

Session 2021-22
No. 91



Tuesday
14 December 2021

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

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.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Minister of State, Treasury and Cabinet Office
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Benyon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Frost	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
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 Offord of Garvel	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and 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

Tuesday, 14 December 2021

Airside Licensing Call for Evidence: Government Response

[HLWS462]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My right hon Friend the Minister of State for Crime and Policing (Kit Malthouse) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The 2017 report of the House of Lords Select Committee that carried out a post-legislative scrutiny of the Licensing Act 2003 recommended that the Government should revoke the exemption from the Licensing Act that applies to most international airports in England and Wales.

Following the report the Government issued the *Airside Alcohol Licensing at International Airports in England and Wales: Call for Evidence*. Its aim was to understand the scale of the problem of drunk and disruptive passengers, the extent to which airports and airlines use the existing statutory powers and other measures to address the problem, the impact of the proposed application of the Act on all affected parties, and to assess the practicalities of administering a licensing regime airside.

Since the Government launched the Call for Evidence on introducing alcohol licensing airside at international airports in England and Wales, we have seen the aviation industry and airports heavily impacted by the global pandemic of Covid-19. The pandemic has meant a significant delay to publishing this response, however these unique circumstances have not changed the decision that was reached.

The Call for Evidence has not provided new evidence which makes a compelling case for extending all of the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003 to airside premises. The premises which serve alcohol airside operate in a highly secure environment which function in a very different way to high streets and night-time economies across England and Wales.

There would be limited benefit in requiring those premises to obtain a premises licence. Many safeguards that can be introduced by a local licensing regime like enhanced security, searches or CCTV are already in place within an airport. In any event, the provisions of the Act that prohibit the sale of alcohol to anyone under the age of 18 and purchasing alcohol on behalf of somebody who is under the age of 18, apply to the sale of alcohol whether they are made from licensed premises or not. The transient and short-term nature of the clientele mean that considerations around noise, or impact on residential areas for example are greatly reduced in this environment.

In addition, there are already penalties in place to address drunkenness in passengers. It is an offence under the Air Navigation Order to be drunk on an aircraft and

airlines have the authority to prevent passengers they believe are intoxicated from boarding aircraft.

For these reasons, the government does not intend to extend all of the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003 airside.

The Government Response will be available on GOV.UK.

COP26 Presidency Year Priorities

[HLWS465]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: My Rt Hon Friend the COP26 President (Alok Sharma MP) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

COP26 concluded with agreement by all Parties to the historic Glasgow Climate Pact. This Pact, combined with increased ambition and action across mitigation, adaptation, and finance means that the goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C remains in sight. But it will only be delivered with concerted and immediate international efforts.

Today, I want to update the House on our priorities for the Presidency Year, to ensure we build on and secure the legacy of our COP Presidency and the UK's international reputation as a climate leader.

Delivering the Glasgow Climate Pact

Throughout the UK's Presidency year, we will work with Egypt as incoming Presidency, the UNFCCC Secretariat, and to convene Parties to deliver on the agreed outcomes in the Glasgow Climate Pact. In doing so we will continue to champion science, especially the IPCC and its major reports in 2022, and the urgency of action. The Paris Agreement made promises and now Glasgow's legacy is focused on delivery.

Mitigation

In the context of the latest climate science, all countries have agreed to revisit and if necessary strengthen their 2030 targets for urgent action this decade. Progress was made in the run up to Glasgow and in our Presidency year, we will work with all Parties to deliver on this commitment and go further and faster to close the gap to a 1.5°C pathway. This will include working with countries to explore further sectoral action and public and private opportunities for investing in their low carbon resilient transition. We will work with the UNFCCC and other international organisations, and seek to use the calendar of international events in 2022 to progress this work. We look forward to working closely with Egypt and the UAE, as incoming COP27 and COP28 Presidents, and with Germany and Indonesia, respectively G7 and G20 Presidencies, to ensure commitments and agreements made at COP26 are built upon and delivered.

Adaptation, loss and damage

At COP26 we made significant progress on adaptation and boosted efforts to deal with climate impacts. The Glasgow-Sharm el Sheikh Work Programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation was launched, for which four mandated workshops will be held in 2022. Developed

countries also agreed to at least double their collective provision of climate finance for adaptation to developing countries by 2025. This is a significant step forward which will help reduce vulnerability, strengthen resilience and increase the capacity of people and the planet to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

We will work with countries to come good on this commitment, increasing the availability, efficiency and accessibility of adaptation finance for climate vulnerable countries and providing support and leadership to initiatives that are part of the UK's Presidency mandate.

Loss and Damage was a critical issue at COP26 and we have moved into a new phase focused on action. Under our Presidency we will ensure progress continues to be made through the new Glasgow Dialogue on arrangements for funding relevant activities, and making sure the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage gets up and running.

Finance

Under the UK's Presidency, 95% of the largest developed country climate finance providers made new commitments, with many doubling or even quadrupling their support for developing countries to take climate action. These pledges mean that we can provide confidence that the \$100 billion finance goal will be met by developed countries and multilateral development banks by 2023 at the latest, with \$500 billion being delivered over the period 2021-2025. We will continue to build momentum on mobilising the \$100bn per year to support developing countries, including increased finance to help vulnerable countries cope with climate impacts. We will also oversee the start of the new ad-hoc work programme on the new collective quantified goal.

We have improved financial flows to those most vulnerable by launching the Access to Finance Taskforce with Fiji, including a commitment of £100 million of funding to support climate vulnerable countries to deliver on their climate plans. Pilots will be launched in Bangladesh, Fiji, Jamaica, Rwanda and Uganda. Building on the South African Just Energy Transition Partnership model and the UK's leadership of the G7, we will explore new opportunities for transformational, country-led climate action through the Clean and Green Initiative. In this context, we will also champion climate action as a core component of the work of international financial institutions, to support the delivery of Paris-aligned growth and development.

We will build on the progress made in Glasgow in aligning private finance flows with the Paris Agreement globally; and in providing tailored support to specific countries and sectors. We will work with partners to leverage the trillions of private finance needed to finance the transition in all countries including the major emitters, and remain accountable and transparent throughout.

Driving sectoral change

COP26 must mark the start of a decade of accelerated climate action. At Glasgow we saw countries commit to accelerate the phase-out of coal power, halt and reverse

forest loss and land degradation, speed up the switch to electric vehicles and commit to work together to reduce emissions in key sectors.

Progress in these and other sectors has an important part to play in unlocking further progress on medium and long-term targets. In the year ahead, we will work to turn sectoral commitments into clear delivery plans, including through implementing the Energy Transition Council and Zero Emissions Vehicles Transition Council 2022 action plans, so we can accelerate the pace of the global transition to zero emission vehicles and meet our Paris Agreement goal. On coal, we will work with partners to ensure that commitments from key G20 countries to end overseas coal financing are made good, that signatories to the Glasgow Declaration on Ending International Fossil Fuel Support implement their commitments and that more countries have the support to enable them to commit to new coal power and to phasing out existing coal plants.

On forests and land use, we will work with endorsers of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use to assess progress, raise ambition and accelerate global action on forests and land use, in order to meet our collective target of halting and reversing forest loss and land degradation by 2030. We will work with our partners to ensure the financial commitments made to protect key forested areas – such as the Congo Basin and the Amazon – are fully implemented, and that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities receive the support they were promised at COP26. We will continue the work to tackle the financial incentives driving deforestation, supporting the financial institutions and development banks in delivering their commitments to eliminate deforestation from their portfolios and align them with nature. We will also work with fellow governments to implement the actions in the Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade roadmap, which was launched at COP26 by 28 countries responsible for 75% of global trade in forest risk commodities.

As in 2021, we will work with partners to ensure major events in the international calendar including at CBD COP 15, G7, UNGA and G20 support these objectives and will use the full range of instruments to encourage higher ambition NDCs, further commitments on net zero, and on coal, cars, cash and trees.

Delivering an inclusive Presidency Year

The Glasgow Climate Pact emphasises the importance of collaboration across sectors and all parts of society to deliver effective climate action. All those who make and shape our economies and societies have a role to play in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

At COP26, we were pleased to agree the 10-year Glasgow Work Programme on Action for Climate Empowerment, and the new 3-year work programme on local communities and Indigenous Peoples, alongside other important steps. Through the UN-backed global campaign Race to Zero, we saw nearly 8,000 businesses and other non-state actors committed to halving global emissions by 2030 and achieving net zero emissions by 2050 at the latest - the largest ever such coalition.

During our Presidency year, we remain committed to taking a whole-of-society approach. We will work in collaboration with civil society, young people, businesses and governments to deliver on our commitments. We will continue to encourage countries to remove the barriers to participation and work with them to implement the necessary policies and projects.

Delivering this ambitious programme will only be possible with a whole-of-government and all of UK approach. A strong team will remain in the Cabinet Office coordinating work across Government to support and deliver the UK's COP Presidency. The FCDO's diplomatic network will remain essential to our international efforts, as will leadership from BEIS, Defra, DfT, DIT, HMT and others.

Existing Parliamentary processes will also ensure the necessary scrutiny and support to deliver on the commitments made at COP26.

Designated Settings Indemnity Scheme Extension

[HLWS463]

Lord Kamall: My Honourable friend the Minister of State (Minister for Care and Mental Health) (Gillian Keegan) has today made the following statement:

Further to the written statement on 29 June 2021, I am tabling this statement for the benefit of Honourable and Right Honourable members to bring to their attention the undertaking of a contingent liability. This relates to an extension of the Designated Settings Indemnity Support (DSIS), which offers targeted and time-limited state-backed indemnity arrangements to care homes registered, or intending to register, as "Designated Settings", and which are unable to obtain sufficient insurance cover.

On 18 January 2021, the Minister for COVID Vaccine Deployment announced in a Written Ministerial Statement, and accompanying Departmental Minute, provision of these temporary indemnity arrangements under the DSIS. The DSIS includes cover for clinical negligence, employer's and public liability where a care provider seeking to become a Designated Setting is unable to secure sufficient commercial insurance, or where an existing provider has been operating without sufficient cover. Employer's and public liability is covered under the new Coronavirus Temporary Indemnity Scheme; clinical negligence is covered by the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts. The DSIS is supervised by DHSC and administered by NHS Resolution, and to date, has proved to be an effective package of support to Designated Settings.

DSIS initially provided cover for Designated Settings until the end of March 2021 and was subsequently extended until 30 September 2021. Now, following a further review of DSIS, it has been extended until 31 March 2022, in order to maintain the current level of support for these vital settings. This extension will benefit

current DSIS participants, as well any additional settings who may wish to apply for the support and who meet the criteria for inclusion. We will review the progress of the support ahead of this end-date.

I regret that in this circumstance, due to the need to ensure that there were no gaps in DSIS cover after the former 30 September end-date, the normal 14 sitting days for consideration was not possible. A Departmental Minute will be laid in the House of Commons providing more detail on this contingent liability.

Food and Feed Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2021

[HLWS468]

Lord Kamall: My Honourable Friend the Minister of State (Minister of State for Health) (Ed Argar) has made the following written statement:

Following the end of the Transition Period, the Government continues to regard food and feed safety and standards a top priority. This Statutory Instrument corrects and addresses deficiencies both in the retained EU law as well as the domestic legislation that provided for its execution and enforcement in England.

The Food and Feed Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2021 will be made under powers in the Food Safety Act 1990 and the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018.

The purpose of this instrument is to:

- amend Article 53 of the retained General Food Law to correct a deficiency that has arisen as a result of the Northern Ireland Protocol. The amendment will ensure that the emergency measures that may be applied where a serious risk to health is identified can be applied to all goods entering into GB;
- amend the authorisation provisions for feed additives and GM food/feed, so that the decisions made by Ministers will be enacted through legislation making these consistent with other retained EU food and feed law; and
- provide a time limited period of adjustment, up until 30 September 2022, for businesses to meet new UK address labelling requirements for certain food products. This would allow businesses to use up old labelling stocks, without facing enforcement action for failure to label affected products with a UK address during this time.

As required under the 'enhanced scrutiny procedure' set out in schedule 8 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, the draft instrument and Explanatory Memorandum have been published online for a period of at least 28 days before the instrument is formally laid in Parliament. To read the full draft Statutory Instrument and Explanatory Memorandum, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulations-on-food-and-feed-safety>.

Hong Kong: Six-monthly Report

[HLWS461]

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:

The latest Six-monthly Report on the implementation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong was published today, and is attached. It covers the period from 1 January to 30 June 2021. The report has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. A copy is also available on the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office website

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office>). I commend the report to the House.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Hong Kong Six-monthly Report [49th Six-monthly Report on Hong Kong.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2021-12-14/HLWS461/>

Intergovernmental Relations: Third Quarterly Report

[HLWS464]

Lord Greenhalgh: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations (Michael Gove), has today made the following written statement:

Earlier today, the UK Government published the third quarterly report of our engagement with the devolved administrations on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) page for intergovernmental relations. The report has also been deposited in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

The report details engagement between the UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive between 1 July and 30 September 2021. It covers a period of collaboration on a range of important areas, including preparations to ensure a safe and secure COP26, as well as partnerships between UK and devolved administrations on net zero, COVID-19 response and recovery, the resettlement of Afghan refugees and the rollout of COVID-19 booster vaccines across the UK.

The report is part of the UK Government's ongoing commitment to transparency of intergovernmental relations to Parliament and the public.

Personal Independence Payment

[HLWS466]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: My honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work (Chloe Smith MP) has made the following Written Statement:

Today the department will publish the latest update on progress on making backdated payments to Personal Independence Payment claimants who are affected by the MH and RJ decisions of the Upper Tribunal (UT). The release will be published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/pip-administrative-exercise-progress-on-cases-cleared>.

The MH decision changed how overwhelming psychological distress is considered when assessing someone's ability to plan and follow a journey. The RJ decision changed how we decide whether someone can carry out an activity safely and if they need supervision.

As at 1 November 2021, we have reviewed around 980,000 cases against the MH decision. This includes cases where claimants have previously been assessed as having 'overwhelming psychological distress' or who have a 'psychiatric disorder' as one of their main health conditions. We have also reviewed around 1,100,000 cases against the RJ decision. This includes cases where claimants have a 'neurological disease' as one of their main health conditions. All reviews will have been carried out by a Case Manager within the Department.

Around 8,200 arrears payments, totalling around £42 million, have been made. We gave a commitment that no-one would see their PIP reduced as a result of this exercise.

In addition, we have written to the vast majority of other claimants in scope of the exercise we said we would in our update to the House on 11 February 2020 ([hcws104](#)). We are continuing to send out letters and carry out reviews for any claimant who asks us to.

This has been a complex and substantial exercise, involving over a million reviews against two UT decisions. Our approach demonstrates that we have prioritised claimants who are most likely to benefit, in order to make backdated payments as quickly as possible. We are now writing to claimants who we do not expect to benefit, so they can request a review if they think they have been affected by these decisions.

We have set out further background to this release in an updated Frequently Asked Questions. I will deposit a copy of this document in the House Library.

We will release a final report at the end of 2022, when we know the outcomes of outstanding reviews.

Postmasters with Overturned Convictions: Funds for Full and Final Settlement

[HLWS460]

Lord Callanan: My Honourable friend the Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets) (Paul Scully) has today made the following statement:

This House is aware of the distressing impact that problems with the Post Office's Horizon IT system have had on the lives and livelihoods of many postmasters.

The Court of Appeal handed down a landmark judgment on 23 April 2021 which quashed the convictions of 39 postmasters whose prosecution had relied on Horizon evidence. 72 convictions have now been quashed to date, and several others are in progress. There are potentially hundreds more postmasters whose convictions have relied on Horizon evidence and may seek to have their convictions quashed.

We want to see these postmasters with quashed convictions compensated fairly and swiftly. So far, the vast majority of postmasters who have had their convictions quashed have each received an interim compensation payment of up to £100,000 while they wait for the next steps in the proceedings.

I am pleased to confirm that today the Government is making funding available to facilitate Post Office to make final compensation payments to postmasters whose convictions have been overturned. We are working with Post Office to finalise the arrangements that will enable the final settlement negotiations to begin as soon as possible. By providing this funding, Government is helping Post Office deliver the fair compensation postmasters deserve.

With the Secretary of State's status as sole shareholder in the Post Office, my Department continues to engage actively with Post Office Limited on this and will maintain strong oversight of the compensation process.

State Pension Age Review

[HLWS467]

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:

My Department is launching the second Government Review of State Pension age, which must be published by May 2023, under Section 27 of the Pensions Act 2014.

As the number of people over State Pension age increases, due to a growing population and people on

average living longer, we need to make sure that our decisions on how to manage the costs of State Pension provide fairness to both taxpayers and pensioners and that it continues to provide the foundation for retirement planning and financial security.

In line with the legislative requirements to review whether the rules about pensionable age remain appropriate, this Review will consider a wide range of evidence from every part of the United Kingdom. It will explore the implications of the latest life expectancy data, including evidence on healthy life expectancy disparities, to provide a balanced appraisal of the costs and options to make sure our decisions on State Pension age are robust and transparent. The Review will also consider how we best support an ageing population and their opportunities to work.

In line with the statutory framework, I am also commissioning two independent reports to contribute to the evidence-base that will inform this Review. I will be commissioning the Government Actuary to provide a report analysing the latest life expectancy projections. I am also commissioning Baroness Neville-Rolfe DBE CMG to provide a report which considers the metrics we use for analysis when setting State Pension age. Baroness Neville-Rolfe DBE CMG has a recognised wealth of senior level experience from a career in business and the public sector, including serving as a company director, working in the UK and internationally as well as being a pension scheme trustee in a FTSE 100 company. I welcome an external consideration of this issue. I have also asked Baroness Neville-Rolfe DBE CMG to consider the views of other experts and stakeholders. I attach the Terms of Reference for Baroness Neville-Rolfe's report to this statement, which will also be made available today on the www.gov.uk website.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Terms of Reference [Govt. Review of State Pension Age-ToR.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2021-12-14/HLWS467/>.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 14 December 2021

Alcoholic Drinks: Excise Duties

Asked by *Lord Rogan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultations they have (1) held, or (2) planned, with (a) Northern Ireland business representatives, (b) Northern Ireland consumer groups, and (c) Northern Ireland political parties, about extending alcohol duties reforms due to apply in Great Britain from 2023 to the whole of the United Kingdom. [[HL4577](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: As set out in our command paper in July, we are seeking a more flexible settlement with regard to the Northern Ireland Protocol to ensure all of the UK can benefit from tax changes such as the alcohol duty reforms announced at Budget.

The Government will continue to discuss the application of alcohol duty reforms to Northern Ireland with the EU and interested stakeholders during the consultation period of the alcohol duty review.

Asked by *Lord Rogan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the European Union regarding the extension of planned alcohol duty reforms in Great Britain to Northern Ireland; and what were the results of such discussions. [[HL4617](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: As set out in our Command Paper in July, we are seeking a more flexible settlement with regard to the Northern Ireland Protocol to ensure all of the UK can benefit from tax changes, such as the alcohol duty reforms announced at Budget.

The Government will continue to discuss the application of alcohol duty reforms to Northern Ireland with the EU during the consultation period of the alcohol duty review.

Armed Forces: Compensation

Asked by *Lord Tunnicliffe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much the Ministry of Defence has paid in mental health compensation to (1) armed forces personnel, and (2) veterans, in each year from 2015 to 2021. [[HL4588](#)]

Baroness Goldie: The information is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Armed Forces: Deployment

Asked by *Lord Coaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many UK armed forces personnel are currently deployed in the UK; and of these, to which local authorities they are deployed. [[HL4538](#)]

Baroness Goldie: As of the 9 December 2021, there were 1,022 personnel deployed on UK resilience tasks. They were deployed to the following locations: Wyton; Edinburgh; Leconfield; Cardiff; London; Aldershot; Manston; Sheerness; Glasgow; Coningsby; Liverpool; Catterick; Inchinnan; and Birmingham.

Armed Forces: Supply Chains

Asked by *Lord Coaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many UK armed forces personnel are currently deployed in the UK to deal with the supply chain issues. [[HL4537](#)]

Baroness Goldie: As of 6 December 2021, there were 161 personnel deployed to assist with supply chain challenges. 137 Service personnel were deployed to support the continuity of fuel supplies around the UK. Defence has also provided 24 Defence Driving Examiners to assist the Department for Transport in their effort to enhance the number of tests offered to prospective HGV drivers in Great Britain and as a result generate more HGV drivers to service the UK in the run up to Christmas.

Armenia: Azerbaijan

Asked by *Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of military attacks by Azerbaijan in Sisian province. [[HL4123](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK Government is closely monitoring the situation on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border following the exchange of fire on 16 November. Our Embassies in Baku and Yerevan have continued to urge de-escalation and a return to negotiations facilitated by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs. Through our Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the UK has condemned recent exchanges of fire that have put civilian lives and regional stability and security at risk. The Minister for Europe and Americas has met both the Armenian and Azerbaijani Ambassadors to London in recent weeks and reinforced these messages.

Asylum: Females

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that there is single sex housing for uncoupled women at all points during the asylum process. [[HL4586](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office provides accommodation and other support to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute.

Those receiving this support are not required to share sleeping quarters with unrelated individuals of the opposite sex, but may, depending on the circumstances, be placed in accommodation facilities which are used to house such individuals.

There are no plans to change these arrangements.

British Nationality: Assessments

Asked by Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to update the Life in the UK test; and when the test was last updated. [HL4549]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Life in the UK test is based on the Life in the UK handbook, "Life in the UK: a guide for new residents". An updated impression of the current edition of the handbook was published in early 2020.

Questions in the test are reviewed on an ongoing basis. New questions were added between October 2020 and January 2021.

The test is kept under review and will be updated further as needed.

Business Premises: Human Rights

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they (1) audit, and (2) monitor, the commercial UK real estate holdings of companies directly associated with regimes with poor human rights records. [HL4578]

Lord Callanan: Monitoring of individuals, and any companies they may be associated with, for human rights abuses overseas is a matter for FCDO and HM Treasury, under the recently introduced Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020.

Business: Climate Change

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to promote good practice in combating climate change to (1) listed, and (2) unlisted, companies. [HL4535]

Lord Callanan: The Government is working with listed and unlisted companies to encourage ambitious action on climate change.

Listed

- From 6 April 2022 the UK will become the first G20 country to enshrine in law mandatory Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)-aligned requirements for Britain's largest companies and financial institutions to report on climate-related risks and opportunities, subject to Parliamentary approval of regulation laid on 28th October 2021.
- Over 1,300 of the largest UK-registered companies and financial institutions will have to disclose climate-related financial information on a mandatory basis – in line with recommendations from the TCFD. This will include many of the UK's largest traded companies,

banks and insurers, as well as private companies with over 500 employees and £500 million in turnover.

- We are requiring more disclosure and transparency in the markets on climate risks and opportunities through the introduction of Sustainability Disclosure Requirements, as outlined in Greening Finance: A Roadmap to Sustainable Investing. These bring together and streamline UK sustainability reporting requirements, including reporting aligned with the Taskforce for Climate-Related Financial Disclosures recommendations.

- As announced by my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer at COP26, listed companies will also be required to publish transition plans that consider the Government's net zero commitment or provide an explanation if they have not done so. As standards for transition plans emerge, the Government and regulators will take steps to incorporate these into the UK's Sustainability Disclosure Requirements and strengthen requirements to encourage consistency in published plans and increased adoption by 2023.

Unlisted Ahead of COP 26, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister launched the Together for our Planet Business Climate Leaders' campaign. The aim of the campaign is to encourage small businesses to make a net zero commitment via the [UK Business Climate Hub](#) and get help and advice on reducing their emissions. Tens of thousands of small and micro businesses were reached through this initiative and over 2,400 UK small businesses have pledged to go green and reduce their emissions.

Citizenship: Ministerial Responsibility

Asked by Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts

To ask Her Majesty's Government which minister has cross-government responsibility for co-ordinating all matters relating to (1) citizenship, and (2) civic engagement. [HL4551]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Minister Kevin Foster has overall responsibility for matters relating to citizenship in the United Kingdom in the Home Office. This portfolio includes the current and future visa system, as well as immigration casework and nationality.

DCMS is responsible for youth engagement across Government and provides grant funding for the UK Youth Parliament programme and Youth Engagement Grant. These are key programmes through which young people can engage with policy and decision-makers and have a say on issues that matter to them. The lead minister is Nigel Huddleston.

DCMS is responsible for youth volunteering and social action across government, and supports the #iwill movement and the #iwill Fund, both of which aim to get 10 to 20 year-olds involved in volunteering, fundraising and campaigning in local communities

Crown Estate Commissioners: Ilham Aliyev

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had, if any, with the Crown Estate regarding its purchase of a property from a company linked to President Aliyev of Azerbaijan. [HL4580]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Under the Crown Estate Act of 1961, The Crown Estate is operationally independent of government. Decisions regarding the sale and purchase of property are a matter for them.

Cryptocurrencies

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to monitor fiat currency to cryptocurrency (1) deposits, and (2) withdrawals, to prevent cryptocurrencies from being used to (a) launder money, and (b) hide transactions in illicit markets. [HL4579]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Since 10 January 2020, UK cryptoasset exchange providers and custodian wallet providers have been in scope of the UK's Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Regulations (MLRs) and Part 7 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. This means that firms in the UK which exchange cryptoassets for fiat currency and vice versa are required to register with the UK's Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), carry out appropriate checks on their customers, and monitor for and report suspicious activity. These can be analysed by the UK Financial Intelligence Unit and made available to law enforcement agencies to investigate and take action when appropriate.

The government has proposed to further extend the requirements placed on cryptoasset firms under the MLRs. HM Treasury recently consulted on the implementation of Recommendation 16 of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for transfers of cryptoassets.

Pending the outcome of the consultation, the implementation of this Recommendation would extend the information sharing and record keeping requirements that apply to bank transfers to transfers of cryptoassets, and thereby further assist in the prevention and detection of money laundering.

Custodial Treatment: Costs

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) direct, and (2) indirect, costs of imprisonment; what alternatives, if any, they are considering; and what steps are they taking, if any, to promote these alternatives. [HL4534]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The direct cost of holding offenders in Custody for 2019-20 in England and Wales was £2.4bn. The indirect costs for the year were £1.1bn.

The overall cost was therefore calculated at £3.5bn. These figures were taken from the latest published Prison Unit Cost statistics (Cost per prison place and Cost per prisoner).

The Government is clear that delivering public protection is not just about better use of custody. In many cases – particularly for low-level offending – effective community supervision keeps the public safer by intervening early to deflect offenders away from future offending and so prevent future victims.

The Government's Sentencing White Paper, published in September 2020, set out an agenda of reform for punishing and rehabilitating low level offenders. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which is currently before Parliament, is delivering on reforms to make community sentences more robust and effective, so that they offer an appropriate level of punishment and address the underlying drivers of offending where appropriate. This will be achieved by piloting a problem-solving court approach for certain community and suspended sentence orders, closer supervision of certain offenders, and the option for tougher and more flexible use of electronically monitored curfews to better reflect the punishment intended, better support rehabilitation, and better protect victims.

Diversity and Inclusion Directorate: Complaints

Asked by Lord Tunncliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to remarks made by Baroness Goldie on 23 November (HL Deb, col 798), how many complaints of (1) bullying, (2) sexism, (3) sexual assault, (4) physical abuse, and (5) emotional abuse, have been made to the Diversity and Inclusion Directorate since it was formed in April; and how many of these complaints have resulted in (a) an inquiry being launched, and (b) a conviction. [HL4589]

Baroness Goldie: Complaints of this nature are not dealt with by the Diversity and Inclusion Directorate. For members of the Armed Forces, complaints of this nature can be raised and investigated in the form of a Service Complaint. Criminal allegations are referred to the Service Police for investigation. For Defence civilian staff, complaints of this nature can be raised and investigated by Defence Business Services' Civilian Human Resources. Where a complaint relates to an incident which may constitute a criminal offence, the matter is referred to the police.

Diversity and Inclusion Directorate: Telephone Services

Asked by Lord Tunncliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to remarks made by Baroness Goldie on 23 November (HL Deb, col 798), how many calls have been made to the Diversity and Inclusion Directorate's bullying,

harassment and discrimination helpline since its establishment in April. [HL4590]

Baroness Goldie: The wholeforce bullying, harassment and discrimination helpline was established in September 2020. Since opening, it has received 489 calls. 202 calls were made in the period April-October 2021.

Economic Situation: Equality

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent steps they have taken to help reduce economic inequality. [HL4571]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Distributional analysis published at Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 shows that in 2024-25, tax, welfare and spending decisions made since Spending Round 2019 will have benefitted the poorest households most, as a percentage of income. The analysis also shows that in 2024-25, the poorest 60% of households will receive more in public spending than they contribute in tax.

Work is the best route out of poverty and that is why the government is investing £6 billion in labour market support over the next three years to help people move into, and progress in work. This builds on the success of the Plan for Jobs, with over 2 million fewer people expected to be unemployed than previously thought.

Electric Scooters

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of private e-scooters sold in each of the past three years. [HL4626]

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of private e-scooters being used on public roads. [HL4627]

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to introduce legislation to legalise the private use of e-scooters; and if so, when they plan to do so. [HL4628]

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were injured in collisions involving e-scooters in (1) 2020, and (2) 2021, to date. [HL4629]

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that retailers are advising their customers of the law regarding the use of private e-scooters in the UK. [HL4630]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department estimates that 750,000 private e-scooters are owned across England

based on survey results from the DfT Transport Technology Tracker. The Department is running trials of rental e-scooters to assess their safety and wider impacts. Trials are live in 31 areas. The evidence gathered during the trials will inform whether e-scooters should be legalised, and how we can ensure their use is as safe as possible. Until we have that evidence we cannot commit to a legislative timetable.

There were 484 casualties in reported road accidents involving at least one e-scooter vehicle in Great Britain in 2020. Information currently held by the Department provisionally indicates that there have been 530 casualties in reported road accidents involving at least one e-scooter vehicle in Great Britain in the first six months of 2021.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy leads on ensuring responsible business practices, but Ministers from this Department wrote to retailers of e-scooters in December 2018 reminding them of their obligations. In July of this year, Rachel Maclean MP wrote again to retailers sharing with them the Department's concerns that retailers are not providing clear, visible and consistent information, to ensure that their customers understand the law. She asked them to work with their sales and marketing teams to ensure that they are familiar with our guidance on privately owned e-scooters, to ensure that their customers are not misinformed, inadvertently or otherwise, about the law which applies to the use of e-scooters.

Electric Scooters: Hire Services

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many e-scooters are available to the public through rental trials. [HL4598]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Data currently held by the Department indicates that there were 22,644 e-scooters available to rent across all trial areas at the end of October.

Farms: Tenants

Asked by **Baroness Rock**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that tenant farmers on short-term, restrictive Farm Business Tenancies will not be constrained from entering new Environmental Land Management Schemes by their landlords. [HL4294]

Lord Benyon: Our approach to environmental land management is the cornerstone of our new agricultural policy. Farming efficiently and improving the environment can go hand in hand.

The Government is working to ensure that the design of our future farming schemes is accessible to as many farmers as possible including tenant farmers. For example, we have designed the Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme rules for 2022 to have shorter agreements and more flexibility, to better suit tenant

farmers, and we have removed the requirement to demonstrate landlord consent. We are exploring and testing how our new schemes might work in practice across different types of holdings and different types and lengths of tenancy agreements.

As part of the development of our new schemes, we have considered the needs of tenants and worked closely with a number of organisations including the Tenant Farmers Association, Country Land and Business Association and National Farmers' Union. We are looking into the problem raised, and will work with these organisations and other stakeholders, to understand whether there is anything we need to do to ensure tenants are not excluded from schemes.

We are also working with tenants through our pilot, test and trials and user research.

Financial Services: Crime

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take, if any, in response to the publication of the Pandora Papers to tackle (1) tax avoidance, (2) money laundering, and (3) other financial crimes. [HL4572]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: This government is committed to making the UK a hostile place for illicit finance and economic crime. We are determined to crack down on dirty money and financial exploitation, to protect our security and prosperity. We have taken action through our 'No Safe Havens' strategy to ensure the correct UK tax is paid; and our landmark 2019 Economic Crime Plan outlines a comprehensive response to ensure the UK cannot be abused for economic crime.

Floods: Finance

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held at Cabinet level about the adequacy of emergency funding available to support communities affected by flooding. [HL4576]

Lord Greenhalgh: In the event of a major flood emergency in England the Secretary of State will liaise with Cabinet colleagues in relevant Departments, including Defra, BEIS and Treasury, to consider activation of i) the Bellwin Scheme, which can be used to provide funding to local authorities to cover the costs of immediate flood response work and ii) the Flood Recovery Framework which provides funding towards the costs of flood recovery for businesses and households.

These schemes are well-established mechanisms which can provide timely and effective support to help communities to recover.

Gaza: Israel

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they plan to make to the government of

Israel regarding Israeli forces firing on fishermen in Gaza while they fish in their designated area. [HL4555]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly raise the importance of the Israeli security force's adherence to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest. We continue to stress to the Israeli authorities the damage that their restrictions on movement, access and trade are doing to the living standards of ordinary Palestinians.

Government Departments: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government which government departments do not invite (1) job applicants, and (2) promotion candidates, to provide any information about their ethnicity. [HL4740]

Lord True: Government departments that use the Government Recruitment Service (GRS) vX recruitment system to track candidates will collect diversity data on all applicants.

Candidates applying on promotion via an external campaign will not be asked questions on their ethnicity. They are, however, expected to complete the diversity questionnaire.

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the latest (1) capital cost, (2) revenue forecasts, and (3) Benefit-Cost Ratio, assumed in the continuing use of HS2 Phase 1 and 2A, (a) with, and (b) without, the inclusion of HS2 Phase 2B West. [HL4529]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: As noted in the most recent Parliamentary Report, the overall Phase One cost is estimated in the range of £35bn to £45bn, with a Target Cost established of £40.3bn (2019 prices). The overall Phase 2a cost is currently estimated as in the range of £5-7bn (2019 prices). The Department will be updating the Strategic Outline Business Case for Phase 2b Western Leg which will include a refresh of the Phase 1 and 2a assessment published in April 2020. This will be published alongside the deposit of the Western Leg hybrid bill.

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government which parts of HS2 Phase 2B have been cancelled. [HL4533]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: As set out in the Integrated Rail Plan we will take forward the Phase 2b Western Leg. We will also progress a new high speed line to the East Midlands and electrify the Midland Mainline, enabling HS2 trains reach Nottingham, Derby and Sheffield. We are investing £100 million in development work on the West Yorkshire mass transit system, as well as looking at the most effective way to run HS2 trains to Leeds.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on (1) the operational costs of HS2, and (2) ticket prices, as a result of the recent increase in energy prices. [HL4558]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: There has been no specific assessment of the impact of recent increases in energy prices on HS2 operating costs. HS2 is not due to be operational until between 2029 to 2033, and it is uncertain if the current energy price fluctuations will still be relevant at this time. Operational cost predictions, including energy prices, are updated regularly and future analysis will use the most relevant energy price projections. Detailed decisions on HS2 fares and services will be taken nearer to when the railway commences operation.

Human Rights Act Independent Review

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the report of their review of the Human Rights Act 2001 will be published. [HL4499]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: In line with our manifesto commitment, the Government plans to overhaul the Human Rights Act (HRA) to make sure it meets the needs of the society it serves and commands public support.

The Government established the Independent Human Rights Act Review to examine the framework of the HRA, how it is operating in practice and whether any change is required. We have received the Panel's report and are carefully considering its conclusions as part of a wider reform programme. We will publish the Panel's report imminently and will consult on any proposed legislative changes.

Islam: Marriage

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether British Muslim women have the rights set out in paragraph nine of Resolution 2253 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, published on 22 January 2019, specifically in relation (1) to obtaining the protection of legal marriage, and (2) to discriminatory practices in relation to religious divorce. [HL4544]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The law has long made provision for couples, including Muslim couples, to marry in their place of worship in a way that gives them legal rights and protections. The Government shares the concern that some people may nonetheless marry in a way that does not give them these legal rights and protections, without appreciating the consequences.

We continue to explore limited reform and non-legislative options in this area with the greatest of care. This work will be informed by the forthcoming reports

from the Law Commission on weddings, and from the Nuffield Foundation on religious weddings.

Islamic State: Yazidis

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to recognise crimes committed against the Yazidis as genocide. [HL4526]

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the briefing by Mr Karim Asad Ahmad Khan QC, published on 10 May, setting out the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability Against Da'esh/ISIL Crimes' (UNITAD) (1) findings of "clear and convincing evidence that genocide was committed by ISIL against the Yazidi as a religious group", and (2) statement that "The intent of ISIL to destroy the Yazidi, physically and biologically, is manifest in its ultimatum – applied remorselessly to all members of their community – to convert or die"; and what assessment they have made of the letter sent by Mr Khan QC to the President of the Security Council on 3 May stating that UNITAD had identified 1,444 potential perpetrators of attacks against the Yazidi community. [HL4527]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We condemn in the strongest terms the atrocities committed by Daesh against all civilians, including Yazidis and other minorities, as well as the majority Muslim population in Syria and Iraq. We note the conviction in a German court on 30 November of a former Daesh fighter for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. We will continue to use our position at the UN, including as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to raise atrocity situations of concern and to support the deployment of all appropriate tools available to the UN in dealing with potential mass atrocities and conflict. Our focus is always on securing an end to violence and protecting civilians.

The UK has contributed £2 million to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh/ISIL (UNITAD), to gather evidence of Daesh crimes in Iraq. We continue to champion, and are committed to, UNITAD's work in gathering evidence of crimes. The UK contributes to the implementation of Iraq's Yazidi Survivor's law which was passed in March 2021 and we continue to work with a wide range of actors to ensure full implementation.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Haaretz article What the Israeli Army Does to Soldiers Who Shoot Palestinians, published on 18 November, which states that 18 unarmed Palestinians have been killed or seriously

injured by fire from Israeli forces without proper investigation or accountability. [[HL4554](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Our Embassy in Tel Aviv raise cases of alleged excessive use of force with the Israeli Defence Forces directly. We raise the issue of the high numbers of Palestinians killed and injured by Israeli Defence Forces in the West Bank and Gaza with the Israeli authorities, encouraging them to carry out swift, transparent and thorough investigations. We also regularly raise the importance of the Israeli security force's adherence to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, in particular the need to protect children, and urge restraint in the use of live fire.

Israel: West Bank

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they plan to make to the government of Israel regarding house demolitions and confiscations by Israeli forces in the West Bank on 23 November. [[HL4556](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and evictions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. The UK regularly raises the issue of demolitions, confiscations and forced evictions of Palestinians from their homes with the Government of Israel, most recently with Israel's Ministry of Defence on 19 October. We regularly call on Israel to halt such counterproductive activity and instead urgently commit to creating a better environment for a just and lasting peace.

Members: Pay and Allowances

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what would be the level of financial support for Members if it had been adjusted for inflation since 1 October 2010. [[HL4650](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Daily Allowance rate was introduced on 1 October 2010 at £300 per day. If it had been adjusted annually for inflation by the Consumer Price Index, it would be £379 per day from 1 October 2021.

Myanmar: Arms Trade

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Joint Statement on increasing violence in Myanmar, published on 26 November, what steps they have taken to hold the statement's signatories accountable for

investments in companies that continue to arm the Myanmar military. [[HL4543](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: All the signatories of the 26 November Joint Statement have made a public commitment to prevent the flow of arms to Myanmar. We are working with our partners to call on others to make similar commitments. The UK provides robust advice to UK companies and businesses to help them avoid exposure to military linked companies. We also have extensive targeted sanctions on the military's businesses. We will continue to encourage the wider international community to take similar measures.

Myanmar: Politics and Government

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Joint Statement on increasing violence in Myanmar, published on 26 November, what assessment they have made of whether the government of Australia is upholding its commitment "to suspend all operational support to the military"; and what representations they intend to make on that matter. [[HL4542](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is working closely with international partners to keep a spotlight on escalating violence and serious human rights violations by the Myanmar Armed Forces. The Joint Statement on 26 November is a clear example of this close collaboration. The Australian Government does not provide operational support to the Myanmar military, and has been consistent in its calls for all countries to cease the transfer of arms to the military regime. We worked closely with Australia to secure the UN General Assembly Resolution on the situation in Myanmar on 18 June, which called on all UN Member States to prevent the flow of arms to Myanmar. We are working closely with Australia to put pressure on those who sell arms to the military regime.

Palestinians: Riot Control Weapons

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they intend to make to the government of Israel concerning the use of (1) rubber bullets, and (2) tear gas, against Palestinian protestors. [[HL4582](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation. In our dialogue with the Israeli authorities we have recognised their legitimate need to deploy security measures to address violence. We encourage them to deploy these in a way which minimises tension and uses appropriate force. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

Prisoners' Release: Government Assistance

Asked by *Lord Lee of Trafford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) financial, and (2) travel, support they provide to prisoners on release. [HL4485]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: All eligible prison leavers are provided with a Subsistence Payment (formerly Discharge Grant) of £76. Recently uplifted in August of this year from £46, the subsistence payment will increase year on year in line with the Consumer Price Index until 2024/25. We also work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions to ensure prisoners have timely access to Universal Credit on their release from prison.

All prison leavers are given a travel warrant or fares paid to their destination within the UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland. An additional payment of up to £50 may also be paid directly to a genuine accommodation provider to help the prison leaver secure a release address.

The Government is reviewing the Discharge policy (Prison Service Instruction 72/2011), to continue to make sure prison leavers receive adequate financial support in the first few days after release and before they might reasonably be able to access other legal sources of income such as applying for state benefits.

Prisoners: Per Capita Costs

Asked by *Lord Lee of Trafford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their latest estimate of the weekly cost of keeping an individual in prison. [HL4484]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: An average cost per prisoner, costs per prison place and overall prison unit costs for each private and public sector prison in England and Wales are routinely published by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). This information is produced on an annual basis and is published after the end of each financial year on the gov.uk website.

The overall average annual costs for keeping an individual in a prison is £42,670, which is taken from the latest published Prison Unit Cost statistics, for 2019-20. The average cost for a week would therefore be calculated as £818.

Ministry of Justice (MoJ) expect the 2020-21 Prison Unit Cost statistics to be published early in 2022.

Public Expenditure: Cost Effectiveness

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure value for money in public spending. [HL4574]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Spending Review 2021 has placed a renewed emphasis on ensuring that every pound of taxpayers' money is spent well and focused on the

areas that make the most difference to people's daily lives.

The government has set clear outcomes for what spending will buy; ensured that all decisions are informed by the best quality evidence; encouraged joint working between departments; and taken further action to drive out low value or inefficient spend. Following the efficiency and savings review earlier this year, Spending Review 2021 confirms savings of 5% against day-to-day central departments budgets in 2024-25.

Railways: North of England

Asked by *Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the estimated cost of (1) electrification, and (2) other improvements, for projects included in the Integrated Rail Plan relating to the (a) Midland Main Line, and (b) TransPennine, line upgrades. [HL4530]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Within the £96 billion set out in the Integrated Rail Plan, £1.4 billion has been allowed for electrifying the Midland Main Line; £5.4 billion has been allowed for the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) base scope, including full electrification; £17.2 billion has been allowed for the Northern Powerhouse Rail core network from Liverpool to York which includes the TRU Option G enhancement.

Asked by *Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the (1) ownership, and (2) sponsoring, structure for the improvements outlined in the Integrated Rail Plan; and what is the involvement of (a) Network Rail, (b) HS2 Ltd, (c) The Northern Powerhouse, and (d) Transport for the North; and what consultation they intend to undertake on the Plan. [HL4531]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department will ask Network Rail to lead work, with input from HS2 Ltd, on schemes to upgrade the conventional existing rail network and option assessment on how best to take HS2 trains to Leeds.

HS2 Ltd is progressing the Western Leg hybrid Bill and will prepare legislation for the proposed high speed route from the West Midlands to the East Midlands. It is also expected to lead the next stages of work on the new line sections of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR).

Transport for the North will continue to fulfil an important role on the NPR programme providing strategic advice and direction to the programme in line with their core statutory function through a joint sponsor role.

The Department will seek to engage representatives from the North and Midlands, including the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, throughout the development of the work outlined in the Integrated Rail Plan.

Asked by *Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will place in the Library of the House a comparison of

journey times for travel between Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, York and Hull, using the options included in the Integrated Rail Plan. [HL4532]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) includes journey time information between Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, York and Hull and has been stored in the Library of the House. IRP proposals will reduce journey times between Manchester and Leeds by 22 minutes, Liverpool and Manchester by 15 minutes and Liverpool and Leeds by 33 minutes. Trains from Hull and York to Manchester and Liverpool will also see faster journey times.

Railways: Passengers

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the forecast of passenger demand growth used in the preparation of the Integrated Rail Plan for (1) local, and (2) long, distance services; and what account have they taken of the changes in demand caused by COVID-19. [HL4528]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government's key assumption is that rail demand will continue to grow but passenger demand over the period between now and 2050 is inevitably uncertain. However, the Government agrees with the NIC that the pandemic is unlikely to put an end to the need to travel between our towns and cities over the longer term. Our adaptive approach towards the core network enables us to respond to any future uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the investments being considered here are long term, and typically take a decade or more to deliver.

Standard of Living

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the effects of inflation on living standards. [HL4573]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Economies are experiencing high inflation, mostly due to pressures from rising energy prices and disruptions to global supply chains. These global pressures are the main driver of higher inflation in the UK.

The Government's commitment to price stability remains absolute. The Bank of England is responsible for controlling inflation – since the Bank became responsible for controlling inflation it has averaged close to the 2% target.

We understand that inflation, if higher than income growth, can reduce households' real incomes, and that higher prices can increase the cost of living for people and households.

That is why we have taken targeted action to help families with the cost of living, including through freezing fuel and alcohol duties, the energy price cap, the Warm Home Discount and the £500m Household Support Fund to help the most vulnerable families this winter. We are also making work pay by reducing the Universal Credit taper rate from 63% to 55%, increasing work allowances by £500 per year and increasing the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour.

Taxation

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide additional specialised support to (1) contractors, and (2) self-employed taxpayers, who are facing large tax liabilities. [HL4587]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HMRC is working hard to help all taxpayers, including contractors and the self-employed, with large tax bills and temporary cash-flow issues, and to provide them with the support they need.

HMRC's longstanding Time to Pay policy allows taxpayers in temporary financial difficulty to schedule their tax debts into affordable and sustainable instalment arrangements with no maximum repayment period. These arrangements are flexible and can be amended if circumstances change. Individuals with Self-Assessment debts under £30,000 can apply online for a Time to Pay arrangements of up to 12 months.

In addition, HMRC has a well-established Extra Support Service which is accessible to all taxpayers. Our customer service advisers have the skills to identify taxpayers who need extra help and to empathetically handle their queries and make reasonable adjustments.

Any taxpayer concerned about their ability to pay should contact HMRC to discuss the support available.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Caine on 23 November (HL3800), how many internment-related civil claims for compensation for unlawful detention have been received by the Northern Ireland Office arising from the Supreme Court judgement of 13 May 2020 in the case of R vs Adams (Appellant) (Northern Ireland); and who signed the 1973 interim custody order. [HL4553]

Lord Caine: There are currently approximately 300 to 400 internment-related civil claims against the Northern Ireland Office brought on a similar basis to that of the case of R vs Adams.

As noted in the Supreme Court judgement of 13 May 2020 in the case of R vs Adams, the 1973 order was signed by a Minister of State in the Northern Ireland Office.

Transcaucasus: Armed Conflict

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) reports of military attacks by Azerbaijan on or near the M2/E117 highway in Armenia; and (2) the humanitarian impact of these attacks for ethnic Armenians in (a) Syunik province, and (b) Nagorno-Karabakh. [HL4124]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK Government is closely monitoring the situation on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border following the exchange of fire on 16 November. Our Embassies in Baku and Yerevan have continued to urge de-escalation and a return to negotiations facilitated by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs. Through our Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the UK has condemned recent exchanges of fire that have put civilian lives and regional stability and security at risk. The Minister for Europe and Americas has met both the Armenian and Azerbaijani Ambassadors to London in recent weeks and reinforced these messages.

Visas: British National (Overseas)

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to expand the British National (Overseas) (BNO) visa scheme to people from Hong Kong who (1) are aged between 18 and 25, and (2) have a parent with BNO status. [HL4584]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Hong Kong BNO route is for those with BNO status and their

eligible family members including adult children who were born on or after 1 July 1997 and who live with their parents. This is grounded in the UK's obligations to those who elected to retain ties to the UK by obtaining BN(O) status; and enables them to relocate as a family. We do not currently have any plans to change these requirements.

Other routes are available to those without BN(O) status, including the undersubscribed Youth Mobility Scheme which offers 1,000 places each year to Hong Kongers and the new Skilled Worker Visa which enables individuals to come to the UK in a wider range of professions and at a lower general salary threshold than in the past.

Windrush Compensation Scheme

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to enable those pursuing claims through the Windrush Compensation Scheme to receive legal aid. [HL4515]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The government has noted the recommendation of the Home Affairs Select Committee to consider the provision of specialist legal advice for applicants to the Windrush Compensation Scheme, potentially funded through legal aid. While we have no existing plans to expand the scope of the legal aid scheme to cover the Windrush Compensation Scheme, we will consider the recommendation in full and respond to the Home Affairs Select Committee in due course.

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