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**Tuesday  
17 May 2022**

**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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| <b>Lord Callanan</b>                          | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy                           |
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| <b>Lord Grimstone of Boscobel</b>             | Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade          |
| <b>Lord Harrington of Watford</b>             | Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities                                   |
| <b>Lord Kamall</b>                            | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care  |
| <b>Lord Offord of Garvel</b>                  | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office   |
| <b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>          | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Whip                         |
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| <b>Lord True</b>                              | Minister of State, Cabinet Office   |
| <b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>              | Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport  |
| <b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>          | Minister of State, Home Office  |
| <b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>             | Whip  |

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# Written Statements

Tuesday, 17 May 2022

## Contingent Liability: Energy Supply Company Special Administration Regime

[HLWS30]

**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:

Today I will lay before Parliament a Departmental Minute describing a contingent liability arising from the issuance of a letter of credit for the Energy Administrators acting in the Special Administration Regime for Bulb Energy Limited ('Bulb'). This letter of credit replaces a previous one originally provided in December, which was extended in February and March, and which has now expired.

It is normal practice when a Government Department proposes to undertake a contingent liability of £300,000 and above, for which there is no specific statutory authority, for the Department concerned to present Parliament with a minute giving particulars of the liability created and explaining the circumstances.

I regret that, as a result of continued negotiations with the counterparty and the reduced Parliamentary sitting period, I have not followed the usual notification timelines to allow the full 14-day consideration period of these issues in advance of issuing the letter of credit.

Bulb entered the Energy Supply Company Special Administration Regime on 24 November 2021. Energy Administrators were appointed by court to achieve the statutory objective of continuing energy supplies at the lowest reasonable practicable cost until such time as it becomes unnecessary for the special administration to remain in force for that purpose.

My Department has agreed to provide a facility to the Energy Administrators, with a letter of credit issued, with my approval, to guarantee such contract, code, licence, or other document obligations of the company consistent with the special administration's statutory objective. I will update the House if any letters of credit are drawn against.

The legal basis for a letter of credit is section 165 of the Energy Act 2004, as applied and modified by section 96 of the Energy Act 2011.

HM Treasury has approved the arrangements in principle.

## Ending BEIS ODA Spending in China

[HLWS29]

**Lord Callanan:** My Honourable friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Science, Research and Innovation) (George Freeman) has today made the following statement:

As one of the world's fastest growing economies, China plays a critical role in addressing many of the world's most urgent challenges such as tackling climate change and preventing Antimicrobial Resistance. It is important that we continue to work with China in these areas and BEIS will build on our collaboration to date with China to address these key global challenges together, as set out in the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy.

However, BEIS is bringing its bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding in China to an end.

BEIS will not be using ODA funding to support research and innovation partnerships with China as we have previously done through ODA vehicles, such as the Newton Fund and Global Challenges Research Fund. Existing ODA-funded activity with China through these will finish by the end of FY 22/23. The technical assistance we have provided through our UK Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions programme (UK PACT) is also no longer from our Official Development Assistance from the end of FY 21/22 and instead, technical assistance to China on climate change issues will be smaller in scale and use non-Official Development Assistance sources.

## Istanbul Convention: Ratification

[HLWS33]

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

Tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a Government priority and these crimes have no place in our society. Last July, we published our new cross-Government Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy to help ensure that women and girls are safe everywhere - at home, online and on the streets. We are committed to radically changing how we end VAWG with a whole system approach focusing on prioritising prevention, supporting survivors and pursuing perpetrators. And in March we published the first ever dedicated and complementary Domestic Abuse Plan, which seeks to transform the whole of society's response to domestic abuse.

The Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, commonly known as the Istanbul Convention, is a gold standard international charter for the protection of women and girls. This Government was proud to sign it in 2012, to signal our strong commitment to tackling VAWG. The Government has always remained committed to ratifying the Convention and since signing it we have worked to significantly strengthen our legislative framework and have introduced a wide range of tools to protect victims better. Our measures to protect women and girls from violence are some of the most robust in the world, and in

some respects, we go further than the Convention requires.

The Government is now satisfied that it has the legislative framework and other necessary measures in place to meet the requirements of the Convention. I am therefore now pleased to confirm, as required by section 1(3)(a) of the Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Act 2017 (“the 2017 Act”), that the UK is compliant with the Istanbul Convention and in a position to seek Parliament’s approval to ratify it. Ratification will send a strong message to women and girls in this country that the Government is committed to ensuring their safety and to ending VAWG. It will also send an equally strong message to our partners internationally which confirms that the UK remains at the forefront of tackling VAWG across the globe. I am pleased also to confirm that the Government is today laying the text of the Istanbul Convention in the form of a Command Paper in both Houses, alongside an Explanatory Memorandum. If no objections are raised to ratification of the Convention in either House within the next 21 joint sitting days, the Government will arrange to deposit its instrument of ratification. In line with the requirement under section 1(3)(b) of the 2017 Act I can therefore confirm that I would expect the UK to have ratified the Convention by 31 July 2022.

Article 78(2) of the Convention allows countries to make a reservation on certain provisions of the Convention. This means that the country will not be bound by that particular provision. The Government has decided to make reservations on two of those provisions. We will be applying a reservation on part of Article 44, which relates to the prosecution of UK residents for committing acts in another country which are crimes in UK law but not under the law of that other country, and which reflects the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. We will also be applying a reservation on Article 59, which relates to migrant victims, to enable us to ratify the Convention before the evaluation of the Support for Migrant Victims scheme concludes, at which point we will consider the policy issues involved substantively, and whether that reservation should continue. Further detail on the reservations is contained within the Explanatory Memorandum published today.

I know that ratifying this Convention will send a strong message about the UK’s commitment to tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, and will help us to continue to lead the way in tackling these terrible crimes.

### **Motoring Agencies: Business Plans 2022-23**

[HLWS31]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** I am pleased to announce the publication of the 2022-23 business plans for the Department for Transport’s Motoring Agencies - the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), the

Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA).

The business plans set out:

1) the key business priorities that each agency will deliver and any significant changes they plan to make to their services, and;

2) the key performance indicators, by which their performance will be assessed.

These plans allow service users and members of the public to understand the agencies’ plans for delivering their key services, progressing their transformation programmes, and managing their finances.

The business plans will be available electronically on GOV.UK and copies will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

### **Public Consultation: Extraction of Information from Electronic Devices Code of Practice**

[HLWS32]

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

Following the successful passage of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act, I am pleased to announce that today I am launching a public consultation on the draft code of practice for the extraction of information from electronic devices.

It is vital that victims feel confident in coming forward to report crime, but we know that fear of intrusive demands for information can deter victims from reporting offences or from continuing to support investigations. The powers in Chapter 3 of Part 2 of the Act therefore strengthen the law to ensure that there is a consistent approach to requesting information from phones and other electronic devices that puts respect for an individual’s privacy at the centre of every investigation.

This code of practice will be a vital tool in ensuring that all use of these powers is lawful and that the powers are used only where it is necessary and proportionate. The draft code makes it clear that the powers must only be used as a last resort. This will ensure that all those who are asked to voluntarily provide their devices and give agreement to the extraction of information, are given all the necessary information to enable them to make the decision that is right for them.

All authorised persons have a duty to have regard to the code when exercising, or deciding whether to exercise, the power. The code will also be admissible in evidence in criminal or civil proceedings and failure to act in accordance with it may be taken into account by the court.

Those who have an interest in the use of these powers and the protection of privacy for complainants are strongly encouraged to respond to this consultation and I

welcome the views of all colleagues on this important piece of guidance.

I will arrange for a copy of the consultation and draft code to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

# Written Answers

Tuesday, 17 May 2022

## Blue Badge Scheme: Spain

Asked by *Lord Bowness*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with regional authorities in Spain regarding mutual recognition of disabled persons blue parking badges; and what progress has been made in those discussions. [HL32]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Blue Badge recognition between countries has to date been based on informal arrangements. The Department for Transport continues to work towards reciprocal provision for Blue Badge holders but does not provide a commentary on the status of these negotiations.

## Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to address the reported bottleneck in the Coronavirus Test Device Approval process. [HL71]

**Lord Kamall:** Current delays in the Coronavirus Test Device Approval (CTDA) process have been due to further information being sought from applicants during the validation process. However, to ensure applications meet the required standards, expert support has been provided by officials, with 60% of approvals being processed in the last three months.

The number of scientific advisors has also been increased to meet demand. Online guidance for applicants has also been updated to provide greater clarity for acceptance criteria for the range of viral loads within positive samples. Officials continue to work with applicants to provide support during the process and minimise any potential delays.

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they conducted a cost analysis before the implementation of the Coronavirus Test Device Approvals process; and how the desktop review fee amount for test applications was decided. [HL72]

**Lord Kamall:** The Department's online only impact assessment included a cost analysis and calculations on the implementation of the Coronavirus Test Device Approvals process. It is intended that this regulation should be cost neutral for taxpayers and as such, the Government recovers the costs from applicants, while ensuring fees are as low as possible. However, through engagement in a public consultation and with industry, we recognised concerns on ensuring smaller businesses can access the market. Therefore a discounted rate of 55% is

offered, in line with taxation benefits for research and development spending offered to small to medium-sized enterprises. We have committed to review the policy at the end of 2022.

## Gambling

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for granting local authorities greater powers to determine the number and location of gambling premises, such as betting shops, in a local area, to help mitigate gambling related harms. [HL171]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The Gambling Act Review is taking a comprehensive look at gambling legislation and regulation in Great Britain to make sure it is fit for the digital age, including whether licensing and local authorities have enough powers to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of premises licences. We will publish a white paper setting out our conclusions and next steps in the coming weeks.

## Gambling: Taxation

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for introducing a mandatory levy on gambling firms to help fund an expansion of treatment and support services for those experiencing gambling related harm. [HL170]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The Government's Review of the Gambling Act called for evidence on how best to recoup the regulatory and societal costs of problem gambling. We will publish a white paper setting out our conclusions and vision for the sector in due course.

## National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: Standards

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) impact on technology appraisals, and (2) timely access to medicines, of current capacity issues experienced by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. [HL146]

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence in relation to its plans to deal with capacity issues. [HL147]

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to address capacity issues being experienced by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence. [HL148]

**Lord Kamall:** The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) commits to publishing draft recommendations on new medicines approximately at the time of licensing, with final guidance within three months of licensing wherever possible. In 2021/22, guidance was issued within three months of a licence for 100% of new medicines where NICE proceeded to appraisal and 98 technology appraisals were published, meeting the target in its business plan.

The Department holds regular accountability meetings with NICE to discuss a range of issues, including the delivery of its commitments. NICE is prioritising the flexibility and capacity of its technology appraisal programme through a more proportionate approach to assessments. From April 2023, NICE aims to expand its capacity for technology appraisals by 20% to respond to the increasing numbers of topics referred for appraisal.

### **National Maritime Museum and National Gallery: Collections**

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

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) the National Maritime Museum, and (2) the National Gallery, about the percentage of their collections that have remained in storage during the last five years; and how many items in storage were lent to private collections outside London. [HL225]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** DCMS-sponsored museums operate independently, at arm's-length from Her Majesty's Government, so the Department does not direct their curatorial and partnership activities. Museum collections serve a range of purposes, and are not always suitable for public display. Only a proportion of a museum's collection will be displayed at any given time, with the remainder either unsuitable for general display or undergoing conservation, on loan to other venues, or in storage but accessible in parts to the public and researchers alike.

DCMS does require its sponsored museums to share their collections, skills, and expertise nationwide, for the enjoyment, education, and entertainment of people across the UK. The Department produces an annual Partnerships Report documenting the extent of this national partnership work, which takes a variety of forms, with a broad range of partners. For example, in the year 2019-20, the national museums (including those sponsored by other government departments and the devolved

administrations) undertook 1,534 "loans out" of 59,870 objects to institutions across the UK. This includes both long and short-term loans, with objects seen by over 22 million people.

### **OneWeb**

*Asked by **Lord Bowness***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many satellite launches have been achieved by communications company OneWeb, and how does this number compare with the targeted number. [HL33]

**Lord Callanan:** Since February 2019, OneWeb has launched 66% of its planned constellation over 13 successful launches. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, OneWeb suspended the remaining six launches from Baikonur.

Following successful conversations earlier this year, OneWeb announced plans for future launches with SpaceX and New Space India.

### **Oneweb: Satellites**

*Asked by **Lord Bowness***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 4 April (HL7258), how many of OneWeb's satellites have been abandoned in Kazakhstan following the decision to suspend use of Russian Soyuz launch vehicles; what is their combined value; and what plans they have to seek their return. [HL34]

**Lord Callanan:** This information is commercially confidential and is a matter for the company.

*Asked by **Lord Bowness***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for OneWeb to obtain an alternative to the Russian Soyuz launch facility. [HL35]

**Lord Callanan:** Following successful conversations earlier this year, OneWeb recently announced agreements with SpaceX and New Space India to launch satellites from alternative launch facilities in lieu of planned (now cancelled) Soyuz launches.

These launches are subject to the relevant regulatory clearances.

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