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HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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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.

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

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Written Statements

Tuesday, 16 October 2018

Armed Forces Pay Review Body

[HLWS979]

Earl Howe: My right hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Defence People and Veterans (Mr Tobias Ellwood) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am pleased to announce that I have invited Lesley Mercer to continue to serve as a Member of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body for a further three-year term of office, commencing on 1 March 2019. This appointment has been conducted in accordance with the guidance of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Domestic Farm Support Funding

[HLWS984]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Michael Gove) has today made the following statement.

Today I am announcing that the Government is launching an independent review into the allocation of domestic farm support from 2020 to the end of this Parliament. The review will make sure that fair funding is delivered to all four parts of the UK, when we leave the EU.

The review will provide recommendations to the Government on factors to take into account in the split of agricultural funding between the four countries of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, once the UK has left the Common Agricultural Policy.

In forming its recommendations, the review will look at what factors should influence the distribution of agricultural funding, while ensuring the effective use of public funds. Each country's unique circumstances will be considered, including its environmental, agricultural and socio-economic make-up. Both the number of farms and the size of farms in each country could also be considered, to make sure that each part of the UK gets a fair deal. The review will be informed by historic CAP decisions but will not revisit these, or redistribute money that has already been committed.

We have already confirmed that we will continue to commit the same cash total in funds for UK farm support until the end of the Parliament, expected in 2022, providing British farmers with more certainty than farmers across the EU, where funding is only guaranteed until 2020.

This review will be led and overseen by an independent external reviewer. I am delighted that Lord Bew of Donegore has agreed to chair the review. Lord Bew has been the Chair of the Committee on Standards in Public Life for five years, held esteemed positions in

Government and contributed to a number of Bills, reviews and reports during his time as a non-party-political peer.

Lord Bew will be joined on the panel by representatives from each devolved administration to ensure that their voices are heard. Membership of this group will be confirmed in due course.

The terms of reference for the review have been published on the GOV.UK website today. The review will report in March 2019 and the findings of the review will be published on GOV.UK in due course.

G6 Lyon

[HLWS981]

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

The informal G6 group of Interior Ministers held its most recent meeting in Lyon on 8 and 9 October 2017. Representatives from the USA, Morocco and the European Commission also attended the meeting.

The summit was chaired by the French Prime Minister and Interim Interior Minister, Édouard Philippe. I represented the United Kingdom. The other participating States were represented by Dr Joachim Brudzinski (Minister of the Interior, Poland), Dr Stephan Mayer (State Secretary, Germany), Matteo Salvini (Minister of the Interior, Italy) and Fernando Grande-Marlaska (Minister of the Interior, Spain).

Morocco was represented by Interior Minister Abdelouafi Laftit. The European Commission was represented by Dimitris Avramopoulos (Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship) and Sir Julian King (Commissioner for the Security Union). The United States was represented by Jeff Sessions (Attorney General USA) and Claire Grady (Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of Homeland Security). Gilles de Kerchove, the EU's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator also attended.

The G6 commenced with a working dinner focused on managing illegal migration flows. During the discussion I promoted the UK's efforts to tackle people smuggling and human trafficking, and highlighted the UK's work upstream and our commitment to work with EU partners on this after we leave the EU. I also stressed the importance of recognising that organised crime is a key threat we need to address.

The second plenary session was on combatting the threat of returning foreign terrorist fighters. During this session I referred to the UK's cross-governmental approach to managing returnees and the need for an end-to-end holistic approach to the issue.

The third session was a working lunch which focused on security cooperation with Sahel countries. During this session I highlighted the UK's commitment to the region and discussed our support on security and stabilisation. I

also encouraged partners to share information to develop shared understanding of local issues and highlighted the problem of the use of kidnap for ransom as a source of terrorist funding.

The final session considered terrorist use of the internet. I highlighted the fact that UK is leading the way on preventing terrorist use of the internet, encouraged the G6 to support the UK's strategic approach of engaging directly with content service providers and sought their support for action to combat Child Sexual Exploitation online.

The next G6 will take place in Germany in 2019.

Export Control Policy

[HLWS980]

Baroness Fairhead: My hon Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Graham Stuart) has today made the following statement:

This statement is guidance given under Section 9 of the Export Control Act 2002.

I would like to inform the House of the introduction of a new policy relating to strategic export controls.

The Government takes breaches of export controls and trade sanctions very seriously, by investigating, disrupting and taking the appropriate enforcement action against companies and individuals who breach our controls. As part of the continuous improvement of export control policy, we have considered what other means could be used to disrupt illicit activities without increasing the regulatory burden on organisations that operate legitimately.

The Government wishes to strengthen its powers in order to mitigate any potential risk that those engaged in activities in breach of export control and sanctions legislation could still separately apply for and receive export or trade control licences in respect of legitimate business activities in which they are simultaneously engaged.

Therefore, when assessing licence applications, the Government may take into account the risk that the proposed legitimate activity will directly or indirectly facilitate other activities that violate UK export control or sanctions legislation. In doing so, the Government will consider, *inter alia*, the conduct of the licence applicant.

Informal Trade Foreign Affairs Council: 5 October 2018

[HLWS983]

Baroness Fairhead: My hon Friend the Minister of State for Trade Policy (George Hollinberry MP) has today made the following statement.

The Informal EU Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) took place in Innsbruck on 5 October 2018. The agenda covered the WTO, EU-US trade and EU trade agreements. I represented the UK at the meeting. A summary of the discussions follows:

On WTO modernisation, the discussion confirmed that the most urgent issue was unblocking appointments to the WTO Appellate Body. Many WTO members were looking to the EU for leadership on this matter. I reaffirmed the UK's support for the rules-based trading system, commended the Commission's concept paper on WTO modernisation, and called for engagement with the wider WTO membership.

On EU-US trade, discussion was on the agreement set out in the EU-US Joint Statement following President Juncker's visit to the White House and progress since July, noting that the near-term focus was on voluntary regulatory cooperation with full respect for domestic legislation. A limited tariff liberalisation was on offer from the EU, provided it focused only on industrial goods. I expressed opposition to US measures on steel, aluminium and threatened measures on autos, offered support to the Commission's approach of prioritising regulatory cooperation, and agreed with others that there should be no lowering of standards.

On ongoing FTA negotiations, the priority for the Japan EPA to be approved by the European Parliament was highlighted. Attendees also expressed continued support for the range of other EU trade agreements.

Security Industry Authority

[HLWS982]

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

The 2017-18 Annual Report and Accounts for the Security Industry Authority (HC 1643) is being laid before the House today and will published on www.gov.uk. Copies will be available in the Vote Office.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 16 October 2018

Aviation: Standards

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to diverge from the rules of the European Aviation Safety Agency following Brexit; and if so, what benefits they anticipate will come from such divergence. [HL10384]

Baroness Sugg: As stated in the White Paper that set out the Government's proposal for the UK's future relationship with the EU, we are seeking a comprehensive air transport deal that seeks continued participation within the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) system. However, the UK's future participation will be a matter for negotiations.

EU safety regulations will be brought into domestic law by means of the powers in the EU (Withdrawal) Act. This means that after exit, the same safety rules will continue to apply.

The UK is committed to maintaining current levels of safety and will continue to strive to improve on these after leaving the EU. Being outside the EU will not change the UK's approach to aviation safety.

Borders Railway Line: Carlisle

Asked by **Lord Steel of Aikwood**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the response by the Prime Minister on 5 September (HC Deb, col 157), whether they will contribute (1) funding, and (2) any other support towards extending the Borders rail route to Carlisle. [HL10369]

Baroness Sugg: The UK Government is committed to working with the Scottish Government to drive forward the innovative, cross-border Borderlands Deal. We will be working with local partners to agree a deal which will see significant investment to transform the local economies within the Borderlands area.

We can confirm that the Borderlands have sought funding for feasibility work on the extension of the Borders Railway as part of their Borderlands Growth Deal submission to both governments on Friday 28 September.

Electronic Funds Transfer: Fraud

Asked by **Lord Chadlington**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that funds obtained by authorised push payment fraud are traced and recovered. [HL10399]

Lord Bates: The Government takes all fraud extremely seriously and recognises the harm that authorised push payment scams can cause. The Government has created

the Joint Fraud Taskforce, which brings together government, the banks and law enforcement to develop a collective response to fraud. The objectives of the Taskforce are to protect the public and businesses from fraud, reduce the impact of fraud on victims, and increase the disruption and prosecution of fraudsters.

Furthermore, the government has established the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR) with a statutory objective to ensure that the UK's payment systems work in the interests of their users. The PSR has convened an Authorised Push Payment (APP) Scams Steering Group, made up of an equal number of both industry and consumer group representatives. On 28 September 2018 this steering group published a draft voluntary code which sets out the circumstances in which payment services providers (e.g. banks) would be responsible for reimbursing APP fraud victims who have acted appropriately. This draft voluntary code is an important step forwards towards better and more consistent protection for consumers and standards for industry.

Gaming Machines

Asked by **Lord Chadlington**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ashton of Hyde on 1 May (HL7099), what assessment they have made of the responses to the consultation on proposals for changes to gaming machines and social responsibility measures; when they intend to announce the implementation date for the reduced £2 stake for Fixed Odds Betting Terminals; and whether they plan to make such an announcement in their forthcoming Budget statement. [HL10400]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: The draft Statutory Instrument needed to reduce the maximum stake on sub-category B2 machines to £2 was notified to the European Commission in September under the requirements of the EU Technical Standards and Regulations Directive. We intend to lay the draft affirmative regulations before Parliament, for the usual process of approval, in the Autumn term. Questions about gambling participation are included in the large scale English and Scottish Health Surveys and an alternative omnibus survey for Wales. The Combined Health Survey for England, Scotland and Wales 2016 results were published on 6 September 2018 and can be found at <https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/survey-data/Gambling-behaviour-in-Great-Britain-2016.pdf>. A copy of the survey is attached.

In addition, the Gambling Commission collects participation data through smaller scale quarterly telephone and online surveys and monitors underage gambling through its young persons survey. The latest information can be found at: <https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/news-action-and-statistics/Statistics-and-research/Levels-of-participation-and-problem-gambling/Gambling->

[participation-and-problem-gambling.aspx](#). A copy is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Gambling Behavior 2016 [Gambling-behaviour-in-Great-Britain-2016.pdf]

Gambling participation 2017 [Gambling-participation-in-2017-behaviour-awareness-and-attitudes.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-10-01/HL10400>

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what platform height above the rail is specified for the new HS2 trains and HS2 line platforms; what is the standard platform height for Network Rail stations likely to be served by HS2 trains; and for each type of platform height how many will achieve level access. [[HL10382](#)]

Baroness Sugg: The new HS2 stations, platforms will be circa 1115mm above rail height. The existing Network Rail stations platforms are nominally 915mm above rail height but for historical reasons there can be a variation between different stations. HS2 trains will be equipped with a moveable gap filler that deploys automatically before the doors open and provides level access between the train and platform at HS2 stations.

Manual boarding ramps will also be provided on board the train and at stations, which will be deployed by a member of staff when needed to provide step-free access from platform to train for the range of platform heights encountered at Network Rail stations.

Inheritance Tax

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government, from the date they are first received, what is the current average time taken by HMRC to agree the IHT400 return calculations for estates in the bands (1) up to £1 million, (2) from £1–5 million, and (3) from £5–10 million; and in each band, what is the average time taken to issue a clearance. [[HL10387](#)]

Lord Bates: HMRC cannot provide average times or break the data down into bands for the value of the estate as this information is not readily available and could only be compiled at disproportionate cost.

Since 6 April 2018 over 95% of IHT400 returns submitted to HMRC were processed within 15 working days of receipt.

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average time taken by the Valuation Office to provide advice to HMRC on estates valued in the bands (1) up to £1

million, (2) from £1–5 million, and (3) from £5–10 million. [[HL10388](#)]

Lord Bates: The Valuation Office Agency does not hold the information requested.

In 2017-18, the VOA cleared its initial appraisals of inheritance tax cases, referred to it by HMRC, within an average of five working days, meeting its target.

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current average time taken to provide a full and final response to executors once the Valuation Office has provided its advice to HMRC. [[HL10389](#)]

Lord Bates: HMRC does not hold this information. Once Valuation Office Agency has provided advice, HMRC seek to write to the executor within 15 days of receiving that advice.

Pre-payment

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will conduct a review of providers of pre-payment plans, and of the sales practices of such providers, with a view to appropriate regulation of this sector. [[HL10367](#)]

Lord Bates: I have interpreted this question as relating to the pre-paid funeral plan market. The government launched a call for evidence into the regulation of the pre-paid funeral plan market in June 2018, having concluded that the current framework of self-regulation is not sufficient to ensure the fair treatment of consumers. We are currently reviewing the submissions and a response will be published in due course.

Probate

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made of the efficiency of the probate processing by HMRC. [[HL10386](#)]

Lord Bates: HMRC is responsible for processing Inheritance Tax accounts, required before probate can be applied for. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has recently commissioned the Office of Tax Simplification to look at ways in which the overall process can be simplified.

Rail Review

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the terms of reference of the review of rail led by Keith Williams will include rail freight; if not, why not; and if so, why rail freight was not mentioned in their announcement on 20 September. [[HL10380](#)]

Baroness Sugg: The Terms of Reference of the Rail Review, published on Thursday 11 October, do include

rail freight. The Government fully supports a successful rail freight industry and recognises the sector's contribution to the environment, communities and the economy.

Railways: Standards

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Secretary of State for Transport on 13 September (HC170781), why they intend to diverge from the rules of the European Railway Agency; and what benefits they anticipate will come from any such divergence. [HL10383]

Baroness Sugg: The Government intends to create the ability to diverge from specifications set by the European Railway Agency, where there is a need to do so, but the UK will be still aligned with European standards. Any decisions about diverging from these rules will depend on their future content and whether they support the UK's interests and meet the needs of the industry and passengers.

These decisions will be carefully managed so that the impacts and benefits are fully assessed. An anticipated benefit of divergence is that HS2 platforms could be built at a higher level than the standards currently prescribed in the European framework. This would provide level boarding and improved accessibility for users of HS2.

West Coast Partnership Rail Franchise

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the cost of Department for Transport officials and consultants preparing the bid documentation for the West Coast Partnership. [HL10379]

Baroness Sugg: The total contingent staffing costs within the Department for Transport for preparing the bid and contractual documentation for the West Coast Partnership was £295,475. £6,360,726 (including VAT where applicable) was spent on consultants.

This reflects efforts required to develop a robust commercial position and benefits to passengers whilst at the same time securing the right Shadow Operator for the £50bn investment in HS2.

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