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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>
Lord True	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Bellamy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
Lord Benyon	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Spokesperson, Wales Office, 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
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Davies of Gower	Whip
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Harlech	Whip
Lord Markham	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Murray of Blidworth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
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	Parliamentary Secretary, HM Treasury
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Chief Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Monday, 21 November 2022

R&D and Fusion Sector Investment and EU Programme Association

[HLWS368]

Lord Callanan: My Honourable friend the Minister of State (George Freeman) has today made the following statement:

The government is announcing today a package of up to £484m funding to invest in the UK R&D sector and to secure the UK fusion sector's commercial leadership and capabilities, while the EU continues to block our association.

The ongoing uncertainty over access to EU Programmes (Horizon, Copernicus, Euratom R&T and Fusion for Energy) is placing increasing pressure on UK universities and research organisations, as well as causing significant issues for the UK's Fusion and Earth Observation sectors.

UK researchers should already be part of these programmes. However the EU have now delayed our association for nearly two years. The UK has done everything it can to secure association, including entering into formal consultations to encourage the EU to implement their obligations.

It remains the Government's preference to associate to EU R&D programmes and the Government remains ready to discuss association with the EU, but we cannot wait forever. Our priority is to invest in the UK's R&D sector, whether through association or, if delays continue, alternative measures.

The investments announced today include:

- £30m Talent and Research Stabilisation Fund.
- £100m Quality-Related (QR) funding for English universities with additional funding for the Devolved Administrations.
- £200m for UK Research Infrastructures.
- £42.1m for the Fusion Industry Programme.
- £84m for Joint European Torus (JET) Operations.

Over the last few months, officials and I have consulted widely with the research community - this package responds to what we have been hearing are their biggest challenges. These investments are UK wide and will provide targeted support during this time of uncertainty. They aim to support staff retention and local talent strategies at eligible universities and research organisations; ensure the UK's labs remain world class and at the cutting edge of R&D; and offer universities and research organisations the discretion to apply the funding in ways that best suit their local needs. Furthermore they will stimulate and accelerate the growth of the UK's fusion industry, delivering a thriving UK fusion

ecosystem and strengthening the UK's position as leaders in the future global fusion market.

Further to the investments announced today, the government will shortly be announcing new investment and projects to boost the Earth Observation community and mitigate the challenges caused by the delays to association to Copernicus.

It remains the government's preference to associate to EU programmes as envisaged under the TCA, but we cannot wait forever to invest the funding set aside for association in our world-leading R&D sector. Earlier this year we set out details of alternatives proposals which we will implement in the event that association is no longer possible. Further details of these plans will be published shortly.

UK-Switzerland: Services Mobility Agreement

[HLWS367]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade (Kemi Badenoch MP) has today made the following statement:

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Swiss Confederation share a deep and trusted trading relationship. We are two global leaders in services trade with deep links between our economies. As per the Office for National Statistics, in 2021, Switzerland was the United Kingdom's 6th largest trade in services partner, with trade in services amounting to £18.4bn and accounting for 48% of total UK-Swiss trade.

In December 2020, in recognition of this unique relationship, and to avoid disruption for service providers not covered by the mobility arrangements set out in the Citizens Rights Agreement, my Department, in coordination with the Home Office and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy negotiated the Temporary Agreement Between the Swiss Confederation and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on Services Mobility (The Services Mobility Agreement).

The Services Mobility Agreement allows UK professionals to travel freely to Switzerland and to work and deliver services visa-free for up to 90 days per year. The Agreement also ensures UK professionals will not face economic interests tests or be required to secure work permits during these first 90 days of service supply.

The Agreement also allows Swiss professionals to come to the UK and provide services under contract in a number of key skilled sectors through the UK's Service Supplier visa for up to 12 months, supporting broader trade in vital industries of the UK economy, including finance, consultancy, legal services, the tech sector and the creative industries.

Whilst the Agreement was always intended to be temporary, the UK and Switzerland have agreed to extend the Agreement for a further three years. This will ensure businesses and services providers here in the UK and

those in Switzerland are provided with the clarity and certainty they need to continue to make use of this unique and important relationship.

The Services Mobility Agreement also established a working group between the UK and Switzerland on the recognition of professional qualifications. I'm pleased to note the working group has had meaningful discussions. The UK's aim is for an agreement that will provide clarity for suitably qualified professionals on the long-term arrangements to have their qualifications recognised in

each Party's market, whilst protecting regulator autonomy. I will update the House with more information on this in due course.

This prolongation will extend the Services Mobility Agreement on its current terms and will enable us to look ahead to negotiations on an enhanced Free Trade Agreement. We look forward to the opportunity that the negotiations present to pursue a comprehensive agreement that is reflective of the UK and Switzerland's deep and historic trading and political relationship.

Written Answers

Monday, 21 November 2022

Alternatives to Prison: Parents

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to recommend non-custodial sentences whenever possible for parents of multiple children, and (2) to maintain strong family links and relationships during prison sentences, in order to reduce re-offending. [[HL3356](#)]

Lord Bellamy: Sentencing is entirely a matter for our independent courts. The sentencing guidelines specify 'sole or primary carer for dependent relatives' as a factor reducing seriousness or reflecting personal mitigation. Courts must strike a balance between the legitimate aims to be served by custody and the effect that sentence has on the family life of others, especially children.

The Probation Service's Pre-sentence Reports help the court in their sentencing decisions and consider the potential significant impact of imprisonment on any dependants (including unborn children).

There will, however, always be some cases where the seriousness of the offending is such that a custodial sentence is necessary. We want to provide the best rehabilitative regimes possible to help break the reoffending cycle as we know maintaining positive family relationships is an important factor in reducing reoffending.

We have worked to embed all 19 of the recommendations made by Lord Farmer in his 2017 review to strengthen family ties for male prisoners and have completed 25 out of 33 recommendations from his subsequent review focused on strengthening family ties for female offenders.

Our work includes requiring prisons to produce local strategies setting out how prisoners will have access to family contact; introducing a national families performance measure; and deploying secure video calling for families across the prison estate.

Armed Forces: Carbon Emissions

Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle**

To ask His Majesty's Government what diplomatic efforts they are making to encourage the inclusion of carbon emissions from militaries in UNFCCC emissions reporting; and what progress they have made. [[HL3267](#)]

Lord Callanan: The UK Government encourages Parties to report to the UNFCCC on all relevant emissions, including those from military sources, in line with UNFCCC best practice. The UK sets its Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory in accordance with international

guidelines and emissions from some military sources (e.g. aircraft and shipping) are already included.

Asylum: Applications

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask His Majesty's Government whether staff newly recruited to conduct asylum interviews and make decisions on individual cases have been equipped with sufficient (1) training, and (2) experience, of the asylum system. [[HL3258](#)]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: We have implemented a recruitment and retention allowance helping us to maintain experienced asylum decision-makers. The Home Office have also developed an asylum academy to reduce the time to competence. We will continue to monitor and review this and its impact on attrition and attraction.

We are also building high performing teams, increasing the number of decision-makers and providing improved training and career progression opportunities to aid retention of staff.

We have a comprehensive training programme and mentoring framework in place to support new and existing decision makers which is delivered by a dedicated team of technical experts.

Asylum: Children

Asked by **Baroness Lister of Burtersett**

To ask His Majesty's Government when they expect to receive the report on age assessment of asylum-seeking children from the expert panel they established; and whether this report will be published. [[HL3244](#)]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: In December 2021, the Chief Scientific Adviser at the Home Office set up an independent Age Estimation Science Advisory Committee to provide her with independent scientific and associated ethical advice, recommendations for best practice and advice relating to issues raised by key stakeholders on the implementation of scientific methods of age assessment.

We are continuing to work with the committee to finalise their report and considering their advice alongside other sources.

Autonomous Weapons

Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle**

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Policy Paper Ambitious, safe, responsible: Our approach to the delivery of AI-enabled capability in Defence, published on 15 June, in particular the statement that "there must be context-appropriate human involvement in weapons which identify, select and attack targets", whether users need to understand the effects of using the weapons in each specific context for such use to be acceptable. [[HL3229](#)]

Baroness Goldie: The MOD has set out a clear commitment to develop and use AI-enabled military capabilities - including, potentially, weapons systems - safely, responsibly, and ethically. This includes ensuring that commanders and the operators of AI-enabled systems are trained to understand the appropriate parameters of use in relation to their specific domain and operating context.

Bill of Rights

Asked by Lord Carlile of Berriew

To ask His Majesty's Government what representations they have received from (1) other states, and (2) the UN Universal Periodic Review which took place on 10 November, regarding the Bill of Rights Bill. [HL3338]

Lord Bellamy: The UN's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a state driven process which involves a review of the human rights records of all UN Member States. The UK is firmly committed to the success of the UPR as an important mechanism for constructive peer review.

During the UK's UPR on 10 November a number of states made recommendations relating to Human Rights Act reform and the Bill of Rights. As is usual practice, a report compiling the recommendations made during the review will be published by the UN Human Rights Council in due course, and a full recording of the session is available on UN Web TV.

The Government regularly discusses matters of mutual interest with our international state partners, and we fully intend to maintain our leading role in the promotion and protection of human rights. The Bill of Rights will allow us to remain a State Party to the ECHR and fully avail ourselves of the margin of appreciation in the sensible application of our human rights laws.

Climate Change and Environment Protection

Asked by Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb

To ask His Majesty's Government further to the publication of Zero Hour's Nature and Climate Declaration on 1 November, what steps are they taking (1) to reduce the full scope of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions reductions in line with limiting global heating to 1.5 degrees Celsius, (2) to halt and reverse biodiversity decline by 2030, and (3) to deliver a more ambitious and integrated environmental protection and decarbonisation plan. [HL3278]

Lord Callanan: The Government is committed to delivering net zero emissions by 2050. This is consistent with the Paris Agreement goal to limit global warming to well below 2°C and pursue efforts towards 1.5°C.

The Environment Act 2021 commits the Government to halting the decline in species in England by 2030, in addition to setting at least one long term target for biodiversity. The Environment Act's package of new policies, alongside other measures including the Nature for Climate Fund and new Environmental Land

Management schemes, will help the Government to reach its targets and tackle climate change and biodiversity loss.

Defence Equipment: Procurement

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the UK's participation in the European Sky Shield Initiative on the UK's "Team Complex Weapons". [HL3243]

Baroness Goldie: The UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) is proactively engaging in the European Sky Shield Initiative in support of its current Land Ground Based Air Defence programme. In so doing, the UK MOD is looking to identify opportunities with its European partners to build on and strengthen the UK's Team Complex Weapons portfolio.

Ethiopia: Armed Conflict and Sexual Offences

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government how many survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) are scheduled to attend the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) ministerial conference in November; how many are invited to speak from the Tigray region of Ethiopia; whether the government of Ethiopia will be represented; and what safeguards they will put in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the survivors. [HL3224]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As a Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) Focus Country, we will highlight the effects of conflict in Ethiopia as part of the programme at the PSVI Conference from 28-29 November. We have invited a range of representatives, including from civil society and the Government, able to discuss the impacts of the conflict in Ethiopia.

Guided by the conference Survivor Advisory Group, we are working to ensure survivor perspectives are included throughout our planning and survivors have been invited to engage as speakers across the majority of conference sessions. All survivors attending and/or sitting on a conference panel are doing so by choice. The UK takes safeguarding extremely seriously, and has consulted extensively with survivors, survivor networks and support organisations on survivor participation, needs and care. Psychosocial support will be provided for anyone who may feel affected during the conference. We will also ensure support staff are adequately briefed to ensure survivors are safeguarded and signposted to additional support services where necessary.

Ethnic Groups and Migrants: Digital Technology

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the voluntary and community sector to

(1) support access, and (2) provide digital skills, for (a) migrant communities, and (b) ethnic minorities. [HL3264]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The voluntary and community sector plays a vital role in supporting people across the country in their everyday lives.

We recognise that digital skills and access are increasingly required to participate fully in society, and that digital exclusion makes it more difficult for people to use essential services.

To support access, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport continues to encourage operators to offer social tariffs, which provide low-cost mobile and broadband services for people on Universal Credit as well as other means-tested benefits. We continue to work closely with Ofcom, consumer groups, and the sector to raise awareness of these low-cost offers. For those unable to own a device with internet access, public libraries play an important role in providing access to the internet, with trained staff and volunteers to support users. The Department for Education's Digital Entitlement allows for adults with no or low digital skills (below level 1) to study for Essential Digital Skills Qualifications (EDSQs) for free.

The size of the challenge, however, means that we cannot tackle the digital divide on our own. The involvement of the voluntary and community sector is crucial, and support can be most effective where providers are able to tailor their support to local needs.

DCMS will continue to engage with the sector and across Government on this topic.

Excise Duties: Red Diesel

Asked by Baroness Mallalieu

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to review the prohibition of the use of red diesel for off-road purposes in relation to the equine industry. [HL3286]

Baroness Penn: The Government confirmed at Spring Budget 2021 that it would remove the entitlement to use red diesel from most sectors from April 2022.

The Government recognised that this would be a significant change for some businesses and ran a consultation to gather information from affected users on the expected impact of these tax changes and make sure it had not overlooked any exceptional reasons why other sectors should be allowed to continue to use red diesel beyond April 2022.

Having assessed the cases made by other sectors to retain their red diesel entitlement, the Government did not believe that they were compelling enough to outweigh the need to ensure fairness between the different users of diesel fuels, the Government's long-term environmental objectives and the need for the tax system to incentivise the development of greener alternatives to polluting fuels.

In response to high fuel prices, the Government announced a temporary 12-month cut to the duty on petrol and diesel of 5p per litre and an equivalent percentage cut on the rates for rebated fuels. Overall, this is a tax cut for consumers, including small businesses, worth around £2.4 billion in 2022-23.

As with all taxes, the Government keeps the red diesel entitlement under review.

Gambling Act 2005 Review

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask His Majesty's Government when the Gambling Act white paper will be published. [HL3259]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Gambling Act Review is an extensive, evidence-led review, which aims to ensure gambling regulation is fit for the digital age. We will publish a White Paper setting out our conclusions and next steps in the coming weeks.

HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Interpreters

Asked by Baroness Coussins

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the full independent review of qualifications and standards for court and tribunal spoken word interpreters, announced by Lord Wolfson of Tredegar on 12 January (HL Deb, col 1151), has been completed; and if so, when it will be published. [HL3341]

Lord Bellamy: This review is ongoing alongside a wider and comprehensive review of language service requirements which is currently being undertaken within my Department. We will, of course, publish the outcome of that review once it is complete.

Hospitality Sector: Conditions of Employment

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect the (1) pay, (2) conditions, and (3) employment rights, of workers in the hospitality sector, given increasing energy costs. [HL3302]

Lord Callanan: Over the past year, the Government has supported workers across the UK and in the hospitality sector to improve pay, conditions, and employment rights.

On pay and facing increasing energy costs, we have helped people and businesses with their energy bills. The Energy Bills Support Scheme is supporting millions of households with rising energy costs until April next year. We have also raised the national living wage which will be £10.42 in April 2023. This is the largest ever cash

increase and will ensure the lowest paid are fairly rewarded for their contribution to the economy.

On employment rights and conditions, the Government is backing five Private Members' Bills to support workers. This includes the Employment (Allocation of Tips) Bill, which will ensure that all tips go to hospitality staff and allows staff to bring a claim to an Employment Tribunal if businesses do not distribute well-earned service charges fairly.

The Government has also been working closely with the hospitality sector. The Hospitality and Tourism Skills Board is developing guidance for employers on good practice regarding working conditions and employee wellbeing and progression

Human Rights: Reform

Asked by Lord Carlile of Berriew

To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of the responses to its consultation on the Bill of Rights Bill supported (1) the proposal to repeal the Human Rights Act altogether, (2) the proposal to restrict positive obligations, (3) the proposal to diverge from the European Court on Human Rights' living instrument doctrine, and (4) the proposal to remove judicial power to interpret legislation in line with the European Convention of Human Rights. [HL3339]

Lord Bellamy: The Government's consultation response is available on gov.uk, where we gave a comprehensive breakdown of the responses to the consultation. The consultation sought views on proposals as well as key themes relating to revision and replacement of the Human Rights Act.

Asked by Lord Carlile of Berriew

To ask His Majesty's Government which of the provisions in the Bill of Rights Bill were recommended by the Independent Human Rights Act Review Panel. [HL3340]

Lord Bellamy: The Bill of Rights follows careful consideration of the work done by the Independent Human Rights Act Review panel. We are very grateful to the panel for its detailed work. In terms of specific provisions, the Bill of Rights takes forward the recommendation from the Review that remedial orders should not be used to amend the Act itself. The Bill also seeks to increase the prominence of the common law in relation to rights protection, which was a key theme of the panel's report.

More broadly, the Review's analysis helped inform our approach in those areas of the Bill that were covered by its Terms of Reference, which was narrower than the scope of the Bill of Rights.

Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy: Autonomous Weapons

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to carry out a public consultation to inform (1) the implementation of the Defence Artificial Intelligence Strategy, and (2) any update to the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy. [HL3231]

Baroness Goldie: We do not intend to undertake public consultation on the whole implementation of the AI Strategy, though we will continue testing aspects of the approach with a range of stakeholders. A Downing Street process is currently underway to update the Integrated Review led by Professor John Bew, the Prime Minister's special adviser for foreign affairs and defence. The update is expected to be published by the end of this year.

International Cooperation: Autonomous Weapons

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the United Nations General Assembly Statement on Lethal Autonomous Weapons systems on 21 October, what steps they are taking (1) to encourage cooperation between the other 69 signatories, and (2) to progress towards the elaboration of "the normative and operational framework regulating, where appropriate and necessary, autonomous weapons including through internationally agreed rules and limits". [HL3232]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: International discussions on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) fall under the auspices of the United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). This is the appropriate forum to address the challenges associated with the use of autonomy in weapon systems. The UK will advocate for a Group of Government Experts (GGE) on LAWS mandate renewal at this year's CCW Annual Conference. The UK will continue to play a proactive role in that group, developing and supporting options, alongside the international community, to establish norms and positive obligations to ensure the safe and responsible use of autonomy.

Local Government: Energy

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask His Majesty's Government how much has been claimed in energy efficiency grants for energy retrofit programmes by each local authority in each year since 2008. [HL3301]

Lord Callanan: Providing breakdowns of energy efficiency allocations for every local authority for each year since 2008 could only be provided at disproportionate cost. However, the most recent allocations to LAs from the Home Upgrade Grant, Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery, Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and Public Sector Decarbonisation schemes can be found on GOV.UK.

National Income: Cost of Living

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to return GDP to the level it was at prior to the increased cost of living. [HL3265]

Baroness Penn: The Government appreciates that many businesses are exposed to increased energy costs, driven by global factors. While GDP remains (in real terms) above its level a year ago, GDP fell in Q3 and underlying growth has slowed.

The Government has taken swift action to tackle the rising cost of energy caused by – in the most part – Putin's illegal war in Ukraine.

The Autumn Statement, delivered by the Chancellor, has demonstrated the Government's commitment to raising productivity and delivering sustainable growth. This will be underpinned by economic stability and sound public finances.

While there are no quick fixes; our long-term approach will provide the stable environment that businesses need to plan, invest, and grow and ensure that our public services have the resources they need to support the most vulnerable in our society.

Prisoners: Crime

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people currently in prison aged 80 or older are serving a sentence they originally received when aged (1) 15 to 17, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 39, (6) 40 to 49, (7) 50 to 59, (8) 60 to 69, and (9) 70 and older. [HL3336]

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask His Majesty's Government how many (1) males, and (2) females, aged (a) 15 to 17, (b) 18 to 20, (c) 21 to 24, (d) 25 to 29, (e) 30 to 39, (f) 40 to 49, (g) 50 to 59, (h) 60 to 69, (i) 70 to 79, and (j) 80 and older, are currently in prison, broken down by offence category. [HL3407]

Lord Bellamy: Please find the requested information in the attached data tables.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Data Table HL3336 [2022-11-28 HL3336.xlsx]

Data Table HL3407 [2022-11-28 HL3407.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-11-14/HL3336>

Prisons: Rehabilitation

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the finding in the HM Inspectorate and Probation report Offender Management in Custody, published on 2 November, that only 25 per cent of keywork sessions were delivered against the prescribed model in May, what is the current rate of the delivery of keywork sessions in each of the prisons where staff have been authorised to carry PAVA spray. [HL3309]

Lord Bellamy: HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has been rolling out PAVA incapacitant spray to all band 3-5 staff in the adult closed male estate and this is still under way. Staff require appropriate training to use PAVA and only prisons that have implemented the key work scheme – which is vital in building relationships between offenders and staff – will receive it.

The figures for delivery of key work quoted in the joint inspection report are the latest currently available.

Key work remains a priority for HMPPS, however, and has an important role in supporting improvements to prisons safety, reducing the risk of harm and re-offending and promoting community reintegration.

South Sudan: Peace Negotiations

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask His Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with the government of South Sudan regarding the peace process. [HL3238]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Poor implementation of South Sudan's peace agreement is driving violence and a humanitarian crisis. Our Ambassador in Juba regularly meets with South Sudanese Ministers to push for progress. The UK's Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan met with the South Sudanese Minister for the Presidency during his visit to London in September. During visits to Juba in July and August, the FCDO Director General for Africa and Latin America, Director for Africa and the UK's Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan met with members of the South Sudanese transitional government. The UK also raises concerns at lack of progress, at the UN Security Council and through Troika (UK, US, Norway) or joint Troika and EU statements.

State Retirement Pensions: Pay

Asked by Lord Goddard of Stockport

To ask His Majesty's Government how has the value of the basic state pension altered as a percentage of average national earnings since 2010. [HL3239]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The basic State Pension rate as a percentage of mean earnings is set out below.

<i>Date of Uprating</i>	<i>Basic State Pension Rate as a percentage of mean earnings (%)</i>
April 2010	16.3
April 2011	16.9
April 2012	17.7
April 2013	17.8
April 2014	18.2
April 2015	18.5
April 2016	18.5
April 2017	18.5
April 2018	18.4
April 2019	18.4
April 2020	19.0
April 2021	18.9

Source: [Abstract of DWP benefit rate statistics 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings: [Earnings and hours worked, all employees: ASHE Table 1 - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#).

The basic State Pension is payable to those who reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016. It should be noted that some individuals may also be receiving the earnings-related additional State Pension (SERPS and/or State

Second Pension (S2P)) or if they were contracted out of the additional State Pension, a private pension instead. Some individuals may also be receiving Graduated Retirement Benefit.

Sudan: Violence

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask His Majesty's Government what humanitarian support they have provided to the government of Sudan, following recent violence in the Blue Nile state. [[HL3236](#)]

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Sudan regarding recent outbreaks of violence in the Blue Nile State. [[HL3237](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We condemn the recent violence in the Blue Nile State and have met with national authorities to urge de-escalation and to allow unfettered humanitarian access; a message our Ambassador to Sudan reiterated in a tweet on 21 October. On 27 October, the UK along with partners, also secured an Any Other Business (AOB) discussion on the violence in the UN Security Council to highlight the responsibility of the Sudanese authorities to protect civilians. During initial violence in Blue Nile State in July, the UK provided around £550,000 humanitarian support to those affected in the region through our partners, including the multi-donor Sudan Humanitarian Fund. We continue to monitor the situation closely and press Sudanese authorities to deliver their obligation to protect civilians.

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