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**Notes:**

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

## ANSWERS

### BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

#### ■ Apprentices

**Gordon Marsden:**

[\[39515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on specific support under the Youth Obligation programme to enable young people with backgrounds of homelessness to access apprenticeships.

**Nick Boles:**

*[Holding answer 9 June 2016]:*

Preparations for the Youth Obligation have been discussed at the Earn or Learn Taskforce. These discussions have included how to help Youth Obligation participants of all backgrounds into apprenticeships.

#### ■ Apprentices: Special Educational Needs

**Maria Caulfield:**

[\[40175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps he is taking to support apprenticeship providers to take on people who have special educational needs and disabilities.

**Nick Boles:**

We are committed to ensuring that apprenticeships are accessible diverse range of people including young people with learning difficulties or disabilities.

We have supported the production of an employer toolkit and a Special Educational Needs (SEN) section of the Education and Training Foundation Excellence Gateway.

To encourage employers to hire apprentices, the Government funds apprenticeship training for all 16-18 year olds. This level of funding is extended for apprentices who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) aged 19-24. In addition, providers can access Learning Support funding to help apprentices who have a learning difficulty and/or disability.

A Taskforce, led by my hon. Friend the Member for Blackpool North and Cleveleys (Paul Maynard), has been looking at issues around apprenticeships for people with learning difficulties or disabilities. The Taskforce is currently considering its recommendations.

Apprenticeships are safeguarded by the same equality duties under the Equality Act (2010) as any other employment. We encourage the use of the range of reasonable adjustments available so apprentices with special educational needs and disabilities (who can apply for Access to Work funding) can demonstrate what they know and can do.

■ **Canada: EU External Trade**

**Mr David Anderson:**

[\[40225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will take steps to ensure that the proposed EU-Canada trade agreement is not implemented until it has been fully scrutinised by national parliaments.

**Anna Soubry:**

The EU–Canada Comprehensive and Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) could be worth up to £1.3 billion per year to the UK economy. The Government is therefore keen to see the agreement implemented as soon as possible.

The Government considers, along with other Member States, that CETA is a “mixed agreement”. This means that CETA can only take full effect once the UK has decided to ratify it. As part of that ratification process, the complete draft text of the agreement would be laid before Parliament for 21 sitting days. In addition, the Government will ensure the proposals for a Council decision on signature, and subsequently conclusion, will be subject to scrutiny in both houses of the UK Parliament.

■ **Degrees**

**Gordon Marsden:**

[\[38406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what estimate he has made of the number of employer-sponsored degrees in (a) 2016-17 and (b) 2020-21

**Joseph Johnson:**

*[Holding answer 6 June 2016]:* Forecasts of the number of employer-sponsored degrees are not available. The Government encourages close partnership between higher education providers and employers, including through degree apprenticeships. Through the Teaching Excellence Framework we will also encourage greater focus on employability in higher education.

■ **Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: Reorganisation**

**Paul Blomfield:**

[\[39632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, with reference to the Written Statement of 26 May 2016, HCWS30, what estimate he has made of the transition costs associated with the decision to create a combined Business, Innovation and Skills headquarters and policy function in London.

**Joseph Johnson:**

*[Holding answer 13 June 2016]:*

The Department has estimated that the transition costs associated with creating a combined policy centre and headquarters in London will be in the range of £9-13m which would be recouped in savings by the end of the Parliament. This model will better enable the Department to operate a more flexible, agile and easily re-deployable policy function which will continue to deliver BIS' priorities as it reduces in size over the course of the Parliament.

**Paul Blomfield:**

[39823]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will publish his Department's consultation response on the proposal for a combined headquarters and policy centre in London.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) recognises the interest in its decision to establish a combined headquarters and policy centre in London, which is why a summary of the decision and its rationale was issued on BIS' website, and why a Written Ministerial Statement was laid informing all MPs on the day of the decision.

The document was written specifically with staff in mind as a piece of internal communications and as a response to the staff consultation BIS conducted. The Department's top priority is ensuring staff have the most up to date and accurate information about the support available to them. We have no plans to publish the document because it contains information on issues which are the subject of on-going internal discussions with staff.

■ **Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: Scotland**

**Chris Law:**

[39827]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many times he has visited Scotland in an official capacity since the 2015 General Election; and what meetings were held on each such visit.

**Joseph Johnson:**

Details of Ministerial meetings are published quarterly on <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bis-quarterly-publications-april-to-june-2012>, including meetings as part of official visits in Scotland.

■ **Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: Vacancies**

**Paul Blomfield:**

[39715]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps he is taking to reduce his Department's vacancy rate.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is developing a Resourcing Strategy that will include targeted recruitment over the next few years including apprenticeships, graduate recruitment, loans from other Government Departments and increasing the use of secondments from the private sector. These interventions, along with having clear workforce plans across the organisation, including undertaking more internal managed moves to deliver priority work, will help reduce the Department's vacancy rate.

## ■ Health Professions: Training

Justin Madders:

[38702]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare graduates who are expected to pay off their student loan in full.

Joseph Johnson:

*[Holding answer 6 June 2016]:* The Government announced in the 2015 Spending Review that from 1 August 2017, all new nursing, midwifery and allied health professional students will receive their funding and financial support through the standard student support system, rather than through the current NHS Bursary Scheme. The changes will enable us to lift the cap on the number of students on nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare courses and provide full time students on these courses with access to around 25% additional financial support for living costs. We expect this reform to enable universities to provide up to 10,000 additional nursing, midwifery and allied health training places over this Parliament.

The proportion of students that will fully repay their loans is estimated for the total full time student population, rather than separately for students on different courses. On this basis, we estimate that between 45% and 50% of student loan borrowers are expected to pay off their student loan in full.

## ■ Higher Education: Standards

Paul Blomfield:

[38615]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, for what reasons the Director of the Social Market Foundation was recommended as the independent member of the selection board which will advise him on the appointment of the Chair of the Teaching Excellence Framework Panel.

Joseph Johnson:

The Commissioner's Code of Conduct states that all panels must have an external element. The Director of the Social Market Foundation was selected to be the Independent Panel Member due to his expertise in the field of Higher Education.

## ■ Post Offices: Scotland

Ian Murray:

[40136]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on (a) businesses and (b) local communities in Scotland of the decision to allow the closure of Post Office branches in Scotland and their replacement by franchises.

Ian Murray:

[40139]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential effect on (a) businesses and (b) the local community in Paisley of the decision to close the Post Office branch and replace it with a franchise.



**George Freeman:**

Post Office Limited runs and operates its directly managed Crown post offices. Changes to its network and proposals to franchise of some of its Crown branches are the operational responsibility of the Post Office. The Post Office's proposals for franchising some of its Crown branches are part of its work to ensure its branch network is sustainable in the long term and ensure that Post Office services remain on our high streets across the country. The change from a Crown to a franchise branch has been undertaken successfully in many locations across the UK and helps sustain Post Office services in these locations, and each change is subject to local consultation.

Over 97% of the UK's post office network is run on a franchise or agency basis.

**■ Skilled Workers: North East****Tom Blenkinsop:**[\[40241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if his Department will make an assessment of the effect of the withdrawal of funding from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills on the Government's analysis of skills shortages in the North East.

**Nick Boles:**

In the context of needing to make savings in non-participation budgets to allow the core adult skills participation budgets to be protected in cash terms, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has consulted the Devolved Administrations and other users of labour market information on future research priorities.

Following these discussions, we have identified the significance of the Employer Skills Survey, the Employer Perspectives Survey and the LMI (Labour Market Information) for All Portal and decided that these products will be maintained. We are currently working with the Commission to transfer the management of these to BIS, and we will work users on how information from these surveys will be disseminated in the future including the provision of regional and local information.

**■ Small Businesses: Apprentices****Neil Coyle:**[\[39704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps he plans to take to involve small and medium-sized enterprises in the proposed digital apprenticeship system.

**Nick Boles:**

We are developing the digital apprenticeship service to support apprenticeships in England. It will help all employers to select an apprenticeship framework or standard, choose a training provider, choose an assessment organisation and post apprenticeship vacancies. By 2020, all employers will be able to use the service to pay for training and assessment for apprenticeships and we will help smaller employers to prepare for this.

We continue to work with a wide range of employers to develop, test and improve the digital apprenticeship service.

**Neil Coyle:**

[\[40204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if the Government will retain the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers in 2017-18.

**Nick Boles:**

The Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) is available until the end of the 2016/17 academic year to businesses with fewer than 50 employees, who have not employed an apprentice in the last 12 months. Eligible employers can receive a £1,500 grant per apprentice (aged 16 to 24) for up to five new apprentices undertaking an apprenticeship framework.

Further details on how small businesses will be supported to take on apprentices from April 2017 will be published at the end of June.

## ■ Space Debris

**Adam Afriyie:**

[\[39726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps the Government is taking to promote action to remove space debris.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The United Kingdom, through the UK Space Agency (UKSA), is one of the thirteen members of the Inter-Agency Debris Coordination (IADC) Committee, which considers the risks posed by space debris. Our national experts, along with more than a hundred experts from other agencies including NASA, met at Harwell in March 2016 for the annual IADC meeting to discuss many issues, including the need for the removal of space debris from orbit, and how that could best be accomplished.

The UK is leading studies in partnership with other national agencies to model the future space environment and identify the most effective ways of mitigating the future hazard of space debris.

UKSA is working with its international partners in technical forums such as the IADC to develop scientific consensus on the best way to manage the hazard posed by debris, such as how many objects might need to be removed, and from where. UKSA is also working to build political consensus within UN forums such as the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to enable such missions to go ahead with appropriate supervision and support from the international community. This includes developing appropriate regulatory/oversight frameworks within the UK's Outer Space Act which allow such technologies to be tested and demonstrated safely in the increasingly congested and contested space environment.

**CABINET OFFICE**■ **Electorate****Peter Grant:**[\[905417\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to amend provisions of the Representation of the People Act 1983 relating to the franchise.

**John Penrose:**

As set out in our manifesto for this parliament, the Government will bring forward proposals amending the Representation of the People Act 1985 to remove the outdated 15 year time limit on overseas voting rights. Subject to the necessary Parliamentary approval, we intend to have this fully in place for the next European Parliamentary elections and UK Parliamentary elections in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

■ **Electronic Government****Louise Haigh:**[\[40094\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the customer satisfaction ratings were for the gov.uk website related to (a) content accuracy, (b) ability to find information, (c) proportion of users who found the website search tool good or very good and (d) proportion of users who got everything or most of what they wanted when visiting the website since 2012.

**Matthew Hancock:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2016]:* Over 100,000 people have taken user satisfaction surveys on the GOV.UK website since 2013. The most recent information is as follows;

On content accuracy, 69.5% they agreed or strongly responded that they "Trust the information on [GOV.UK](#)".

On the ability to find information, in 2016 52% responded that they agreed or strongly agreed that [GOV.UK](#) was "easy to use", up from 42% in 2015

On the question of the proportion of users who got everything or most of what they wanted when visiting the website, in 2016 46% responded that they agreed or strongly agreed with this statement up from 36% in 2015.

■ **Iraq Committee of Inquiry****Dr Andrew Murrison:**[\[R\] \[38697\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what provision will be made for helping veterans and their families who may be affected by the publication of the Chilcot Report.

**Matthew Hancock:**

*[Holding answer 6 June 2016]:* The Iraq Inquiry has announced arrangements for next of kin of those who lost their lives in Iraq to see embargoed copies of the report on the day of publication. Representatives of the Armed Forces welfare and family liaison services will be on hand at the publication of the report and will be able to discuss with family members what further support might be helpful to them. Government is currently

considering how best to ensure that those directly involved in Iraq operations can access the full report from the Inquiry, and we will announce arrangements in due course. There is no question of families of service personnel who died in Iraq having to pay for copies of the Chilcot report.

#### ■ Ombudsman Services

**Mr Nicholas Brown:** [40236]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the remit of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to cover Ombudsman Services provided by the Ombudsman Services Company.

**Matthew Hancock:**

I refer the hon Member to my Written Ministerial Statement of 1 March 2016 [Hansard reference HCWS566]. There are no current plans to extend the scope of the FOI Act.

#### ■ Proof of Identity: Internet

**Louise Haigh:** [40125]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the proportion of people aged (a) 16 to 24, (b) 25 to 44, (c) 45 to 54, (d) 55 to 64, (e) 65 to 74 and (f) 75 years and older who have the (i) evidence and (ii) technology needed to verify their identity online.

**Matthew Hancock:**

We do not differentiate between ownership of technology and evidence in our assessments of who can use [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/verify) Verify.

[GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/verify) Verify works for 90% of working adults in the UK, which is the main user group for most of the services currently using [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/verify) Verify. Coverage is lower amongst very young people and older people - we continue to improve coverage for those age groups.

#### ■ Public Sector: Ombudsman

**Tom Watson:** [39718]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what progress he has made on bringing forward proposals for a modern public services ombudsman in the last three months.

**John Penrose:**

The Government is making good progress and will publish draft legislation in due course.

**TREASURY**■ **EU Grants and Loans****Karl McCartney:**[\[39803\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will estimate the amount of funding that will be made available to each part of the UK for science, education and research purposes through EU schemes in the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework.

**Mr David Gauke:**

EU science, education and research schemes are awarded on the basis of excellence and are not pre-allocated. As a world leader in these sectors, the UK has a strong track record at securing these funds – in recent years around 15% of such receipts from Horizon 2020, the EU's main research programme, have gone to the UK. The deal secured by the Government on the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) resulted in an increase of over one third in the proportion of the EU budget spent on competitiveness, research, innovation and university funding. In addition, Horizon 2020's budget was almost 30% higher in real terms than its predecessor programme. The post-2020 MFF has not been proposed.

■ **Financial Services: Education****Mr Alistair Carmichael:**[\[40051\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what role the new money guidance body will play in coordinating financial capability initiatives.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The government is committed to ensuring that members of the public are given the help they need to make informed financial decisions. This is why the government published a paper at Budget - *Public Financial Guidance Review: Proposal for Consultation*. The paper set out plans to create a new money guidance body which will identify gaps in the financial guidance market and commission targeted debt advice, money guidance and financial capability projects to fill those gaps.

The paper published at Budget sought views on how the new money guidance body should best deliver guidance services. The consultation closed on Wednesday 8 June and the government will publish a response in the Autumn.

■ **Financial Services: Fraud****Kirsten Oswald:**[\[39907\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to prevent regulated financial intermediaries from promoting products in the unregulated sector by implying that victims of misselling or fraud will have recourse to the protections offered by regulation.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The issues raised are a matter for the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), who are operationally independent from Government.

The question has been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply directly to the honourable member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

**■ Infrastructure: Scotland****Richard Arkless:**[\[40215\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many national infrastructure projects have been established in Scotland since 1997.

**Greg Hands:**

More than 240 infrastructure schemes have been completed since the beginning of the last Parliament. The National Infrastructure Pipeline (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-infrastructure-pipeline-2016>) contains a list of planned private and public infrastructure projects and programmes. Almost all Scottish economic infrastructure, including transport, water, flood defence and waste, is devolved to the Scottish government. However, the UK government has made significant investment in transport infrastructure, including £1.2 billion to replace the electric intercity 225 fleet that currently runs on the London to Edinburgh line, as well as £50 million, matched by the Scottish government, to replace the Cross-border Caledonian sleeper.

**■ National Insurance Contributions: Investment Income****Kirsten Oswald:**[\[39914\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the distributional effect of the exclusion from National Insurance contributions of property, dividends, pensions and other forms of non-employment income.

**Mr David Gauke:**

National Insurance contributions (NICs) are not intended to tax all forms of income. As a system of social security, the purpose of NICs is that individuals contribute when they are working, in order to build entitlement to contributory benefits such as the State Pension.

Taxes are levied on non-employment income through the rest of the tax system, and the government's policies since 2010 have repeatedly increased the contribution of the wealthy. The richest fifth of households will contribute more than half (52%) of UK household tax receipts in 2019-20; under the 2010-11 tax system, they would have paid 49%.

## ■ State Retirement Pensions

**Steve McCabe:**

[[40148](#)]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 24 May 2016 to Question 37689, if he will indicate where in that document details are provided on the (a) potential effect on the triple lock pension policy and (b) value of state pensions for people who retire before 6 April 2016 of a potential reduction in economic growth in the event of the UK voting to leave the EU.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The document entitled *HM Treasury analysis: the immediate economic impact of leaving the EU* provides more detail on the impact that leaving the EU would have on GDP, CPI inflation and on average real wages, in Section 2, Part 3 of the document.

In addition, the Treasury has published further analysis of the impact that leaving the EU would have on pensioner incomes in *Effects on pensioners from leaving the EU*. Details on the effect on the value of State Pension and the triple lock are included in the section entitled *Effects on pensioner incomes* on pages 2-3.

## ■ Tax Havens

**Stephen Kinnock:**

[[39770](#)]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will introduce measures to prevent companies based in tax havens from purchasing assets during privatisations.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The Government seeks to ensure value for money for the taxpayer in conducting asset sales. This includes running sales on a competitive basis that are open to a wide range of potential buyers. The Government has no plans to change the existing arrangements governing participation in the sale of government assets.

## ■ Taxation: Developing Countries

**Helen Goodman:**

[[39928](#)]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government's anti-poverty objectives in (a) Malawi, (b) Ghana and (c) Nepal are being taken into account when negotiating tax treaties with those countries.

**Helen Goodman:**

[[39976](#)]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Department for International Development had any role in the current negotiations of tax treaties with (a) Malawi, (b) Lesotho, (c) Ghana and (d) Nepal.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The Government recognises that developing countries may have different preferences from those of the UK and is willing to accommodate these preferences as part of a balanced agreement that is acceptable to both sides.

By governing the taxation of cross-border income flows in a predictable manner and eliminating double taxation and excessive taxation, tax treaties promote international trade and investment, leading to sustainable tax revenues, which are vital in financing for development.

Treasury Ministers decide the UK's treaty negotiation programme following consultation with a number of interested parties, including the Department for International Development.

■ **Taxation: Malawi**

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[39860\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to ensure that the renegotiation of the UK-Malawi tax treaty supports development and helps tackle poverty in that country.

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[39861\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to improve the transparency of the negotiation process for UK tax treaties.

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[39862\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the effect of the UK's tax treaties with developing countries on tackling poverty in those countries.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The UK regularly reviews its treaty network and actively engages with developing countries. Discussions with Malawi over a new tax treaty began some years ago, and substantive agreement has been reached at official level. It is hoped that the treaty will be signed shortly. Although the UK's starting point in negotiations is based closely on the OECD model double taxation convention, the Government recognises that developing countries will sometimes have different preferences, and treaties the UK has recently signed demonstrate that we are willing to accommodate at least some of those preferences as part of a balanced agreement. But the nature of the negotiating process is that it remains confidential to the two sides until the treaty is signed.

By governing the taxation of cross-border income flows in a predictable manner and eliminating double taxation and excessive taxation, tax treaties promote international trade and investment, leading to sustainable tax revenues, which are vital in financing for development.

## CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

■ **Church of England: Disadvantaged**

**Deidre Brock:** [\[40353\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, if the Church of England will make an assessment of the effect of austerity on communities in the most deprived areas as measured by the English Indices of Deprivation 2015.



**Mrs Caroline Spelman:**

The Church Commissioners have no plans to undertake such an assessment.

Through its network of parishes and dioceses the Church of England is present in all the communities of England. The clergy and people of the Church of England are well placed to hear, articulate and respond to the needs and concerns of local communities. This plays an important role in informing the public engagement of the Church on social policy matters especially at local level.

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Communities and Local Government: Scotland

**Chris Law:** [\[39824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many times he has visited Scotland since the 2015 General Election; and what meetings, with whom, were held on each of those visits.

**Mr Mark Francois:**

Whilst the Secretary of State has not visited Scotland since the 2015 General Election, officials have had a number of meetings on proposed City Deals across Scotland.

### ■ Communities and Local Government: Training

**Fiona Bruce:** [\[39675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps to ensure that staff in his Department receive religious literacy training.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Civil Service Learning, the main training portal for civil servants, has a broad range of diversity and inclusion learning, which is available to all civil servants. There is also a two day course covering both Abrahamic and Dharmic religions for officials who need a more in depth understanding to carry out their role.

DCLG officials have had discussions with the Commission on Religion and Belief in Public Life (CORAB) about their call for greater religious literacy in every section of society. The Government is aware of the recent evidence sessions on religious literacy held by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education and will carefully consider the findings of the Group's report when it is published.

### ■ First Time Buyers: Northern Ireland

**Jim Shannon:** [\[39884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Northern Ireland Executive on steps to support first-time buyers.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Secretary of State has had no formal meetings with his counterpart in the Northern Ireland Executive.

However, the Department is actively involved with the British Irish Council, who meet frequently to discuss cross-cutting housing issues and share expertise.

## ■ Green Belt

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [40156]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many houses were built on green belt land in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [40163]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many applications were made by developers for housebuilding on green belt land in each of the last five years.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Department for Communities and Local Government does not hold information on the numbers of planning applications made in the Green Belt.

The department's Land Use Change Statistics estimate that 3% of new residential addresses created in 2014-15 were in the Green Belt; unchanged from 2013-14. This equates to an estimated 3,900 homes – 2.9998% of the total homes built in the Green Belt in 2013-14, and 4,600 homes – 2.9997% of the total homes built in 2014-15.

The figures in the 13/14 publication are the first in the new series and so are not directly comparable to the previous Land Use Change Statistics which last published data covering the year 2011. Figures for 2011 and prior are available from the department's website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/land-use-change-statistics-in-england-2011>

## ■ Households: Nationality

**Karl McCartney:** [39706]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, for what reasons the English Housing Survey Headline Report 2014 to 2015, published in February 2016, did not contain a breakdown of the nationality of the Households Representative Person by tenure; and if he will publish the data held on the nationality of the Households Representative Person by tenure for each of the last 10 years.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The department collects details on the nationality of all household reference persons in the English Housing Survey. However, the sample size of the English Housing Survey does not permit us to report detailed nationality statistics.

## ■ Housing: Young People

**David Simpson:**

[\[39079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to support young people living at home with their parents in finding their own accommodation.

**Brandon Lewis:**

This government is supporting young people into homeownership, including delivering 200,000 Starter Homes exclusively for young first-time buyers with at least a 20% discount.

We have introduced the Help to Buy ISA which provide a 25% saving bonus for first time buyers aged 16 and over who are saving up for a deposit.

At last year's Autumn Statement we committed £4.1 billion towards delivering 135,000 new Help to Buy: Shared Ownership properties by 2021.

Our Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme has so far delivered 73,000 sales with 81% of those going to first time buyers.

## ■ Local Government Finance

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[39883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with the Local Government Association on the effect of charges on local authorities of changes to funding over the next five years announced in the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The 2015 Spending Review confirmed a historic four year settlement for local government, including making councils responsible to local people for their financing, rather than central government. It delivers a long-held ambition for councils to be financed from locally raised resources. And it means that by the end of this Parliament, councils will benefit from 100 per cent business rates retention – something they have been calling for, for over a quarter of a century.

It is a settlement which has been subject to extensive consultation, including with the Local Government Association, which welcomed the offer of a four year planning horizon. A range of additional funding flexibilities were sought during the consultation, especially on fees for planning and licensing.

In February 2016, proposals were outlined to link future increases in councils' fees for processing planning applications to performance in terms of speed and quality of decisions.

By the end of this Parliament, local government will be able to retain 100 per cent of local taxes, including up to £13 billion of revenue from business rates, to spend on local government services. In order to ensure that the reforms are fiscally neutral, these new

powers must come with new responsibilities, as well as phasing out grants from Whitehall. The government is working closely with the Local Government Association to design the reforms.

#### ■ Sleeping Rough: Northern Ireland

**Jim Shannon:** [\[39886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Northern Ireland Executive on reducing the number of people sleeping rough in the UK.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

One person without a home is one too many. That is why we have increased central investment to tackle homelessness over the next four years to £139 million. This includes a new national £10 million programme to support innovative ways to prevent and reduce rough sleeping, building on the success of our No Second Night Out initiative.

Homelessness is a devolved matter. I have not had any conversations with my counterpart in the Northern Ireland Executive but would be happy to do so.

#### ■ Vacant Land

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[40176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many applications there were by developers for housebuilding on brownfield sites in each of the last five years.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Department for Communities and Local Government does not hold information on the numbers of planning applications made on previously developed (brownfield) land.

### CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

#### ■ Broadband

**Richard Arkless:** [\[39671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assistance the Government plans to provide to broadband suppliers to meet the terms of the Universal Services Obligation.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

Universal Service Providers responsible for delivering the broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) will be designated by Ofcom following changes to primary and secondary legislation. No decision has been taken yet on funding the USO's delivery .

## ■ Broadband: Rural Areas

**Richard Arkless:**

[\[39670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what support the Government is providing to remote rural communities on obtaining reliable access to broadband.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

Public investment in improving broadband is nearly £1.7 billion, including £790 million of UK government funding, to bring superfast broadband to areas of the UK where it would not otherwise be available. Superfast broadband is now available to 90 per cent of UK premises and this will reach 95 per cent by December 2017.

The Government has also implemented a basic broadband scheme to enable all premises to gain access to speeds of at least 2Mbps. This allows residents to gain access to every government service available online.

Furthermore, in November 2015 the Prime Minister announced the Government's intention to introduce a new broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) with the aim to provide a safety net for those homes and business in the hardest to reach parts of the UK without access to superfast broadband.

## ■ Culture, Ethics and Practices of the Press Inquiry

**George Kerevan:**

[\[40192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what timetable he has set for commencing the second stage of the Leveson Inquiry.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

Criminal proceedings connected to the subject matter of the Leveson Inquiry, including the appeals process, have not yet been completed. We have always been clear that these cases must conclude before we consider Part 2 of the Inquiry.

## ■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Pay

**Greg Mulholland:**

[\[38216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the average hourly earnings were of his Department's (a) BME and (b) non-BME employees in (i) 2015 and (ii) 2016.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

\$24052016|5|W|26052016|Greg Mulholland|Leeds North West|To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the average hourly earnings were of his Department's (a) BME and (b) non-BME employees in (i) 2015 and (ii) 2016. 38216 A: The tables below are the average hourly rates for all employees (Senior Civil Service and below) within the Department of Culture, Media and Sport for the following categories. However, I would note to the Hon. Member that such simple averages do not paint an accurate figure of our workforce and recruitment practices.

## 2015

CATEGORY	AVERAGE HOURLY RATE
BME	£17.06
Non-BME	£21.63
Unknown	£20.20

## 2016

CATEGORY	AVERAGE HOURLY RATE
BME	£16.50
Non-BME	£21.71
Unknown	£20.39

The Civil Service is changing, and our recruitment seeks to reflect the make-up and composition of our nation as a whole. Historically, BME staff were under-represented: both in terms of previous recruitment patterns and the number and proportion in higher grades, both of these factors have contributed to the differences in average salaries.

Additionally in DCMS a significant number of employees have not declared their ethnicity - less than 60% declared their ethnicity in 2015 and 2016 – which means that the data provided cannot be taken as a comparison of BME and non-BME wages across the Department. DCMS are actively encouraging employees to increase the declarations that will provide reliable data on protected characteristics. As a result between 31 March and 27 May 2016 the declarations have risen to almost 70%. There is also a clear decline in the pay gap between BME and non-BME employees over the two months that the declarations have increased.

The differential at Senior Civil Service (SCS) grades is a result of a low number of declared BME employees at this level.

We are making progress the proportion of BME staff in the Civil Service has risen from 9.2% in 2010 to 10.6% in 2015, but we recognise that there is still more to do.

In March, the Government published its 2016 Talent Action Plan for the Civil Service. It provides a progress update on initiatives to increase diversity in the Civil Service, including cross-Government talent programmes aimed at under-represented groups.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/talent-action-plan-2016-removing-the-barriers-to-success>

31 March 2015 Data

	2015			2016		
Grade	BME	Non-BME	Unknown	BME	Non-BME	Unknown
SCS	34.42	35.68	40.51	35.26	37.24	41.17
A(U)	32.62	28.54	29.49	28.37	29.89	29.61
A	24.52	24.42	24.96	24.17	24.26	24.56
B	17.07	17.06	16.61	17.09	16.74	16.10
C	12.48	12.31	12.22	11.73	12.22	12.12
D	9.92	10.50	9.94	9.93	9.68	10.03

#### Notes on the data

The data is sourced from the Staff in Post payroll reports for 31 March 2015 and 31 March 2016. 'Employees' include all employees paid through the organisation's payroll, including any employees on maternity, paternity or shared parental leave, those on paid sick leave and employees on paid special leave. This excludes employees not paid through the payroll including agency and interim staff, those on unpaid leave or career breaks, Fee Paid staff, Non-Executive Board Members, political appointments where earnings are not determined by DCMS such as Ministers and Special Advisors.

'Unknown' includes individuals who have either elected to prefer not to declare their ethnicity or those who have not recorded a response against this protected characteristic. The average hourly earnings include basic salary and allowances.

#### ■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Scotland

**Chris Law:** [\[39828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many times he has visited Scotland in an official capacity since the 2015 General Election; and what meetings were held on each such visit.

#### **Mr Edward Vaizey:**

The Secretary of State regularly visit all parts of the United Kingdom, including Scotland. Details of meetings with external organisations are published on a quarterly basis and can be accessed via the [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) website.

#### ■ Television: Licensing

**Richard Arkless:** [\[40211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government plans to exempt the viewing of sporting events in which nations of the UK are participating from the obligation to pay the TV Licence.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

There are no current plans to amend the TV licence framework in this way. A TV licence is not a fee for broadcasting services, it is a legal permission to install or use television receiving equipment (such as televisions, computers, laptops, tablets, mobile phones, games consoles, digital boxes and DVD/VHS recorders) to watch or record television programmes as they are being broadcast. This applies regardless of which television channels a person receives or how those channels are received. The government is also bringing forward legislation to extend the requirement to hold a TV licence to people streaming or downloading television programmes through on-demand services provided by the BBC (notably iPlayer).

**DEFENCE****■ Armed Forces: Compensation****Richard Arkless:**[\[40214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if the Government will review the mechanism by which service personnel are awarded payment in the event of life-changing injuries during their time in the armed forces to take greater account of the effect of those injuries on those people.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) provides no-fault compensation for members of the Armed Forces where illness, injury or death is caused by service from 6 April 2005 under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) and, before that date, under the War Pensions Scheme (WPS).

Any disablement, injury or illness, including those which are life-changing, can be claimed with awards made where the claimed disorder is accepted as being due to Service. Lay and scheme medical advisers work together and decisions are evidence based, reflecting the individual case facts, contemporary medical understanding of causation and the relevant law.

Awards under the WPS depend on the assessed level of disablement with the method of assessment set out in the legislation and expressed as a percentage. The AFCS is tariff based. The legislation includes nine tables of injuries and disorders with associated tariff levels, relevant to military service. A lump sum is paid for pain and suffering taking account of the likely progress of the condition over the person's lifetime. There are 15 tariff levels and, for the more serious disorders and injuries, a guaranteed income payment to cover reduced civilian employability is paid, in addition, from the date of claim for life.

Service personnel may make a claim for damages under common law for Service after May 1987 and where the MOD has a proven legal liability, compensation is paid. The amount of compensation is determined by common law principles which, broadly, take into account an individual's pain and suffering, degree of injury, past and future



financial losses and level of care required. Compensation can therefore vary depending on an individual's circumstances.

The MOD has no plans to undertake a review of this mechanism, however the AFCS tariff levels and payment awards are currently being reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose.

## ■ Armed Forces: Discharges

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[39645]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many service personnel were medically discharged from the (a) Royal Navy excluding the Royal Marines, (b) Royal Marines, (c) Army and (d) Royal Air Force in each year since 2010.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Information on the number of UK Regular Armed Forces personnel medically discharged by Financial Year and Service since 2010 is given in the attached.

Defence Statistics release annual updates on medical discharges in the UK Regular Armed Forces as an Official Statistic publication. The next statistical release is due in July 2016 which will present data for financial year 2015-16. The latest report for 2014-15 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

### **Attachments:**

1. UK Regular AF Medically Discharged [39645 - Table showing UK regular UK AF personnel medically discharged by FY and service since 2010.docx]

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[39646]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the average length is of the transition period for personnel of each of the Armed Forces between a decision of the Medical Board recommending discharge and that discharge taking place; and what support is given to personnel during that period to support the transition to civilian life.

**Mark Lancaster:**

This information is not held in the format requested. However, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) does hold information on the average length of time between attendance at a medical board and the date of medical discharge for UK Regular Armed Forces personnel.

For those UK Regulars discharged between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2015, the median averages are as follows:

SERVICE	MEDIAN AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS BETWEEN A MEDICAL BOARD AND SUBSEQUENT MEDICAL DISCHARGE
Royal Navy	132
Royal Marines	133
Army	223
Royal Air Force	173

Those who are medically discharged are entitled to the highest level of resettlement provision through the Career Transition Partnership (CTP), regardless of how long they have served or the nature and cause of injuries. We also offer specialised support for wounded, injured and sick personnel and those with the most complex barriers to employment to ensure they receive the most appropriate support within their recovery pathway. This is delivered through the Defence Recovery Capability and is supported by the Career Transition Partnership Assist (CTP Assist) programme. The purpose of CTP Assist is to deliver an individualised, needs-based service to those Service personnel who face the greatest barriers to employment given their medical condition.

The MOD Veterans' Welfare Service (VWS) provides welfare support automatically to those medically discharged, with an 'on request' service for all other members of the veterans community.

The Transition Protocol is an established practice to ensure the effective transition of health and social care for injured Service leavers to local public providers. There is regular and close co-operation between the MOD, the Department of Health, NHS England and the Devolved Administrations in order to ensure that it is working successfully.

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[\[39647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the role is of personal recovery officers related to different categories of injury of armed forces personnel who are due to receive medical discharge; how many such officers there are in each branch of the Armed Forces; and if he will make a statement.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Naval Service employs 29 Recovery Cell/Troop (NSRC) staff who have broadly equivalent responsibilities to those of Personal Recovery Officers (PROs) and oversee the recovery of Wounded, Injured and Sick (WIS) personnel. NSRC staff do not differentiate between different categories of injury; all WIS are managed equitably with their recovery pathway being directed by doctors, physiotherapists, military Departments of Community Mental Health and Occupational Therapists. Not all personnel on a recovery pathway are due to receive medical discharge; 84% return to work.

A total of 67 PROs are based within 11 Personnel Recovery Units (PRUs) across the UK and Germany; PRUs are military units established for the command and care of WIS

soldiers with the greatest need. All Army WIS personnel have a dedicated PRO assigned to them, to assist them through the recovery process and co-ordinate support from other agencies. If the individual remains in their unit the PRO will be someone in the unit who has been assigned by their Commanding Officer.

Soldiers are transferred to a PRU if their Chain of Command or unit recommend they need more help than the unit can provide. There are a number of reasons for this, such as the nature or severity of their injury or illness, the distance between the soldier's home address and the unit (if the soldier is at home on recovery duty), or because the unit is due to deploy. The PRUs are not residential facilities, but are organised on a regional basis allowing soldiers to be transferred to the one closest to them.

The RAF has two full time and two part-time PROs based in the Personnel Recovery Centre at RAF High Wycombe.

RAF PROs are responsible for supporting WIS personnel through their recovery pathway and in support of their patient care whether they are returning to Service or being medically discharged. They encourage and, where necessary, direct WIS personnel to manage their own recovery pathway as much as they are able. RAF PROs become the line manager for WIS and provide mentoring, coaching and welfare support throughout their recovery. They maintain regular contact with WIS personnel for up to six months after their discharge.

## ■ Armed Forces: Early Retirement

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[39979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the factors underlying decisions to leave the armed forces early; and what he is doing to address the most significant factors behind such decisions.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) continually monitors the reasons for voluntary outflow of Service personnel through methods such as the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS). We recognise that the impact of Service on family and personal life remains the most important factor influencing an intention to leave. The New Employment Model Programme (NEM) is at the centre of activity being developed to address the underlying reasons individuals leave the Armed Forces and to help mitigate the impact of Service life on the family. The NEM was established to review the Terms and Conditions of Service to deliver a more modernised offer that allows personnel and their families more choice and reduce the impact of Service life on individuals and their families whilst still meeting the Services' needs.

The NEM has already introduced a number of changes to address personnel concerns about better opportunities outside the Service, including a set of Career Management Principles and Practices designed to support greater consistency in how careers are managed and realistic lifestyle choice based on employment, stability and location factors. This will enable personnel to access employment readiness training for spouses/civil partners through the new Career Transition Partnership contract; pilots are

now running in the Royal Air Force and Joint Forces command. The Department has also secured LIBOR funding to support a business start-up programme designed specifically for Armed Forces families and a course to deliver vocational assessment and employability training for Service spouses. We are also working with financial services providers to tailor their products for the Armed Forces community including banking, insurance and credit history and have also introduced loans for deposits for Service personnel to either buy their own home or for a rental deposit.

At the beginning of the year, the MOD published its first UK Armed Forces Families' Strategy. The Strategy recognises that to recruit and retain capable and talented Service personnel that Defence must do more to listen, talk to and empower Service families. The Strategy is based on the principles of supporting fairness in line with the Armed Forces Covenant. It aims to provide greater choice where possible, empowering families by providing information and access to support when they need it, and engendering resilience in families, supporting self-determination and independence preparing families for their eventual transition from Service life.

#### ■ Armed Forces: Pay

**Kirsten Oswald:** [\[39957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on morale among members of the armed forces of the transition from Pay 2000 to the new Pay 16 pay structure.

**Kirsten Oswald:** [\[40216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what account he took of the pattern of complaints relating to terms and conditions made through the service complaints procedures in reforming the pay structure for the armed forces.

**Kirsten Oswald:** [\[40217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to take account of the levels of satisfaction with pay reported in the Regular Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey in his setting of pay policy for the armed forces.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The new Pay 16 structure was specifically established in response to Service personnel criticisms of the old pay model. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has developed the new pay model as a simpler, more transparent system which provides Service personnel with greater pay predictability. It addresses some of the concerns about the previous pay model reported by personnel through both the Service Complaints system and the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) and in feedback from the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB). I fully expect these changes to be positive for morale overall.

Many personnel will experience an increase in pay as a result of the new pay model, and no one will take a cut in core pay on implementation. We have taken steps to ensure that personnel are aware of the range and nature of the pay reforms that began on 1

April 2016 and comprehensive internal communications activity has been undertaken to explain the changes. This included Departmental guidance to help personnel understand their new pay statement and any changes. Personnel, including those under pay protection, continue to remain eligible for any Government-approved pay award. Pay protection has been put in place to ensure that no one will take a pay cut on implementation of Pay 16 and this arrangement will exist for at least the first three years to ensure that no one is disadvantaged.

The new pay model is not designed as a cost saving exercise, but is a rebalancing of pay to make more efficient and effective use of the Armed Forces pay bill; the AFPRB will continue to recommend pay rates for all personnel. As we go forward the Service Complaints Process and AFCAS will be primary sources which inform our assessment of the benefits realised through the pay reforms.

## ■ Armed Forces: Sexual Offences

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[39983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how old the (a) women and (b) men in the army were who told the Sexual Harassment Report 2015 survey that they had been a victim of a sexual assault in the previous 12 months.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The table below gives the age range by gender for Regular and Reserve Army personnel who answered 'yes' to Question 12 of the Sexual Harassment Survey 2015: 'In the past 12 months have you had an experience involving any of the behaviours in Question eight which made you feel particularly upset?' and who then specified in Question 13 that one of these experiences was 'Made a sexual assault on you':

GENDER	MINIMUM AGE (IN YEARS)	MAXIMUM AGE (IN YEARS)	AVERAGE (MODE) AGE
Men	29	37	See note 4
Women	18	52	23

This information should be considered with the following caveats:

The data captured in the Sexual Harassment Survey 2015 represents the attitudes and opinions of serving personnel, not the number of sexual assaults recorded through the formal complaints process.

Participants were not given a definition of sexual assault in the survey, therefore answers were based on subjective interpretations of the term. It is not known whether the behaviour experienced was consistent with the legal definition of sexual assault.

Because a sample, rather than a census, was taken, the data may not be representative of the whole serving population.

Not available due the small sample size.

**■ Eurocorps**

**Mrs Anne Main:** [\[40232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the UK's liaison officer to Eurocorps was withdrawn.

**Mr Julian Brazier:**

We have no digital record of there being a UK liaison officer to the Eurocorps.

**■ Iraq: Islamic State**

**Toby Perkins:** [\[40112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assistance his Department is providing to the Iraqi armed forces to help reclaim the city of Fallujah from Daesh.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

As part of Coalition forces, the RAF is conducting airstrikes against Daesh targets providing Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance in support of Iraqi Security Forces operations in Fallujah.

**■ Ministry of Defence: Pay**

**Greg Mulholland:** [\[39973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 26 May 2016 to Question 38217, on his Department's BME pay gap, where the information about this is held; and what estimate he has made of the cost of providing the information.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Ministry of Defence does not capture and report data on hourly earnings, and therefore does not provide comparative data in this way.

The Department has recently published an Equal Pay Audit 2015 report which can be found at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mod-equal-pay-audit-report-2015>

This Audit presents a comparison of male to female and White to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) annualised average salaries in the period 1 October 2014 to 1 October 2015. This meets the Department's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to provide information on its workforce identified by the Equality Act 2010.

**■ Ministry of Defence: Staff**

**Toby Perkins:** [\[40111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) regular service personnel, (b) reservists and (c) civilian staff were employed by his Department in each year since 2010.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Information on the number of Regular Service personnel and Reservists employed by the Ministry of Defence from 2012 to 2016 is available in the annual Service Personnel

Statistics publication. Older data is also published by UK Defence Statistics. This information can be found at the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-monthly-service-personnel-statistics-index>

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140116142443/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/index.php/publications/UK-defence-statistics-compendium>

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140116142443/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/index.php/publications/personnel/military/reserves-and-cadets-strengths/>

Civillian staff employed by the Ministry of Defence is published in the Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report and in the UK Defence Statistics publication which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-monthly-service-personnel-statistics-index>

## ■ Navy: Fisheries

**Zac Goldsmith:** [\[39959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Royal Navy assets on global maritime patrol are used to maximum effect in combatting illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing.

**Zac Goldsmith:** [\[40044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what proportion of naval vessels and aircraft routinely conduct monitoring and reporting of maritime activity (a) in the presence of vessels engaged in fishing and (b) otherwise when they are operating in or transiting through the Exclusive Economic Zone of British Overseas Territories.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Ministry of Defence supports the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in combatting illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing through a support agreement between the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the Royal Navy (RN), whereby naval assets conduct fishery protection activities. The RN and MMO work closely to maximise the effectiveness of these fishery protection activities within the Exclusive Economic Zone of the UK.

RN and Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) vessels also conduct maritime security operations at all times while at sea, this includes monitoring and reporting maritime activity to relevant UK authorities. Reporting of fishing and other maritime activity to local UK authorities in Overseas Territories and the relevant authorities of other nations is routinely undertaken whenever a RN or RFA vessel is operating in the vicinity of UK Overseas Territories.

## ■ Royal Fleet Auxiliary

**Ian Mearns:** [\[39902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's (a) operational and (b) crew costs were in each year from 2008-09 to 2015-16.

**Ian Mearns:** [\[39968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the average cost is to the (a) Royal Navy and (b) Royal Fleet Auxiliary of training (i) an officer cadet and (ii) a rating.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The information is not held in the format requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

**Ian Mearns:** [\[39904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many merchant seafarers employed by the Royal Fleet Auxiliary took voluntary redundancy in each year from 2008-09 to 2015-16.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

None.

**Ian Mearns:** [\[39969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent estimate he has made of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's future requirement for (a) officer cadets and (b) ratings.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Under current planning assumptions the Royal Fleet Auxiliary expects to recruit the following number of Officer Cadets and Apprentice Ratings in each of the next five years:

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Cadet	32	32	32	32	32
Apprentice	128	128	117	117	93

## ■ Shipping

**Ian Mearns:** [\[39966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department has taken to implement recommendation 15 of the Department for Transport's Maritime Growth Study, published in September 2015, on improving links between the Royal Navy and the wider UK maritime sector.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Royal Navy (RN) has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) to allow Warfare Officers to obtain commercial Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) certificates of



competency. Discussions with the MCA have commenced to develop a similar MOU for Engineer Officers and Ratings. More widely the RN continues to seek to align its training with STCW requirements. The RN Resettlement Service also offers impartial advice on second careers with many strong links with maritime sector organisations and companies.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Academies

**Stephen Timms:** [\[40256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether it is her policy that local stakeholders will be able to express views on proposals to require a school to convert to academy status.

**Edward Timpson:**

Since launching our proposals in the White Paper *Educational Excellence Everywhere*, the Government has listened to feedback from all stakeholders with an interest in the proposals, and will continue to do so.

Under the Academies Act 2010, governing bodies of schools who wish to convert to academy status must consult formally about their plans with anyone who has an interest in the school. This will include staff members and parents, but should also involve pupils and the wider local community. Where a school is failing or otherwise eligible for intervention there is no requirement to consult, but the proposed sponsor of the new academy is under a duty to communicate their plans to improve the school to parents.

**Stephen Timms:** [\[40258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to ensure that multi-academy trusts are accountable to the parents of students in those academies.

**Edward Timpson:**

Our White Paper *Educational Excellence Everywhere* set out the Government's intention to introduce a new duty on academies to ensure that they listen to the views and needs of all parents, particularly when key decisions are made about their child's school. For Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) we will expect all academies to engage meaningfully at a local level.

We are committed to ensuring parents have a more significant voice in their child's school. Through the new Parent Portal, we will ensure parents have access to clear and simple information about the school system and how to support their child. This will work alongside the new performance tables website which is making it easier for parents to find out how well their child's school is performing and to compare schools across a range of key measures.

We will provide guidance on handling complaints to ensure a common approach for all schools and MATs so that all parents know where they can go if a problem arises. In addition, we will make it simpler for parents to escalate complaints to the Department, and beyond that to a public service ombudsman.

Finally, we are considering how parents might petition Regional Schools Commissioners for their child's school to move to a different MAT where there is underperformance or other exceptional circumstances.

**Stephen Timms:** [40259]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she has developed proposals that enable academies to be re-brokered with a new sponsor or multi academy trust on the initiative of parents of children in those academies.

**Edward Timpson:**

Our White Paper *Educational Excellence Everywhere* set out the Government's intention to engage Multi Academy Trusts (MATs), sponsors, academies, dioceses and the wider schools sector to ensure that the academies legal framework for the future can achieve the right balance of intervention, review and stability. This included a commitment to consider how parents at individual schools might be able to petition Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) for their school to move to a different MAT where the school or its MAT is underperforming or in other exceptional circumstances.

We will be testing and consulting on proposals for the future legal framework with a wide range of stakeholders, including parents, in due course. This engagement will assess the implications of different legal framework models and ensure that any options which are taken forward are fit for purpose.

RSCs already take action to move academies to new trusts where necessary and parents should continue to escalate any concerns they have about academies to RSCs where the academy trust has not responded sufficiently to their concerns.

#### ■ Academies: Admissions

**Steve McCabe:** [40146]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 27 May 2016 to Question 37443, what guidance her Department provides to admission authorities on how consultations should be advertised.

**Nick Gibb:**

The School Admissions Code sets out the requirements that admission authorities must follow when consulting on proposed admissions arrangements.

The Schools Admissions Code is available at the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/389388/School\\_Admissions\\_Code\\_2014\\_-\\_19\\_Dec.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School_Admissions_Code_2014_-_19_Dec.pdf)

#### ■ Academies: Freehold

**Jess Phillips:** [39667]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many academy schools hold the freehold of their school sites.

**Edward Timpson:**

*[Holding answer 13 June 2016]:* The Department does not retain a central record of the land holding arrangements for individual academies. However, the vast majority of academies will be occupying sites on the basis of a lease from the relevant local authority.

No school gains the freehold of a school site as a result of becoming an academy. Academies own their own land only where the school already owned the land before converting to academy status. These are usually former foundation or voluntary schools which are generally the freeholders of their own land even as maintained schools and in the case of voluntary schools which tend to mainly occupy land which was not originally provided by the state.

The Department does not have detailed information on the current and historic ownership of academy land and buildings, and had chosen not to prioritise the expenditure necessary to resolve the issue.

**■ Armed Forces: GCSE****Stephen Timms:**[\[38405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether armed forces trainees are included in the policy of ensuring that by 2020 young people who do not achieve A\* to C passes in English and mathematics GCSEs at age 16 resit their exams a year later.

**Nick Gibb:**

*[Holding answer 6 June 2016]:* The Department for Education sets a requirement that young people who do not achieve a GCSE grade C in English or mathematics by age 16 should continue the study of these subjects. This requirement applies only to 16-19 study programmes funded by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and is set out in a funding condition for schools and colleges which receive EFA funding. The requirement would therefore apply to any member of the armed forces undertaking EFA-funded 16-19 programmes. It would not apply to requirements for training provided and funded by the armed forces, which are a matter for the Ministry of Defence.

**■ Department for Education: Scotland****Chris Law:**[\[39830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many times she has visited Scotland in an official capacity since the 2015 General Election; and what meetings were held on each such visit.

**Nick Gibb:**

My Rt Hon Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, visited Scotland in December 2015 for a number of engagements.

**■ Department for Education: Training**

**Fiona Bruce:** [39676]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will take steps to ensure that staff in her Department receive religious literacy training.

**Nick Gibb:**

We currently have no plans to carry out religious literacy training in the Department.

Civil Service Learning, the main training portal for Civil Servants, has a broad range of diversity and inclusion courses, which are available to all civil servants. There is also a two day course covering both Abrahamic and Dharmic religions for officials who need a more in depth understanding to carry out their role.

**■ Extended Schools: Lancashire**

**Julie Cooper:** [39363]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many school breakfast clubs there are in (a) Burnley and (b) Lancashire.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The most recent results of the *Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey* suggest that in England in 2013, there were 12,800 before school settings. Of these 1,900 were in the North West. However, it is not possible to identify within this total the number of settings in Burnley and Lancashire.

The findings of the Survey can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-and-early-years-providers-survey-2013>

Later this year we will update the school performance tables and plan to publish alongside them information about all schools' childcare provision including breakfast clubs.

**■ ICT: English Baccalaureate**

**Michelle Donelan:** [39573]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the number of students who have taken up computer science as an option in the EBacc in each of the last five years.

**Nick Gibb:**

Computer science has been included in the science element of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) since 2014. To enter the EBacc science pillar, pupils can enter core and additional science GCSE; enter GCSE science double award; or enter three single sciences at GCSE. The single sciences are biology, chemistry, computer science and physics.

A time series of the total number of entries in GCSE computer science for the last three years is published as part of the "Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2014 to 2015 (revised)" statistical first release (SFR).[1]

[1]

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/502685/SFR01\\_2016\\_Subject\\_Timeseries.xls](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/502685/SFR01_2016_Subject_Timeseries.xls) ("Subject time series tables: SFR01/2016" document)

## ■ Primary Education: National Curriculum Tests

**William Wragg:** [40046]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much notice her Department gave schools of the changes to primary school SATs tests in 2016.

**Nick Gibb:**

The new primary national curriculum was published in final form in July 2013. It came into force in September 2014. The new national curriculum tests at Key Stages 1 and 2 were first announced in March 2014. Since then schools have been provided with further information to help them adapt to the assessment arrangements. In addition to sample questions published in summer 2014, complete sample tests were published in summer 2015.

## ■ Priority School Building Programme

**Jim McMahon:** [R] [40035]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to publish post-occupancy evaluations of primary and secondary schools built under wave 1 of the Priority Schools Building Programme.

**Edward Timpson:**

The Department for Education is collecting a range of post-occupancy data on schools built under wave 1 of the Priority Schools Building Programme. This data considers all potential benefits realised including user satisfaction and building performance. The results of this exercise will be published once it is complete.

## ■ Pupil Premium

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [40243]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to adjust the pupil premium funding for schools to take account of the additional responsibilities proposed in the Children and Social Work Bill in its current form.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The Children and Social Work Bill proposes a new duty on schools to appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

The pupil premium plus is additional funding for schools to support the educational needs of looked-after children and those who were previously looked after but who

have left care through an adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangements Order. The Spending Review confirmed that the pupil premium will be protected at current rates over the course of this Parliament. This protection applies to the pupil premium plus, which will continue at £1,900 per pupil.

Pupil premium plus funding for pupils who were previously looked after is allocated directly to schools and it is for the head teacher to decide how best to use it to support the needs of these pupils.

## ■ Schools: Finance

**William Wragg:** [40252]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the average cost to the public purse of an additional (a) school place and (b) classroom in each of the next three years.

**Edward Timpson:**

New school places and classrooms are delivered through a variety of programmes across England. The Department does not centrally collect data on the cost of building primary or secondary schools across all local authorities. The cost of building new places and classrooms varies significantly depending on local factors including: the size of the project; forecasts of construction inflation; and regional variations in the cost of construction. All of these are subject to change over time.

Local authorities report the cost per place of providing new school places through the annual School Capacity data collection. For primary schools this data has been used to produce basic need scorecards. The scorecards detail the cost per place, including for new schools, for each local authority. The latest published scorecards are for the academic year 2013/14 and can be accessed on GOV.UK at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-places-local-authority-basic-need-scorecards-2014](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-places-local-authority-basic-need-scorecards-2014).

## ■ Schools: Immigrants

**William Wragg:** [38928]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what representations she has received from local authorities on the effect on school places of immigration from (a) EU and (b) non-EU countries.

**Edward Timpson:**

I refer the Hon. Member to the answers provided for PQs 33106 and 33107 on 18 April 2016.

**William Wragg:** [40249]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on taking account of the effect on demand for school places of immigration (a) in general and (b) from nationals from other EEA countries.

**William Wragg:** [\[40250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what research her Department has (a) undertaken and (b) commissioned on the effect of immigration on demand for school places; and if she will make a statement.

**William Wragg:** [\[40251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what representations she has received from (a) local authorities and (b) other bodies on pressures on school places due to immigration from (i) EU and (ii) non-EU countries.

**Edward Timpson:**

I refer the Hon. Member to the answers provided for PQs 33106 and 33107 on 18 April 2016.

## ■ Supply Teachers

**Mr Nicholas Brown:** [\[40235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many agency staff were contracted to cover classes in primary and secondary schools in England and Wales in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department collects details of all teachers working in state funded schools through the annual School Workforce Census. However, this census does not separately identify agency teachers.

## ■ Teachers: Labour Turnover

**Mr Nicholas Brown:** [\[40263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to improve teacher retention.

**Nick Gibb:**

It is vital for schools to be able to retain good teachers – that is why we have made policy interventions in the areas that teachers tell us matter most, such as improving pupil behaviour and reducing unnecessary workload.

We have appointed behaviour expert Tom Bennett to lead a review to ensure new teachers are fully trained in managing behaviour in 21<sup>st</sup> century schools.

In response to our Workload Challenge, we set up three independent review groups to address unnecessary workload in the key areas of marking, planning and data management. The groups reported early this year, and set out clear principles about what should happen in schools to reduce unnecessary workload in these areas. The Government has accepted all the relevant recommendations made by the groups, and we will continue to work with the teaching profession to make sure they have the ongoing support they need to continue reducing unnecessary teacher workload.

We have recently conducted the first biennial Teacher Workload Survey, which will allow us to track teacher workload over the coming years. The results of the first survey will be published later this year.

Approximately 90 per cent of all teachers are in service in state-funded schools the year after they qualify, and 72 per cent of those who qualified in 2009 were still in teaching five years later. Over the longer term, over 60 per cent of teachers remain in service 10 years after qualifying.

## ■ Teachers: Training

**Steve Brine:** [\[39982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidelines her Department issues on inset days at schools in England.

**Nick Gibb:**

This is a matter for schools to decide. We have empowered schools to lead the delivery of high-quality professional development for their teachers through the creation of the national network of teaching schools, and we are supporting this through the development of a new *Standard for Teachers' Professional Development*. Decisions relating to teachers' professional development rightly rest with schools, head teachers, and teachers themselves, as they are in the best position to judge their own requirements.

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document specifies that teachers must be available for work for 195 days each year and that they may only be required to perform duties other than teaching pupils on five of those days. It is for schools to decide for themselves how best to make use of those five days, including whether they should be used for in-service training .

**Mr Nicholas Brown:** [\[40234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans the Government has to increase the number of teachers in training.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Government is investing heavily in the future of our teaching profession. Between now and 2020, we have committed to spending more than £1.3bn on initiatives aimed at attracting more people into the profession.

Teaching remains a profession that is attracting the brightest and best new graduates as well as career changers. We achieved 94% of our postgraduate ITT target for 2015/16, of which 7% was additional recruitment beyond the target in primary, English, history and PE. Although we recognise that teacher recruitment remains challenging, particularly in some priority subjects and in certain areas of the country, we are nevertheless confident that overall recruitment to ITT remains strong.

We have already put in place a number of measures aimed at attracting more top graduates into teaching, particularly in the core academic subjects that help children reach their full potential. We are continuing to offer generous financial incentives,



including prestigious scholarships, worth up to £30,000 tax-free for trainees with top degrees in priority subjects.

In March 2015, the Prime Minister announced a package of up to £67m to recruit an additional 2,500 maths and physics teachers and to train 15,000 existing non-specialist teachers in those subjects over the term of this Parliament.

#### ■ Vocational Education: Tees Valley

**Tom Blenkinsop:** [\[40065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to Lord Heseltine's report, Tees Valley: Opportunity unlimited, published on 7 June 2016, what assessment her Department has made of the feasibility of a University Technical College or Institute of Technology in the Tees Valley area.

**Nick Boles:**

*[Holding answer 13 June 2016]:* Lord Heseltine's report recommends that, following the Tees Valley Post-16 Area Review, universities and local employers should consider whether technical based education provision in the form of either a University Technical College (UTC) or Institute of Technology (IoT) may help to address skill gaps and contribute to meeting the future needs of business.

The Government is committed to establishing a UTC or technical academy within reach of every city. As with other new academies, proposals to establish new UTCs and technical academies are submitted to the Department twice a year. The Department for Education would consider any proposals from the Tees Valley area as it would from elsewhere. The strongest applications that demonstrate a clear need and demand for their chosen specialisms in their local area are approved to develop their plans further.

The Baker Dearing Educational Trust is funded by the Department to support applicant groups and can be contacted to discuss future UTC proposals. The process for establishing IoTs has not started yet, so no assessment has been made regarding the feasibility of an Institute in the Tees Valley area.

## ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

#### ■ Department of Energy and Climate Change: Conditions of Employment

**Clive Lewis:** [\[40210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2016 to Question 39039, how many of the 193 off-payroll contingent staff employed by her Department since May 2015 were paid through limited companies; and what the total amount paid through limited companies was in that period.

**Andrea Leadsom:**

Contingent workers include contractors, agency workers and interims. Our contingent workers are engaged via approved provider frameworks and not directly through limited companies.

The response to Question 39039 has been revised and reissued. There were 152 contingent workers in core DECC during the period 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2016 (source: legacy HR system).

As at 1 May 2016 core DECC had 39 off-payroll (contingent) workers. All of these are engaged via an approved provider framework and not directly through limited companies.

■ **Department of Energy and Climate Change: Temporary Employment**

Clive Lewis:

[\[40209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 8th June 2016 to Question 39232, how many agency workers were employed by her Department in each of the last five financial years.

**Andrea Leadsom:**

The response to Question 39232 provided the financial spend for contingent workers over the last five financial years. This includes temporary workers, contractors and interims.

The number of temporary workers, contractors and interims engaged as at 31 March in each of the last five financial years is set out in the table . This is historical point in time data which was extracted from our legacy HR database at the first of April each year and cannot be retrospectively validated for accuracy.

As at 1 May 2016 there were 39 temporary workers, contractors and interims in DECC.

***Number of temporary workers, contractors and interims.***

- 31 March 2011 - 86
- 31 March 2012 - 137
- 31 March 2013 - 157
- 31 March 2014 - 145
- 31 March 2015 - 104
- 31 March 2016 - 58
- 1 May 2016 - 39

Clive Lewis:

[\[40255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how much her Department spent on agency workers in financial year 2015-16; and how much was paid to each agency used in that year.

**Andrea Leadsom:**

The Department is in the process of finalising its Annual Report and Accounts – the information on total spend on agency worker will be available in public domain in July 2016.

Information on cash amounts paid to agencies over £500 is available through the Department's transparency reporting at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-of-energy-climate-change&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-of-energy-climate-change&publication_type=transparency-data).

## ■ Fuel Poverty

**Dan Jarvis:**

[40206]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how much progress her Department expects to make towards eliminating fuel poverty by the end of this Parliament.

**Andrea Leadsom:**

The 2030 target, now enshrined in law, requires Government to improve as many fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable to Band C energy efficiency standard by 2030.

We have also set an interim fuel poverty milestone for 2020, to get as many fuel poor households as reasonably practicable into Band E.

The Government will be guided by the fuel poverty strategy published in March 2015 which sets out a clear policy of working towards improving energy efficiency standards in the homes of the fuel poor.

We intend to focus the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the Warm Home Discount more effectively on the fuel poor, and will consult on our future approach. Between them they will provide around £1billion of support each year.

The latest available statistics indicate that, in 2013, 2.35 million households were in fuel poverty in England of which 2.04 million were Band E or above. The next fuel poverty statistical release is due on 30th June 2016.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

## ■ Bees: Pesticides

**Steve McCabe:**

[40149]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 4 May 2016 to Question 35884, on Bees: Pesticides, if she will make it her policy to exercise her powers to lift the temporary ban on neonicotinoids in the future; and if she will make a statement.

**George Eustice:**

EU restrictions on the use of neonicotinoids have been fully implemented in the UK. Member States can authorise limited and controlled use of a pesticide on an exceptional basis in emergency situations to "control a danger which cannot be contained by any other reasonable means". Emergency authorisations are not granted automatically and applications must be based on evidence relating to the need for the pesticide and possible harmful effects.

Decisions on whether or not to grant authorisations for restricted neonicotinoids will be made on the basis of an examination of the technical and scientific information submitted by the applicant, by the UK Expert Committee on Pesticides and the Health and Safety Executive. Two applications are currently under consideration and will be assessed using the above regulatory criteria.

## ■ Dogs: Exports

**Angela Smith:** [\[39331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many consignments of dogs were exported from the UK to Hong Kong in the last 12 months; and how many dogs were exported within those consignments.

**George Eustice:**

The Animal and Plant Health Agency have issued export health certificates for 281 consignments of dogs to be exported to Hong Kong within the last 12 months, relating to 309 dogs in total. To date 266 of these consignments have been confirmed, relating to 293 dogs in total.

**Angela Smith:** [\[39701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many consignments of dogs were exported from the UK to Hong Kong in 2015; and how many dogs were in each such consignment.

**George Eustice:**

The Animal and Plant Health Agency issued export health certificates for 235 consignments of dogs to be exported to Hong Kong during 2015, relating to 267 dogs in total.

## ■ Neonicotinoids

**Mr Nicholas Brown:** [\[40264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she has made an assessment of the implications for her Department's policies of the findings of the University of Dundee study on the use of clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam neonicotinoid pesticides, published on 28 April 2016.

**George Eustice:**

The Government recognises the importance of effective pesticides and believes that they should be authorised if the scientific evidence shows they have no harmful effects on human health and no unacceptable effects on the environment. Good science is therefore essential for good decisions.

The Government will keep evidence on neonicotinoids under close scrutiny. The EU Commission has also initiated a review of the science, which will include evidence to address data gaps identified when restrictions on neonicotinoids were implemented in 2013.

**FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ **Belize: Guatemala****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[39651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports the Government has received on the territorial dispute between Belize and Guatemala over the area around the Sarstoon River.

**Mr Hugo Swire:**

The Government receives regular reports on the territorial dispute between Belize and Guatemala, including the area around the Sarstoon River.

I met Foreign Minister Elrington of Belize and Foreign Minister Morales of Guatemala on 25 May to discuss the border dispute and progress towards referring the the dispute to the International Court of Justice.

■ **Central America: Borders****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[39652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to Belize and Guatemala on (a) adhering to the provisions established under the 2005 Confidence Building Measures related to the disputed border between those countries and (b) steps to improve confidence and trust between those countries.

**Mr Hugo Swire:**

I last met Foreign Minister Elrington of Belize and Foreign Minister Morales of Guatemala on 25 May to discuss confidence building measures and further steps towards referring the border dispute to the International Court of Justice. We continue to encourage both countries to enhance confidence and trust between them by engaging in constructive dialogue, building on the provisions established by the 2005 Confidence Building Measures. We fund a number of projects to support increased economic activity in the border region, with the aim of reducing the need to cross the border illegally.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Scotland****Chris Law:**[\[39833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many times he has visited Scotland in an official capacity since the 2015 General Election; and what meetings were held on each such visit.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The Foreign Secretary, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) visited Edinburgh on 20 January 2016. Meetings were held with First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, Ruth Davidson MSP, and as part of the UK-Poland Quadriga, Polish Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski and Polish Defence Minister Antoni

Macierewicz. There was a wreath-laying at the Scottish National War Memorial and a commemoration at the Wojtek the Bear memorial.

I visited Scotland on 11 November 2015, where I met Fiona Hyslop MSP and Humza Yousaf MSP to discuss EU reform and held roundtable meetings with Scottish Financial Enterprise and NFU Scotland.

#### ■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Training

**Fiona Bruce:** [\[39677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will take steps to ensure that staff in his Department receive religious literacy training.

**Mr David Lidington:**

Training to develop religious literacy is provided at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London and at a number of Embassies and High Commissions overseas. In London, staff are offered a two day course covering Abrahamic and Dharmic religions. This is supplemented by a range of training activities on specific religions and religious topics.

A religion and foreign policy element is being built into the syllabus offered to all staff through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Diplomatic Academy.

#### ■ Mediterranean Sea: Refugees

**Helen Hayes:** [\[39929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what further steps the Government plans to take to reduce the incidence of drownings of refugees and migrants in the Mediterranean.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The Government's focus is on addressing the root causes of irregular migration so as to reduce the need for people to make perilous journeys to Europe. We have taken action to tackle smugglers and save lives at sea: HMS Enterprise is deployed as part of the EU's counter migration operation, Operation Sophia. The UK has rescued almost 18,000 people, and disrupted suspected people smugglers, in the Mediterranean since 2015. At the G7 Summit in Japan on 27 May, the Prime Minister announced that the UK will work on a plan to boost the capability of the Libyan coastguard to stem the flow of illegal migration across the Mediterranean into Europe. Once a detailed plan has been agreed with the Libyan authorities, the UK will send a training team to assist in its implementation, and as soon as the relevant permissions and UN Security Council Resolution are in place, we will deploy a naval vessel to the South Central Mediterranean.

## ■ Saudi Arabia: Arms Trade

**Toby Perkins:** [\[40150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect on the civil war in Yemen of arms sold by the UK to Saudi Arabia.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK supports the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition military intervention in Yemen, which came at the request of legitimate President Hadi to deter aggression by the Houthis and forces loyal to the former president Saleh. Saudi Arabia and the Coalition have played a crucial role and the priority now is for the Yemeni parties to agree a political solution through UN-facilitated peace talks to end the conflict. The UK is not a member of the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition and UK's arms exports to Saudi Arabia are made under pre-existing and long-standing government to government arrangements. The UK Government takes its arms export responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. The Government is satisfied that extant licences for Saudi Arabia are compliant with the UK's export licensing criteria.

## ■ Saudi Arabia: Human Rights

**Toby Perkins:** [\[40220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK offered support to Saudi Arabia for the process of that country being elected to the UN Human Rights Council.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Saudi Arabia was the only candidate put forward by the Asian Group for this seat in the UN's Human Rights Council. So while the UK never publicises how it votes, this was not a contested election and the UK's vote was immaterial.

## ■ Yemen: Military Intervention

**Stephen Twigg:** [\[39821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policy of the recent UN Secretary-General's report on Children and Armed Conflict and its Annex which lists the Saudi-led Coalition as committing grave violations against children in Yemen.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We are aware of the UN Secretary General's annual report on Children in Armed Conflict which was published on 2 June, which includes a section outlining the impact of the conflict in Yemen on children. The conflict in Yemen has had a significant impact on children, in terms of the numbers of child casualties, the recruitment of children as soldiers, and attacks on hospitals and schools. We consider all these reports very carefully. We note the announcement by the UN Secretary General on 6 June that removed the listing of the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition from the report's annex, pending the conclusion of a joint review by the UN and Saudi Arabia on the cases and numbers cited in the text. We welcome co-operation between the UN and Saudi Arabia to look in

to this matter. A political solution remains the best way to bring this conflict and the suffering of the Yemeni people to an end. The UK Government remains fully committed to this endeavour.

## ■ Yemen: Peace Negotiations

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[40002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress his Department has made on returning to political negotiations to end the conflict in Yemen; and what assessment he has made of the effect of the UK's support for the Saudi-led coalition on achieving this aim.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK supports the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition military intervention in Yemen, which came at the request of legitimate President Hadi to deter aggression by the Houthis and forces loyal to the former president Saleh. Saudi Arabia and the Coalition have played a crucial role in this endeavour. Peace talks are now the top priority. During the Foreign Secretary's visit to the Gulf in late May and early June, all countries reassured of their commitment to finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Yemen. The UK is working closely with the UN to encourage the Yemeni parties to engage in good faith in the peace talks in Kuwait and respect the ceasefire which started on 10 April. Through the cross-government Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, we are providing £1.05 million (over 2 financial years) to the UN Special Envoy's office to bolster UN capacity to facilitate the peace process, and are also supporting work to broaden the dialogue to include women and other under-represented groups.

## HEALTH

### ■ Abortion

**Fiona Bruce:**

[\[39734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost to the public purse of provision of abortion services in England was in each year from 1986 to 2013.

**Jane Ellison:**

Information about expenditure on abortions is not collected centrally.

### ■ Asthma

**Stephen McPartland:**

[\[39578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of trends in the number of patients with severe asthma being referred to a specialist by their GP over the last three years.

**Jane Ellison:**

No such assessment has been made.



## ■ Cancer: Medical Treatments

**Mr Jamie Reed:** [\[39580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of cancer patients in (a) England and (b) Copeland constituency received their first cancer treatment within 62 days of an urgent GP referral in 2015-16.

**Jane Ellison:**

The information is shown in the following table.

Proportion of patients that started first treatment for all cancers within 62 days of an urgent general practitioner referral in 2015-16

ENGLAND	NHS CUMBRIA CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP (CCG) <sup>1</sup>	
2015-16	82.4%	79.2%

*Source:* Cancer waiting times, NHS England

*Notes:*

<sup>1</sup> NHS Cumbria CCG is the CCG responsible for commissioning care for the residents of the constituency of Copeland. Data is not available by parliamentary constituency.

## ■ Cancer: Screening

**Mr Jamie Reed:** [\[39579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of cancer patients in (a) England and (b) Copeland constituency waited six weeks or more for a diagnostic test in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Jane Ellison:**

The information is not available in the format requested.

## ■ Electronic Cigarettes

**Adam Afriyie:** [\[39744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans that the new tobacco control plan will address the effects of (a) electronic vaping devices and (b) heat not burn devices.

**Jane Ellison:**

The new tobacco control plan will cover the use and effects of electronic vaping devices and novel tobacco products, including heat not burn devices.

## ■ Health Professions: Training

**Justin Madders:** [40208]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2016 to Question 38977, how the figure of 10,000 new nursing, midwifery and allied health training places by 2020 was calculated.

**Ben Gummer:**

As announced by the Chancellor in the Spending Review in November 2015, the Government has committed to remove the cap on the number of students studying nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions from 1 August 2017. This will enable universities to offer up to 10,000 new training places for students to start these courses in this Parliament.

This reflects estimates on the level of unmet demand for places in the current system where, as an example, for nursing, around two out of three nursing applicants who currently apply for a place are turned down.

## ■ Heart Diseases: Screening

**Derek Thomas:** [39813]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to improve GP access to natriuretic peptide testing.

**Derek Thomas:** [39814]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to improve the speed and accuracy of diagnosis for heart failure patients.

**Derek Thomas:** [39815]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to improve co-ordination of care for heart failure patients across primary and secondary care.

**Jane Ellison:**

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.

Specifically on heart failure, NHS England is working with Health Education England to look at ways of improving the provision of and increase access to echocardiography, which is used for the diagnosis of heart failure.

NHS England has also established a best practice tariff for acute heart failure. This aims to encourage better practice in the caring for heart failure patients. In addition, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published quality standards for acute heart failure and chronic heart failure, which can be found at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/QS9>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs103>

NHS England expects commissioners and providers to take account of quality standards in the services that are delivered to patients.

The use of natriuretic peptides in diagnosing heart failure is widely understood and pathology laboratories are used to measuring them. The NICE's guidance on acute heart failure and chronic heart failure both cover the use of natriuretic peptides. This guidance can be found at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg108>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg187>

The NICE has also developed a commissioning toolkit for the use of natriuretic peptides assessment in primary care for suspected heart failure:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/sharedlearning/a-commissioning-toolkit-for-use-of-natriuretic-peptide-assessment-for-suspected-heart-failure-in-primary-care>

## ■ Motor Neurone Disease

**Michelle Donelan:** [\[39575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding is allocated to each region for support services for people with motor neurone disease.

**Jane Ellison:**

Clinical commissioning groups and NHS England are responsible for delivering services for people with motor neurone disease, funded from their annual funding allocations. Information on funding for motor neurone related services is not collected centrally.

## ■ Obesity

**Jim Shannon:** [\[39890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with the Royal College of Nursing on the effect of boredom on obesity.

**Jane Ellison:**

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has not had any such discussions.

## ■ Pregnancy

**Fiona Bruce:** [\[39733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will issue a response to Early Day Motion 1150 of Session 2015-16, Legal protection for unborn children.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Government has no plans to repeal the Infant Life Preservation Act 1929, or sections 58 and 59 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861.

## ■ Strokes: Rehabilitation

**Kate Green:** [40014]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the level of access to stroke rehabilitation services in areas that are socio-economically deprived.

**Jane Ellison:**

Although the Department has made no assessment of access to stroke rehabilitation in socio-economically deprived areas, the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP) undertook an audit in 2015 of the provision and organisation of post-acute stroke care, including rehabilitation services. The audit shows there are variations around the country in the availability of these services to stroke survivors. The Strategic Clinical Networks and the National Clinical Director for Stroke are working with clinical commissioning groups to help address this.

The SSNAP data can be found at:

<https://www.strokeaudit.org/results/PostAcute/National.aspx>

## HOME OFFICE

## ■ Asylum

**Kirsty Blackman:** [39996]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied asylum seeking children were denied permanent asylum having applied as an adult in 2015.

**James Brokenshire:**

When a child passes the age of 18 and their Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) leave expires, they are no longer considered to be a UASC and are therefore required to take steps to return voluntarily or seek further leave to remain. Our records show that the number of main asylum claimants under the age of 18 years of age, who were granted UASC leave based on an asylum claim made on or after 1 April 2005, who went on to submit a further leave application in 2015 and were refused is 311.

## ■ Asylum: Children

**Royston Smith:** [39292]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the Government's policy is on the use of child advocates to support social workers working with unaccompanied migrant children.

**Karen Bradley:**

Unaccompanied migrant children are looked after by local authorities, which provide social work support and access to legal representation. Such children are also referred to the Refugee Council's Children's Panel for specialist support.

In addition, the Government ran a trial of independent child trafficking advocates from 8 September 2014 for a period of 12 months across 23 local authorities in England. The

trial provided a valuable contribution to our understanding of this area of work and we are currently working with a broad range of interested parties as well as Parliamentarians to further develop our thinking so that we ensure we support trafficked children appropriately. We will update Parliament in due course.

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[40127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to how many unaccompanied child refugees her Department has granted permission to join family in the UK; and what the countries of origin were of such children.

**James Brokenshire:**

We support the principle of family unity and have several routes for families to be reunited safely. We do not hold collective figures on how many unaccompanied child refugees have been granted permission to join family in the UK; and what the countries of origin were of such children.

## ■ Asylum: Deportation

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[39763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of failed asylum seekers who have been removed or voluntarily deported were (a) overstayers and (b) illegal entrants in each of the last seven years.

**James Brokenshire:**

Our records show what proportion of failed asylum seekers who have been removed or voluntarily deported were overstayers between 2009 and 2015; in table 1

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Enforced Removal	17%	21%	30%	31%	34%	35%	31%
Voluntary Departure	9%	16%	15%	24%	38%	32%	24%

Our records show what proportion of failed asylum seekers who have been removed or voluntarily deported were illegal entrants between 2009 and 2015; in table 2

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Enforced Removal	48%	56%	54%	45%	42%	40%	44%
Voluntary Departure	42%	40%	30%	40%	36%	39%	40%

## ■ Asylum: EU Law

Steve McCabe: [\[40147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will provide additional funding for transfer cases related to the Dublin Regulation where further evidence of family links is needed for asylum to be granted.

**James Brokenshire:**

The Dublin Regulation is the mechanism for determining which EU Member State is responsible for examining an asylum claim, not whether an individual qualifies for asylum. Any request to the UK from another Member State to unite family members under the Dublin Regulation is carefully considered: where someone seeking asylum elsewhere in the EU can demonstrate they have close family members legally in the UK, we will take responsibility for that claim. We make decisions based on all evidence available to us and where it is coherent, verifiable and sufficiently detailed to establish family links.

## ■ Asylum: Families

Gareth Thomas: [\[39781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect of the decision to introduce a 30-day deadline to travel once a family reunion visa has been issued; and if she will make a statement.

**James Brokenshire:**

*[Holding answer 13 June 2016]:* The visas issued to non-EEA nationals who are coming from overseas to stay in the UK for more than six-months are limited to 30 days duration because they are intended to act as a means of enabling the person to travel to the UK and to collect their biometric residence permit (BRP) following their arrival in the country. When a family reunion application is made individuals can specify the date they would like the visa to start to enable them to make any necessary travel arrangements, including obtaining exit visas.

The start date of the visa can be deferred for up to three months from the date of application. If there is any delay expected in the processing time of the application, the individual will be contacted by UKVI and informed about the delay. Where someone is unable to make arrangements to travel to the UK within the 30 day period, they can apply for a replacement visa.

We are aware that a small number of families have experienced difficulties with the visa procedures to enable them to join their family members in the UK, and have sought to address these issues by updating the guidance we issue to Entry Clearance Officers on family reunion applications.

## ■ Asylum: Higher Education

**Paul Blomfield:**

[\[40213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on access to higher education for people who have been granted humanitarian protection.

**James Brokenshire:**

Home Office officials have been involved in discussions with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to ensure that any conditions relating to access to Higher Education for those granted humanitarian protection satisfy our international obligations.

## ■ Asylum: Housing

**Alex Cunningham:**

[\[38729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many reports of criminal offences against residents of properties used to house asylum seekers have been recorded in each of the last 12 months.

**James Brokenshire:**

*[Holding answer 6 June 2016]:* The Home Office and its accommodation providers encourage accommodated asylum seekers to inform us of any criminal or anti-social activity against them so that appropriate action can be taken to ensure their safety. Information concerning the reports of criminal offences is not recorded on centrally collated statistical databases and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost by examination of case records.

## ■ Asylum: Religion

**Stuart C. McDonald:**

[\[40100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the implications for the Government's policy on asylum of the report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, entitled Asylum report: inadequate assessment of religion-based claims, published in June 2016.

**James Brokenshire:**

We are currently carefully considering the report and its recommendations. The report acknowledges the progress made by the Home Office with regards to guidance and training provided to its staff but highlighted the Group's view that there were some discrepancies between the Home Office policy and practice.

The Home Office carefully considers all asylum claims on their individual merits and grants protection for those who genuinely need it, in accordance with our international obligations under the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). In every asylum case the particular circumstances of the individual are considered in light of published country information, which includes issues relating specifically to religious freedoms.

Published guidance on the interviewing and consideration of religious claims is regularly reviewed and takes into consideration the views of religious groups and other stakeholders.

All asylum decision makers are currently receiving credibility training. This course trains decision makers on how to assess the evidential value of their interview questions (including when assessing religious based claims and religious conversion), the various reasons why someone may not come across as credible in an asylum interview and discusses issues such as speculation and implausibility. The 5-week Foundation Training Programme (FTP) for new decision makers trains staff on all aspects of the asylum decision making process, including religious based claims and religious conversion has been endorsed by the UNHCR.

## ■ Domestic Violence

**Rushanara Ali:** [\[40313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what funding the Government has allocated to tackle domestic violence in each year since 2010.

**Karen Bradley:**

The previous Government provided £40 million of dedicated funding for domestic and sexual violence services between 2011 and 2015 equating to £10 million per year. This funding was extended until April 2016, supplemented by an additional £10 million for refuges and a £3.5 million fund to boost the provision of domestic violence services.

As part of our new Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy, we announced increased funding to £80 million from 2016 to 2020 to protect women and girls from violence, which includes support for refuges and other accommodation-based services, funding to national helplines, a further year of funding for Independent Domestic Violence Advisers and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference Coordinators and, from 2017, the launch of the VAWG Transformation Fund.

## ■ Gurpal Viridi

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[40178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the cost to the Metropolitan Police is of obtaining a transcript of the Southwark Crown Court trial of charges against Gumpal Viladi.

**Mike Penning:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2016]:* The cost of obtaining any court transcript depends on the length of the proceedings.

The exact cost of the transcript in this case is unknown as no transcript has been requested to date by the Metropolitan Police Service.



## ■ Human Trafficking

**Sarah Champion:**

[\[39098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the total amount (a) awarded and (b) recovered was from individuals convicted of human trafficking offences in each of the last three years; and how much of the money so recovered was allocated to (i) the Treasury, (ii) the police and (iii) the victim.

**Karen Bradley:**

*[Holding answer 8 June 2016]:* The information relating to the amounts recovered and distributed in relation to human trafficking in each of the last three years is given in the table below. It should be noted that during the period in question, the Government introduced the Modern Slavery Act 2015, which gives law enforcement agencies better tools to tackle modern slavery and created a new statutory defence to further protect victims.

The amount recovered only includes money collected from confiscation orders and cash forfeitures under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. The amount paid in compensation only includes that paid out of the money collected under confiscation orders.

Under the Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme, the Government invests 50% of any recovered assets that remain once compensation has been paid to victims into frontline operational agencies, including the police, in order to incentivise the use of asset recovery powers.

### PROCEEDS RECOVERED IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASES

YEAR	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Amount recovered	£1,537,048.80	£1,079,261.11	£541,565.76
Compensation paid to victims	NIL	£53,745.74	£102,198.52
Amount paid to the police	£48,089.57	£67,459.96	£96,026.21
Amount paid to other frontline operational agencies	£703,572.21	£435,597.92	£119,905.91
Retained by central Government	£751,661.79	£503,057.89	£215,932.12

Data is extracted from reports run on 6 June 2016 using the Joint Asset Recovery Database (JARD). JARD is a central repository of information relating to the seizure of the proceeds of crime using Proceeds of Crime Act powers. JARD is a live database which is continually updated. As such, the data provided may vary from reports run on earlier or later dates.

## ■ Immigration Controls: Aviation

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[39755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of flights identified as high-risk where Border Force officials have not attended in the last 12 months; when the automated system for airports to check the civil aviation tracking system will be introduced; and if she will make a statement.

**James Brokenshire:**

To release the information requested on flights identified as high-risk, which is operationally sensitive, would be contrary to the interests of national security. Border Force examines incoming general aviation flights in comparison with the Civil Aviation Tracking System. Border Force has considered options for improving the methods by which this is achieved and will develop this further in the coming year.

## ■ Metropolitan Police

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[40179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Metropolitan Police have provided her with a copy of the memorandum of a conviction/order entered in the Register of Lambeth East Juvenile Court that records the proving on 1 April 1987 of offences or complaints by PC Markwick by a defendant aged over 16 on 7 November 1986.

**Mike Penning:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2016]:* The Metropolitan Police Service has not provided this document to the Home Office.

## ■ Offences against Children

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[40261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 3 June 2016 to Question 39000, how many interviews with people making accusations of child abuse have been carried out by Operation Pallial under the Achieving Best Evidence guidance with a social worker present.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[40262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 3 June 2016 to Question 39000, how many of the eight people convicted as a result of Operation Pallial investigations had previous convictions for sexual offences.

**Karen Bradley:**

The National Crime Agency, leading Operation Pallial, has informed us that all interviews they have conducted have been under Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) guidelines and, where the need for appropriate adult or other support is identified, this has been provided. It is not possible to provide figures on the number of interviews conducted where a social worker has been present as this information is not held centrally.

Three people convicted as a result of Operation Pallial have previous convictions for sexual offences.

#### ■ Police Community Support Officers: Ethnic Groups

**Jack Dromey:**

[\[40212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of police community support officers in England and Wales were BME in each year from 2005 to 2015.

**Mike Penning:**

The Home Office publishes data on the total number of full time equivalent police community support officers, and the number of full time equivalent police community support officers who are Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), in the annual 'Police workforce in England and Wales' statistical bulletin.

#### NUMBER OF FULL TIME EQUIVALENT POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES 1,2,3,4

As at 31 March...	Number of BME PCSOs (FTE)	Total number of PCSOs (FTE)	Proportion BME <sup>2</sup>
2005	879	6,148	14%
2006	1,029	6,768	15%
2007	1,577	13,529	12%
2008	1,813	15,807	11%
2009	1,893	16,507	11%
2010	1,870	16,918	11%
2011	1,686	15,820	11%
2012	1,443	14,393	10%
2013	1,350	14,205	10%
2014	1,193	13,066	9%
2015	1,126	12,331	9%

1. This table contains full-time equivalent figures that have been presented to the nearest whole number.

2. The proportion of PCSOs who are BME is calculated by dividing the number of BME PCSOs by the total number of PCSOs. The total number of PCSOs includes cases where the ethnicity was "not stated".
3. Figures have been confirmed by all police forces after collection and before publication each year.
4. Some totals here may not equate to the published figure if a police force has revised their figures since the publication.

The table contains data on the proportion of police community support officers who were BME from 31 March 2005 to 31 March 2015.

Data for 31 March 2015 (the latest period for which figures are available) can also be found in the tables of the July 2015 police workforce statistics publication:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/495631/police-workforce-tabs-mar15-revised-jan16.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495631/police-workforce-tabs-mar15-revised-jan16.ods)

**Attachments:**

1. PQ 40212 - Table [PQ 40212 - Table.xls]

## ■ Undocumented Migrants

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[39760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the total cost to her Department was of the van-based advertising campaign advising illegal immigrants to go home, launched in Autumn 2013; and if she will make a statement.

**James Brokenshire:**

The cost for this campaign (Operation Vaken) has previously been published. I refer the hon member to Parliamentary Question 215728 which I answered on 3 December 2014.

## ■ Visas: Overseas Students

**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[38689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 3 March 2016 to Question 28999, how many (a) credibility interviews were conducted and (b) students did not undergo such interviews in each year from 2009-10 to 2015-16.

**James Brokenshire:**

The number of point of application credibility interviews of Tier 4 applicants conducted by UK Visas and Immigration during the time periods requested can be found in the table below.

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF TIER 4 CREDIBILITY INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED*
2013-2014	112357

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF TIER 4 CREDIBILITY INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED*
2014-2015	123749
2015-2016	60131

\*THIS DATA IS TAKEN FROM UNPUBLISHED LOCAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION THAT IS NOT SUBJECT TO NATIONAL STATISTICS PROTOCOLS AND IS THEREFORE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

All of these interviews were conducted via video conference by staff based in the UK. Additional interviews may be conducted overseas as part of the application process.

The difference in the number of interviews conducted can primarily be explained by a shift towards more in-depth interviewing of higher risk cases. This more selective approach to interviewing follows a number of reforms we have introduced to the student migration system to clamp down on abuse while continuing to attract the brightest and best to our world-class institutions. These reforms have had an impact both on the volume and genuineness of the student visa applications we now receive.

The Home Office does not hold the specific data requested in a format that would allow us to state how many students did not undergo such interviews. To obtain this information would involve reviewing individual case records, incurring disproportionate cost.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### ■ Developing Countries: Corruption

**Mr Nigel Dodds:**

[\[39954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent discussions she has had with her US counterpart on levels of corruption in states in receipt of international aid.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

The Secretary of State met with Gayle Smith on 18 April for the annual DFID-USAID development dialogue in Washington DC.

My senior officials and those of USAID engage frequently and the UK and USA are working closely to follow up on commitments made in our respective country statements at the Prime Minister's Anti-Corruption Summit on 12 May.

### ■ Developing Countries: Sustainable Development

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[39989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the funding commitments her Department have made to contribute to the UN sustainable development goals; and if she will make a statement.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

The Global Goals are the starting point for DFID's Strategic Objectives and are embedded across all that the Department does. Through the Bilateral Aid Review and Multilateral Aid Review we will agree on an allocation of DFID's budget that delivers our desired ambition against the Strategic Objectives through the most effective channels, based on a solid understanding of what works, and providing maximum value for money.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[39990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what contribution her Department has made to the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the last six months; and if she will make a statement.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

The Global Goals are the starting point for DFID's Strategic Objectives and are embedded across all that the Department does. In February this year we published our Single Departmental Plan (SDP), which sets out how we will play our part in delivering the UK Aid Strategy to help end extreme poverty, deliver the Global Goals and create a safer and more prosperous world.

This strategic approach reflects DFID's commitments to economic development, girls and women and responding to humanitarian crises; as well as our ambition to lead the way internationally on engaging young people; tackling climate change; and investing more in research, technology and skills to maximise development outcomes.

**Ms Diane Abbott:**

[\[40327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the findings of the report of the International Development Committee, UK implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, HC 103, published on 8 June 2016, on the need for a cross-government approach in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, what recent discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on those goals.

**Justine Greening:**

I have discussed the government's approach to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. This will be a cross-government effort with individual Secretaries of State accountable through their Single Departmental Plans. There will continue to be regular discussions involving all relevant departments across Government. The Government will respond to the IDC report.

## ■ Eritrea: Human Rights

**Ms Diane Abbott:**

[\[40328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the implications are for the Government's policy on using Overseas Development Funding aid through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa to send Eritreans in the EU back to Eritrea of the recommendation by the Commission established by the UN Human Rights Council to refer that country to the International Criminal Court.

**Justine Greening:**

There are no programmes under the EUTF that are specific to Eritrea or that are funding the return of Eritreans currently in the EU.

■ **EU Aid**

**Mr Nigel Dodds:**

[\[39951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of total EU member states' aid the UK aid funding represents.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

Every pound of aid the UK spends through EU institutions is matched by over £6 from other Member States.

■ **Iraq: Humanitarian Aid**

**Toby Perkins:**

[\[40109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment she has made of the humanitarian situation in Fallujah.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

The UK is concerned by reports of a deteriorating humanitarian situation in Fallujah. The UN estimates that up to 90,000 civilians may be trapped inside the city and surrounding areas. We call on all sides to the conflict to respect International Humanitarian Law and to ensure free, unimpeded access for humanitarian agencies.

Since June 2014, the UK has committed £79.5 million in humanitarian assistance to the crisis in Iraq. The UK is the largest contributor to the Iraq Humanitarian Pooled Fund, through which we are funding projects to support those leaving Fallujah. Our humanitarian partners continue to engage with the Government of Iraq, civil and military authorities to find ways of reaching civilians.

■ **New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition**

**Ms Diane Abbott:**

[\[40329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the implications for her policies are of the report from the Committee on Development of the European Parliament on the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (NAFSN), published on 3 May 2016, on the Government's support for the NAFSN.

**Justine Greening:**

The New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition is a multi-stakeholder platform that aims to accelerate responsible investment in African agriculture. At the continental level, it is led by the African Union Commission. We support their aims through our policy engagement and programme work.

The report makes some useful recommendations which we are considering and will discuss with the wider AU-led initiative. Many of the report's recommendations have already been the focus of DFID policy and programme work.

**■ Overseas Aid**

**Mr Nigel Dodds:** [\[39952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent discussions she has had with the devolved administrations on her Department's priorities.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

DFID Ministers have met Scottish Government Ministers on two occasions in the past year. DFID officials have met officials of the devolved administrations to discuss respective priorities on a number of occasions.

**■ Pitcairn Islands: Shipping**

**Zac Goldsmith:** [\[40043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department plans to include best practice biosecurity and waste management requirement clauses in its next contract for the Pitcairn Island supply ship.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

The tender for the Pitcairn Islands supply ship is currently underway and best practice biosecurity and waste management requirement clauses will be included in the agreed contract.

**■ St Helena: Airports**

**Mr Gavin Shuker:** [\[40230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what estimate she has made of the weekly cost of the deferment of the opening of St Helena Airport.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

The St Helena Airport was certificated by Air Safety Support International on 10 May 2016 and is open.

**Mr Gavin Shuker:** [\[40233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment she has made of the operational readiness of St Helena Airport; and when she expects commercial operations at that airport to commence.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

The St Helena Airport was certificated by Air Safety Support International on 10 May 2016 and is open. As a result of turbulence and wind shear identified on the northern approach, the certification confirms the airport is classed as Category C, which requires certain conditions to be met by airlines and aircraft proposing to use the airport. Work is underway to establish commercial air services.



## ■ Yemen: Overseas Aid

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[39874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to ensure that UK aid for the conflict in Yemen benefits its intended recipients; and what proportion of the £85 million of aid for Yemen committed in the last year has been used to support children.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

The UK is the 4th largest donor to the crisis in Yemen and has more than doubled its humanitarian support over the last year to £85 million for 2015/16. We work with trusted and impartial partners such as UN agencies and NGOs who have good access and a strong track record of delivering and monitoring assistance in difficult and dangerous places. We regularly monitor and review our programmes and have an independent monitoring programme to provide independent assurance on what we are delivering.

In 2015/16 DFID provided the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with £6 million, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) with over £21 million and Save the Children with over £3 million. Amongst other activities, our funding helped treat over 150,000 children under 5 with severe acute malnutrition and screen 140,000 children for childhood infections. It also helped support and refer displaced children and enabled 3,500 refugee children and Yemeni children from their host communities to resume education. DFID has also supported education in Yemen through the Social Fund for Development (SFD). Since 2010, more than 240,000 children have attended schools supported by SFD.

## JUSTICE

## ■ Small Claims

**Julian Sturdy:**

[\[39716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for what reason the Government is proposing to raise the small claims limit to £5000 rather than to £3000.

**Dominic Raab:**

The Government is determined to crack down on the compensation culture and has announced reforms, including raising the small claims limit, to tackle the problem. These reforms will build on previous measures taken by the MoJ to control costs, tackle fraud, strengthen the medical evidence process and reduce incentives to pursue trivial whiplash claims. £5,000 is considered to be the appropriate level for the small claims limit and the rationale for this will be set out in the consultation document which will be published in due course.

**LEADER OF THE HOUSE**■ **Leader of the House of Commons: Scotland**

**Chris Law:**

[\[39837\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, how many times he has visited Scotland in an official capacity since the 2015 General Election; and what meetings were held on each such visit.

**Chris Grayling:**

I have not visited Scotland in an official capacity since the 2015 General Election.

■ **Welsh Grand Committee: Translation Services**

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[40145\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, what estimate he has made of the potential cost of providing simultaneous and written translation in Welsh Grand Committees for bilingual proceedings.

**Chris Grayling:**

English is and should remain the language of this House. The Government has not made a detailed estimate of the cost of providing simultaneous and written translation in Welsh Grand Committees.

**NORTHERN IRELAND**■ **Terrorism: Northern Ireland**

**Craig Whittaker:**

[\[40455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent assessment she has made of the level of threat in (a) Northern Ireland and (b) Great Britain from dissident republican groups.

**Mrs Theresa Villiers:**

Threat levels are kept under constant review. The threat from dissident republican groupings in Northern Ireland is Severe, an attack is highly likely. In Great Britain it is Substantial, an attack is a strong possibility.

The threat from terrorism is being suppressed by the diligent work of the PSNI and MI5, sometimes carried out under difficult and dangerous circumstances. This Government's first priority is to keep people safe and secure right across the United Kingdom and we will always give our fullest possible support to the police and intelligence services.

**SCOTLAND**■ **EU Grants and Loans: Scotland****Karl McCartney:**[\[39802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will estimate the level of structural funding that the EU Commission's formula will allocate to Scotland in the post-2020 Multi Annual Financial Framework.

**David Mundell:**

The post-2020 Multi Annual Financial Framework has not been proposed. I refer the hon Member to a letter signed by the former Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Rt hon Vince Cable of 17th April 2014, on 'European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund: UK Allocations 2014 to 2020'. This is available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/307492/bis-14-772-uk-allocations-eu-structural-funds-2014-2020-letter.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307492/bis-14-772-uk-allocations-eu-structural-funds-2014-2020-letter.pdf).

**Karl McCartney:**[\[39808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what change there was in the amount the EU Commission proposed to make available in structural funds to Scotland for the period 2014 to 2020 from the period 2007 to 2013; and what steps his Department took to limit such change; and what estimate he has made of the level of such funding for Scotland after 2020.

**David Mundell:**

I refer the hon Member to the information provided at HM Treasury analysis: the long-term economic impact of EU membership and the alternatives (paragraphs 1.113 – 1.126). This is available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/517415/treasury\\_analysis\\_economic\\_impact\\_of\\_eu\\_membership\\_web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/517415/treasury_analysis_economic_impact_of_eu_membership_web.pdf).

**TRANSPORT**■ **Bridges: Tees Valley****Tom Blenkinsop:**[\[40244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to paragraph 9.2.7 of the report by Lord Heseltine, Tees Valley: opportunity unlimited, published in June 2016, if he will make it his policy to provide a new strategic road Tees crossing.

**Andrew Jones:**

The first Road Investment Strategy (RIS) recognises that tackling congestion on the A19 is a priority and includes a scheme to widen the A19 between the A1027 (Norton) and A689 (Wynyard).

In addition, the Tees Valley Combined Authority and the local authorities are working in partnership with Highways England to identify options for a new crossing of the Tees to

enhance the road network. The Combined Authority has made a bid to the Department's Large Majors scheme for 2016/17 to develop proposals. The results of bids into this fund are due to be published in July 2016.

Highways England has begun gathering evidence to support the development of the second RIS period which commences in 2020/21. The evidence from Lord Heseltine's Report will be taken into account in this process.

## ■ Cycling and Walking

**Toby Perkins:** [\[40114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what additional funding his Department plans to make available for walking and cycling initiatives as a result of the cycling and walking investment strategy.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government has made clear its intention to make this country a cycling nation. The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy will be published in the summer and will include details of how the £300m committed in the last Spending Review will be invested to support cycling and walking.

In addition to the dedicated cycling and walking programmes, there are a number of wider funding streams which are devolved to local bodies and which can and are being used to support cycling and walking projects. In particular, billions are available to Local Enterprise Partnerships and local authorities through the Local Growth Fund and Integrated Transport Block allocations.

In addition to the above, a record £6.1 billion has been allocated to local highways authorities between 2015 and 2021 for road maintenance, and this funding can help maintain footways and cycleways.

## ■ Driving: Licensing

**Justin Madders:** [\[40260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 6 June 2016 to Question 38478, what the current average time taken is to process driving licence renewal applications for people over 70 years old where medical investigations are required.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) deals with more than 600,000 medical driver licensing applications annually. The length of time taken to deal with an individual application depends on the medical condition and whether further information is required from medical professionals.

For the period April 2015 to March 2016, the average time for an assessment and a licensing decision to be made was 53 working days, irrespective of age. Between April 2014 and March 2015, the figure was 58 working days.

## ■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Helen Jones:

[40242]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will re-assess the business case for the Hoo Green to Bamfurlong spur of the second phase of High Speed 2 to take account of the decision to place the train depot at Crewe rather than Golborne.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

HS2 Ltd and the Department for Transport have been analysing route and station options in light of responses received following the Phase Two consultation. It would not be appropriate to go into detail on any individual location before a route decision has been taken. A route decision is planned for autumn 2016.

## ■ HM Coastguard

Deidre Brock:

[40004]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how his Department measures the performance of the coastguard.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

Her Majesty's Coastguard undertake an annual programme of Operational Standards Reviews to measure the quality, consistency and effectiveness of operational service delivery.

Additionally HM Coastguard routinely review at least 5% of incidents to which their National Network has responded to assess the effectiveness of outcomes and learn any appropriate lessons for future operations.

## ■ Public Transport: Greater London

Stephen Hammond:

[40052]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations his Department has received from the new Mayor of London on working together to deliver his manifesto commitment to freeze transport fares.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Secretary of State and other Transport Ministers meet representatives of the Greater London Authority and Transport for London on a regular basis to discuss a wide range of subjects. The Department has not yet received any representations from the Mayor on this matter.

## ■ Rescue Services: Edinburgh

Deidre Brock:

[40010]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what coastguard personnel responded to the incident off Portobello beach in Edinburgh in the early hours of 15 May 2016.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Coastguard Rescue Teams (CRT) from Fisherrow and Queensferry were tasked to respond to the incident off Portobello beach in Edinburgh in the early hours of 15 May 2016.

■ **Rescue Services: Scotland**

**Deidre Brock:** [\[40013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many coastguard rescue (a) employees and (b) volunteers cover Scotland.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The number of Coastguard rescue (a) employees and (b) volunteers that cover Scotland are as follows:

(A) Employees

HM Coastguards National Network enables the National Maritime Operations Centre (NMOC) and 9 Coastguard Operations Centres (CGOC) to coordinate any incident anywhere around the UK coast. Workload is therefore managed on a national basis enabling national capability and resource to be available to any incident. There are 314 full time equivalent Coastguard posts within the national network of which 69 are based at CGOCs located in Scotland (Aberdeen, Shetland and Stornoway).

There are 37 full time equivalent Coastguard posts that are responsible for the management, training and oversight of the volunteer Coastguard Rescue Teams that cover Scotland.

(B) Volunteers

There is an establishment of 1,226 volunteer Coastguard Rescue Officers that cover Scotland.

■ **River Forth: Rescue Services**

**Deidre Brock:** [\[40007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which coastguard stations cover the Firth of Forth.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The operational concepts and procedures that underpin HM Coastguards National Network mean that the Coastguard Centres within it no longer have fixed geographic boundaries. The network enables the National Maritime Operations Centre (NMOC) and 9 Coastguard Operations Centres (CGOC) to coordinate any incident anywhere around the UK coast. Workload managed on a national basis enabling national capability and resource to be available to any incident, for example in the Firth of Forth, on the basis of the nature of the incident.

**Deidre Brock:**

[\[40009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the coastguard search and rescue capability for the Firth of Forth is.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

HM Coastguard search and rescue capability consists of the tasking and coordination of rescue resources, the volunteer Coastguard Rescue Service (CRS) and the provision of Search and Rescue Helicopters.

Tasking and Coordination of Rescue Assets

HM Coastguards 'National Network' enables the National Maritime Operations Centre (NMOC) and 9 Coastguard Operations Centres (CGOC) to coordinate any incident anywhere around the UK coast. Workload is therefore managed on a national basis enabling national capability and resource to be available to any incident, for example in the Firth of Forth, on the basis of the nature of the incident.

Volunteer Coastguard Rescue Service

There are 4 volunteer Coastguard Rescue Teams (CRT) covering the Firth of Forth with the following operational capabilities.

CRT	WATER SAFETY AND RESCUE	LAND SEARCH	MUD RESCUE	ROPE RESCUE	FIRST AID
Leven	✓	✓		✓	✓
Kinghorn	✓	✓		✓	✓
South Queensferry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fisherrow	✓	✓		✓	✓
North Berwick	✓	✓		✓	✓

Additionally there are 5 full time Maritime Coastguard Agency employees who are responsible for the management, training and oversight of these teams.

Search and Rescue Helicopters

The Search and Rescue Helicopters based at Inverness and Prestwick provide capability for the Firth of Forth. However, it should be noted that the speed and range of the aircraft located at the four HM Coastguard bases in Scotland means that HM Coastguard has the ability to surge up to five SAR helicopters to a single incident in Scotland, should it be necessary to do so.

**■ Unmanned Air Vehicles**

**Richard Burden:** [\[39997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to engage with the European Aviation Safety Authority task force assessing the risk of collision between drones and aircraft.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Department for Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority have regular interaction with the European Aviation Safety Authority (EASA) on the development of drone safety regulations. This includes engagement on the EASA task force studying the risk of collision between drones and aircrafts, which we expect will be consulting more formally across Member States this summer.

**Richard Burden:** [\[40015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 26 April 2016 to Question 34503, if he will release a summary or redacted version of risk assessments carried out by the Cross-Government Working Group on RPAS.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Cross-Government Working Group on RPAS commissioned a piece of work, led by the Ministry of Defence, to analyse the potential use of drones for criminal purposes including the potential use of drones for terrorist purposes. This work is ongoing and being kept under review. I will place a redacted summary of the work to date in the Libraries of both Houses before the Summer Recess.

**Richard Burden:** [\[40016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 12 April 2016 to Question 32352, whether the memorandum of understanding between the Home Office, the Civil Aviation Authority and the police has been agreed.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

I can confirm that the memorandum of understanding between the Department for Transport, the Home Office, the Civil Aviation Authority and the police has been signed and is operational.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****■ Bereavement Benefits**

**Kirsten Oswald:** [\[40218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the long-term effect on incomes of households with children affected by the planned replacement of widowed parent's allowance by bereavement allowance.

**Priti Patel:**

Bereavement support payments (BSP) will replace both Widowed Parent's Allowance and Bereavement Allowance for those bereaved from April 2017 onwards.



BSP will not be taken into account when calculating income for the benefit cap and will also be paid in addition to income related benefits to ensure that the least well off families are financially better off under the reform.

Further information is provided via the link below.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/311318/pensions-act-ia-annex-d-bereavement-support-payment.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/311318/pensions-act-ia-annex-d-bereavement-support-payment.pdf)

## ■ Cold Weather Payments

Dan Jarvis:

[40207]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential health benefits of increasing the temperature below which cold weather payments are made.

Priti Patel:

The Government already has a plan to protect health and reduce harm from cold weather. In October 2015 it published The Cold Weather Plan for England which can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cold-weather-plan-cwp-for-england> . We have no plans to change the criteria for Cold Weather Payments.

## ■ Employment Schemes: Scotland

Ian Murray:

[40135]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what information his Department holds on the number of starts in Scotland on the Work Choice programme in each of the last three financial years for which such information is available.

Priti Patel:

For all Work Choice providers excluding Remploy, there have been 2,070 starts in Scotland in the financial year 2013/14, 1,780 in 2014/15, and 1,210 in 2015/16.

Ian Murray:

[40137]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what information his Department holds on the number of job outcomes in Scotland for the Work Choice programme in each of the last three financial years for which such information is available.

Priti Patel:

For all Work Choice providers excluding Remploy, there have been 1,350 job outcomes in Scotland in the financial year 2013/14, 1,290 in 2014/15, and 700 in 2015/16.

Ian Murray:

[40138]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what information his Department holds on the number of referrals for individuals in Scotland to the Work Choice programme in each of the last three financial years for which such information is available.

Priti Patel:

For all Work Choice providers excluding Remploy, there have been 2,780 referrals in Scotland in the financial year 2013/14, 2,270 in 2014/15, and 1,510 in 2015/16.

**■ Personal Income**

**Ronnie Cowan:** [40099]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what research his Department has undertaken on the potential merits of implementing a universal basic income.

**Priti Patel:**

My department has not undertaken any research on this topic.

**■ Widowed Parent's Allowance**

**Kirsten Oswald:** [39909]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of children likely to be affected by the planned replacement of widowed parent's allowance by bereavement allowance.

**Kirsten Oswald:** [39910]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the annual saving which would be generated by the planned replacement of widowed parent's allowance by bereavement allowance.

**Priti Patel:**

Bereavement support payments will be introduced from April 2017 for new claimants only. Existing claimants of Widowed Parent's Allowance and Bereavement Allowance will remain on those benefits for the lifetime of their awards therefore there will be no impact on them or their families.

Bereavement Support Payment is forecasted to cost the Department for Work and Pensions an extra £100m in the first three years. The full cost to the exchequer will be greater than this as, unlike its predecessors, Bereavement Support Payment will not be taxable.

Further information on forecast expenditure is provided via the link below.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/487612/outturn-and-forecast-autumn-statement-2015.xlsx](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/487612/outturn-and-forecast-autumn-statement-2015.xlsx)

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### TREASURY

#### ■ ECOFIN: 17 June 2016

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke):

[\[HCWS43\]](#)

A meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council will be held in Luxembourg on 17 June 2016. EU Finance Ministers are due to discuss the following items:

#### **Anti-Tax Avoidance Package**

The Presidency will seek a political agreement on a compromise text relating to the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive.

#### **Financial Transaction Tax**

An update will be provided on the progress regarding implementing a Financial Transaction Tax in participating Member States. The UK is not taking part in the Financial Transaction Tax.

#### **Strengthening the Banking Union**

A presentation will be given on a roadmap regarding strengthening of the Banking Union, alongside an oral update from the Presidency on progress made in Council working groups.

#### **Current Legislative Proposals**

The Presidency will update the Council on the state of play of financial services dossiers.

#### **State of play of the Banking Union**

The Commission will give an update on several dossiers linked to the Banking Union: the Single Resolution Fund, the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive and the Deposit Guarantee Scheme Directive.

#### **Analysis by the Commission on temporary VAT derogations (reverse charge mechanism)**

Following a request by the Czech Finance Minister, the Commission will present analysis relating to widening the use of the reverse charge mechanism to combat VAT fraud. This will be followed by an exchange of views.

#### **Implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact**

The Council will be asked to endorse the draft decisions to close the Excessive Deficit Procedures for Cyprus, Ireland and Slovenia based on recommendations by the Commission. As these decisions cover euro area Member States, the UK does not have a vote.

#### **Report of the European Court of Auditors on the Excessive Deficit Procedure**

Following preparation by the Economic and Financial Committee, the Council will adopt conclusions relating to a European Court of Auditors report on effective implementation of the Excessive Deficit Procedure.

**Contribution to the European Council meeting on 28-29 June 2016**

The Council will prepare a number of items ahead of June European Council. Specifically, Ministers will endorse the 2016 Country Specific Recommendations, part of the European Semester process.

Following this, views will be exchanged on: National Productivity Boards within the euro area; economic and fiscal governance; unified euro area representation at the IMF; and the Commission's recent communications on external aspects of migration and the investment plan for Europe.

**■ ECOFIN: 25 May 2016**

**The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke):** [\[HCWS44\]](#)

A meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council was held in Brussels on 25 May 2016. EU Finance Ministers discussed the following items:

**Anti-Tax Avoidance Package**

Ministers held an exchange of views on a compromise text relating to the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive. Ministers agreed that this file would return to ECOFIN in June for further discussion and possible agreement.

**Current Legislative Proposals**

The Presidency updated the Council on the state of play of financial services dossiers.

**State of play of the Banking Union**

The Commission gave an update on several dossiers linked to the Banking Union: the Single Resolution Fund, the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive and the Deposit Guarantee Scheme Directive.

**VAT Action Plan**

The Council held an exchange of views and agreed Council conclusions relating to the Commission's VAT Action Plan, published 7 April, and a European Court of Auditors Special report.

**European Semester**

Following preparation by the Economic and Financial Committee, the Council adopted conclusions on the 2016 In-Depth Reviews of macroeconomic imbalances and the implementation of the 2015 Country Specific Recommendations.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ AGENDA FOR JUNE EU ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Environment and Rural Affairs (Rory Stewart): [\[HCWS42\]](#)

I will attend the EU Environment Council in Brussels on the 20<sup>th</sup> June, along with my Noble Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Climate Change (Lord Bourne).

Following adoption of the agenda, the list of “A” items will be approved.

Under legislative activities the Council will debate a proposal to reform the EU Emissions Trading System. The Presidency will provide a state of play report on the ongoing negotiations with the European Parliament to agree the National Emissions Ceiling Directive.

Under non-legislative activities, the Council will aim to adopt Council conclusions on the EU action plan for the Circular Economy and the EU action plan against wildlife trafficking. They will also discuss a Council statement on the ratification of the Paris Agreement.

The following items are due to be discussed under Any Other Business:

- a) NO<sub>x</sub> emissions by diesel cars
- b) Recent international meetings:
  - i ) High-Level Meeting (Montreal, 11-13 May 2016) and preparations for the ICAO Assembly (Montreal, 27 September–7 October 2016)
  - ii ) Second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (Nairobi, 23–27 May 2016)
  - iii ) Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Batumi, Georgia, 8–10 June 2016)
- c) REACH forward-priorities for effective regulation (Brussels, 1 June 2016)
- d ) High-Level Meeting “Make it Work” (Amsterdam, 4 April 2016)
- e) Communication on Environmental Implementation Review
- f) Global amphibian deaths - combatting the fungus *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* (Bsal) infecting salamanders and newts in the EU
- g) Informal meeting of the Environment and Transport Ministers (Amsterdam, 14-15 April 2016)
- h )Endocrine disruptors
- i) Work programme of the incoming Presidency

## FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

## ■ Foreign Affairs Council (20 June) and General Affairs Council (24 June)

The Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington):

[[HCWS41](#)]

My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs will attend the Foreign Affairs Council on 20 June and I will attend the General Affairs Council on 24 June. The Foreign Affairs Council will be chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and the General Affairs Council will be chaired by the Dutch Presidency. The meetings will be held in Luxembourg.

**Foreign Affairs Council**

The agenda for the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) is expected to include the Arctic, Sahel, Middle East Peace Process and Macedonia. Ms. Mogherini is expected to raise Libya, Burma, Cultural Diplomacy and the forthcoming EU-China Summit in her opening remarks.

*The Arctic*

The UK will support the proposed Council Conclusions on the Arctic which we expect to be adopted at the Council, following the publication of the Joint Communication on 27 April. The Conclusions acknowledge the important role the EU has in helping to meet the challenges now facing the region, and that the EU should focus on those areas where it can add value, such as research, climate change and the environment.

*Sahel*

The discussion will focus on the EU's overall approach to the Sahel, and its support to the G5 Sahel group of countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger). Ministers will consider how to accelerate implementation of the Mali peace agreement one year after its signature. The UK priority will be to ensure the EU's approach in the Sahel and the instruments at its disposal are focussed on tackling the long-term drivers of instability and migration.

*Middle East Peace Process*

Ministers will exchange views on the outcome of the international meeting which was held in Paris on 3 June.

*Macedonia*

Discussion will focus on the longstanding political crisis in Macedonia. We expect Ministers to register their concern about negative developments in the rule of law, and the impact on regional stability, as well as signal to Macedonia's leaders that they must reverse this negative trend.

*Libya*

Discussions will focus on extending EU NAVFOR MED Operation Sophia's mandate to take on two additional tasks: capacity-building and training of the Libyan Coastguard and implementing the UN arms embargo on the High Seas off the coast of Libya.

## General Affairs Council

The General Affairs Council (GAC) on 24 June is expected to focus on preparation of the June European Council, European Semester, Inter-Institutional Agreement, Better Regulation and Transparency.

### *Preparation of the June European Council*

The GAC will discuss the agenda for the 28-29 June European Council, which the Prime Minister will attend. The agenda will focus on Migration, Jobs, Growth and Investment, External Relations and the outcome of the UK Referendum.

### *European Semester*

The GAC will look to approve the Country Specific Recommendations ahead of the European Council.

### *Inter-Institutional Agreement (IIA) and Better Regulation*

The Commission's 2017 Work Programme is tabled for discussion at the General Affairs Council ahead of its release in October. The GAC will also discuss legislative programming in future years.

### *AOB – Slovakia's Presidency Priorities*

The GAC will take note of the draft priorities presented by Slovakia for their EU Presidency, which begins on 1 July. They intend to focus on four areas: Economic and Financial; Single Market; External Relations; and Migration. The Slovak Presidency will continue the work of the Dutch Presidency, and be followed by that of their trio partner, Malta.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Justice and Home Affairs post-Council statement

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mrs Theresa May): [\[HCWS45\]](#)

The final Justice and Home Affairs Council of the Dutch Presidency took place on 9 and 10 June in Luxembourg. The Immigration Minister, the rt hon James Brokenshire MP, attended the Justice Day and I attended the Interior Day.

Justice Day (9 June) began with a progress report on the draft Directive on the supply of digital content. The proposal aims to advance the growth of cross-border e-commerce in the EU by setting common rules for governing the supply of digital content.

The Council then discussed four files in which the UK does not participate: Matrimonial Property Regimes; Registered Partnerships; the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO); and the Directive on Protection of the Union's Financial Interests Ministers. Ministers agreed General Approaches on both Matrimonial Property Regimes and Registered Partnerships, enabling negotiations with the European Parliament to begin. Ministers secured broad conceptual support on a number of issues relating to the internal functioning of the EPPO, and on the Directive on Protection of the Union's Financial Interests, Ministers did not reach agreement on a number of compromise options. The Presidency then presented a progress

report on negotiations to extend the European Criminal Record Information System (ECRIS) to third country (non-EU) nationals. The Immigration Minister intervened to support the principles behind the ECRIS proposal and to emphasise the importance of finding a suitable technical solution to data sharing.

Over lunch, the Presidency facilitated a discussion on compensating victims of crime, focusing on improving cooperation and sharing best practice. The Commission committed to look at practical steps to support improved cooperation.

After lunch, the Presidency sought a steer from Ministers on work to improve criminal justice in cyberspace. The Immigration Minister intervened to agree the importance of tackling cybercrime and to stress that best use should be made of existing tools.

Under Any Other Business, the Commission informed Ministers that a code of conduct to combat hate speech online had been developed with the IT industry and the Commission will present an impact report to Council in December. The Presidency also updated Ministers on outcomes from the recent EU-US JHA Ministerial meeting on 1-2 June. Finally, the incoming Slovakian Presidency presented its Justice and Home Affairs priorities. The A Points were then adopted.

Interior Day (10 June) began with a discussion on the draft Weapons Directive, which relates to control of the acquisition and possession of weapons. Supported by other Member States, I intervened to welcome the progress made, but underlined the potential to go even further in ensuring appropriately high standards of regulation. The Presidency concluded that there was support for a General Approach and trilogue negotiations with the European Parliament will now begin.

The Council then turned to the Presidency's data sharing Roadmap. The Roadmap contains a number of practical proposals aimed at enhancing data sharing between Member States to enhance security and law enforcement, which reflects in particular proposals made by the UK and France. I fully supported the Presidency's prioritisation of this work to enhance internal security across Europe, particularly the sharing of data between Schengen and non-Schengen Member States. Several Member States supported both my position and the objectives and actions set out in the Roadmap.

The discussion on the fight against terrorism focused on a paper from the European Counter Terrorism Coordinator (EUCTC) which made a number of recommendations to advance work to tackle the terrorist threat. I welcomed the role of the EUCTC in supporting Member States in tackling terrorist finance, online radicalisation and firearms, and stressed the clear difference in mandate and competence between the work of Europol and that of the Member State-driven Counter Terrorist Group (CTG). The CTG, which has provided a multilateral platform to enhance cooperation between independent European intelligence services, also gave a presentation.

The Council noted a report on the implementation of the Renewed Internal Security Strategy and the Presidency updated Interior Ministers on the outcomes of the EU-US JHA Ministerial Meeting on 1-2 June, and the outcomes from the High Level meeting on Cyber Security on 12-13 May.



Over lunch, there was a discussion on migration through the Central Mediterranean route and the Commission presented its Communication on external migration. After lunch, the Council discussed the implementation of the EU–Turkey Statement of 18 March. Supported by the Commission, I intervened to ensure a continued focus in the Council on the effective and full implementation of the Statement by Leaders.

The Council then discussed proposals concerning the relationship between the Schengen states and Georgia, Ukraine, Kosovo, and Turkey. There was an exchange of views on these proposals and the Council did not agree a General Approach on Georgia. The UK does not participate in these measures.

Next on the agenda was the European Border and Coast Guard, where the Presidency provided a progress update on negotiations with the European Parliament. The UK does not participate in this measure.

The Commission then presented its proposals to the Council on reform of the Common European Asylum System. Finally, the incoming Slovakian Presidency presented its Justice and Home Affairs priorities to Interior Ministers.