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WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
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Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Kamall	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
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Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Wolfson of Tredegar	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Monday, 18 October 2021

Anti-Slavery Day

[HLWS304]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Safeguarding (Rachel Maclean) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Modern slavery is an abhorrent crime. Tens of millions of victims around the world are coerced, deceived, and forced into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment.

This happens in the UK as well; to British citizens and to those trafficked from abroad. Today, on the UK's Anti-Slavery Day, we pause to reflect on the trauma that victims suffer, the cruelty of those that exploit them and the bravery of survivors attempting to rebuild their lives.

This Government is committed to eradicating modern slavery. Over the past year we have continued to work towards this aim with our partners in the Devolved Administrations, in law enforcement and across the criminal justice system, with local government and our health and welfare sectors, with our international partners, with business, civil society, and academia.

Together we have continued to identify and provide support to thousands of victims of modern slavery through our contract with the Salvation Army. The number of law enforcement investigations has continued to increase. Conviction rates for cases prosecuted through the courts have also increased.

The Independent Child Trafficking Guardian Service now covers in total two thirds of all local authorities across England and Wales; a key milestone to better support child victims delivered through our National Referral Mechanism Transformation Programme.

The HO has invested a further £1.4m this year to support the police modern slavery response, bringing the total investment to £15m since 2016. This funding has helped to drive the increase in modern slavery investigations and operations.

And during our G7 Presidency, G7 members agreed to joint action on forced labour in global supply chains and reaffirmed their commitment to upholding human rights and international labour standards. Modern slavery and human trafficking is a global problem and we continue to provide global leadership to tackle it.

We are committed to driving greater transparency in supply chains to ensure the private and public sectors use their leverage to tackle the risks of modern slavery in the goods and services they procure and provide. In March this year we launched the Government registry of modern slavery statements on GOV.UK to enhance transparency. Statements covering over 21,000 organisations have now been added to the registry.

This Government continues to lead by example. We have continued to progress work on public procurement that we committed to in the world's first Government modern slavery statement that we published in March 2020. And we will soon publish further detail of the actions Government Departments have taken to prevent modern slavery in their supply chains.

We have continued to fund the Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre to improve the evidence base on modern slavery and to help inform our policy response. And the Government has recently launched the Modern Slavery Prevention Fund to test and develop innovative approaches to preventing modern slavery in the first place, aiming to stop this harm before it starts.

Tomorrow, our landmark Nationality and Borders Bill will progress to Committee stage in the House of Commons, and the modern slavery measures in this Bill will seek to bring clarity for decision makers and victims, and maintain our commitment to ensuring victims of modern slavery are identified and supported as early as possible.

These actions demonstrate the Government's relentless commitment to addressing this crime. We will soon provide further detail in our annual report on modern slavery.

But we are not complacent. The nature of modern slavery continues to evolve. We have committed to publish a new Government strategy for modern slavery next year to ensure we continue to lead the way with our partners in bringing an end to this crime.

Armoured Cavalry Programme: Ajax Update

[HLWS309]

Baroness Goldie: My hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Procurement (Jeremy Quin MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I wish to provide a further update to Parliament on the Ajax equipment project being delivered as part of the Armoured Cavalry Programme.

1. Health and Safety

The review by the MOD's Director of Health, Safety and Environmental Protection on the Health and Safety aspects of the Noise and Vibration concerns raised on Ajax is now in its final stages. The Report runs through the chronology of the Ajax programme and key decisions made regarding safety in order to ensure a clear understanding of the current background and is being subjected to a formal Maxwellisation process. I look forward to the Report being finalised. I will publish it in full.

2. Update on Personnel

The health of our service personnel is our top priority. At 30 September 2021, the total number of people exposed to noise and vibration from Ajax was 310, of whom 11 are civilians and 10 are now Veterans. All 310

individuals have now been contacted and offered assessments for noise and vibration.

On noise, at 30 September 2021, 270 people have been assessed and 40 people have declined assessment or have so far been unavailable to attend. Of the 270 individuals who have been assessed, 231 have returned to duty having maintained or returned to pre-exposure levels of hearing. Of the 231, as an extra precaution, 166 people are receiving enhanced hearing surveillance. Of the remaining 39 people who have been assessed, 34 remain under specialist outpatient care at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham/Royal Centre for Defence Medicine; most of these are under-going a period of hearing rest prior to reassessment, at which point we expect a significant number to return to full duties. There are a remaining 5 individuals who have been medically downgraded (potentially requiring a change of duties within the Armed Forces) or discharged, either for reasons unrelated to hearing or with hearing loss as a major or minor cause. In the case of hearing loss being identified Ajax may or may not be confirmed as a contributory factor. I am withholding a more precise breakdown of those downgraded or discharged because individuals could be identified resulting in a potential breach in medical confidentiality.

Vibration injuries is a highly specialised area, requiring a graduated assessment process. All 310 individuals exposed have been offered a vibration assessment, with around 125 having so far declined assessment. The process is ongoing but, at 30 September, 45 individuals have been referred for specialist assessment of symptoms which could be associated with whole body vibration and 9 individuals have been referred for specialist assessment of symptoms which could be associated with whole body vibration and 9 individuals have been referred for both. None of the individuals exposed to Ajax have had a change in medical grading or been medically discharged due to vibration.

I will continue to update the House on the number of personnel affected by noise and vibration, including if any trends become apparent once the data has been further analysed.

3. Programmatic Issues

I have made clear that Ajax requires a full time, dedicated Senior Responsible Owner. I am pleased to report that we have now appointed David Marsh to the position, who took up the role on 1 October with the endorsement of the Infrastructure & Projects Authority. As the new SRO, he is now in the process of reviewing the Armoured Cavalry Programme to determine what actions need to be taken to put the programme back on a sound footing.

On 6 September, following authorisation by the Ajax Safety Panel, the independent Millbrook trials recommenced. As planned, and following a further meeting of the Safety Panel, these trials continued at Bovington to provide a wider range of surfaces on which to test the vehicle. These trials involved General

Dynamics crew and real-time monitoring of noise and vibration. Trials have been conducted on the turreted AJAX variant and on the ARES variant, both of which were Capability Drop 1 vehicles. The trials were run at the Millbrook Proving Ground and at Bovington. This has generated hundreds of Gigabytes of data which is currently being processed. Subject to Safety Panel authorisation, trials of a second ARES Capability Drop 1 vehicle will commence shortly at the Millbrook Proving Ground. On 7 October the Safety Panel also authorised military personnel to conduct essential maintenance on the vehicle and marshalled movement.

Since my last statement data has continued to be gathered and analysed to determine the root cause of vibration in the vehicles. In parallel design modifications have been developed to reduce the vibration experienced by the crew. Testing continues to determine the effectiveness of the modifications and whether they would help ensure the vehicle meets the Army's requirement.

Investigations into excess noise also continue. An in-line attenuator has been designed and we are now validating its effectiveness to address the noise transmitted through the communications headsets.

The focus for the MOD and General Dynamics remains on delivering long-term solutions for noise and vibration to ensure Ajax meets the Army's need. Until then, it is not possible to determine a realistic timescale for declaration of Initial Operating Capability or the later introduction of Ajax vehicles into operational service with the Army. We will not accept a vehicle that is not fit for purpose.

Ajax is an important capability for the Army and we are committed to working with General Dynamics for its delivery. We have a robust, firm price contract with General Dynamics under which they are required to provide the vehicles as set out in the contract for the agreed price of £5.5bn.

Blood Donor Selection Criteria

[HLWS306]

Lord Kamall: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid) has today made the following written statement:

I would like to inform the House about changes that the Government will be making to the blood donor selection criteria. This announcement forms part of the wider steps the Government has taken to make blood donation more equitable.

In 2019, the Government commissioned the 'For the Assessment of Individualised Risk' (FAIR) Steering Group to consider whether changes could be made to the blood donor selection criteria to ensure it was as effective and inclusive as possible.

On 14 June 2021, in response to the FAIR Steering Group's work, the Government implemented changes that enable men who have sex in long-term relationships to

give blood. These changes put in place a gender-neutral selection policy, where deferrals are now based on higher risk behaviours associated with acquiring infections.

Following further work by the FAIR Steering Group, I can announce that the Government will be making an additional change to the blood donor selection criteria, which will increase inclusivity without compromising the safety of donated blood.

As part of its work, the FAIR steering group reviewed the effectiveness of the question prospective donors are asked about whether they have recently had sex with a partner who may ever have had sex in an area where HIV is endemic (including most of sub-Saharan Africa). In reviewing the evidence, the Steering Group considered the other questions that are already on the pre-donation questionnaire that help to identify high-risk donors and the associated deferrals already in place, as well as the effect of routine screening of all donations for HIV and other blood-borne viruses. The FAIR Steering Group concluded that the question could be removed without impacting the safety of the blood supply. Furthermore, they determined that removing the question would help to improve inclusivity and equity for Black African donors. This is especially important due to the ongoing need for more Black African donors who can have rarer blood types, which will help to improve and save lives in the UK.

The Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO) reviewed the Steering Group's findings and agreed that the removal of this question poses no additional safety risks to the blood supply and recommended the change was made to the pre-donation selection criteria.

The Government has now reviewed the evidence presented by the FAIR Steering Group together with SaBTO's advice and has accepted this recommendation. This means that the question asking whether donors had recently had sex with a partner who may ever have had sex in an area where HIV is endemic will be removed from the blood donor selection criteria. This is a progressive and welcome step forward, reducing limitations for people to donate blood and creating a fairer system for blood donation.

The Department of Health and Social Care is working with NHS Blood and Transplant to implement this change. We will have monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure the safety of donors and patients, including continued monitoring of both acute and chronic infections in new and regular donors. The changes will be reviewed in twelve months.

Closure of Service Police Legacy Investigations

[HLWS310]

Baroness Goldie: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

In February 2017, the then Secretary of State for Defence announced that the Iraq Historic Allegations Team (IHAT) would close and any remaining Iraq legacy investigations would be reintegrated into the service police system. Service Police Legacy Investigations (SPLI), led by a senior Royal Navy Police officer took over these remaining investigations at the beginning of July 2017.

I can today announce that the SPLI completed its investigative caseload in December 2020 and, following the completion of administrative functions, officially closed its doors on 30 September 2021.

In total, SPLI assessed 1,291 allegations, of which 178 were pursued through 55 separate investigations. The SPLI complied fully with the requirements of the Armed Forces Act 2006 (in referring cases to or consulting the Service Prosecuting Authority (SPA)) and with the High Court's direction to work closely with the SPA to ensure cases were completed as promptly as possible while maintaining the necessary rigour. None of the IHAT or SPLI investigations have resulted in any prosecutions.

One significant challenge throughout the investigations was the issue of the credibility of allegations made against UK service personnel. While we accept that some allegations were credible, this does not detract from the fact we know, from the investigations and from the Al-Sweady public inquiry, that some were not. We know that Phil Shiner, formerly of Public Interest Lawyers, obtained Iraqi clients improperly – through the use of financial incentives – and acted with a lack of integrity. In 2017, the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal found allegations of misconduct when representing claims against British soldier – including dishonesty – proven to the criminal standard of proof and he was struck off the Roll of Solicitors.

The vast majority of the more than 140,000 members of our Armed Forces who served in Iraq did so honourably. Many sadly suffered injuries or death, with devastating consequences for them and their families.

However not *all* allegations and claims were spurious, otherwise investigations would not have proceeded beyond initial examination and no claims for compensation would have been paid. It is sadly clear, from all the investigations the UK conducted, that some shocking and shameful incidents did happen in Iraq. We recognise that there were four convictions of UK military personnel for offences in Iraq including offences of assault and inhuman treatment. The Government's position is clear – we deplore and condemn all such incidents.

It is also clear that in some cases the original Royal Military Police investigations – conducted in arduous, battlefield conditions, with limited resources and under strict Force Protection measures – did not manage to secure all the required evidence, with the result that opportunities to hold those responsible to account may now have been lost. I apologise unreservedly to all those

who suffered treatment at the hands of UK forces which was unacceptable.

The closure of SPLI marks the completion of the remaining investigations stemming from operations in Iraq. However, we are aware that further serious allegations may arise in the future, and that where credible these would have to be investigated in line with our obligations under international and domestic law.

Looking ahead, any historical criminal allegations will be referred to the Defence Serious Crime Unit. This was recommended in the Lyons/Murphy Review of the Service Justice System, and is further supported by Sir Richard Henriques, a retired judge who I appointed to conduct a review of how allegations on operations are raised and investigated. His review will help ensure we have the best possible framework, skills and processes in place, should this be necessary in the future.

The completion of the SPLI investigations brings us closer to the end of a decade of extensive litigation and large-scale investigations. While the Iraq Fatality Inspector continues to look at a small number of remaining cases, we can start to draw a line under the legacy of our operations in Iraq and to focus on the future.

Coronavirus Community Support Fund: Evaluation

[HLWS300]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: I am repeating the following Written Ministerial Statement made on 18 October 2021 in the other place by my Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society, Nigel Huddleston MP:

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the National Lottery Communities Fund (TNLCF) have recently published a series of reports detailing the evaluation of the Coronavirus Community Support Fund. The reports will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The reports [can also be found online](#).

The £200 million Coronavirus Community Support Fund ('the Fund') was part of the unprecedented £750 million of government funding to support voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to continue their vital work during the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding was provided by DCMS. TNLCF managed, distributed and oversaw the funding. Additional management support was provided by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

The purpose of the Fund was to increase community support to people disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis, through the work of VCSE organisations; and reduce temporary closures of essential VCSE organisations, and so reduce the burden on public services.

The funding went to 8,200 organisations who in turn supported an estimated 6.5 million people. This included

children and young people (supported by 39% of grantholders), people with mental health conditions (40%) and older people (32%).

Without the £200 million fund almost one fifth of recipients would have been forced to close their doors, while over half revealed that they would have delivered significantly fewer services if it had not been for assistance from the Fund. Over 6,200 employees of these organisations were brought back or prevented from being furloughed, and over 4,200 new staff members were recruited. This is in addition to grantholders mobilising 136,000 existing volunteers and over 47,000 new volunteers that they had not worked with previously.

The CCSF has also played a major role in the Government's commitment to tackling loneliness across all grants, with 63% reporting they had promoted ways of building social connections during the pandemic, 79% reporting that beneficiaries felt less lonely, and 70% reporting beneficiaries had more access to social contact.

The findings also underline the positive impacts felt by volunteers who were mobilised during the pandemic. 84% of people who volunteered through the Fund felt like they were making a difference, and 66% people felt it gave them a sense of purpose.

Gibraltar: Future Relationship with the European Union

[HLWS303]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Elizabeth Truss), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

On 31 December 2020, the UK Government, together with the Government of Gibraltar, agreed a Political Framework with the Kingdom of Spain on how a future agreement between the UK and the European Union (EU) in respect of Gibraltar would function in the interests of all parties.

This represented the first stage of the two-part process whereby the EU would examine a request from Spain, in agreement with the UK, to initiate the procedure for the negotiation of a separate UK-EU agreement in respect of Gibraltar.

On 5 October 2021, the EU concluded its internal processes necessary to begin the UK-EU negotiations. While the EU mandate has not been published we understand it has been amended from the Commission's draft mandate published on 20 July 2021. Importantly it now references the role of the European Border and Coastguard Agency (Frontex) in delivering the fluid movement of people between Gibraltar and the Schengen area. Both the UK Government and Government of Gibraltar have been clear that the operation of frontline Schengen external border checks on the territory of Gibraltar by Spanish officials would not be acceptable.

There remain however a number of areas where the opening EU position directly conflicts with the Political

Framework agreed between the UK and Spain. These issues will need to be addressed in the UK-EU negotiations to ensure that the pragmatic and careful balance of the Political Framework is maintained. The UK is committed to working constructively to address these issues with the objective of concluding a treaty in line with the Political Framework. Formal negotiations began in Brussels on 11 October and further detailed conversations will follow in the coming weeks.

The UK Government continues to work side-by-side with the Government of Gibraltar. We agreed our joint approach to negotiations at the UK-Gibraltar Joint Ministerial Council held in Gibraltar on 29 March 2021. At the core is a shared aim to secure future prosperity for Gibraltar and the surrounding region. This can be delivered through a treaty which brings confidence, legal certainty and stability to the lives and livelihoods of the people of Gibraltar and neighbouring communities.

While fully committed to seeking a treaty based on the Political Framework, the UK Government and Government of Gibraltar are working closely to ensure robust plans are in place for all eventualities, including if there is no negotiated outcome. Although confident an agreement can be reached, it is only prudent to prepare for all eventualities. The UK will stand fully behind Gibraltar, its people and its economy in any scenario.

We remain steadfast in our support for Gibraltar and will not agree to anything that compromises UK sovereignty.

Household Support Fund

[HLWS305]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: My Right Honourable Friend, The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Dr Thérèse Coffey MP) has made the following Written Statement:

Our £407 billion COVID support package has protected jobs and livelihoods through the worst of the pandemic. With the UK economy rebounding, our Plan for Jobs is working, with the number of payrolled employees now above pre-pandemic levels and vacancies are at record levels. Thanks to the formidable force of our jobs and jobs armies, and an expansion of the Government's Plan for Jobs worth over £500 million, we are building back better – helping people to move into better-paid work, progress, and increase their financial resilience. Our approach is boosting pay, prospects and prosperity for the long-term.

However, we recognise that some people may require extra support over the winter as we enter the final stages of recovery, which is why vulnerable households across the country will now be able to access a new £500 million support fund to help them with essentials. The Household Support Fund will provide £421 million to help vulnerable people in England and allocations to individual local authorities are set out below. The Barnett Formula will apply in the usual way, with the devolved administrations receiving almost £80 million (£41 million

for the Scottish Government, £25 million for the Welsh Government and £14 million for the NI Executive), so the fund totals £500 million.

The Household Support Fund is available to councils in England from this month and will run over the winter to 31 March 2022. The funding will primarily be used to support households in need with food, energy and water costs, with flexibility to support with wider essentials. In cases of genuine emergency (where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need), the Household Support Fund can also be used to support housing costs. At least 50% of the funding will be reserved for households with children and up to 50% is available for vulnerable households without children, including individuals. Local Authorities have the flexibility to design their schemes to best suit local needs, within the parameters of the guidance.

This new Fund will bolster existing measures we have introduced for low-income households, such as increasing the national living wage, expanding the £220 million Holiday Activities and Food Programme, doubling free childcare for eligible working parents and increasing the value of Healthy Start vouchers by over a third. The Household Support Fund also sits alongside the support available through the Warm Home Discount, the Cold Weather Payment scheme and the almost £30 billion Government is projected to spend in 2020/21 on housing benefit and the housing element of Universal Credit.

Table attached for the: Household Support Fund Indicative Funding Allocations per County Councils/Unitary Authorities for the period 06 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Household Support Fund Indicative Funding Allocations [Hh Support Fund Indicative Funding Allocations.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2021-10-18/HLWS305/>

Investment in Green Projects

[HLWS308]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change (Greg Hands) has today made the following statement:

A year on from the publication of the Ten Point Plan the Government can confirm more than £5.8 billion of investment in green projects has been secured, along with at least 56,000 jobs in the UK's clean industries.

This major green investment boost, helps to drive forward the government's ambitions to make the UK a global leader in green technology and finance. It includes more than £650 million in advancing offshore wind this year alone, supporting almost 3,600 jobs across the Humber and North-East and over £900 million in accelerating the shift to zero emissions vehicles. As part of this Envision AESC will invest over £400 million in

battery manufacturing for example, as part of a £1bn project with Nissan and Sunderland Council to create a flagship Electric Vehicle Hub. ENI Spa has invested more than £400 million in offshore wind.

This week's Global Investment Summit in London is expected to attract almost 200 leading industry figures from around the world to invest in the best of UK green business and innovation. Securing private investment for clean technology is a core part of the Government's strategy to meet our world-leading emissions reductions targets over the next decade and achieve Net Zero by 2050. Our upcoming Net Zero Strategy, to be published this week, builds on the Ten Point Plan, setting out how we will deliver on our net zero commitments, giving businesses the certainty they need to invest.

Further progress since the Ten Point Plan includes:

- Securing around £1.5bn of investment into our offshore wind industry, supported by the government's £160m scheme to upgrade ports and infrastructure. Renewables now represent almost 40% of the UK's total electricity generation.
- Kicking off the biggest-ever round of our flagship renewable energy scheme for low carbon electricity (Contract for Difference) with £200 million for offshore wind projects and £24m for floating offshore wind.
- Publishing the Hydrogen Strategy to grow the UK hydrogen economy, consulting on design of the £240m Net Zero Hydrogen Fund, and announcing funding of seven real-world hydrogen transport pilots.
- Committing £20 million to increase on-street charge points for electric vehicles and providing £50m to support charge point installations.
- Publishing our Transport Decarbonisation Plan and National Bus Strategy, as well as supporting Coventry to become UK's first all-electric bus city and consulting on world-leading pledge to end the sale of all new, polluting road vehicles by 2040 and net zero aviation emissions by 2050. This is on top of more than 300 new walking and cycling schemes.
- Providing £1 billion to upgrade schools, hospitals, and council buildings with energy efficiency measures and committing £222 million to upgrade socially rented homes. Local Authorities through the Green Homes Grant scheme have also started installing upgrades to around 50,000 low-income households.
- Announcing £19.5 million of grant funding for UK projects developing novel carbon capture technology and we have kicked off the process to decide the first carbon capture cluster locations in our industrial heartlands.
- Launching the floods investment programme that is on track to better protect 336,000 properties.
- Awarding 90 projects under the second round of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, totalling £80 million of investment, and launched several schemes under the Nature for Climate Fund to expand our pipeline of tree planting projects in England.

- Launching the £1 billion Net Zero Innovation Portfolio, providing funding for low-carbon technologies and systems across the areas of the 10 Point Plan.

- Launching our landmark North Sea Transition Deal and Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy.

Motor Vehicle Driving Licences

[HLWS307]

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

The need to tackle the HGV driver shortage is a top priority for my Department and this Government is committed to finding solutions to mitigate its effect and take urgent action. With 25 proactive actions taken by my Department to resolve the long-term HGV driver shortage in recent weeks, we are already seeing results, with a 300% increase in the number of HGV provisional licence applications. This is a real achievement, but it is important that we continue to build on this success.

The haulage sector has been experiencing a chronic shortage of HGV drivers worldwide for some time. In Great Britain the issue has been further exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, which meant that driver testing had to be suspended for much of 2020, delaying entry to the industry of potential drivers. In addition, there are longer-term issues surrounding attracting and retaining drivers to the industry such as: anti-social hours, poor diversity, relatively low pay and poor driver facilities.

The Department for Transport and other government departments have been working alongside the haulage industry to ensure that we attract, recruit, train and test drivers who want to enter the profession, including increasing capacity for testing candidate drivers through measures taken by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and prioritising licence applications within the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency.

Streamlining the HGV driving licence regime is an important step in getting drivers tested and into jobs quickly, relieving the pressure on the haulage industry from the driver shortage. On 10 September 2021, following public consultation, I announced a number of measures to simplify the HGV licencing regime and bring forward legislation that would remove the current staged process for getting an HGV licence in Great Britain.

It will mean that drivers will not need to hold a Category C (rigid lorry) licence before applying for a Category C + E (articulated lorry) licence, removing a stage in the process for those drivers who wish to acquire a category C + E licence. This measure will be addressed through a draft affirmative statutory instrument which is laid before Parliament today.

This legislation will help to make the process from learner to qualified driver quicker by removing certain steps and allow it to respond more rapidly to the acute need for drivers at the heavier end of the vehicle

spectrum. High driving standards will be maintained through existing pre-test training and gaining on-road driving experience.

To make rapid progress on this, we are seeking to make use of the urgent procedure under paragraph 14(6) of Schedule 8 to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. As Secretary of State for Transport, I am of the opinion that, by reason of urgency, the requirements for the statutory instrument to be made after being published in draft together with a scrutiny statement should not apply.

Forgoing the 28-day publication period will allow earlier laying of the legislation than would have otherwise been possible and strengthen the steps we have already taken to increase testing capacity and ease supply chain issues as quickly as possible. Arrangements will be in place to ensure that the changes made by the legislation are operationally effective as soon as the legislation is in force.

Tackling the causes and effects of the HGV driver shortage is a top priority for my Department and the driving licence regime and its legislation must support our efforts. This as part of 25 measures we have taken so far, will help us to reduce the impact of this shortage on the people of Britain.

Plan for Jobs Extension

[HLWS302]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: My Right Honourable Friend, The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Dr Thérèse Coffey MP) has made the following Written Statement:

Our Plan for Jobs is working. With the UK economy rebounding strongly, the number of payrolled employees is now above pre-pandemic levels and vacancies are at record-levels. Our unprecedented £407 billion support package protected jobs and livelihoods through the worst of the pandemic and the formidable force of our jobs and jobs armies means we are building back better – helping people move into decent, well-paid jobs and get the skills they need to succeed.

We are investing a further £500 million to expand the Plan for Jobs to build on its successes to help people of all ages fulfil their potential, in particular younger and older jobseekers and those on low-incomes.

We are extending our Kickstart scheme until the end of March 2022, which has so far helped over 85,000 young people take a confident first step in their careers. This will allow thousands more young people to benefit and enable employers a further opportunity to apply for funding for roles, especially those who were unable to take on young people while COVID restrictions were in place. New applications for roles will be accepted until 17 December 2021, though employers will be expected to move quickly to fill their approved roles.

We are extending our Youth Offer to 2025. This will ensure young people can continue to benefit from

intensive work coach support through the Youth Employment Programme, specialised Youth Employability Coaches and over 135 Youth Hubs are already providing support to thousands of young people across England, Scotland and Wales. We are also expanding eligibility, with 16 and 17 year olds able to join alongside 18 – 24 year olds claiming Universal Credit and searching for work.

For older workers, who often face specific challenges remaining in and returning to work, we will be funding a new support package. This will ensure they receive more intensive, tailored support during their work search journey, as well as information and guidance on later life planning, helping them make informed choices and supporting them to plan their career and stay in, or return to work.

And for low-paid workers, from April 2022, we will bolster our work coach support for people on Universal Credit to help them boost their earnings through a focus on career progression advice, with Jobcentre specialists working with local employers to identify opportunities for people to progress in work.

We are also extending JETS – our Job Entry Targeted Support Scheme – to September 2022, which has so far supported over 175,000 people across the UK by providing light-touch employment support for six months within the first year of unemployment. And our Job Finding Support (JFS) scheme will continue to prioritise support for those coming off furlough through online, tailored, one-to-one support for those newly unemployed and claiming Universal Credit, including recruitment advice from a skilled adviser, support with CVs, and mock interviews.

This expansion of our Plan for Jobs and Jobcentre network is an example of our commitment to invest in skills and jobs, helping people to move into well-paid work, progress, earn more and increase financial resilience – boosting pay, prospects and prosperity.

Updates to International Travel: Summary

[HLWS301]

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

As trailed in my Oral Statement on 20 September, as of the 4 October, we have:

- Replaced the traffic light system with a single red list and simplified travel measures for eligible arrivals from the rest of the world based on passengers' vaccination status.
- Removed the requirement for eligible fully vaccinated passengers to take a pre-departure test, providing that they are arriving into England from a non-red list country or territory and have not been to a red list country or territory in the last ten days. The Devolved Administrations have also aligned on this policy.

We have also made the following changes in respect of international travel:

Lateral Flow Devices for Arrival Tests

From 4am on 24 October, arrivals into England who are considered fully vaccinated, along with most under 18s, who have not been in a red list country in the last 10 days will be able to take a lateral flow test on or before day 2 of their arrival, instead of a PCR test. This change will cut the costs of tests in time for travellers returning from half-term breaks and these tests can be booked from 22 October.

Passengers will need to take a photo of their lateral flow test result and send it back to their private testing provider for verification. Anyone who tests positive will need to self-isolate and take a free NHS confirmatory PCR test.

Red List Review

The Government has conducted the first review of the red list under our new and simplified system of international travel. As of 4am on Monday 11 October, 47 countries including South Africa, Brazil, Mexico and Thailand were removed from the red list.

Given the success of the vaccination programme in the UK and the latest evidence of variants across the world, including the fact that the Delta variant is now dominant in many countries as it is in the UK, we have been able to significantly reduce the red list. However, we remain concerned about the presence of Mu and Lambda variants in the small number of countries we have kept on the red list. We will keep this list under review.

The following 7 countries and territories now make up the red list:

Colombia	Panama
Dominican Republic	Peru
Ecuador	Venezuela
Haiti	

All passengers arriving into England from a red list country, or those who have been in a red list country or territory in the last 10 days, will have to quarantine at a Managed Quarantine Service facility for 10 days upon their arrival in England.

Expansion of the Inbound Vaccination Policy

As of 4am on Monday 11 October, we also expanded our inbound vaccination policy to include eligible fully vaccinated passengers who have not been in a red list country in the ten days before their arrival into England, to the below countries:

Albania	Maldives
Bahamas	Moldova

Bangladesh	Morocco
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Nigeria
Colombia	North Macedonia
Egypt	Oman
Ghana	Pakistan
Grenada	Serbia
Hong Kong	St Kitts & Nevis
India	St Lucia
Jamaica	St Vincent & The Grenadines
Jordan	Turkey
Kenya	Ukraine
Kosovo	Vietnam

In addition, we have expanded the policy to a further set of countries and territories which were removed from the red list at this review:

Brazil	Namibia
Chile	The Philippines
Georgia	South Africa
Indonesia	Thailand
Montenegro	

Our inbound vaccination policy now covers over 100 countries and territories, and eligible fully vaccinated passengers will be treated the same as those vaccinated in the UK. Eligible fully vaccinated passengers who have not been in a red list country in the ten days before their arrival into England will no longer need to take a pre-departure test before their departure, a post-arrival test on day 8 or self-isolate upon their arrival. This now includes UN staff and volunteers vaccinated as part of the United Nations vaccine rollout.

Clinical Trial Participants

From the end of October, we will also recognise as fully vaccinated people participating in COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials from countries and territories including Japan, Canada, Australia and the EU, provided they can supply adequate proof of their participation. This is in recognition of their vital work in helping to tackle the virus and builds on the agreements made at the meetings

with G7 counterparts that I chaired in May and September this year.

Acceptance of UK Pre-departure Test Certification via the EU Digital Covid Certificate (DCC)

As of 4am on Monday 11 October, non-vaccinated passengers arriving into England are allowed to present proof of a negative pre-departure test via the EU Digital Covid Certificate, in either paper or digital formats.

Changes to FCDO Travel Advice

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) has lifted its advice against all but essential travel for over 80 countries and territories. The change means people will be able to travel to a larger number of destinations with greater ease.

The FCDO will no longer advise against travel to non-red list countries on COVID-19 grounds, except in exceptional circumstances such as if the local healthcare system is overwhelmed. Many travel insurance companies use FCDO travel advice as a reference point in their policies – typically excluding cover for places where government advises against essential travel, however people will now be able to purchase travel insurance for a wider range of destinations across the globe.

The FCDO will continue to advise against all but essential travel for all red list countries and territories, where the risk to British travellers is “unacceptably high”.

Whilst public health is a devolved matter, the Government works closely with the devolved administrations on any changes to international travel and aims to ensure a whole UK approach.

Written Answers

Monday, 18 October 2021

Acceleration Unit

Asked by *Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the Department for Transport Acceleration Unit's (1) current work programme, (2) staffing number, and (3) annual budget; and what are its achievements to date. [HL2822]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Since its launch in October 2020, the Acceleration Unit has supported programme and policy teams to speed up the delivery of infrastructure projects and the implementation of new policy initiatives. The work of the Acceleration Unit is driven by the need to build back better, to level up the country and to decarbonise transport.

Key achievements to date have included challenging delivery of the Restoring Your Railways programme, including the Dartmoor Line reopening and Northumberland Line; supporting the development of the National Bus Strategy, published on time in March 2021; working with DfT's arms-length bodies on the development of modal acceleration programmes.

The current work programme includes acceleration oversight on a portfolio of 112 projects in the north through the Northern Transport Acceleration Council; ongoing challenge on the Restoring Your Railways programme; and supporting acceleration of the Manchester & Northwest Rail Transformation Programme to bring forward benefits to passengers in the north earlier.

The Acceleration Unit is currently made up of three members of staff.

Additional Restrictions Grant

Asked by *Baroness Goudie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much of the funding allocated to local authorities under the Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme had been spent by 31 July. [HL2839]

Lord Callanan: All data on Government allocations and Local Authority payments of the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) is available at GOV.UK. As at the last date of publishing, 29 August 2021, Local Authorities had received £2,023,461,804 in ARG funding, and overall had reported to us as having spent £1,710,673,774.

Alok Sharma

Asked by *Lord Robertson of Port Ellen*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what departmental support they provide to the COP26 President, Alok Sharma MP. [HL2875]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: A dedicated COP26 Unit, comprising 230 staff, has been set up in the Cabinet Office to oversee preparations for COP26. The COP26 Unit works closely with other government departments and the global diplomatic network.

Army: Reorganisation

Asked by *Lord Tunnicliffe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date infantry reorganisation plans will be published. [HL2978]

Baroness Goldie: Detailed plans for the future structure of the Army are still being refined. There will be announcements made on our intent for both the regular and reserve force in due course.

Bridges: Barcombe

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Highways England regarding the (1) ecological, (2) environmental, and (3) heritage, impact of the proposed infilling of Barcombe Bridge in East Sussex; what alternatives have been considered to infilling; and why is the infilling being progressed using development powers rather than a planning application. [HL3031]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: There are no current plans to infill Barcombe Bridge. All infilling and demolition work on the Historical Railways Estate, including Barcombe Bridge, has been paused while National Highways review their programme and seek additional input through the newly created Stakeholder Advisory Forum.

National Highways will fully consult the Local Planning Authority at an appropriate official level irrespective of whether or not Permitted Development Rights already exist. These discussions would be documented prior to the commencement of any proposed works.

National Highways has been engaging with Transport for the South East, Lewes and Eastbourne District Council and East Sussex County Council over the safe maintenance of the bridge. Specific engagement with Lewes and Eastbourne District Council has occurred over the past 18 months and is ongoing.

Bronzefield Prison

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that all the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman recommendations for change at HMP Bronzefield, published on 22 September, will be implemented in a timely fashion. [HL2848]

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to update Parliament on the progress of implementing the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman recommendations for change at HMP Bronzefield, published on 22 September. [HL2849]

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman Independent investigation into the death of Baby A at HMP Bronzefield on 27 September 2019, published on 22 September, what discussions they have had with the Chief Inspector of Prisons. [HL2850]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The events that took place at HMP/YOI Bronzefield were unquestionably tragic, and significant improvements have since been put in place both at the prison and across the entire female estate.

The Ministry of Justice, Sodexo (the private providers who are contracted to run HMP Bronzefield) and health providers have accepted the recommendations made by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman in their thorough report and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) will continue to work closely with providers to ensure pregnant women in Bronzefield receive the best possible care. The on-site HMPPS Controller will oversee implementation of the recommendations in line with the agreed Action Plan and timelines, working collaboratively with NHSE and service providers.

A project team is coordinating the implementation of the recommendations and to take forward wider learning across all women's prisons.

In July 2019 a fundamental review of policy relating to pregnancy, Mother and Baby Units and maternal separation from children up to the age of two in women's prisons commenced, which concluded in July 2020, and HMIP were part of the consultation group. As a result of the review, a new policy has been published and learning from these tragic events has been incorporated into the new policy where appropriate.

Buildings: Insulation

Asked by **Baroness Pinnock**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the share of contributions between (1) landlord, and (2) tenant, owners in a shared leasehold ownership scheme to the costs arising from

cladding removal and fire safety improvements. [HL2867]

Lord Greenhalgh: The extent to which leaseholders are liable for works or not is governed by the terms in their leases. Government is providing over £5 billion in grant funding for the remediation of unsafe cladding on residential buildings 18 metres and over. This means that leaseholders (including those in shared ownership) in eligible high-rise buildings can be reassured that unsafe cladding will be replaced at no cost to them. Government is also establishing a generous finance scheme which will provide leaseholders in residential buildings of 11-18 metres with access to finance for cladding remediation costs. We will publish more details on how this scheme will work as soon as we are in a position to do so. Finally, we have also introduced a new model for Shared Ownership which will include a 10-year period during which the landlord will support with the cost of repairs in new build homes. The changes will prevent new shared owners from being hit with unexpected repairs and maintenance bills and will help to bridge the gap between renting and homeownership.

Business: Coronavirus

Asked by **Baroness Goudie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support educational travel businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL2841]

Baroness Barran: The government has worked at pace to provide an unprecedented and comprehensive package of support to help as many individuals and businesses as possible during this challenging period.

The measures introduced include the small business grants, the coronavirus loan guarantee schemes, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), the deferral of VAT and income tax payments. These measures have been designed to be accessible to businesses in most sectors and across the UK.

Further measures have been announced by my Right Hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that build on the significant support already available as well as set out how current support will evolve and adapt. This includes the extension of the CJRS until the end of September 2021, extending and amending the coronavirus loan guarantee schemes to allow businesses more time and greater flexibility to repay their loans, and the extension of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme grant.

The 'Pay as you Grow' measures will give UK businesses that borrowed under the Bounce Back Loan Scheme the option to repay their loan over a period of up to ten years, and benefit from repayment holidays where required.

The Recovery Loan Scheme (RLS), which launched on 6 April 2021, will ensure UK businesses of any size can continue to access loans and other kinds of finance up to £10 million per business as they grow and recover from

the disruption of the COVID-19 outbreak. For RLS, the government guarantees 80% of the finance to the lender to ensure they continue to have the confidence to lend to businesses. The scheme is open until 31 December 2021, subject to review.

In line with the autumn and winter plan the Government continues to keep arrangements for international travel and the relaxation of travel restrictions under review.

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to abolish the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership; if they have such plans, to which body the Partnership's responsibilities would be transferred; and where it would be based. [HL2860]

Lord Callanan: The Government is hugely grateful for the work LEPs have done over the last ten years to support their local economies, including through the Local Growth Fund, Growth Hubs and giving valuable insight to local and national government. Earlier this year the Budget set out significant changes to the way local growth investments are supported, decentralising power and working more directly with local government across the United Kingdom. A review of the LEP was announced at the Spring Budget with the intention to state the Government's plans around the role of LEPs in the forthcoming White Paper and at the Spending Review.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) when, and (2) by whom, the extremely vulnerable in England were notified that they were eligible for COVID-19 booster vaccines. [HL2590]

Lord Kamall: On 14 September 2021, the Government accepted advice from the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) that individuals who received vaccination in phase one of the COVID-19 vaccination programme in priority groups one to nine should be offered a booster vaccine. The JCVI advise that the booster vaccine dose is offered no earlier than six months after completion of the primary vaccine course and as far as possible be deployed in the same order as phase one. The first booster vaccine was administered on 16 September 2021 and in the week commencing 20 September 2021 over 1.5 million people were invited for their vaccine.

The National Health Service will contact those who are eligible, including those with underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of severe COVID-19.

On 1 September 2021, the Government also accepted the JCVI's advice to offer a third primary dose to those with severe immunosuppression at or around the time of

their first or second primary dose of COVID-19 vaccination as a precautionary measure. The JCVI will review at a later date whether such persons require a further booster dose following completion of their three-dose primary vaccine course.

Asked by Lord Hay of Ballyore

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the timetable for the vaccine booster rollout, in particular for those designated as clinically extremely vulnerable. [HL2698]

Lord Kamall: The first booster vaccine was administered on 16 September 2021 and in the week commencing 20 September 2021 over 1.5 million people were invited for their vaccine.

Booster vaccines will be offered to individuals who received vaccination in phase one of the vaccination programme in priority groups one to nine, including all those aged 16 to 49 years old with underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of severe COVID-19. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation advises that the dose is offered no earlier than six months after completion of the primary vaccine course, and that the programme should as far as possible be deployed in the same order as phase one.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the type of vaccine to be used for the third COVID-19 vaccination for patients who are immunosuppressed will (1) be decided by the doctors treating the patient, or (2) be decided by those administering doses at clinics. [HL2857]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcement that a third COVID-19 vaccine will be offered to people who are immunosuppressed, what guidance has been issued regarding (1) the type of vaccine to be used, and (2) dosage. [HL2859]

Lord Kamall: For those aged 18 years old and over, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advise a preference for mRNA vaccines for the third primary dose, with the option of the AstraZeneca Vaxzevria vaccine for individuals who have received this vaccine previously. The dosage is a third full dose of the relevant COVID-19 vaccine. The specialist involved should advise on whether the patient fulfils the eligibility criteria and on the timing of any third primary dose. NHS England and NHS Improvement issued *Updated JCVI guidance for vaccinating immunosuppressed individuals with a third primary dose* on 2 September 2021, on the vaccine preference for patients who are immunosuppressed and the guidance for how to proceed with third primary doses. A copy of the guidance is attached.

In exceptional circumstances, persons who received a mRNA COVID-19 vaccine previously may be offered a

third primary dose of the AstraZeneca Vaxzevria vaccine following a decision by a health professional on an individualised basis. For those aged 12 to 17 years old, the Pfizer vaccine remains the preferred choice.

Disability: Children and Young People

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask Her Majesty's Government what fiscal steps they are taking to help disabled children, young people and families (1) to recover from missed health and social care services during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (2) to access the therapies, care, equipment and health services they need in for their future wellbeing. [HL2834]

Lord Kamall: The forthcoming Spending Review will set out the Government's spending plans for health and social care for future years. On 6 September, we announced an additional £5.4 billion to support the COVID-19 response over the next six months - a total of more than £34 billion this year. This includes £2 billion to tackle the elective backlog and reducing waiting times for patients, including disabled children.

We are working with the Department for Education and NHS England and NHS Improvement to improve the provision of health and care services for disabled children, including access to therapies and equipment. In 2020, NHS England and NHS Improvement made clear that the restoration of essential community services must be prioritised for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged up to 25 years old and who have an Education Health and Care Plan in place or are going through an assessment. We are supporting access to appropriate disability equipment via the NHS Supply Chain, which maintains a framework contract for the supply of rehabilitation and disabled services equipment, such as paediatric wheelchairs.

Elections: Proof of Identity

Asked by Lord Tyler

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the voter identification pilot schemes, what estimate they have made of the number of people who could be turned away from polling stations in a General Election. [HL2880]

Asked by Lord Tyler

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether returning officers will be required to retain data on the number of people who are turned away from polling stations because they do not have appropriate photographic voter ID and who (1) subsequently return with such ID, or (2) do not return to vote. [HL2881]

Asked by Lord Tyler

To ask Her Majesty's Government what upper limit will be set for the highest acceptable number of

people turned away from polling stations because of a lack of appropriate photographic voter ID. [HL2882]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government in its manifesto committed to protecting the integrity of our democracy by introducing identification to vote at polling stations. Stealing someone's vote is stealing their voice. Voter fraud is a crime that we cannot allow room for and we must stamp out any potential for it to take place in elections.

Everyone who is eligible to vote will have the opportunity to do so. Any eligible voter who does not have one of the required forms of photographic identification, can apply for a free, local Voter Card from their local authority. The Electoral Commission will provide a comprehensive, targeted communications campaign and guidance, raising awareness throughout the electorate of the new voter identification requirements.

As set out in the Elections Bill, Electoral Registration Officers in England and Wales and Returning Officers in Scotland will be required to keep a record of those people for whom a ballot paper was refused and the reasons for this refusal.

Extradition: India

Asked by Lord Singh of Wimbledon

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the collapse of the case against Piara Singh Gill, Amritivir Singh Wahiwala and Gursharanvir Singh Wahiwala, why they certified an extradition request from the Indian authorities for these individuals. [HL2879]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Extradition requests from outside the European Union are governed by Part 2 of the Extradition Act 2003 ('the Act'). Under section 70 of the Act, if the UK has formal extradition relations with such a territory – as it does with India – and receives a valid extradition request from it, the Secretary of State must certify the request unless certain narrow exceptions in the Act apply. In this case, none of those exceptions applied and, by law, the Secretary of State was obliged to certify the extradition requests.

Certification of extradition requests by the Secretary of State is only one step in the extradition process. Requests are subsequently subject to the full scrutiny of the Court and the safeguards contained within the Extradition Act 2003.

Having considered these cases, the Court discharged the three individuals wanted by India on the grounds that a *prima facie* case could not be established.

Geothermal Energy

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to include minima for (1) volume, or (2) price, for geothermal energy in the next Contracts for Difference electricity auction. [HL2820]

Lord Callanan: On 13 September 2021 we published draft parameters ahead of the fourth Contracts for Difference (CfD) allocation round which did not include a minimum for geothermal energy. The final budget notice will be published ahead of the CfD round opening in December.

HMS Vanguard: Trident Submarines

Asked by Lord Tunnicliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date HMS Vanguard is expected to rejoin the fleet of Trident submarines. [HL2977]

Baroness Goldie: I am withholding details of when HMS Vanguard will re-join the Fleet as disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

Households

Asked by Lord Green of Deddington

To ask Her Majesty's Government, for each year from 2010 to date, how many UK households there were (1) with a non-UK born household reference person, (2) with a UK-born household reference person, and (3) with a household reference person for whom the country of birth was not known. [HL2843]

Lord True: The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have, therefore, asked the Authority to respond.

Lord Green of Deddington House of Lords London SW1A 0PW

12 October 2021

Dear Lord Green,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question requesting data for how many UK households there were (1) with a non-UK born household reference person, (2) with a UK-born household reference person, and (3) with a household reference person for whom the country of birth was not known (HL2843).

The Office for National Statistics is responsible for undertaking the Labour Force Survey (LFS), from which these estimates of household reference person by country of birth have been derived. Table 1 shows the number of households by the household reference person's country of birth in the UK from 2010 to 2020¹.

The table contains estimates of the number of households for household reference persons who are UK born, non-UK born or whose country of birth is missing. The totals of each column may not add up to the total households figure due to rounding, and estimates are rounded to the nearest hundred. As the estimates are based on a survey, they are subject to sampling variability. This is because the sample selected is only one

of a large number of possible samples that could have been drawn from the population.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

1. A household reference person (HRP) is the householder who owns the accommodation; is legally responsible for the rent; or occupies the accommodation as reward of their employment, or through some relationship to its owner who is not a member of the household. If there are joint householders, the one with the highest income is the HRP. If their income is the same, then the eldest one is the HRP.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table 1 [Table 1.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-10-04/HL2843>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Asked by Lord Green of Deddington

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications for (1) settled, and (2) pre-settled, status have been granted under the EU Settlement Scheme, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [HL2842]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes data on the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in the 'EU Settlement Scheme statistics'.

The latest published information on EUSS applications received and applications concluded to 30 June 2021, by Local Authority can be found in tables EUSS_LA_01, EUSS_LA_02 and EUSS_LA_03 (see attached) available at:

EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, June 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Tables - EUSS_LA_01, EUSS_LA_02 and EUSS_LA_03 [eu-settlement-scheme-local-authority-tables-28-august-to-30-june-2021 (1).xls]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-10-04/HL2842>

Interpreters: Afghanistan

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what process they followed to partner with Greater Good Global to resettle Afghan translators. [HL2871]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government has warmly welcomed hundreds of Afghan nationals to this country who have worked alongside our Armed Forces and diplomats in Afghanistan. There is a significant cross-government effort underway to ensure Afghans arriving in the UK receive the vital support they need to rebuild their lives, find work, pursue education and integrate into their local communities. To do so we are working closely

with local authorities, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and the commercial sector.

In response to the Afghan crisis, a number of NGOs offered their services to the Home Office including Greater Good Global who are helping to provide wraparound services to Afghans accommodated temporarily in hotels, ensuring that they have access to essential living items and services until they are relocated into more permanent accommodation.

Letting Agents: Regulation

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to implement the recommendations of the report of the working group on the Regulation of Property Agents, published on 18 July 2019. [HL2844]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government is committed to promoting fairness and transparency for homeowners and renters and making sure that consumers are protected from abuse and poor service. This commitment includes raising professionalism and standards amongst property agents, protecting consumers while defending the reputation of good agents from the actions of rogue operatives. We therefore welcome the ongoing work being undertaken by the industry itself to raise professionalism and standards across the sector.

The Government is considering the recommendations in the report received from the working group on the regulation of property agents. We welcome the work of the Noble Baroness as the Chair of the independent steering group on codes of practice for property agents, and we will continue to work with industry on improving best practice.

Nigeria: Terrorism

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the possible threat to the UK of (1) the six Nigerians listed by the government of the United Arab Emirates as "global financiers of terrorism" on 13 September, and (2) the organisations in Nigeria which the government of the United Arab Emirates named as having received funds and armaments from jihadist supporters. [HL2814]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK condemns all support of terrorist organisations, including financiers, and welcomes an international response to stifle the capability of terrorists to conduct attacks. The UK aims to make the financial system an unsafe space for terrorists to raise and move funds using a range of disruptive tools and capabilities at our disposal to prevent the movement of terrorist finance into and out of the UK.

We work closely with Nigeria and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to support their efforts against terrorist organisations, including through the UK-UAE Partnership to Tackle Illicit Financial Flows, which launched on 17

September. We maintain up to date travel advice, including security assessments and the threat of terrorism, on the GOV.UK website.

Population

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to raise the subject of global overpopulation at COP26; and what proposals they have to address it. [HL2885]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to HL13299 on 25 February 2021.

Railways: Electrification

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to announce new infill rail electrification schemes ahead of COP26. [HL2830]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Announcements on future rail electrification schemes will be informed by the outcome of the ongoing Spending Review.

Regional Planning and Development

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government what quantitative measure or measures they will use to determine the success of their levelling up policies. [HL2861]

Lord Greenhalgh: Levelling up is at the heart of the Government's agenda to build back better after the pandemic and deliver for the people of the UK. The Government will publish a White Paper in due course that will set out our plans in more detail.

Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to include (1) an equivalent to, or (2) a replacement for, the Renewable Heat Incentive for large-scale renewable heat generation in their Heat and Buildings strategy. [HL2819]

Lord Callanan: Large scale renewable heat generation will be supported in a number of ways, including through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, the Industrial Energy Transformation Fund, the Green Heat Network Fund and the Green Gas Support Scheme. Further information on each of the schemes can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Rifles

Asked by Lord Robertson of Port Ellen

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Earl Howe on 6 February 2019 (HL Deb,

col 410GC), what was the outcome of the consultation on the .50 calibre rifles; and what plans they have, if any, to ban such rifles. [HL2874]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government ran a public consultation on a range of firearms safety issues between 24 November 2020 and 16 February 2021.

Amongst other issues, the consultation sought views on high muzzle energy rifles and whether enhanced security arrangements are necessary for these rifles to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands. Over 12,000 responses were received to the consultation. The Government is considering these responses carefully and will publish its response to the consultation in due course.

Schools: Hygiene

Asked by The Earl of Shrewsbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following reports of people drinking alcohol-based hand sanitiser, what plans they have to withdraw those products from schools and replace them with effective alternatives. [HL2878]

Baroness Barran: The department has developed extensive guidance for all settings across the education, childcare and children's social care sectors on how to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, including a range of protective and control measures for preventing the spread of the virus. There is information to support settings on their responsibilities that advises to clean their hands thoroughly, and more often than usual, as well as good basic hygiene, and the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach, which advises individuals to clean their hands with soap and water or use sanitiser:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance#control-measures>.

Ultimately, schools remain responsible for the products that they require and, as with other cleaning products, schools can access hand sanitiser through their existing supply chains. There are many alcohol- and non-alcohol-based hand sanitisers and surface disinfectants on the UK market and schools should base the use of any of these products on their own risk assessment, alongside existing guidance.

Our guidance signposts settings to the e-Bug COVID-19 website which contains free resources for settings, including materials to encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene. This information can be found at the following link:

https://e-bug.eu/eng_home.aspx?cc=eng&ss=1&t=Information%20about%20the%20Coronavirus.

All education, childcare and children's social care settings should follow the UK Health Security Agency, formally known as Public Health England, guidance on cleaning for non-healthcare settings outside of the home. The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>.

Hand sanitisers and surface disinfectants are biocidal products. They are regulated by the Health and Safety Executive. The Health and Safety Executive publishes a list of authorised biocidal products, including hand sanitisers and surface disinfectants:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/biocides/uk-authorised-biocidal-products.htm>.

The Cabinet Office and the Department for Health and Social Care published product specifications and standards associated with personal protective equipment at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/927550/Essential_technical_specifications_PPE_and_medical_devices-v0.3_Oct2020_accessible.pdf.

Social Services: Finance

Asked by Lord Lipsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether care costs that are met at present by the nursing cost allowance will count towards the new £86,000 cost cap for personal care. [HL2851]

Lord Kamall: Nursing services provided or funded by the National Health Service are not subject to a financial assessment and contribution by the individual. NHS-funded nursing care will not count towards the £86,000 cap on social care costs due to be introduced in October 2023.

Asked by Lord Lipsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many older people will benefit from the new cap on personal care payments for each year from 2023–24 to 2029–30. [HL2853]

Lord Kamall: Approximately half of all older adults receive some state support for their personal care costs under the current system. This will rise to nearly two-thirds of adults following the implementation of the reforms announced on 7 September. An impact assessment setting out the costs and benefits of social care charging reform will be published in due course.

Students: Vaccination

Asked by Baroness Morgan of Huyton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to resolve the differences between the COVID-19 self isolation rules applying to domestic and international students who are fully vaccinated with a vaccine approved for use in this country in order to avoid (1) reputational damage to English universities and the UK Government, and (2) negatively affecting

the implementation of 'household' systems in universities to manage outbreaks; and what guidance they are providing to universities to support incoming students with the self isolation rules. [HL2664]

Lord Kamall: Those who are fully vaccinated with a vaccine approved for use in and administered in the United Kingdom are not required to self-isolate if they are a contact of a positive case. Those under the age of 18 years and six months old are also not required to self-isolate if they are a contact of a positive case, which also applies to international students. Adults who have not been fully vaccinated in the UK, are legally required to self-isolate if they are the contact of a positive case. This continues to be kept under review, taking into account clinical judgement on risk and the prevalence of COVID within the UK and overseas.

The Government has published *Contingency framework: education and childcare settings* which provides detailed procedures and the principles for managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 in all education settings, including guidance to universities to support all incoming students with self-isolation rules. A copy of this guidance is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Contingency Framework
[20210817_Contingency_Framework_FINAL (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-09-13/HL2664>

Tour Operators and Travel Agents: Non-domestic Rates

Asked by **Baroness Goudie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to ensure travel agents, tour operators and other travel businesses are prioritised for support from the Business Rates relief fund announced on 25 March. [HL2838]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Funding for businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic that have not otherwise been eligible for existing reliefs will be available once the legislation relating to material change in circumstance provisions, the Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill, has passed and Local Authorities (LAs) have established their own local relief schemes. The Government will support LAs to do this as quickly as possible, including through new burdens funding.

Formal guidance will follow in due course, setting out the specific considerations that LAs should have regard for when providing relief. Relief will be for LAs to award on a discretionary basis.

Travel: Additional Restrictions Grant

Asked by **Baroness Goudie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to reallocate unspent money from the Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme to support travel agents, tour operators and other travel businesses. [HL2840]

Lord Callanan: The Government has introduced an unprecedented package of support for businesses affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, including grants, business interruption loans and the Coronavirus Job Support Scheme.

Allocation of Additional Restrictions Grant funds is solely within the remit of Local Authorities, as they are best placed to provide support that suits the needs of their local area. We continue to work closely with Local Authorities, encouraging them to distribute funding to those businesses most impacted by the restrictions. Reconciliation of the scheme will be undertaken after the closure of the fund on 31 March 2022.

Unitary Councils

Asked by **Baroness Pinnock**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Local Government Boundary Commission for England is required to propose new ward boundaries for the three new designated unitary authorities in North Yorkshire, Cumbria, and Somerset. [HL2866]

Lord Greenhalgh: We intend to seek Parliamentary approval early in 2022 to secondary legislation to establish new unitary councils in Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset. These orders will provide for elections in May 2022 to the new unitary councils in their implementation form, including the council size and warding arrangements. It is expected that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England will carry out full electoral reviews of each of the new unitary councils before the second elections to these councils in May 2027.

Universal Credit

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what impact assessment they carried out ahead of the cessation of the Universal Credit uplift on 6 October. [HL2873]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: No Impact Assessment has been made of ending the Universal Credit Uplift, as it was always intended to be temporary.

The Chancellor announced a temporary six-month extension to the £20 per week uplift at the Budget on 3 March to support households affected by the economic shock of Covid-19. Universal Credit has provided a vital

safety net for six million people during the pandemic, and the temporary uplift was part of a COVID support package worth a total of £407 billion in 2020-21 and 2021-22.

There have been significant positive developments in the public health situation since the uplift was first introduced. With the success of the vaccine rollout and record job vacancies, it is right that our focus is on helping people back into work.

Through our Plan for Jobs, we are targeting tailored support schemes of people of all ages to help them prepare for, get into and progress in work. These include: Kickstart, delivering tens of thousands of six-month work placements for Universal Credit claimants aged 16-24 at risk of unemployment; we have also recruited an additional 13,500 work coaches to provide more intensive support to find a job; and introduced Restart which provides 12 months' intensive employment support to Universal Credit claimants who are unemployed for a year. Our Plan for Jobs interventions will support more than two million people.

We recognise that some people continue to require extra support, which is why we have introduced a £421 million Household Support Fund to help vulnerable people in England with essential household costs over the winter as the economy recovers. The Barnett Formula will apply in the usual way, with the devolved administrations receiving around £80 million (£41m for the Scottish Government, £25m for the Welsh Government and £14m for the NI Executive), for a total of £500 million.

Warships: Repairs and Maintenance

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to enhance the (1) armament, and (2) defensive, capability of the Royal Navy's Forth class offshore patrol vessels. [HL2887]

Baroness Goldie: In line with procedures for any deploying ship, the armament and defensive capabilities of the Batch 2 River Class Offshore Patrol Vessels are adjusted as required to ensure the ships can operate safely in accordance with their intended tasking.

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