific information on how the new contract will impact doctors' salary. On the same day, I issued a Written Ministerial Statement (HLWS282) in Parliament and the Secretary of State wrote directly to all junior doctors. The Government guaranteed that under the new contract:

- average pay will be maintained, and that the pay of all junior doctors working safe hours in the transition to the new contract would be protected and those junior doctors who could complete their training within four years will continue to be paid based on the existing contract. We want the British Medical Association to work with us on the detail and the Secretary of State for Health will be setting out the details of the Government's offer to junior doctors in the coming days;

- basic pay will reflect a 40 hour week, and planned hours worked on top of this (up to a maximum of eight hours) will be paid proportionately i.e at the standard rate for the time of day worked;

- there will be a mutual contractual obligation on employers and trainees to respect the following limits on working hours:

A maximum of 48 weekly hours on average (extended, but still limited, to 56 hours a week on average for those trainees who choose to opt- out of the Working Time Regulations);

New maximum of 72 hours in any consecutive seven day period (lower than the 91 hours possible within average weekly hours of 48);

No rostered shift to exceed 13 hours (excluding overnight on-call periods); and

A new limit of no more than five consecutive long shifts (i.e. more than 10 hours); no more than four consecutive night shifts (where at least three hours fall between 11pm and 6am); and no more than seven consecutive days and nights on-call.

- introduce a safer, fairer contract for junior doctors that will help improve their training experience to better support patient care every day of the week.

The published contract offer to junior doctors and calculator is attached and can be found at:

<http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/need-to-know/junior-doctors-contract>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Junior Doctor Contract [JD A4 booklet FINAL.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-27/HL3060>

Legal Aid Scheme

Asked by Lord Falconer of Thoroton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what has been the total cost to the public purse of their appeal against the High Court's ruling in *R v The Secretary of State for Justice* [2014] EWHC 2365 (Admin). [HL3044]

Lord Faulks: As a matter of principle this Government believes that individuals should have a strong connection with the UK in order to benefit from the civil legal aid scheme. We believe that the residence test we have proposed is a fair and appropriate way to demonstrate that strong connection. We have therefore pursued an appeal against the High Court's judgment in this case.

The total costs to the public purse of pursuing this appeal can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Liverpool Prison

Asked by Baroness Stern

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they have taken in response to the October report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons on HM Prison Liverpool that "the prison's daily routine was chaotic and unpredictable" and that 44 per cent of prisoners were locked in their cells during the working day. [HL3112]

Lord Faulks: HMP Liverpool is committed to implementing the recommendations of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons report of 20 October 2015.

Hours worked in Industry have increased month on month from 57% to 88%. A new activity centre has been opened and provides additional regime places for 100 prisoners. Vulnerable prisoners have been re-allocated to alternative regime places within the prison following the disbanding of B wing. This unit did not have activity places allocated to it. Prison laundry activity places have

been allocated to prisoners located on the drug rehabilitation unit providing additional regime places.

Plans to introduce a new Welcome centre which will allocate shorter term prisoners to activity places more quickly, will soon become operational.

Further improvement methods such as electronic prescribing are currently being piloted to improve the efficiency of treatment and medication practices, thereby providing a more consistent regime.

Liverpool Prison: Restraint Techniques

Asked by Baroness Stern

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the October report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons on HM Prison Liverpool, what action has been taken to ensure that when force is used in HM Prison Liverpool it is the minimum necessary to ensure safety. [HL3114]

Lord Faulks: HMP Liverpool is committed to implementing the recommendations of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons report of 20 October 2015.

Restraint is only used as a last resort where no other form of intervention is appropriate. HM Prison Liverpool is committed to ensuring that the minimum force necessary in any situation is applied.

Livestock: Clones

Asked by Baroness Parminter

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the amendments adopted by the European Parliament in September to the proposed Directive on the cloning of certain species for farming purposes (COM (2013) 0892); and what advice they gave to United Kingdom MEPs prior to their adoption. [HL3067]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The UK sees no justification for either the original European Commission proposals for further restrictions on cloning activity or the European Parliament's proposed extension to the progeny and descendants of clones; and all animal species.

The science is clear that the meat and milk from clones and their offspring is as healthy as from more traditionally reared animals; and EU and national rules already exist to protect the welfare of the livestock concerned.

What is more, there is no cloning of farm animals conducted in the EU at present, so introducing any further controls, will not materially increase welfare standards within the Community.

Briefing to this effect was provided to UK MEPs in advance of the Parliament's discussions.

Local Sustainable Transport Fund

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to continue with the Local Sustainable Transport Fund

beyond 2016; and if not, whether they plan to replace it with an alternative fund for sustainable transport. [HL3015]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: All future budgets, including those for the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, remain subject to Spending Review negotiations. Further information will be made available after the outcome of the Spending Review is announced on 25 November.

Ministerial Policy Advisers: Codes of Practice

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers increases the role and powers of Special Advisers; and, if so, whether they plan to bring forward regulations under section 2(5) of the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014 so that consultant lobbyists would need to register communications made personally to a Special Adviser. [HL3027]

Lord Bridges of Headley: It is usual practice to publish an updated Code of Conduct for Special Advisers after an election. The updated Code, published on 15 October, does not change the role and powers of special advisers.

Ministers: Codes of Practice

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have amended the Ministerial Code to remove the duty to comply with international law and treaty obligations. [HL2991]

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Ministers are under a duty to comply with international law including treaties signed and ratified on behalf of the United Kingdom. [HL2992]

Lord Bridges of Headley: I refer the Noble Lord to the answer given to the Noble Lord Falconer of Thoroton on 5 November 2015 to HL3046,HL3047,HL3048, which I have attached for ease of reference.

The Ministerial Code is normally updated and reissued after a General Election. The updated Code makes clear that Ministers must abide by the law. The obligations of Ministers under the law including international law remain unchanged.

Information relating to internal discussions and advice is not disclosed.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Referral answers [HL3046, HL3047, HL3048 attached referral answers.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-26/HL2991>

*Asked by **Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the new wording in the Ministerial Code, issued in October, alters the legal obligations or duty of ministers to comply with international law and treaties. [HL3028]

Lord Bridges of Headley: I refer the Noble Lady to the answer given to the Noble Lord Falconer of Thoroton on 5 November 2015 to HL3046,HL3047,HL3048, which I have attached for ease of reference.

The Ministerial Code is normally updated and reissued after a General Election. The updated Code makes clear that Ministers must abide by the law. The obligations of Ministers under the law including international law remain unchanged.

Information relating to internal discussions and advice is not disclosed.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Referral answers [HL3046, HL3047, HL3048 attached referral answers.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-26/HL3028>

*Asked by **Lord Jones of Cheltenham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the October publication of a revised Ministerial Code, whether the omission in section 1.2 of a commitment to international law and treaty obligations represents a reduction in the role that the United Kingdom's international obligations play in domestic decision-making, and whether the duty of ministers to comply with the law continues to include international law and treaties. [HL3052]

Lord Bridges of Headley: I refer the Noble Lord to the answer given to the Noble Lord Falconer of Thoroton on 5 November 2015 to HL3046,HL3047,HL3048, which I attach for ease of reference.

The Ministerial Code is normally updated and reissued after a General Election. The updated Code makes clear that Ministers must abide by the law. The obligations of Ministers under the law including international law remain unchanged.

Information relating to internal discussions and advice is not disclosed.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Referral Answers [HL3046, HL3047, HL3048 attached referral answers.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-27/HL3052>

Narendra Modi

*Asked by **Lord Ahmed***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether restrictions were imposed on the travel of Narendra Modi; if so, whether such restrictions have been lifted; and if so, why. [HL2948]

Lord Bates: The Home Office do not routinely comment on individual cases. The Home Office has obligations in law to protect this information.

Network Rail

*Asked by **Lord Berkeley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the Bowe report into Network Rail will be completed, and whether it will be published. [HL2973]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Secretary of State for Transport expects to receive the Bowe Review once it is completed later in the autumn.

The Secretary of State has committed to publish the Review in the autumn.

Upon publication copies will be placed in both Libraries of the House.

Network Rail: Land

*Asked by **Lord Berkeley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what changes they have proposed to requirements for disposing of Network Rail land not currently used for rail-related purposes. [HL2974]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Condition 7 of Network Rail's network licence regulates the disposal of the company's land assets. Network Rail's network licence is held with the Office of Rail and Road. The Government has not proposed any changes to Condition 7.

NHS: Private Sector

*Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the capacity of NHS England and Clinical Commissioning Groups to monitor contracts between the National Health Service and the private sector, and (2) their effectiveness in doing so. [HL3141]

*Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they have ensured that the lessons learned from the Public Accounts Committee report identifying significant weaknesses in central government's capacity to monitor and enforce contracts are extended to the role of Clinical Commissioning Groups. [HL3143]

Lord Prior of Brampton: NHS England is currently undergoing a transformation of its commercial and

procurement functions and, as part of this process, a need has been identified for improved contract management process and for the deployment of skilled contract management resources within the organisation.

With regard to clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), NHS England has established a Lead Provider Framework Agreement for CCGs (and other public sector entities), providing access to commissioning support services, including procurement and contract management capability. NHS England's website provides a large number of tools, resources and 'how to use' website, all of which can be accessed at: www.england.nhs.uk/lpf. The Lead Provider Framework provides access to nine accredited providers of commissioning support services who are already providing effective contracts and procurement support at scale to other CCGs and commissioners. Most CCGs have undertaken – or are in the process of undertaking – a review of commissioning support needs in order to determine the most effective way of meeting their future capacity and capability requirements, and are supported by NHS England in their make/share/buy decisions and any subsequent procurements under the Lead Provider Framework.

As indicated, the Lead Provider Framework has numerous tools and resources which are too large to attach to this reply or place in the Library, therefore it can only be accessed via NHS England's website.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they have ensured that the National Health Service has fully absorbed the lessons of the Public Accounts Committee report identifying significant weaknesses in central government's capacity to monitor and enforce contracts with large private companies. [HL3142]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Department is addressing the recommendations set out in the Public Accounts Committee Report. Through our normal accountability arrangements we have sought assurance from our arm's length bodies (ALBs), including NHS England, that they have the necessary organisational architecture in place to support good contract management and will continually strive to improve by applying best practice. The Department is building a contract management function which will seek to advise ALBs on how to apply effective contract management.

Each ALB will be responsible for determining its next steps. Each ALB will need to provide the necessary assurances that it is operating effectively and that it has the requisite capability and capacity to support effective contract management of significant amounts of public money.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many contracts between the National Health Service and the private sector have been subject to (1) contract query notes, (2) termination of contracts, and (3) financial

sanctions, since the Health and Social Care Act 2012 came into force. [HL3144]

Lord Prior of Brampton: As part of the transformation of commercial and procurement functions, NHS England and the clinical commissioning groups will be developing a centralised view of the contract data as recommended in the Centre for Health and Public Interest independent body report. Information in accordance with that report will be available in the future.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what response they have made to the report of the Centre for Health and the Public Interest on contracting in the National Health Service. [HL3145]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Under NHS England's Standard Financial Instruction both clinical commissioning groups and commissioning support units have an obligation to provide NHS England with details of all contracts entered into with third party suppliers. These arrangements are then subject to review by NHS England's Commercial and Legal Teams.

Older Workers

Asked by Lord Oakeshott of Seagrove Bay

To ask Her Majesty's Government what were the numbers of (1) employed males, and (2) employed females, aged 65 years or older (a) five years ago, (b) 10 years ago, and (c) 20 years ago. [HL3066]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

ONS correspondence on statistics [HL3066.pdf ONS letter.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-27/HL3066>

Older Workers: Average Earnings

Asked by Lord Oakeshott of Seagrove Bay

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the estimated average earnings from employment of 1,156,000 employees aged 65 years or older, as shown in Summary Table 2(2) of the Office for National Statistics UK Labour Market Bulletin for October by gender. [HL3065]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

ONS correspondence on statistics [HL3065.pdf ONS letter.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-27/HL3065>

Open Prisons

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many places in category D prisons were available in England and Wales in each month since January 2013. [HL3130]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many places in category D prisons in England and Wales were occupied by prisoners in each month since January 2013. [HL3131]

Lord Faulks: Progression to open prisons is never automatic, and prisoners must generally be within two years of release before they can be considered for allocation. Public protection is paramount, only those prisoners who are assessed as low risk of escape/abscond and low risk of causing harm to the public are transferred to an open prison.

The following table shows the number of category D places that were available and occupied by prisoners in open prisons in England and Wales as at the last Friday in each month since January 2013. This information is published monthly on gov.uk

The data above does not include the number of places available and in use in category D units in otherwise closed prisons.

Breakdown of the population and capacity of the dedicated open estate from January 2013 to October 2015.

<i>Month</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>Population</i>
Jan-13	5,131	4,933
Feb-13	5,131	4,953
Mar-13	5,131	4,982
Apr-13	5,131	4,993
May-13	5,131	4,988
Jun-13	5,131	4,981
Jul-13	5,131	4,988
Aug-13	5,131	4,994
Sep-13	5,131	4,990
Oct-13	5,131	5,005
Nov-13	5,203	5,048
Dec-13	5,217	4,993
Jan-14	5,217	4,932
Feb-14	5,217	4,994

<i>Month</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>Population</i>
Mar-14	5,217	5,037
Apr-14	5,339	5,159
May-14	5,339	5,122
Jun-14	5,339	5,087
Jul-14	5,339	5,082
Aug-14	5,374	5,011
Sep-14	5,374	4,943
Oct-14	5,397	4,846
Nov-14	5,397	4,814
Dec-14	5,397	4,759
Jan-15	5,405	4,666
Feb-15	5,329	4,680
Mar-15	5,131	4,691
Apr-15	5,453	4,922
May-15	5,468	4,876
Jun-15	5,544	5,020
Jul-15	5,569	5,019
Aug-15	5,569	5,062
Sep-15	5,520	5,076
Oct-15	5,550	5,127

Pedicabs: Greater London

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 22 July (HL1498), whether they plan to bring forward regulations regarding rickshaws in London in order to protect tourists from excessive charges. [HL3029]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government is continuing to consider the Law Commission's recommendations for reforming taxi and private hire legislation, including the proposal that rickshaws in London are brought within the regulatory regime for taxis and private hire vehicles.

We are already engaged with the Mayor of London in discussing the implementation of the recommendations from the Law Commission.

The Government will formally respond to the Law Commission and announce its intentions once this scrutiny is completed.

Police: Finance

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what response they have made to the claim by the Chief Constable of Cumbria that the proposed changes in the funding formula for police forces mean that forces could be reduced to a "blue light" emergency response service, and that those changes could lead to the end of community policing in the county. [HL3093]

Lord Bates: We are currently refining the proposed police funding model in light of responses to the public consultation and continue to engage with Police and Crime Commissioners and forces as part of this process. The model will not be finalised until we have considered further feedback from policing partners. Allocations for individual force areas have not been set and no decisions on funding will be made until the Spending Review reports in November.

The proposed model uses objective indicators to allocate funding according to relative need. We consider this approach to be a fairer and more transparent method of allocating limited resources in comparison to the current complex, opaque and out of date formula.

Decisions about the size and composition of the police workforce are an operational matter for chief officers, in line with the local priorities set by their Police and Crime Commissioner.

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government to what extent the level of recorded crime in a police force's area affects the amount of funding allocated under the proposed new formula for funding of police forces. [HL3095]

Lord Bates: The proposed police funding model is based on a set of objective indicators that correlate strongly with long term patterns of crime.

As we set out in our consultation on a proposed new funding model, we believe it is not appropriate to directly base force level allocations on crime statistics as these are directly influenced by police activity.

Prisoners: Gender Recognition

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what rules they have put in place to ensure that transgender persons are placed in prisons that are appropriate for them based on their gender identity. [HL3084]

Lord Faulks: Prison Service Instruction 07/2011 sets out NOMS policy on the care and management of prisoners who live or propose to live in a gender other than the one assigned at birth. Prisoners are normally placed according to their legally recognised gender. However, the guidelines allow room for discretion and senior prison staff will review the circumstances of every case in consultation with medical and other experts in order to protect the physical and emotional wellbeing of the person concerned along with the safety and wellbeing of other prisoners.

A review of the current policy on transgender and transsexual prisoners began earlier this year and revised policy guidance will be issued to reflect NOMS' responsibilities to transgender offenders in the community as well as in custody. The intention is to implement the guidance early in the New Year.

Public Inquiries

Asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government what public inquiries they have instigated into the death of a single individual since 1988; who were those individuals; why they were referred for a public inquiry in each case; and on which dates they were referred. [HL2965]

Lord Faulks: The table below lists each public inquiry launched by the Government to investigate the death of a single individual since 1988. It shows the purpose of the inquiry and the timing of the inquiry from its launch to publication of the inquiry report.

<i>Individual</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Stephen Lawrence	To inquire into the matters arising from his death on 22 April 1993, in order particularly to identify the lessons to be learned for the investigation and prosecution of racially motivated crimes.	July 1997 – February 1999
Victoria Climbié	To establish the circumstances leading to and surrounding her death.	May 2001 – January 2003
Dr David Kelly	To conduct an investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death.	July 2003 – January 2004
Zahid Mubarek	To investigate his death and the events leading up to the attack on him, and make recommendations about the prevention of such attacks in the future.	April 2004 – June 2006
Robert Hamill	To investigate whether any wrongful act or omission by or within the Royal Ulster Constabulary facilitated his death or obstructed the investigation of it, or whether attempts were made to do so; whether any such act or omission was intentional or negligent; and whether the investigation of his death was carried out with due diligence. (This followed a recommendation of the Cory Collusion Inquiry.)	November 2004 – February 2011

<i>Individual</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Billy Wright	To investigate whether any wrongful act or omission by or within the prison authorities or other state agencies facilitated his death, or whether attempts were made to do so; and whether any such act or omission was intentional or negligent. (This followed a recommendation of the Cory Collusion Inquiry.)	November 2004 – October 2010
Rosemary Nelson	To investigate whether any wrongful act or omission by or within the Royal Ulster Constabulary, Northern Ireland Office, Army or other state agency facilitated her death or obstructed the investigation of it, or whether attempts were made to do so; whether any such act or omission was intentional or negligent; and whether the investigation of her death was carried out with due diligence. (This followed a recommendation of the Cory Collusion Inquiry.)	November 2004 – May 2011
Baha Mousa	To investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of Baha Mousa, an Iraqi civilian who died in Iraq in 2003 and the treatment of others detained with him by the British armed forces.	August 2008 – September 2011
Bernard (Sonny) Lodge	To investigate his death at HMP Manchester in August 1998. (An ad hoc investigation began in September 2008 and was converted into a 2005 Act inquiry.)	February 2009 – December 2009
Azelle Rodney	To investigate the death of Azelle Rodney who was shot by a police marksman in North London on 30 April 2005.	June 2010 – July 2013
Alexander Litvinenko	To investigate his death on 23 November 2006. (The inquest was converted into a 2005 Act inquiry following a judicial review.)	July 2014 – present

Railways

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of, and what conclusions they have drawn from, the report by JMP Consultants Ltd for the Passenger Transport Executive Group Destination Growth: the Case for Britain's Regional Railways. [HL3135]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Passenger Transport Executive Group's Destination Growth report is a useful contribution to the research that underpins the case for Britain's Regional Railways.

The Government is investing record amounts in building a world-class rail network across Great Britain, helping to create jobs, boost businesses, and secure long-term economic growth in every part of the country.

Railways: Tickets

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made on the South East Flexible Ticketing Scheme, and whether there have been any delays to previously announced plans. [HL3014]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: A review of initial proposals to make smart tickets available across the south-east with a target date of end December 2015 has led to a refocused and enhanced programme with a wider geographic scope and an improved technological approach. As part of this, a new South East Flexible Ticketing (SEFT) central back office, providing critical IT infrastructure and data processing capability, has already undergone testing and, working with industry to establish how best to offer smart ticketing to passengers in the

south-east, we have already reached agreement with 5 train operators, serving 73% of all rail season ticket holders in the south-east. We are continuing to work with operators to ensure full coverage of services in offering foundations for smart ticketing.

In addition, through this scheme smart season tickets are already available to customers on Govia Thameslink Railway and c2c. South West Trains and Abellio Greater Anglia plan to introduce smart seasons on their services in January 2016; Southeastern will follow at the end of 2016. The programme is planned to complete in 2018.

Refugees

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Church of England following the letter sent to the Prime Minister by 86 bishops on 10 September about the Church providing funds to meet all additional costs of increasing the number of refugees taken into the United Kingdom; and what assessment they have made of the further support the Church of England can provide to meet the needs of refugees in the United Kingdom. [HL2836]

Lord Bates: On 10 September 2015 a letter signed by 37 Bishops was sent to the Prime Minister. This letter set out how the Church stands ready to play their part but also how they believe the country could resettle more than 20,000 Syrian refugees over the next five years.

The Home Office wants to involve the Church in the design and implementation of the longer term programme of work. We are happy to have meetings with representatives from the Church to discuss the issues raised in the Bishops letter. Some of these meetings have already taken place with more planned over the next few weeks.

Refugees: Children

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are considering allowing refugee children to join relatives, such as grandparents, in the United Kingdom. [HL3025]

Lord Bates: Our refugee family reunion policy allows immediate family members of a person in the UK with refugee leave or humanitarian protection status - that is a spouse or partner and children under the age of 18, who formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled their country of origin - to reunite with them in the UK. We have no plans to extend these provisions.

Where a family reunion application is rejected under the Immigration Rules, such as in the case of refugee child applying to join extended relatives, the Entry Clearance Officer must consider whether there are exceptional circumstances or compassionate reasons to justify granting a visa outside the Rules.

Refugees: Mediterranean Sea

Asked by Lord Higgins

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that migrants rescued from drowning by the British Navy in the Mediterranean are no longer disembarked in the European Union, in order to discourage migrants from travelling in unseaworthy vessels provided by people smugglers. [HL3051]

Lord Bates: As set out in the Government's response to written questions HL2307 and HL2339 under international law the UK has a duty to not return people who are rescued at sea to countries where they would be at risk of serious harm. Migrants rescued in the Mediterranean must therefore be disembarked at the nearest safe country.

The Government, however, maintains that the link must be broken between getting on a boat and automatically achieving residence in the Europe. The UK continues to push for action through the EU and UN to tackle the causes of illegal migration in order to discourage people from making these dangerous journeys. The UK is pursuing and disrupting the organised crime groups profiting from the people smuggling trade, including through the creation of an Organised Immigration Crime Task Force.

Migrants who do reach the EU need to be registered, screened and processed when they arrive to control their movement as well as to distinguish between those in real need of international protection and economic migrants. The UK is supporting the EU 'Hotspots' initiative which will help give effect to this.

The UK is leading the way for a sustainable and effective approach to the migrant situation and at the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 8 October the Home Secretary reiterated that in order for EU Member States to focus their resources on helping those in genuine need, an

effective returns system for those not found to be in need of international protection is vital.

Refugees: Middle East

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of Oxfam's proposals for the worldwide resettlement of the most vulnerable 10 per cent of the Iraqi and Syrian refugees who are outside their home countries. [HL2726]

Lord Bates: The UK has been at the forefront of the response to the crisis in Syria. We have pledged over £1.1 billion, our largest ever humanitarian response to a single crisis. We are the second largest bilateral donor after the US. Approximately half of UK assistance is targeted towards the Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. By meeting basic humanitarian needs and helping to create new opportunities we aim to help Syrians to build a life in neighbouring countries.

The UK's position is that funding provided to the region is a more sustainable way of dealing with the refugee crisis rather than encouraging dangerous onward migration journeys. For this reason, the UK's resettlement offer focuses on supporting the most vulnerable Syrians directly from the region who would best be protected in countries like the UK.

Refugees: Syria

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost, in the first year, of accepting Syrian refugees. [HL2837]

Lord Bates: The first 12 months of each refugee's resettlement costs will be funded using ODA (Official Development Assistance). After year one we will also provide additional funding to assist with costs incurred in future years.

The anticipated cost for the first year is still being worked out between relevant Government departments and local authorities. We expect to agree indicative costings in the near future.

There are a range of factors that have to be included when it comes to bringing people to the UK and helping them to settle. Each person coming from Syria will have different needs so it is not possible to say how much the support for any individual will cost.

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the remarks by the Syrian Archbishop Jean-Clement Jeanbart on the BBC Radio Four programme Sunday that European countries taking in Syrian refugees are harming Syria. [HL2921]

Lord Bates: The Government has been leading the way for a comprehensive and sustainable response to the conflict in Syria. The Government believes that the best way to help the majority of the many displaced Syrians across the globe is through practical and political action within affected regions. That is why the Government has prioritised humanitarian assistance in crisis regions and supports regional protection programmes which will improve the conditions for refugees seeking protection in their region of origin until they are able to return to their homes.

The Government recognises, however, that not all displaced Syrians can be supported effectively in the region and that is why we have committed to granting protection to 20,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees under our Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme over the course of this Parliament.

The Government shares Archbishop Jean-Clement's view that we must actively seek an end to the conflict as it is the best way to ensure that the UK's help has the greatest impact for Syrian refugees, as opposed to larger scale relocation or resettlement.

*Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich***

To ask Her Majesty's Government which towns in the United Kingdom have been designated as potential destinations for Syrian refugees arriving under the Government's Gateway Protection Programme; which town councils have so far indicated acceptance; and of what numbers. [HL2941]

Lord Bates: Syrian refugees are brought to the United Kingdom as part of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. This scheme has been expanded to resettle up to 20,000 Syrians in need of protection during this Parliament. This is in addition to those we resettle under the Gateway and Mandate schemes which are completely separate schemes.

Resettlement under the government schemes is voluntary on the part of local authorities. We are grateful to those who take on this role and will continue to work in partnership with them. We do not disclose the details of where refugees will be resettled upon their arrival in the UK under the Government resettlement schemes as this may undermine the privacy and recovery of this vulnerable group of people.

*Asked by **Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what has been their assessment of the UNHCR claim that the United Kingdom is legally obliged to resettle 114 Syrian refugees who have arrived by boat at the British military base in Cyprus. [HL3023]

Lord Bates: Those migrants who seek asylum will have their claims considered by the Cypriot authorities on behalf of the Sovereign Base Authorities (SBA). There is no obligation to allow those recognised as refugees to take up residence in the UK.

Refugees: Visas

*Asked by **Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what has been their response to calls from UNICEF for the United Kingdom to allow refugees to apply for humanitarian visas in countries of origin and transit at United Kingdom embassies. [HL3024]

Lord Bates: There is no provision in our Immigration Rules for someone to be given permission to travel to the UK to seek asylum or humanitarian protection and Her Majesty's Government has no plans to extend the Immigration Rules to allow refugees to apply for humanitarian visas at any UK embassies.

We are focusing our efforts on resettling vulnerable people in need of international protection from the region, including 20,000 Syrians by the end of the Parliament. This provides refugees with a direct and safe route to the UK and uses established UNHCR processes. This is of course in addition to the £1.12 billion in humanitarian aid provided by the UK for those most in need in the region – more than any other country in the world except the United States.

Salt

*Asked by **Baroness Masham of Ilton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last reviewed the evidence base relating to dietary sodium intake as part of a balanced diet. [HL3073]

*Asked by **Baroness Masham of Ilton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to new evidence suggesting that their current campaign to reduce salt intake could be too generalised. [HL3074]

*Asked by **Baroness Masham of Ilton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to the potential negative effects of restricting dietary sodium intake. [HL3075]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The evidence base relating to dietary sodium intake was extensively reviewed in the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's (SACN) report 'Salt and Health', published in 2003. In reviewing the evidence, SACN noted that the greatest benefits were likely to be achieved by taking a population approach to reducing salt intakes rather than through individual targeted advice.

The SACN continues to monitor average salt intakes through a programme of dietary survey work.

New voluntary salt reduction targets have been developed for 76 specific food groups that contribute most to people's salt intakes and major retailers, manufacturers and caterers are working to meet these targets by December 2017.

The SACN has also reviewed the evidence around the impact of low sodium intakes. It found no basis for changing the existing recommendation for a target reduction in average salt intake to 6 grammes per day for the adult population, equivalent to 2.4 grammes per day of sodium.

The SACN 'Salt and Health' report is attached and can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/sacn-salt-and-health-report

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Salt and Health [SACN Salt and Health report 2003.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-10-28/HL3073>

Small Businesses

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to support growing small businesses that require more facilities after they leave business hubs. [HL3086]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: Growing small businesses can get assistance from a number of Government schemes. For example the Government set up Enterprise Zones across England to support new and expanding businesses by offering incentives such as tax relief on top of the doubling of Small Business Rates Relief which we have extended for a further year until April 2016.

There are also Catapult centres round the country - places where the very best of the UK's businesses, scientists and engineers work together to transform ideas into products and services. They allow small businesses access to resources and equipment they may need.

Small businesses can find out more about these schemes and also obtain other advice that may help them by approaching their local Growth Hub. There are now 30 Growth Hubs across England that are bringing together local and national business support so that people can find the help they need quickly and easily.[i]

[i] <http://www.lepnetwork.net/about-leps/the-network-of-leps/>

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any discussions are taking place about supporting ING Groep NV's plans to expand their small-business lending programme. [HL3087]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The government wishes to see a diverse and competitive market for lending to small and medium businesses and welcomes new entrants to that market. We are aware of ING's recent equity investment in an online lending platform. That is a commercial matter for ING which the government has not discussed with the company.

Social Security Benefits

Asked by Baroness Manzoor

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of additional hours of employment and jobs available to people wanting to increase their working hours in order to avoid the proposed four-year freeze in working age benefits from 2016. [HL3229]

Lord Freud: The Government set out its assessment of the impacts of the policies in the Welfare Reform and Work Bill on 20th July. These are available on the Parliament website.

Asked by Baroness Manzoor

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of how many people will work more hours as a result of the proposed four-year freeze in working age benefits from 2016. [HL3230]

Lord Freud: The Government set out its assessment of the impacts of the policies in the Welfare Reform and Work Bill on 20th July. These are available on the Parliament website.

Speed Limits

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the recent recommendations in a report by Brake that local authorities need simplified powers to introduce 20 mph zones. [HL3010]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Local authorities have sufficient powers to introduce 20 mph zones. The Department issued revised guidance in January 2013 aimed mainly at traffic authorities who are responsible for setting local speed limits. This guidance was revised following full public consultation in Summer 2012 and is available online on GOV.UK

Stansted Express Railway Line

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there are plans to improve the Stansted Express service from Liverpool Street to Stansted airport; and if so, what are the details of those plans. [HL3011]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The current operator is engaged in discussions with Network Rail in regard to improving Sunday service provision to Stanstead Airport. And as we have stated in the East Anglia Stakeholder Briefing Document and Consultation Response, in the next long-term franchise Stansted will be served with an earlier weekday morning service, and other measures we have specified will improve both reliability and punctuality across the franchise including the London Liverpool St to Stansted services. We are also specifying

a direct Norwich to Stansted service for the new franchise.

STEM Subjects: Graduates

Asked by Lord Wills

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics graduates who will not be in education or employment one year after graduation, in each of the next five years. [HL3018]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: Estimates for future years are not available.

Asked by Lord Wills

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to increase the number of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics graduates in education or employment one year after graduation. [HL3019]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: The Government attaches great importance to the supply of science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills and the value that they bring to all sectors of our economy. It has commissioned two independent reviews into graduate employment and accreditation in STEM which aim to explore some of the issues around the employment outcomes of graduates from STEM disciplines.

Sir William Wakeham is leading the review into STEM disciplines. A second, separate review is being led by Sir Nigel Shadbolt and is considering the specific concerns related to graduates of Computer Science. [HL3019]. The reviews are due to report to Ministers in Winter 2015/16. (Note: further information can be found at <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/kess/gradstemreview/>)

Syria: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the numerical strength of the moderate forces fighting against President Assad in Syria. [HL3152]

Earl Howe: Estimating the numerical strength of armed groups in Syria is challenging given the lack of data, the fluidity of the situation on the ground, and the multiplicity of groups. Nevertheless, we estimate that fighters loyal to the Free Syrian Army, which has close links to the Syrian National Coalition, which is the heart of the political opposition, run into tens of thousands.

Syria: Military Intervention

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask Her Majesty's Government in what circumstances they would consider using British military assets to prevent President Assad from using barrel bombs against civilians in Syria. [HL3151]

Earl Howe: We have repeatedly demanded that Assad ceases the use of barrel bombs and called on his allies, Russia and Iran, to apply pressure to that end. Ultimately, a negotiated political transition is the only way to end the conflict and alleviate Syria's humanitarian crisis. Any decision to commit UK military assets in order to prevent Assad's use of these indiscriminate weapons would be subject to appropriate legal consideration, close consultation with allies and the endorsement of the House of Commons.

Syria: Refugees

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what they are doing to co-ordinate the work of non-governmental organisations and charities in order to improve the support available for refugees as they leave Syria, and to support them in settling and integrating into European life. [HL2820]

Lord Bates: The UK has been operating resettlement schemes for many years and we already have established and effective networks to accommodate and support resettled people.

However, we recognise that the increase in numbers will require an expansion of current networks and the impact on local communities and infrastructure will need to be managed carefully. That is why we are working with a wide range of partners including local authorities and civil society organisations to ensure that people are integrated sensitively into local communities.

Teachers: Training

Asked by Baroness Donaghy

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether initial teacher-training programmes delivered using core places allocated to universities are as schools-led as those delivered through School Direct. [HL2999]

Lord Nash: A school-led training course gives trainees the chance to train on the job in at least two schools. School-led initial teacher training is made up of School Direct (tuition fee), School Direct (salaried) and School-centered ITT provider (SCITT) routes. One of the key principles of the School Direct training route is that it gives schools the decision-making power they need to work with their preferred partners in the design and delivery of ITT, and to select and recruit the best possible candidates. A number of different models have been developed by schools working with appropriate ITT providers based on local needs.

Many schools are choosing to work with universities in the delivery of School Direct training. The same ITT criteria, which specify the minimum amount of time that trainees must spend in schools, apply to all ITT routes, whether school or university-led.

The increasing availability of school-led routes alongside university-led courses allow applicants to choose the right course depending on personal circumstances, qualifications, and the subject and age group they want to teach.

*Asked by **Baroness Donaghy***

To ask Her Majesty's Government why a cap has been imposed on recruitment to initial teacher-training programmes by universities but not on school-centred initial teacher training and School Direct recruitment. [HL3000]

*Asked by **Baroness Donaghy***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the different controls placed on recruitment to university initial teacher training and recruitment to School Direct and school-centred initial teacher-training programmes in 2016–17 on the choice available to prospective trainee teachers. [HL3001]

*Asked by **Baroness Donaghy***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure the continued viability of teacher training delivered by school-university partnership other than through School Direct. [HL3002]

*Asked by **Baroness Donaghy***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they have taken to ensure that the increase in school-centred initial teacher training and School Direct initial teacher training does not undermine existing programmes delivered by mainstream school-university partnerships. [HL3003]

Lord Nash: The government is committed to the ongoing expansion of school-led initial teacher training (ITT). The move towards school-led ITT has created new opportunities for universities to grow their business: engaging directly with schools to become their chosen partner; and working with school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) to offer academic awards. In addition, the university sector as a whole has the opportunity to recruit trainees up to the same overall level as they have for the 2015/16 academic year. It is, therefore, not expected that this change of approach will have a substantial impact on the higher education sector.

*Asked by **Baroness Donaghy***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what analysis they have carried out of the impact of the increase in School Direct and school-centred initial teacher training on the availability of placements for students on mainstream school-university programmes. [HL3004]

Lord Nash: The National College of Teaching and Leadership does not collect information on placements.

These are negotiated between providers and schools as part of their partnership arrangements.

Trains

*Asked by **Lord Greaves***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with Vivarail, train operating companies, and Passenger Transport Executives on the potential use of D-trains (class 230), and for which areas or services. [HL3136]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The deployment of rolling stock is a matter for train operators.

Department for Transport officials have met with Vivarail to understand their proposals for the refurbishment of D78-Stock. Along with other industry stakeholders, officials have visited Vivarail's facilities at the Long Marston Depot.

The Great Western Railway franchise includes a commitment for the operator to carry out initial feasibility studies in respect of a number of potential projects, and one of these is into the use of D-Class trains.

Vivarail is a private sector company that has developed these proposals at its own risk.

Vocational Education: Design

*Asked by **Lord Freyberg***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to take steps to increase the number of vocational pathways in design disciplines, and if so, by how many. [HL3092]

Lord Nash: There are a variety of different options available to young people to enable them to gain the skills required to enter design related occupations. 14-16 year olds can study design related GCSEs and government approved technical awards. 16-19 year olds can study design related A Levels and government approved technical certificates or tech levels, which are supported by employers. Options beyond this include higher education or employment, and there are apprenticeships currently available in the field of design.

We want to go further to reform technical and professional education to develop a world-leading system to deliver the skills that the economy needs. The Productivity Plan, published in July 2015, announced the government's intention to reform technical and professional education to provide individuals with clear, high-quality routes to employment.

Yemen: Armed Conflict

*Asked by **Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the response to conditions in the southern Yemen city of Taiz. [HL3161]

Baroness Verma: The people of Taiz are in urgent need of humanitarian supplies. The city continues to experience intense fighting, which is making it extremely difficult for aid agencies to deliver humanitarian assistance. There are reports that efforts to access the city and provide relief have been consistently blocked by the Houthis over the past month.

The UK continues to call on all parties to facilitate rapid, safe and unhindered access to all people in need in

Yemen. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and support UN and NGO partners' efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to Taiz city.

On 27 September 2015, the Secretary of State announced an additional £20million for humanitarian assistance to Yemen, bringing our overall contribution for 2015-16 to £75million and making the UK the 4th largest bilateral donor to Yemen crisis

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1	Iron and Steel: Manufacturing Industries 9
Higher Education Green Paper 1	Junior Doctors: Conditions of Employment 10
Written Answers.....2	Legal Aid Scheme 10
Agriculture: Subsidies 2	Liverpool Prison 10
Air Pollution 2	Liverpool Prison: Restraint Techniques 11
Air Pollution: EU Law.....2	Livestock: Clones 11
Air Pollution: Lambeth.....2	Local Sustainable Transport Fund 11
Airports: Noise 2	Ministerial Policy Advisers: Codes of Practice . 11
Alexander Blackman 3	Ministers: Codes of Practice..... 11
Asylum: North Korea 3	Narendra Modi..... 12
Aviation: Training 3	Network Rail..... 12
Cancer: Meat Products 3	Network Rail: Land 12
Carbon Monoxide: Poisoning..... 3	NHS: Private Sector..... 12
Catering and Retail Services (HL): Redundancy .3	Older Workers 13
Civil Proceedings..... 3	Older Workers: Average Earnings..... 13
Coroners 4	Open Prisons..... 14
Courts: Debt Collection..... 4	Pedicabs: Greater London..... 14
Criminal Injuries Compensation: Offences against Children 4	Police: Finance 15
Criminal Proceedings: Fees and Charges 5	Prisoners: Gender Recognition 15
Cycleways 5	Public Inquiries..... 15
Cycling: Per Capita Costs..... 5	Railways 16
Department of Health 5	Railways: Tickets 16
Developing Countries: LGBT People 6	Refugees 16
Diseases 6	Refugees: Children 17
Emergency Services: Telecommunications..... 7	Refugees: Mediterranean Sea 17
EU Immigration..... 7	Refugees: Middle East..... 17
Flour: Additives..... 7	Refugees: Syria..... 17
Gangmasters: Licensing 8	Refugees: Visas 18
Government Departments: Mass Media 8	Salt..... 18
Grammar Schools: Maidenhead 8	Small Businesses 19
Groceries Code Adjudicator 8	Social Security Benefits..... 19
Health Hazards: Meat Products 8	Speed Limits 19
Human Trafficking: Compensation 8	Stansted Express Railway Line 19
Immigration: Appeals 9	STEM Subjects: Graduates..... 20
India: British Nationals Abroad..... 9	Syria: Armed Conflict 20
	Syria: Military Intervention 20

Index to Statements and Answers

Syria: Refugees.....	20
Teachers: Training.....	20
Trains.....	21
Vocational Education: Design.....	21
Yemen: Armed Conflict	21