



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 28 June 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:38 P.M., 28 June 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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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

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[905550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the Government's strategy is for increasing the number of apprenticeships.

**Nick Boles:**

The English Apprenticeships 2020 Vision document that we published in December outlines our plans to increase the quantity and quality of apprenticeships in England.

Employer-led reforms are making it easier and more attractive for employers to offer apprenticeships. We have also set new expectations for the public sector and through public procurement.

We announced a £10 million fund to help boost the number of degree apprenticeships that provide the high level skills our economy needs.

#### ■ Apprentices: Taxation

**Kirsty Blackman:**

[\[905554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what discussions he has had with the devolved administrations on implementation of the Apprenticeship Levy.

**Nick Boles:**

We are working closely with the Devolved Administrations and Territorial Offices, regularly meeting with officials and Ministers on levy implementation. The last Skills Ministers meeting was in February.

We want to ensure the levy works for employers wherever they are in the UK and will be publishing further information later this month.

#### ■ Billing

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[905552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that customers are able to receive utility and other bills in paper form on request.

**George Freeman:**

My Department does not intervene in the billing arrangements of individual businesses in the regulated utilities.

But I understand that most utility and other providers give customers the option to receive bills in paper form if they so request.

## ■ Broadband: Small Businesses

**Alex Chalk:** [\[905555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps the Government is taking to improve broadband access for small businesses.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

The Government recognises the importance of broadband access throughout the UK for businesses of all sizes. Under the Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme, over 50,000 SMEs across 52 cities took a connection voucher, with around 41,000 businesses already connected to super and ultra-fast broadband.

The Government is also undertaking a Review into Business Broadband, jointly led by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to explore the barriers faced by businesses, including SMEs, in accessing the affordable, high-speed broadband they need. That Review is ongoing and will report later this year.

## ■ Consumers

**Jake Berry:** [\[905549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps he is taking to facilitate customers switching suppliers in consumer markets.

**Nick Boles:**

We are taking action to make it quick and easy to switch suppliers. Last year, we published six switching principles, urging industry to improve their processes.

The Government has challenged the mobile phone operators to unlock handsets for free, and the major operators have committed to doing so.

We are also legislating for easier switching in the communications markets in the Digital Economy Bill.

## ■ EU External Trade

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[40708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what information his Department holds on how many free trade negotiations involving the EU have been both initiated and concluded in the last 10 years.

**Anna Soubry:**

Over the last ten years, the EU has initiated, but not yet concluded, preferential trade negotiations with the following countries: United States of America; Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay); the Pacific Community (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu); Japan; India; the Philippines; Malaysia, Thailand; Tunisia; Libya. The European Commission has also launched trade negotiations to modernise existing agreements with Armenia, Mexico and Morocco.

Over the last ten years, the EU has concluded preferential trade negotiations with the following countries: Kosovo; Bosnia; Serbia; Ukraine; Montenegro; Albania; South Korea; Singapore; Vietnam; Ukraine; Georgia; Moldova; Canada; the Andean Community (Colombia, Ecuador and Peru); Central America (Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala); the East African Community (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda); the West African Community (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo); the Southern African Development Community (Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland); and CARIFORUM (Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Surinam, Trinidad, Tobago, and the Dominican Republic).

## ■ Land Registry

**Justin Madders:**

[905556]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what his plans are for the future of the Land Registry.

**Sajid Javid:**

We recently consulted options for the Land Registry.

This consultation closed on 26 May and Government are currently reviewing the responses.

Until this is completed, no decision will be made.

## ■ Manufacturing Industries: Iron and Steel

**Glyn Davies:**

[905557]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps he is taking to support British steelmaking.

**Anna Soubry:**

This Government has taken unprecedented action to help our steel industry.

We're cutting electricity costs by hundreds of millions, tackling unfair trade and are the first EU country to introduce new flexibility in public procurement.

We have also offered an unparalleled package of support to secure the long term future of Tata Steel's UK operations.

That is what the steel industry has asked for and that is what we are delivering.

## ■ Post Offices: Paisley

**Mhairi Black:**

[905548]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how much the Post Office has spent on refurbishing the Crown Post Office premises in Paisley since January 2010.

**George Freeman:**

The hon Member recently tabled a Named Day question on this matter.

In my answer of 13 June I advised that this was the operational responsibility of the Post Office and I would ask its Chief Executive, Paula Vennells, to write to the hon Member.

I understand Paula Vennells wrote to the hon Member on 21 June. This letter has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

■ **Tata Steel****Bob Blackman:**[\[40994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what discussions he has had with Tata UK on that company's sale of carbon credits and its pension fund deficit; and if he will make a statement.

**Anna Soubry:**

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Ministers have held a number of meetings with Tata at which a wide range of issues impacting Tata's business have been raised. These continue to be explored as part of our wider package of Government support for UK Steel. In addition, on 26 May 2016, the Department for Work and Pensions launched a consultation on the options for the British Steel Pension Scheme. The consultation has now closed and the responses are being considered carefully.

**CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ **Gambling****Ronnie Cowan:**[\[40986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will hold discussions with gambling license holders to encourage those licensees to increase annual contributions for the research, prevention and treatment of gambling addiction.

**David Evennett:**

It is a requirement on all gambling licence holders to make an annual financial contribution to one or more organisations that perform research, education and treatment (RET) for gambling-related harm. The vast majority choose to make that contribution to the Responsible Gambling Trust (RGT) which raised £6.5million in 2015.

The Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB), was set up to by the Gambling Commission to advise on priorities for research, education and training relating to responsible gambling. The RGSB is now working with the RGT to estimate the costs of the relevant activities that have been identified in the recently published National Responsible Gambling Strategy, 2016-19. This process will determine what RGT should expect to raise from all those businesses who profit from commercial gambling in Britain.

## ■ Video on Demand

**Craig Williams:** [\[41010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the obstacles to the increased provision of access services on video on demand content.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

Ofcom, the regulator for video on demand services, is reviewing how to improve the provision of access services on video on demand services.

**Craig Williams:** [\[41013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will issue guidance to (a) content providers, (b) platform operators and (c) other participants in the video on demand supply chain to specify who has the responsibility for providing access services on video on demand services.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

It would be the responsibility of Ofcom, the regulator for video on demand services, to issue such guidance.

**Craig Williams:** [\[41014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what objectives his Department has set Ofcom for the provision of access services on video on demand content.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

The Audio Visual Media Services Directive, which the UK adheres to, sets out the principles that Ofcom is required to ensure are met with respect to the provision of access services on video on demand services.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Armed Forces: General Practitioners

**Steven Paterson:** [\[40612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent guidelines he has issued to members of the armed forces on registering with a doctor.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Primary healthcare for serving Armed Forces personnel is provided by the Defence Medical Services (DMS).

Leaflet 1-3-4 of Joint Service Publication 950 (the Defence medical policy document) explains the healthcare transition arrangements for personnel leaving the Services and DMS care. This includes information on registering with an NHS General Practitioner.

## ■ Armed Forces: Recruitment

**Stephen Timms:** [\[40822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that armed forces recruits aged between 16 and 19 without a GCSE in mathematics or English are prepared for later life outside the armed forces.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) provides Service personnel with a range of educational, learning and development opportunities with our Learning Centres employing English and mathematics tutors who are employed to teach in numeracy and literacy. Over 95% of recruits are enrolled into an Apprenticeship Programme each year, regardless of their age, which ensures that Service personnel gain a Level 2 in numeracy and literacy. This is the equivalent of a GCSE.

It is an Ofsted goal that we encourage our people to achieve maths and English GCSE. The Ministry of Defence does actively encourage our Personnel to gain GCSE maths and English, and provides many opportunities for them to do this in their career with classes run in learning and development centres using part time Service instructors; or using distance learning programmes for exams sat on operational units and in shore bases.

## ■ Burma: Armed Forces

**Ann Clwyd:** [\[40600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assistance, education and training the Government is providing to the Burmese Army; and whether the Government provides training on human rights and humanitarian obligations.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Her Majesty's Government provides educational training to the Burmese military. In 2015 this included the Managing Defence in a Wider Security Context and Strategic Leadership Programmes, both delivered by the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom in partnership with Cranfield University. In addition, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst delivered a Psychology of Leadership programme in Burma, and we have also provided English language training. Both programmes delivered by the Defence Academy included dedicated modules on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. Ethics in Leadership and the issue of Child Soldiers and Women and Girls in Conflict Zones are also included in the syllabus. The Government does not provide any form of combat training to the Burmese army.

## ■ Cluster Munitions

**Tom Brake:** [\[40776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department considers that the use of cluster munitions is always unlawful under international humanitarian law because of their indiscriminate nature.



**Penny Mordaunt:**

Since becoming a signatory to the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions it is now unlawful for the UK to use cluster munitions under any circumstances.

For those states not currently a signatory to the Oslo Convention then the use of cluster munitions may be legitimate provided that they are used within the clearly defined limitations of International Humanitarian Law.

**■ EU Battlegroups****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[40712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what involvement UK armed forces have had with EU battle groups in the last three years; and how many UK armed forces personnel the Government has pledged to commit to those groups.

**Mr Julian Brazier:**

The EU Battlegroup concept has Lead Nations on standby for six month periods. The UK was an EU Battlegroup Lead Nation from July to December 2013, and will be again from July to December 2016. The total number of UK personnel involved is 2,330. They remain under national control and direction at all times.

**■ Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[40743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress has been made on the upgrade of a Voyager aircraft for transporting senior Ministers; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Following the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, the Ministry of Defence project team are working with Air Tanker Ltd and their supplier, Airbus Defence and Space, on the Voyager enhanced cabin fit and are on target to deliver this in July 2016.

**■ Iraq: Islamic State****Craig Whittaker:**[\[40486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what training and logistical support the armed forces have provided to Iraqi forces to combat the threat from Daesh in Iraq in the last 12 months.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The UK Armed Forces have continued to play a full part in the Global Counter-Daesh Coalition programme to build the capacity of Iraqi (including Kurdish) security forces. Over the past 12 months, we have contributed to the training of over 13,600 Iraqi army personnel and some 2,570 Peshmerga, to build vital counter-IED expertise and to enhance medical and infantry skills. The impact of this training can be seen in the success of Iraqi security forces over the past year in taking back territory previously held by Daesh. Some 40% of occupied territory has now been recovered. In terms of logistic support, following the UK's substantial contributions of non-lethal support, heavy

machine guns, ammunition and military equipment to meet immediate Kurdish Peshmerga needs in early 2015, the UK has provided airlift to facilitate other international contributions and, subject to parliamentary approval, is planning to provide a further £1 million of ammunition later this summer for Peshmerga use.

■ **Maritime Patrol Aircraft**

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many UK (a) flight crew, (b) ground crew and (c) intelligence analysts have served on US P-8 Poseidon aircraft under the Seedcorn exchange programme; and what the cost to the UK public purse has been of deploying those people since the start of that programme.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The Seedcorn programme in the US on P8 aircraft started in 2012 with 20 personnel involved and has remained at 20 for each subsequent year (allowing for minor fluctuations during transitory periods). As the Seedcorn programme is an aircrew initiative, no ground crew or intelligence analysts have served on US P8 under it.

The total cost of the Seedcorn programme since inception is some £14.1 million. It is not possible to break out actual costs for personnel by location and aircraft type.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the cost of training UK crew and maintenance personnel for the P-8 Poseidon aircraft to be procured by the UK; and where he expects that training to take place.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The training programme for UK crew and maintenance personnel for the P-8 Poseidon, once it has been procured, is currently being developed. Consequently, no costs are currently available.

Training for the P-8 Poseidon aircraft will initially be undertaken at Naval Air Station, Jacksonville, USA, from 2018 prior to relocating to RAF Lossiemouth at a future date.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which of the UK's allies has aircraft which are capable of refuelling P-8 Poseidon aircraft to be procured by the UK.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The P-8 Poseidon is currently undertaking air-to-air refuelling trials in the United States to clear the aircraft to receive fuel in flight. The initial clearance will be against the Boeing KC-135 operated by the United States Air Force. In addition, the Royal Australian Air Force is expected to conduct trials using their Airbus KC-30A multirole tanker aircraft in 2017.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether P-8 Poseidon aircraft to be procured by the UK are capable of being refuelled by the RAF's Voyager K2/K3 aerial refuelling tanker aircraft.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 3 December 2016 to Question 17840 to the hon. member for Garston and Halewood (Maria Eagle).

**Attachments:**

1. 17840-QnA extract on Maritime Patrol Aircraft  
[20151203\_QnA\_extract\_on\_Maritime\_Patrol\_Aircraft[1].docx]

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on the P-8 Poseidon programme.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Wider discussions have been held involving several Government Departments including officials from the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills on the UK prosperity agenda and any opportunities that the UK procurement of P-8 might create.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, where the engines for the P-8 Poseidon aircraft to be procured by the UK will be manufactured.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

As the main investment decision on the UK's Maritime Patrol Aircraft programme has not yet been taken by Ministers, no contracts have yet been placed for the procurement of a UK fleet of P-8 Poseidon aircraft. It is therefore not possible to confirm where the engines in such a fleet would be manufactured.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what future ground surveillance capabilities his Department plans to develop for the P-8 Poseidon programme.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The Ministry of Defence expects the P-8 Poseidon to be principally used in the Maritime Patrol Aircraft role, although it does have a limited overland surveillance capability. We will be examining options to improve its overland capability but no plans are yet in place and no decisions have yet been taken.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects the contract to be signed between his Department and Boeing to deliver the UK's P-8 Poseidon aircraft.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence recently announced during a visit to the United States, we intend to begin ordering P-8 Poseidon aircraft this summer.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[40790\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what proportion of the P-8 Poseidon programme is covered by the US International Traffic in Arms Regulations.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

It is intended that the Boeing P-8 Poseidon aircraft will be purchased through a Foreign Military Sales (FMS) agreement with the US Government, which allows us to get the capability we need within the required timeline. No assessment has yet been undertaken as to which parts of the aircraft or the associated support solution are covered by the US International Traffic in Arms Regulations, although all such considerations will form part of the terms of the FMS case.

## ■ Patrol Craft

**Michael Fabricant:** [\[41012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of the use of Archer type naval vessels to augment the coast guard.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Royal Navy (RN) operates the Archer Class P2000 ships to support the activities of the University RN Units, as well as general navigation and seamanship training.

In line with the principles of Military Aid to Civil Authorities, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) assesses the suitability of various capabilities, not just the P2000 Class, to achieve an effect when support is requested by another Government Department for a specific task. The MOD continues to be involved in the Government's contingency planning activity, but currently there is no formal request for MOD to supply assets in support of the coast guard.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Angling: Licensing

**Simon Hart:** [\[R\] \[40642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 19 January 2016 to Question 22080, when the Environment Agency will be consulting on the proposals to modernise the rod licence service.

**George Eustice:**

The Environment Agency advertised its proposed changes to the rod licence structure and duties on 6 May 2016 in the London Gazette, Welsh newspapers and in the angling press. The Environment Agency also consulted stakeholders through focus groups, newsletters, publications, websites, telephone calls and their stakeholder forum, the England Fisheries Group, prior to advertising the changes in England and Wales.

## ■ Animal Products: Imports

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[\[40996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will bring forward legislative proposals to ban the bringing into the UK of hunting trophies from threatened or endangered species.

**Rory Stewart:**

Under international rules set by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), a hunting trophy from an endangered or threatened species can be exported only if the exporting country is satisfied that the hunt was both legal and sustainable.

Importing controls are implemented at an EU-wide level and the UK works with other EU Member States to agree a collective approach. In light of growing concerns about the sustainability of the hunting of some species, stricter controls on the import of hunting trophies of six species, including lions and African elephants, have been introduced. As a result, the import of hunting trophies of certain species from certain countries is currently prohibited.

The Government considers that properly managed, legal and sustainable trophy hunting can play a part in species conservation efforts, including by providing an important source of funding for conservation in some countries. In view of this, we have no plans to introduce legislation banning the import of all trophies of endangered or threatened species. We will however continue to monitor the impact of trophy hunting and will work to put in place greater protection, including prohibiting imports, if this is shown to be needed.

For example, in recognition of the real concerns about the impact of trophy hunting on lion conservation, I announced in Parliament on 24 November 2015 that the Government will ban lion trophy imports by the end of 2017 unless there are improvements in the way hunting takes place in certain countries, judged against strict criteria. We will work with our European and international partners, and experts in the field, to reach a common approach to this issue.

## ■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Wiltshire

**Michelle Donelan:**

[\[41028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of badgers exterminated through culling in Wiltshire were found to carry bovine TB in all instances in which tests were carried out in the last five years.

**George Eustice:**

Natural England has not licensed the killing of badgers in Wiltshire for the purpose of preventing the spread of bovine TB in the last five years.

**■ Food: Procurement**

**Neil Parish:** [\[40982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress the Government has made on implementing the recommendations of the report by Dr Peter Bonfield on a plan for public procurement of food, published in July 2014.

**George Eustice:**

The Government is committed to providing food produced to British standards or their equivalent in all its canteens, restaurants and cafeterias by the end of this Parliament. Defra is working closely with other Departments and businesses to implement the Plan for Public Procurement of Food, including a balanced scorecard. The Ministry of Justice launched a tender for supplying food to prisons earlier this year, worth £500 million, which requires bids to use the balanced scorecard. Their current supplier has agreed that the 30 million portions of UHT milk served in prisons each year will be sourced from UK producers. We are working with the Ministry of Defence to develop the best way to incorporate the balanced scorecard into their forthcoming contracts. We are working with all central government departments to ensure that their food and catering contracts comply with the balanced scorecard approach.

**■ Pollution: River Thames**

**Rushanara Ali:** [\[41038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to reduce (a) plastic packaging consumer waste and (b) other forms of pollution in the River Thames.

**Rory Stewart:**

The Government has taken a number of steps to reduce the amount of consumer plastic packaging waste ending up in the natural environment, including in the River Thames, by reducing the amount of plastic packaging placed on the market, increasing the amount that is recycled, and reducing litter.

These include the UK's Packaging Waste Regulations, which both put an obligation on producers to ensure that a proportion of the packaging they handle is recovered and recycled and require that packaging should not exceed what is needed to ensure that products are safe, hygienic and acceptable to the consumer.

Working with the Waste and Resources Action Programme, a number of activities support recyclability and reducing packaging waste. The industry led Plastics Industry Recycling Action Plan also identified actions across the whole supply chain to increase the amount of plastic packaging waste recycled sustainably.

The Government's Litter Strategy for England will also help to improve the way we all tackle the scourge of litter. To develop the Litter Strategy we are working with a range of interested stakeholders, including representatives from the Marine Conservation Society, Thames21 and the Canals and Rivers Trust.

In terms of other forms of pollution, the Environment Agency controls pollution from discharges of treated sewage, industrial effluent and storm sewage overflows into the River Thames using environmental permits under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010. The Environment Agency also leads the development of River Basin Management Plans setting statutory environmental objectives for all our waters, including the River Thames, which were revised last year.

Finally, the Thames Tideway Tunnel will significantly reduce the current high volumes of untreated sewage that regularly overflow into the River Thames through London at times of even moderate rainfall.

## ■ Soil: Research

**Daniel Zeichner:** [\[41064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the current health and status of earthworm populations in English arable soils; and what trends have been observed in the last two decades based on research and surveys carried out by her Department; and what information her Department holds on those trends based on research carried out by other bodies.

**Rory Stewart:**

Defra has not carried out an assessment of the current health and status or trends of earthworm populations in English arable soils.

However, Defra is working closely with the research councils and is funding research to improve our understanding of the role of soil biodiversity in contributing to soil condition.

**Daniel Zeichner:** [\[41065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the (a) title of, (b) name of contractors used for, (c) budget of and (d) location on her Department's website of each survey of earthworm populations and diversity in arable soils in England carried out by her Department is since 1996.

**Rory Stewart:**

Defra has not carried out any surveys of earthworm populations and diversity specifically in arable soils.

Defra carries out research on earthworms as part of a wider programme of research on sustainable land management because of their important role in developing soil structure, water movement, nutrient dynamics, and plant growth.

## FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

## ■ Iraq: Politics and Government

**Anne McLaughlin:** [\[41029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support the further development of democratic non-sectarian governance in Iraq.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We are supporting the Iraqi government as it works to deliver the non-sectarian governance and meaningful political reconciliation and reform needed to rebuild public trust in the Iraqi state and unite all Iraq's communities against Daesh.

We welcome the commitments that the Government of Iraq has made to inclusivity, to protecting Iraqi citizens, addressing human rights abuses, holding those responsible to account and to delivering the public services and economic opportunities which Iraqis want and deserve.

Through the Conflict Stability and Security Fund we are contributing £6m to the UN's Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilisation, to help the Iraqi government stabilise areas recently liberated from Daesh and re-establish security, basic services and inclusive local governance. These funds will contribute to a number of projects designed to support community cohesion and encourage reconciliation, acceptance and tolerance between communities at a grass roots level.

## HEALTH

## ■ Care Homes: Mortality Rates

**Charlotte Leslie:** [\[40809\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what correspondence his Department has received about data on adjusted deaths per beds rates in care homes since January 2014.

**Alistair Burt:**

The Department has not received any such correspondence since January 2014.

## ■ Incontinence

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[40739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the annual cost to NHS services is of purchasing products used in the management of continence care.

**George Freeman:**

National Health Service trusts are responsible for managing procurement of goods or products on an individual basis. Records associated with spend collectively across the NHS are not held centrally by the Department.



## ■ NHS Protect

**Charlotte Leslie:** [\[40810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many prosecutions have been instigated by NHS Protect in each year since 2010.

**Charlotte Leslie:** [\[40811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people were employed by NHS Protect at each Civil Service pay grade in each year since 2010.

**George Freeman:**

NHS Protect co-ordinates anti-crime work in the National Health Service in England. This not only includes investigations and prosecutions but also managing information and intelligence and, wherever possible, ensuring crime is deterred and prevented.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Number of NHS Protect prosecutions	105	41	18	7	16	9

Note:

1. Not all prosecutions relate to cases where the investigation commenced in the year shown as complex investigations may take more than one year to conclude and, if appropriate, prosecute.

NHS Protect staff are employed on NHS Agenda for Change terms and conditions and the following table shows the number of NHS Protect staff by NHS pay scales.

NUMBER OF  
NHS PROTECT  
STAFF BY

GRADE	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Band 3	3	2	1	1	1	1
Band 4	22	17	13	15	16	15
Band 5	23	34	28	30	30	30
Band 6	11	0	0	1	1	2
Band 7	106	87	78	78	85	81
Band 8a	30	32	34	34	35	30
Band 8b	13	10	11	10	10	10
Band 8c	6	5	6	6	6	3

NUMBER OF  
NHS PROTECT  
STAFF BY

GRADE	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Band 8d	1	1	0	0	0	0
Band 9	1	1	1	1	1	1
Associates	1	1	1	2	1	1
Total	217	190	173	178	186	174

Note:

1. Associates are clinical specialists employed to provide advice and guidance in their area of expertise.

#### ■ NHS: Conditions of Employment

**Paula Sherriff:**

[\[40584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 28 April 2016 to Question 35252, when he expects data to be published on the number of off-payroll staff within the scope of the HM Treasury guidance on senior off-payroll engagements in NHS foundation trusts in 2014-15.

**Alistair Burt:**

NHS Improvement will publish this information as soon as possible.

#### ■ NHS: Sustainable Development

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[40553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2016 to Question 37279, if he will make it his policy to ensure there is a formal public consultation on every Sustainability and Transformation Plan footprint.

**George Freeman:**

As set out in the NHS Shared Planning Guidance, published in December 2015, the success of Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) will depend on having an open, engaging, and iterative process that involves patients, carers, citizens, clinicians, local community partners including the independent and voluntary sectors, and local government through health and wellbeing boards. The arm's length bodies responsible for the NHS Five Year Forward View – NHS England, NHS Improvement, the Care Quality Commission, Public Health England, Health Education England and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence – have asked for local engagement plans as part of the STP process, building where appropriate on existing engagement through health and wellbeing boards and other local arrangements.

When plans are ready, normal rules around engagement and public consultation will apply. The arm's length bodies will be holding conversations with each area to assess their plans for local engagement.

**Justin Madders:**

[\[40616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance (a) his Department and (b) NHS England have provided to Sustainability and Transformation footprint teams on involving university providers in the development of Sustainability and Transformation Plans.

**George Freeman:**

It is appreciated that we cannot achieve the transformation required without the active engagement of the organisations, clinicians and staff who actually deliver it, nor can we develop care integrated around the needs of patients and users without understanding what our communities want and without our partners in local government. Local areas are responsible for ensuring engagement with the most relevant organisations which may include university providers. From a workforce perspective, Health Education England are working across arm's length bodies with Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) leads to ensure workforce and training requirements are considered through the STP process.

#### ■ Vaccination: Babies

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[40748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 22 January 2016 to Question 22462, if he will place in the Library a copy of NHS England's report on individual funding requests for palivizumab.

**George Freeman:**

NHS England has advised that it is assessing the effect of individual funding requests for palivizumab on premature babies at risk of severe complications from respiratory syncytial virus. It will report its findings in July 2016.

### HOME OFFICE

#### ■ Detention Centres: Sexual Offences

**Angela Crawley:**

[\[40859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of (a) rape and (b) sexual abuse have been reported in detention centres in each of the last three years.

**Angela Crawley:**

[\[40860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of (a) rape and (b) sexual abuse have been reported at Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre in each of the last three years.

**Angela Crawley:**

[\[40877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many women who have reported (a) sexual abuse and (b) rape whilst in detention have subsequently been deported in each of the last three years.

**James Brokenshire:**

All complaints made by detainees are investigated by the relevant supplier in accordance with Detention Services Order 03/2015 'Handling complaints'. Any allegations of serious misconduct made by a detainee against staff are also referred to the Home Office Professional Standards Unit (PSU) for investigation. Where a detainee, or someone on behalf of a detainee, alleges that a member of staff has committed a sexual offence against them the police will automatically be notified, even if the detainee does not wish the matter to be reported or to make a formal complaint.

Management information shows that there have been six allegations of sexual assault made by detainees against staff at Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre between 2013 and 2015. Of these six allegations, one was made in 2013, three in 2014 and two in 2015.

In the same period there have been two Home Office PSU investigations into allegations of sexual assault made by detainees against staff in other immigration removal centres. Both allegations were made in 2015. There have been no allegations of rape made by a detainee against staff at any immigration removal centre during this period.

This is provisional management information that is subject to change. It has not been assured to the standard of Official Statistics.

Information on the number of women who have been deported following an allegation of sexual abuse or rape while in detention is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

## ■ Intelligence Services

**Andy Slaughter:**

[\[40937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's factsheet on the Investigatory Powers Bill, dated 30 October 2015, on what date and through what process the use of equipment interference was avowed for use by the security and intelligence agencies.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The use of equipment interference by the security and intelligence agencies was avowed on 6th February 2015 when the Government published a draft Equipment Interference Code of Practice detailing the procedures and safeguards that apply to the power. The use of equipment interference by the security and intelligence agencies is authorised under Sections 5 and 7 of the Intelligence Services Act 1994 and statutory oversight is provided by the Intelligence Services Commissioner.

## ■ Passports: Fraud

**Keith Vaz:**

[[40993](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the HM Passport Office's target is for identifying fraudulently obtained genuine passports.

**James Brokenshire:**

Her Majesty's Passport Office does not have a numerical target for identifying fraudulently obtained genuine (FOG) passports. The work on detecting FOGs is part of a wider programme which also has a significant focus on preventing passport fraud.

## ■ Radicalism

**Greg Mulholland:**

[[41047](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to conduct telephone surveys of British Muslims on views of extremism; how many such surveys her Department plans to conduct; when those surveys will commence; and how many people will be surveyed.

**Karen Bradley:**

The Government is committed to tackling all forms of extremism. The Counter Extremism Strategy aims to protect and safeguard communities at risk from extremism of all types.

In that strategy we committed to be evidence based and to work closely with academics and universities through commissioning and part-funding research. Decisions on how best to do this will be made in due course.

## ■ Supermarkets: Road Traffic Offences

**Karen Lumley:**

[[41044](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department holds statistics on the prosecution of motorists for (a) speeding and (b) other motoring offences in supermarket car parks.

**Mike Penning:**

The Home Office does not collect data on prosecutions for motoring offences. Data on prosecutions for motoring offences are held by the Ministry of Justice and are published in their quarterly Criminal Justice Statistics publication. However it is not possible to separately identify motoring offences committed in supermarket car parks. This information can only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The publication can be accessed at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/criminal-justice-statistics-quarterly>

**■ Vetting**

**Rushanara Ali:** [\[41036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to (a) monitor and (b) improve the performance of police forces in completing applications to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

**Karen Bradley:**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) provides a formal monthly performance report to the Home Office and Home Office Ministers. This includes updates on the performance of police forces in meeting the Service Level Agreement (SLA) standards for the time taken to complete local disclosure checks.

If police force performance falls below the standard agreed with the DBS, the DBS will work with the force concerned. Where appropriate, this may include implementing a recovery plan and providing additional resources to ensure that the plan is fully supported.

**■ Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre: Pregnancy**

**Angela Crawley:** [\[40861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many pregnant women are in detention at Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre.

**Angela Crawley:** [\[40991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many pregnant women have been deported from the UK in the last five years.

**James Brokenshire:**

The Home Office will not necessarily be aware that a woman is pregnant unless she chooses to make this known to us and a woman may not know herself that she is pregnant when she is detained. It may not always be appropriate for healthcare professionals to disclose information that the patient has asked not to be disclosed.

Subject to these limitations, management information for 21 June 2016 shows that there were no pregnant women detained under Immigration Act powers at Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre.

Information on the number of pregnant women deported from the UK in each of the last five years is not held centrally and providing it would incur disproportionate cost.

**HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION****■ Parliamentary Estate: Access**

**Patrick Grady:** [\[40799\]](#)

To ask the Rt. hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington representing the House of Commons Commission, whether any pedestrian entry points to the Parliamentary Estate are

restricted to particular categories of passholder, and if so what those restrictions are at each point.

**Tom Brake:**

The main Parliamentary Estate has the following pedestrian entrances available to passholders (see exceptions to this below):

**House of Commons**

- Canon Row/Derby Gate
- 1 Parliament Street
- Carriage Gates Turnstiles
- Subway – Westminster Tube
- Cromwell Green Visitor Entrance
- St Stephen's Entrance
- Portcullis House
- 53 Parliament Street

**House of Lords**

- Black Rod's Garden
- Chancellor's Gate
- Peers' Entrance – By convention and practice, only Peers and their spouses or partners are allowed to use this entrance. Members of the House of Lords are allowed to invite up to six guests in via this route unless dispensation to bring in more is given by Black Rod. Guests must be booked in by name before they are allowed access.

Pedestrian entry points to outbuildings which form part of the Parliamentary Estate are not restricted to particular categories of passholder.

Holders of the following passes have restricted access to certain pedestrian entrances on the Estate:

- Former Member Passes – Subway, St Stephen's, Portcullis House entrances only
- House of Commons Nursery Passes – 1 Parliament Street entrance only
- Westminster Gym Passes – Derby Gate entrance only
- MEP Passes – MEPs are only able to access the House of Lords via Black Rod's Garden entrance and can only use readers within the House of Lords.

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT****■ Developing Countries: LGBT People**

**Tim Farron:** [\[40848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department has taken to promote LGBT rights in developing countries in this Parliament.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

Through development programmes, DFID aims to support civil society, governments and others to build open economies and open societies in which citizens have freedom, dignity, choice and control over their lives, and institutions are accountable, inclusive and responsive.

DFID's approach to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights' was published in February 2016 online.

**■ Ethiopia: Human Rights**

**Mr David Anderson:** [\[41099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent discussions she has had with the Ethiopian government on the situation in the Oromia region.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

I visited Ethiopia on 17<sup>th</sup> June and met with a number of senior Ethiopian Government officials. Our discussions covered a range of issues, including the situation in the Oromia region. I set out the UK Government's serious concerns about the response to protests in Oromia.

**■ Ethiopia: Overseas Aid**

**Mr David Anderson:** [\[41100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions she has had with the Ethiopian government on the implications for her Department's supported programmes in Oromia of the response of that government to protests in that region.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

I visited Ethiopia on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June and held discussions with senior Ministers in the Ethiopian Government, reiterating our concerns about the response to the protests in Oromia. I emphasised that civil and political rights are an important aspect of DFID's Partnership Principles assessments, which inform decisions on the shape of our programme.



**JUSTICE**■ **Courts**

**Christina Rees:** [\[40864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans his Department has for training the judiciary on the implementation of problem-solving courts.

**Christina Rees:** [\[40865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many courts will be involved in the problem-solving courts pilot programme; and how much funding has been allocated to those pilots.

**Christina Rees:** [\[40866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he expects the Problem-Solving Courts Working Group to (a) conclude and (b) report back on its work.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Working Group has now submitted its findings, which support the case for problem-solving courts.

Training of the judiciary is a matter for the judiciary and the judicial college. We will be working with both, taking learning from approaches nationally and internationally, as we progress our work on problem-solving courts.

■ **Domestic Violence: Legal Aid Scheme**

**Andy Slaughter:** [\[40550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the cost to the public purse was of the case in the Court of Appeal (civil division) on appeal from High Court Queen's Bench Division, Divisional Court between the Queen (on the application of Rights of Women) and the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, 2015, Ewhc 35 (Admin).

**Andrew Selous:**

Since 22 January 2015 we have spent approximately £16,400 (excluding VAT) on legal fees in this case. We are pleased the court confirmed the Lord Chancellor did have the power to set domestic violence evidence requirements.

We have implemented interim regulations that address the two concerns of the court and are now working with domestic violence support groups, legal representative bodies and colleagues across government to inform an evidence-based solution with the aim of drawing up replacement regulations.

**TRANSPORT****■ Motor Vehicles: Testing****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[40519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to bring the date at which a motor vehicle is treated by the Government as historic for MOT purposes into line with the date at which the Government regards a vehicle as historic for vehicle excise duty purposes; and if he will make a statement.

**Andrew Jones:**

A consultation is being planned about MOT testing, including the scope of exemptions from MOTs, for vehicles of historic interest. The proposal to bring the MOT date into line with the dates for vehicle excise duty is likely to be one consultation option. We hope to launch this consultation later this year. The target for making changes is for them to come into effect by May 2017.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****■ State Retirement Pensions: Females****Karen Lumley:**[\[41019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he holds information by parliamentary constituency on the number of people affected by transitional arrangements for women born after 6 April 1951 caused by the change in the state pension age.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Women born between 6 April 1950 and 5 April 1953 were affected by State Pension age equalisation under the Pensions Act 1995.

The Pensions Act 2011 accelerated the equalisation of State Pension age, and included transitional arrangements limiting State Pension age delays, affecting women born between 6 April 1953 and 5 December 1953. It also brought forward the increase in State Pension age from 65 to 66 which affected women born between 6 Dec 1953 and 5 April 1960.

Information on the numbers affected by parliamentary constituency is not held by the Department for Work and Pensions. However, a population breakdown of women by age at mid-2014 (women with birthdates in 1951 would have been aged 62 or 63 at this point) by constituency can be found in the Office for National Statistics' data set of Parliamentary Constituency Mid-year Population Estimates for England and Wales:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/parliamentaryconstituencymidyearpopulationestimates>

For Scotland:

<http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/special-area-population-estimates/spc-population-estimates>

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ Advance from the Contingencies Fund

**Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Matthew Hancock):**  
[[HCWS46](#)]

The Cabinet Office has sought an advance in the amount of £100,000,000 from the Contingency Fund to cover pension payments for which net cash requirement has been sought in the Main Estimate 2016-17 but the amount Voted on Account is forecast to be insufficient. The reason for this is that the forecast income has been lower than predicted and there has been a higher than expected level of lump sum payments in this first quarter of the year. The Supply Bill which authorises the balance of the expenditure is not due to be Voted until late July 2016.

An amount of £40,000,000 is required to fund the pension payments and an amount of £60,000,000 is required to fund the payment to HMRC in respect of the tax due for pensions paid.

Parliamentary authority for resources of £7,905,416,000 has been sought in a Main Estimate for the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £100,000,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

**Attachments:**

1. Word copy of statement [Written Ministerial Statement - Advance from the Contingencies Fund .docx]
- 2.

### SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

#### ■ Advance from the contingencies fund

**Spokesperson, Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission (Mr Gary Streeter):**  
[[HCWS47](#)]

The Electoral Commission has sought an advance on the resources requested in its Main Estimate 2016-17 from the Contingencies Fund to enable it to deliver the Commission's planned services. Details of these services are set out in the Commission's Main Estimate, which was laid before Parliament in April 2016. This is a temporary cash advance which is required as the Supply and Appropriation Bill 2016 will not receive Royal Assent until July 2016. The Commission is not seeking any additional funding in this financial year.

Parliamentary approval for resources of £950,000 will be sought in a Main Estimate for the Electoral Commission. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £950,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

The advance will be repaid upon Royal Assent of the Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Bill.