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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>
Baroness Stowell of Beeston	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office and Department for Transport
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Baroness Altmann	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Whip
Lord Bridges of Headley	Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change, Wales Office and Whip
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Whip
Lord Dunlop	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Whip
Lord Faulks	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
Lord Freud	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Deputy Chief Whip and Spokesman for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Lord O'Neill of Gatley	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
Lord Price	Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
Baroness Shields	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture Media and Sport and Home Office
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Verma	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for International Development
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Monday, 11 July 2016

Deputy Chair of the Boundary Commission for Wales

[HLWS83]

Lord Faulks: My right honourable friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Michael Gove) has made the following Written Statement.

"I should like to inform the House that I have made the following appointment under Schedule 1 to the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986:

- The Honourable Mr Justice Lewis has been appointed as Deputy Chair of the Boundary Commission for Wales, effective from 1 August 2016 until 31 July 2019."

Government Amendments to Wales Bill: Analysis of English Votes for English Laws

[HLWS84]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Wales (Alun Cairns) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement today (11 July 2016):

I am pleased to announce the publication of analysis of English Votes for English Laws in relation to Government amendments to the Wales Bill at Commons Committee.

The English Votes for English Laws process applies to public bills in the House of Commons. To support the process, the Government has agreed that it will provide information to assist the Speaker in considering whether to certify that Bill or any of its provisions for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws.

The memorandum provides an assessment of tabled Government amendments to the Wales Bill, for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws, ahead of the second day of Commons Committee. The Department's assessment is the amendments do not change the territorial application of the Bill.

This analysis reflects the position should all the Government amendments be accepted.

The memorandum can be found on the Bill documents page of the Parliament website at: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/wales.html> and I have deposited a copy in the Libraries of the House.

Post-16 Skills Plan

[HLWS80]

Lord Nash: My honourable friend the Minister of State for Skills (Nick Boles) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

As a country, one of the most important challenges we face is reforming the skills system. Such reform is crucial if we are to ensure our country's future prosperity and improve the life chances of millions of people.

We have a critical need for highly skilled people, trained effectively, to grow the economy and raise productivity. Weaknesses in the UK's skills base have contributed to its long-standing productivity gap with France, Germany and the US. While international comparisons highlight our strong performance at graduate and higher skills levels, we perform poorly at the intermediate, skilled technician level. Indeed the UK is forecast to fall from 22nd to 28th out of 33 OECD countries for these intermediate-level skills by 2020 [i]. Following the vote to leave the European Union, it will become more important than ever that we have a highly skilled workforce that boosts the productivity of the country and allows us to trade competitively across the world.

There is also a compelling moral case for change. Skilled employment leads to prosperity and security for individuals, while unskilled employment often means the opposite. We need to give all young people and adults the opportunity to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for the world of work.

We made significant improvements to the skills system in the last Parliament. We grew investment in apprenticeships, for example, and removed from performance tables thousands of poor-quality qualifications, that offered little or no advantage in the jobs market, as result of the Wolf Report [ii]. But there are still serious issues which must be tackled. Technical education remains the poor relation of academic education, and there are key challenges we must overcome, including that:

- standards and qualifications are not always set by employers; instead they are too often set by a confusing mixture of awarding organisations and intermediary bodies which have not provided an effective voice for business;
- the system is too complex and often difficult to navigate for both young people and adults looking to retrain; and
- we have too little dedicated technical education at advanced levels (levels 3, 4 and 5) to meet this country's need for technician-level skills, and study programmes are not always designed to deliver what is needed to move to skilled employment.

On Friday 8 July I published, and laid before Parliament, a Post-16 Skills Plan. This is our ambitious framework to support young people and adults in England to secure a lifetime of sustained skilled employment and meet the needs of our growing and rapidly changing economy.

The Skills Plan builds directly on the recommendations of an independent panel on technical education. The panel was chaired by Lord Sainsbury of Turville and its members were: Baroness Wolf of Dulwich, Sir Roy

Griffiths Professor of Public Sector Management at King's College London; Bev Robinson, Principal and Chief Executive at Blackpool and The Fylde College; Simon Blagden, Non-executive Chairman at Fujitsu UK; and Steven West, Vice-Chancellor and President at University of the West of England. The panel consulted widely, its deliberations were non-political and its conclusions are pragmatic. Its recommendations draw from international best practice and will place our system on a par with the best in the world.

Together, the Skills Plan and Sainsbury report set out a holistic strategy to tackle the current flaws with the skills system by:

- building on the apprenticeship 'Trailblazer' approach by putting employers at the heart of the system and empowering them to take the lead in setting the standards in technical education;
- ensuring that, alongside the already well-established academic option, this country has a high-quality technical option which aligns apprenticeships and college-based learning;
- building on the experience of other countries with successful skills systems by developing a new framework of 15 technical routes to skilled employment, with each route grouping together skilled occupations where training requirements are similar;
- developing a strong, dynamic, financially sustainable and locally responsive training provider base through area reviews and other reforms; and
- putting in place a wider set of systemic changes, including making more data available and reforming careers guidance to inform student choice, and ensuring we have the right funding and accountability arrangements in place.

The Skills Plan is our overarching framework, with a common set of principles and a guiding vision. I am confident that it can lead to lasting change. We will work closely with employers, colleges and other training providers to develop detailed plans, and publish more detail later in the year.

The Report of the Independent Panel on Technical Education will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

[i] UKCES (2014) *UK Skill Levels and International Competitiveness*, 2013 available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-skills-levels-international-comparisons-and-competitiveness>

[ii] *The Review of Vocational Education – The Wolf Report (2011)*, available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-vocational-education-the-wolf-report>.

Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Bill

[HLWS81]

Lord O'Neill of Gatley: I have made a statement under Section 19(1)(a) of the Human Rights Act 1998 that, in my view, the provisions of the Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Bill are compatible with the convention

rights. A copy of the statement has been placed in the Library of the House.

UK Steel Industry

[HLWS82]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (Sajid Javid) has today made the following statement.

Since Tata Steel announced its intention to restructure its UK operations, the Government has worked closely with Tata, potential buyers and other stakeholders including the trade unions and the Welsh Government, to ensure a sustainable future for the business. We remain committed to that objective, and to ensuring the continuation of primary steelmaking in South Wales.

Following the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU, and a review of the bids received for Tata Steel UK, the Board of Tata Group announced on Friday 8 July its intention additionally to explore options for retaining ownership of the business with strategic partners, including through a possible joint venture with ThyssenKrupp AG. Discussions are at a preliminary stage.

Tata has also announced its intention to sell separately its speciality steel business based in Rotherham and Stocksbridge, as well as two mills that produce steel pipes based in Hartlepool. Around 2,000 of Tata's UK workforce are employed in the businesses that will be sold. None of the businesses that will be sold are supplied with steel from Port Talbot, and are separate business units within the group.

I met the Chairman of Tata Group in Mumbai on 8 July. During that meeting, Tata Group confirmed again their commitment to achieving an outcome for their UK operations that provides the business with the best long term prospects for a competitive and sustainable future.

The Government is committed to working with Tata to achieve that objective. We will remain in close contact with Tata during the sale process for the speciality steel and pipes business units, and as they develop their plans for the strip products business. The Government's offer of support via an equity stake and/or loans on commercial terms to a future owner of the strip products business, which includes the operations at Port Talbot, remains.

Separately, the Government continues to work with the wider steel sector to improve the business environment in the UK, with a focus on ensuring its competitiveness in the long term. The Steel Council met for the second time on 8 June to consider the recommendations of its working groups. The vast majority of these recommendations are reflected in the UK Steel manifesto which was published last week, which I welcome.

We are already taking forward many of these recommendations and the Council has agreed to develop a common vision for the future of the sector in the UK, which will provide clarity around what Government, the companies and the workforce must do to ensure the steel

industry remains competitive and more sustainable in the future. My Department will shortly commission further

research to assist the sector in the development of its vision.

Written Answers

Monday, 11 July 2016

Agriculture: Subsidies

Asked by Lord Willoughby de Broke

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the announcement by the EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Phil Hogan, on 8 June of an extension until 15 October of the payment window for the Rural Payment Agency (RPA) to make payments to qualifying farmers is not yet available on the RPA website. [HL807]

Asked by Lord Willoughby de Broke

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 17 June (HL446), why that answer did not include the information that on 8 June the EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Phil Hogan, announced an extension until 15 October of the payment window for the Rural Payment Agency to make payments to qualifying farmers. [HL808]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Commissioner Hogan announced his intention to allow applications from Member States for CAP direct payments to be made after the closure of the payment window without incurring the penalties that would otherwise fall on paying agencies for making late payments. Defra and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) noted this announcement.

Once we have received information from all UK paying agencies concerning the value of payments made by 30 June, we will be in a position to consider whether the UK should submit a request for such penalties to be waived.

The RPA remains focused on getting top up 2015 BPS payments to those that received bridging payments, out as promptly as possible.

Air Space

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to introduce measures for airspace modernisation. [HL842]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's airspace modernisation plan is set out in the Future Airspace Strategy which was agreed in 2011. This long-term strategy is now being implemented by the aviation industry and overseen by the Future Airspace Strategy Deployment Steering Group which is jointly chaired by the Civil Aviation Authority and NATS.

Aircraft: Air Conditioning

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether jet engine oils and hydraulic and de-icing fluids contain

substances that attract harmonised and notified hazard classifications under the CPL Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008. [HL872]

Lord Freud: Suppliers of jet engine oils, hydraulic and de-icing fluids are required to provide information on their products and on certain hazardous components under the direct-acting EU CLP Regulation. Some hazardous components/substances in these oils and fluids may attract harmonised hazard classifications under the CLP Regulation.

Information for users of these products about hazardous components/substances must be included in the safety data sheets required by the REACH Regulation ((EC) No 1907/2006) and, where appropriate, on the labels for these products before the products can be placed on the market in the EU.

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Department for Transport has ever consulted ExxonMobil and other lubricant manufacturers about whether they have ever undertaken inhalation toxicity testing of heated engine oils as a whole, and if so, with what results. [HL873]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Committee of Toxicity (COT) referred to this and other research on pyrolysed oils in the 2007 Statement that it published after being commissioned by the Department for Transport to undertake a scientific review of data submitted by the British Airline Pilots' Association on the possible effects on aircrew health of oil/hydraulic fluid smoke/fume contamination incidents in commercial aircraft.

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether incidences of fumes and contaminated air in the cockpit or in the passenger compartment of commercial aircraft that have, or could have, endangered the aircraft, its occupants or any other person are required to be reported under Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1018. [HL874]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Yes. The Regulation does mandate the reporting of events such as those the Noble Lady sets out.

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 20 June (HL503), on what basis they state that European Aviation Safety Agency certification standard 25.1309c does not require warning systems for engine oil that leaks onto hot aircraft engines over which cabin "bleed air" is drawn. [HL875]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) certification standard CS 25.1309c requires a warning only in the case where an

unsafe condition requires immediate corrective action by the flight crew.

By virtue of the engine manufacturer's compliance with certification standard CS E.510 for the engine, the aircraft manufacturer is able to demonstrate that an unsafe condition requiring immediate corrective action will not exist under CS 25.1309c. Ensuring compliance with these requirements is the responsibility of EASA.

*Asked by **The Countess of Mar***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 20 June (HL503), and in the light of the fact that there are no detection systems fitted in commercial aircraft to indicate the presence of fumes, how pilots or crew with little or no sense of smell are expected to be able to identify the presence of fumes in cabin air that might constitute a potential safety incident. [HL876]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Anosmia (complete loss of smell) is rare and many of the medical conditions/medications which may cause this are incompatible with pilot medical certification. Hyposmia (reduction in sense of smell) is most commonly associated with acute or chronic upper respiratory tract infections (URTI) - crew who have a significant URTI should not be on duty.

Even if someone did have little, or no sense of smell, there are other indications of the occurrence of a fumes event, such as the presence of smoke or a visible haze. In addition, any fumes event associated with bleed air contamination would be distributed throughout the cockpit/cabin, so detection does not rely on the sense of smell of one individual.

Any pilot experiencing symptoms of possible cabin air contamination, such as eye or throat irritation, should follow the standard operating procedure and wear their goggles and oxygen mask, regardless of whether they can smell anything - particularly if they are aware that they have a poor sense of smell.

There is currently no evidence of toxicity as a result of fumes events that would justify installation of monitors (even if monitors suitable for routine use on aircraft were available).

Electric Vehicles

*Asked by **Baroness Randerson***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many electric vehicles they estimate will be using British roads by 2030. [HL841]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: There are currently over sixty thousand ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) on the road in the UK. The Government has the goal that by 2040 all new cars and vans will be zero emission vehicles. The uptake trajectory between now and then will depend on a range of factors including technological developments, consumer attitudes, international regulations and Government incentives, but by 2030 we

would expect ULEVs to be firmly into the mass market. The Government will be spending more than £600 million by 2020 to support uptake and manufacturing of ULEVs in the UK.

EU Withdrawal

*Asked by **Lord Lester of Herne Hill***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will seek parliamentary approval before deciding whether to invoke Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. [HL790]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: It is a matter for the Government, and the new Prime Minister, to decide whether there should be a Parliamentary vote before the UK notifies the European Council of its intention to withdraw from the EU.

*Asked by **Lord Lester of Herne Hill***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Scottish legislative consent is a necessary condition before Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty can be invoked on behalf of the UK. [HL792]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: No, a legislative consent motion is not required.

European Parliament Members

*Asked by **Lord Hylton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the result of the EU referendum, what is the current position of the British members of the European Parliament. [HL813]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While the UK remains a member of the EU, we retain the rights and obligations of membership.

British members of the European Parliament were elected to serve their constituents and will be able to do so until the UK leaves the EU.

Financial Services

*Asked by **Viscount Waverley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they and the Bank of England will be taking to protect and promote (1) the City of London, and (2) Edinburgh, as financial centres until negotiations to exit the EU are completed. [HL801]

Lord O'Neill of Gatley: The Chancellor has met with financial institutions this week to discuss the impact of the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union.

Britain's economy and financial system are fundamentally strong. Action by the government and the Bank of England over the last six years has substantially strengthened the resilience of the financial system, and the authorities have all the necessary tools in place to protect financial stability.

The UK is a leading global financial centre serving not just Britain or Europe, but the entire world. It has natural strengths such as a central time zone and the English language, together with an unrivalled pool of firms and investors, supported by world leading legal and professional services. Major banks from across the globe have bases in the UK, and the UK has the fourth highest share of cross-border banking. It is also fast establishing itself as a global hub for renminbi, rupee, Islamic finance, green finance and FinTech business.

Formal negotiations with the EU will not begin until the UK triggers Article 50. In the meantime, and during the negotiations that will follow, there will be no change to people's rights to travel and work, and to the way our goods and services are traded, or to the way our economy and financial system is regulated.

The government is committed to deepening relationships with new and established trade partners. Earlier this week the Chancellor laid out plans to build a highly competitive economy by targeting a corporation tax rate of less than 15%, focusing on a new push for investment from China, ensuring support for bank lending, redoubling efforts to invest in the Northern Powerhouse and maintaining the UK's fiscal credibility.

The government will also maintain an open and constructive dialogue with the UK financial services industry, including through the Financial Services Trade and Investment Board, which is tasked with boosting and promoting the UK's financial services competitiveness position and supporting jobs. Government and industry collaboration will continue to play a central role in delivering a global, sustainable, innovative and competitive UK financial services industry that continues to go from strength to strength.

Forests

*Asked by **Baroness Byford***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the efficacy of the three-day interval between the notification and arrival of forest reproductive material in preventing damage to, or infection of, existing forestry. [HL776]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Forest Reproductive Material (Great Britain) Regulations 2002 regulate the marketing of forest reproductive material (FRM). There is no notification period for the introduction of FRM so no such assessment has been carried out.

The Plant and Tree Notification System requirements relates to the movement of certain tree species from other EU member states and extends to oak, plane, sweet chestnut, pine, elm, prunus and ash trees (although no movements of ash trees are permitted at present, due to ash dieback restrictions).

The scheme is intended to help the Animal and Plant Health Agency's Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate build intelligence about particular trades, particularly those where there is a risk of introducing harmful

organisms, and to help arrange targeted inspections of such trees. The information is also valuable in the event of an outbreak, to facilitate tracing of trees which may be implicated, and to help inform the development of Defra policy. The scheme is not restricted to trees intended for forestry purposes.

Notification of importation of plants and trees should be before or within 5 days of the arrival of the consignment, detailing the planned destination in England or Wales.

Health Services: Reciprocal Arrangements

*Asked by **Lord Laird***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 13 June (HL566), what assessment they have made of why the UK has claimed £49,736,125 from EEA countries and Switzerland for the cost of the NHS providing treatment to people for whom they are responsible under EU law, but has reimbursed EEA countries and Switzerland £674,418,036 for the cost of providing treatment to people for whom the UK is responsible under EU law in 2014–15. [HL845]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Because of European Union healthcare rules, millions of United Kingdom citizens who work, visit or retire to other European countries can receive the free or reduced cost healthcare they need. That is what we are paying the £674 million for.

Some 80% of this (over £500 million) is for our pensioners who chose to retire to Europe.

Many more of our pensioners choose to retire to other European Economic Area countries than pensioners from those countries retiring to the UK, it is therefore inevitable that we will pay more to cover healthcare costs of our pensioners.

*Asked by **Lord Laird***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 13 June (HL566), what the calculation systems are for payments by the UK to France, Ireland and Spain for the cost of providing treatment to people for whom the United Kingdom is responsible under European Union law. [HL913]

*Asked by **Lord Laird***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 13 June (HL566), for how many UK citizens currently residing in France, Ireland and Spain they are responsible, and for how many citizens from those countries currently residing in the UK are France, Ireland and Spain responsible respectively. [HL914]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Other European Economic Area (EEA) countries and Switzerland reimburse the United Kingdom for the cost of the National Health Service providing treatment to people they are responsible for under European Union law, including UK nationals

insured in another EEA country or Switzerland. In the same way, the Department, on behalf of the UK Government, reimburses other EEA countries and Switzerland for the cost of providing healthcare treatment to people we are responsible for under EU law, irrespective of nationality.

As insurability under EU law is not determined on the basis of nationality, it is not possible to provide information on the number of citizens from each country covered by these rules.

Payment arrangements from the UK to France, Spain and Ireland are as follows:

France:

- All categories of insured persons: Actual costs (meaning the UK is billed for actual healthcare usage)

Spain:

- Temporary Visitors: Actual costs
- All other categories: Average costs (a lump sum is billed, irrespective of the amount of healthcare received)

Ireland:

- Temporary Visitors (not including planned treatment claims or workers): Formula agreement
- Planned Treatment claims: Actual costs
- Workers: Waiver agreement between the two countries
- All other categories: Average costs

The decision on whether to bill on the basis of average costs is for individual EEA countries to make.

Asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 13 June (HL566), what assessment they have made of the discrepancy between the total claims made by the UK against EEA countries and Switzerland and the total claims made against the UK by EEA countries and Switzerland. [HL959]

Lord Prior of Brampton: There is no discrepancy, merely an imbalance due to demographic factors. European Union healthcare rules ensure that millions of United Kingdom citizens who work, visit or retire to other European countries can receive the free or reduced cost healthcare they need. Some 80% of the UK's European Economic Area healthcare bill is for our pensioners who chose to retire to Europe.

As many more of our pensioners choose to retire to other EEA countries than pensioners from those countries retiring to the UK, it is inevitable we will pay more to cover the healthcare costs of people insured by the UK than we will receive from other EEA countries. People from Europe who choose to live, work and pay tax in the UK are fully covered by the National Health Service.

All EEA countries, including the UK, have a legal obligation to pay agreed claims relating to healthcare treatment provided. Once both sides are satisfied that such claims are accurate, they are paid in full.

Heart Diseases

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the implementation of NICE's commissioning toolkit for the use of natriuretic peptides assessment in primary care. [HL814]

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase the number of heart failure patients who have access to heart failure specialist nurses. [HL815]

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to increase patients' access to specialist multi-disciplinary teams to improve care for heart failure patients in the community. [HL818]

Lord Prior of Brampton: NHS England is working with key partners to ensure better co-ordination and integration of all services with the aim of delivering person-centred and coordinated care which is tailored to the needs and preferences of the individual, their carer and family.

In particular, to encourage better practice in the caring for heart failure patients, NHS England has established a best practice tariff for acute heart failure. It is also working with Health Education England to explore ways of improving the provision of and increasing access to echocardiography, which is used for the diagnosis of heart failure.

To help the NHS understand what a good quality service looks like, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) publish quality standards which define best practice within a topic area and it has published quality standards for acute and chronic heart failure. NHS England expects all commissioners and providers to take account of quality standards in the services that are delivered to patients.

NICE has developed a commissioning toolkit for the use of natriuretic peptides assessment in primary care for suspected heart failure. It has also produced guidance on acute heart failure and chronic heart failure, both of which cover the use of natriuretic peptides.

NICE guidance and quality standards are published online only, but due to the complexity and length of their content, they cannot be included as attachments.

Helicopters: Greater London

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will increase the minimum permitted flying height for helicopters in central London with a view to improving safety and reducing noise and air pollution. [HL869]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government keeps the operational requirements for helicopters under constant review, but has no plans to make any adjustments at the present time.

Landfill

Asked by Baroness Parminter

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of leakage at landfill sites in Britain, and what plans they have to investigate landfill sites to identify any that are leaking. [HL844]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Environment Agency is responsible for regulating landfill sites that hold an environmental permit, which includes all operational and some closed sites. Operators of landfill sites must comply with their permit conditions and these will normally include a requirement to monitor emissions or leakage. The Environment Agency assesses compliance with permit conditions on an ongoing site-specific basis.

The monitoring and management of historic landfill sites that are no longer operating under a permit is a matter for local authorities under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Government does not hold these records and has therefore not made an assessment of leakage from these sites.

Members: Security

Asked by Lord Evans of Weardale

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether concerns of MPs about their personal security have adversely affected their confidence in carrying out the full range of their parliamentary duties. [HL810]

Lord Bridges of Headley: It is integral to the functioning of our democracy that MPs, Peers, and Ministers are able to carry out the duties without fear for their safety, or that of their staff. The personal security of MP's is a matter for the House Authorities.

Merchant Shipping

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they consider merchant shipping part of the UK's critical national infrastructure; and what advice they give to UK shipping companies about cybersecurity. [HL915]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Whilst merchant shipping is vital to the well-being of the country, individual vessels are not considered part of the UK's critical national infrastructure, as this term tends to refer to fixed physical infrastructure. But transport as a whole is designated as a critical sector for the UK.

The Department for Transport regularly liaises with both the ports and shipping industries to address cyber security concerns. A Code of Practice for Ports is

scheduled to be published in July 2016. Research into cyber vulnerabilities on vessels has also taken place with the co-operation of shipping companies and it is anticipated that a Code of Practice will be published in due course. In the meantime, we are also working with the International Maritime Organization to address global concerns. Guidelines produced by industry are currently being discussed by the IMO and are available on the Baltic and International Maritime Council website.

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have made for bilateral and multilateral aid to the Palestinian Authority after the UK has left the EU. [HL796]

Baroness Verma: The Prime Minister has been clear that the negotiation for Britain's future relationship with Europe will need to begin under a new Prime Minister, and we have now got to look at all the detailed arrangements. In the meantime, Departments continue working to deliver the Government agenda.

Personal Independence Payment

Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Atos and Capita about introducing audio recordings of Personal Independence Payment assessments. [HL931]

Baroness Altmann: There are no current contractual obligations for Personal Independence Payment assessment providers (Atos and Capita) to provide an audio-recording of consultations. Claimants may use their own equipment to record their face-to-face consultation should they wish, subject to any reasonable conditions the Department place on such recordings.

We regularly keep our position on recording under review and will be having further dialogue with the Assessment Providers on this point.

Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they monitor Personal Independence Payment assessments for accuracy. [HL932]

Baroness Altmann: The Department is committed to ensuring that all Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claimants receive high quality, objective, fair and accurate assessments. The Department closely monitors all aspects of the process including the performance of the assessment providers, Atos Healthcare and Capita.

From 1st July 2016, we implemented an independent audit of PIP throughout Great Britain. This covers an audit of assessments carried out by our providers to ensure that the advice they provide to the Department's

decision makers is of suitable quality, is fully explained and is justified.

*Asked by **Baroness Thomas of Winchester***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they ensure that all medical reports presented by claimants at Personal Independence Payment assessments are read by assessors. [HL933]

Baroness Altmann: Health Professionals must support their evaluation of the claimant's health condition by an examination of all submitted materials thereby ensuring that the information provided to the Department's Decision Makers is fully explained and justified.

The Department closely monitors all aspects of the process including the performance of Health Professionals to ensure that the advice they provide to the Department's Decision Makers is of suitable quality.

*Asked by **Baroness Thomas of Winchester***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether all Personal Independence Payment assessment centres are accessible for disabled people. [HL934]

Baroness Altmann: All Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment sites must be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 with suitable ground floor accommodation available. The assessment providers are required to ensure that the needs of all PIP claimants are considered, including proximity to public transport routes and access to suitable parking.

Before attending a face-to-face consultation, claimants are informed that they can alert their assessment provider of any additional requirements that they may have and the providers will meet any such reasonable requests.

Where appropriate, assessments may also be carried out in a claimant's home.

Population: Statistics

*Asked by **Lord Berkeley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the Office of National Statistics' statistical bulletin Population Estimates for UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2015 published on 23 June was not subject to purdah before the EU referendum. [HL774]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UKSA Response [Draft Response to HL774 v2 (2) (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-06-27/HL774>

Post Offices

*Asked by **Baroness Burt of Solihull***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in each month since May 2005, (1) what was the total size of the Post Office network, and (2) how many post office closures took place. [HL1036]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: I am pleased to say that branches open an extra 200,000 hours a week since the start of the Post Office's transformation programme and customer satisfaction with the network is high.

Management and provision of the Post Office network is the operational responsibility of the Post Office. I have asked Paula Vennells, the Chief Executive of Post Office Limited, to write to the noble Baroness on this matter. A copy of her reply will be placed in the libraries of the House.

Public Sector: Procurement

*Asked by **Viscount Waverley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the result of the EU referendum, whether British companies can still tender freely and on equal terms for active public procurement opportunities in other EU member states; and whether they will be able to do so (1) after Article 50 is invoked, and (2) up until negotiations for the UK's withdrawal from the EU are concluded. [HL804]

*Asked by **Viscount Waverley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the result of the EU referendum, whether companies from other EU member states can still tender freely and on equal terms for active public procurement opportunities in the UK; and whether they will be able to do so (1) after Article 50 is invoked, and (2) up until negotiations for the UK's withdrawal from the EU are concluded. [HL805]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The current public procurement rules will continue to apply until the UK has left the EU following the successful conclusion of exit negotiations.

Railways: Finance

*Asked by **Baroness Randerson***

To ask Her Majesty's Government by what date they expect fairer charges for open access operators on railways to be introduced by the Office of Rail and Road. [HL878]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Setting the framework for track access charges is a matter for the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). As the Secretary of State made clear in his Written statement on 17 March, the Government would like to see reforms as soon as possible to ensure a level playing field between operators, and that open access operators pay a fairer contribution to the costs they

impose on the network. ORR are considering options as part of their Periodic Review 2018 process, and we consider that any changes to the charging framework could be in place for the start of Control Period 6 in 2019.

Railways: Wales

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they estimate the Cardiff Rail Operating Centre will be commissioned. [HL840]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Cardiff Regional Operating Centre opened in 2010 and has been signaling trains since that date.

Roads: Accidents

Asked by Baroness Byford

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether companies employed to remove crashed vehicles have a legal obligation to collect detached parts of the vehicles from hedgerows, ditches and property around crash sites. [HL778]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The company employed by Highways England in respect of vehicle recoveries does not have a legal obligation to remove debris from, or around, the strategic road network.

Rwanda: Abortion

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Rwanda concerning reports that women are being imprisoned for having an abortion after being raped. [HL794]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We are aware of concerns that it is difficult for women in Rwanda to secure the required sign-off by a judge and two doctors for an abortion, and that this may be driving victims of rape to seek illegal abortions.

We have been clear that Rwanda must do more to give citizens the full civil and political rights that they deserve, including through a justice system which takes into account the challenges faced by women and girls and delivers for victims of crime.

We have also been working jointly with the Government of Rwanda to deliver a robust drive against gender-based violence. I refer my noble Friend to the answer that the noble Baroness Verma gave on 20 June regarding the Department for International Development's £4.6 million programme to empower women and girls and tackle the drivers of gender-based violence.

Southern

Asked by Viscount Goschen

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Southern Rail about the ongoing disruption to service on their network. [HL831]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are in regular dialogue with Govia Thameslink Rail (GTR) who provide Southern services about the performance on their network. We are determined to see services improve and are working hard with the industry to achieve this.

Stem Cells

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 28 June (HL663), what policy the UK Stem Cell Bank has implemented regarding the process for depositing cell lines; what has been the maximum time interval to date between publication of any scientific papers describing the derivation of stem cells and deposition of corresponding samples in the UK Stem Cell Bank; and how the UK Stem Cell Bank has assisted researchers in complying with the policy of Nature that authors must make data and materials publicly available upon publication. [HL859]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The UK Stem Cell Bank's policy regarding the process for depositing stem cell lines is outlined in the United Kingdom Code of Practice for the Use of Human Stem Cell Lines. A copy of the Code of Practice is attached. Additional guidance on the process is provided by the Bank on their website and by the Independent Steering Committee which oversees the operation of the Bank and is supported by the Medical Research Council (MRC).

Information related to the publication timing of scientific papers is not routinely monitored.

The Bank via the Steering Committee has four mechanisms for making data and materials available on request. Researchers may:

(i) apply for project approvals to include accessing stem cell lines held by the Bank;

(ii) apply to access stem cell lines held by other parties in the UK (subject to approval from the lines' owners);

(iii) UK researchers apply for approval to import stem cell lines from overseas (subject to derivation of those lines meeting UK standards of ethical informed consent); and

(iv) Overseas researchers may apply for approval to export stem cell lines from the UK for use in their research.

Further information on these processes is available from the websites of the Bank and of the MRC. This guidance is accompanied by a UK Register of stem cell lines held by the Bank, including information on embryonic stem cell lines approved for use in the UK.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Code of Practice [Code of practice for the use of human stem cell lines.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-06-29/HL859>

Thames Tideway Tunnel

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Thames Tideway Tunnel project will send clean excavated materials to landfill permit sites as a waste or to be beneficially reused as a material or product as recovery in accordance with its commitment to reduce waste to landfill in the development consent order. [HL825]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Tideway, the infrastructure provider set up to finance and deliver the Thames Tideway Tunnel, has been assessing several sites identified through the Development Consent Order (DCO) process to receive the tunnel excavated material.

Amongst other things this assessment looks at maximising the beneficial use of excavated material and its transport by river to meet environmental commitments made under the DCO. The relevant site operators have already made a number of applications to the Environment Agency (EA). The type of permit these sites require will be assessed by the EA in line with its guidance. This guidance is currently being revised following a recent Court of Appeal judgment which in some cases may lead to the reclassification of some waste activities as disposal rather than recovery. It is possible for appropriate disposal to deliver beneficial use such as habitat creation.

UK Membership of EU: Referendums

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what legal advice they have received about whether the result of the EU referendum is legally binding. [HL803]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), has been clear in his statement on 27 June 2016. The British people have voted to leave the European Union, and that the decision must be respected.

West Coast Railway Line

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what research or analysis they undertook prior to consulting on proposals to cut train services to intermediate stations on the InterCity West Coast service. [HL879]

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have assessed the impact on Birmingham Airport of a reduction in train services to Birmingham International, including the impact on the percentage of passengers who access the airport by rail and by car respectively. [HL881]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Rail services between London and the Midlands are currently provided by the West Midlands and InterCity West Coast franchises. These franchises are due to be replaced when they expire in October 2017 and April 2018 respectively. The Department has completed a consultation in respect of the replacement West Midlands franchise, and commenced another in respect of InterCity West Coast in May. The outcomes of those consultations will be used to inform what we ask the operator of the new franchise to provide. This information, including the key challenges and opportunities that the Department has identified for those franchises, will be published in due course.

Neither consultation proposed cutting train services. We expect potential bidders to plan their train services to meet the needs of passengers at the stations they serve considering how best to serve and link markets and improve service reliability. To make sure their plans best reflect the needs of the franchise we are seeking views from the public and stakeholders on the ICWC franchise on:

- any direct journeys currently provided by ICWC that they would want to see protected at a minimum level; and
- priorities for potential changes to train services, such as speeding up service for long-distance passengers, for example by changing stops at low-use stations or adjusting the level of service.

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have assessed proposals from the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority that more carriages should be added to trains on the InterCity West Coast service to reduce overcrowding. [HL880]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Rail services between London and the Midlands are currently provided by the West Midlands and InterCity West Coast franchises. These franchises are due to be replaced when they expire in October 2017 and April 2018 respectively. The Department has completed a consultation in respect of the replacement West Midlands franchise, and commenced another in respect of InterCity West Coast in May. The outcomes of those consultations will be used to inform what we ask the operator of the new franchise to provide. This information, including the key challenges and opportunities that the Department has identified for those franchises, will be published in due course.

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