



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 9 September 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:48 P.M., 09 September 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

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Attorney General: Consultants

Margaret Hodge: [44323]

To ask the Attorney General, if he will publish a list of all secondees to the Law Officers' Departments from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

Robert Buckland:

There have been no secondees from any consulting firm to the Attorney General's Office, Government Legal Department, Crown Prosecution Service or Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate in the last three financial years.

The Serious Fraud Office had one KPMG employee with them on secondment in 2015-16 covering a Principal Investigator role as an accountant on an operational case team.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Staff

Caroline Lucas: [44541]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 4 March 2016 to Question 29005, if Ministers of his Department have concluded whether further steps are required to improve clarity and transparency on employment status for employers and individuals.

Margot James:

These issues are still being considered by the recently established Cross-Government Working Group on Employment Status.

The group consists of officials who work on employment status policy from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), HM Treasury, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Office of Tax Simplification. The group is chaired by the head of employment status at HMRC.

Further information on the group and its work can be found on the Government website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/cross-government-working-group-on-employment-status>

■ Electrical Safety

Andrew Stephenson:

[[44124](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment of the (a) benefits and (b) risks of using electrical socket safety covers or inserts.

Margot James:

The Department has not made an assessment of the benefits and risks of using electrical socket covers or inserts.

Under the General Product Safety Regulations 2005 all products placed on the UK market must be safe and any products that do not comply can be removed from sale by Trading Standards.

There are no reports of death or injury as a result of the use of socket covers.

Andrew Stephenson:

[[44125](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what representations he has received on the potential introduction of a ban on electrical socket safety covers or inserts.

Margot James:

The Department has received representations from FatallyFlawed.org.uk putting forward their view that socket covers should be banned as they believe them to be unnecessary and dangerous due to the safety shutter system installed as standard in UK electrical sockets.

Under the General Product Safety Regulations 2005, all products placed on the UK market must be safe and any products that do not comply can already be removed from sale by Trading Standards. There are no reports of injuries or death as a result of the use of socket covers.

■ Employment Tribunals Service: Fines

Caroline Lucas:

[[44542](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many financial penalties have been imposed to date on respondent employers for aggravated breach of employment law under section 16 of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013; and how many such penalties (a) have been paid and (b) remain unpaid.

Margot James:

Between 6 April 2014 and the end of August 2016, Employment Tribunals have imposed 16 financial penalties on respondent employers for aggravated breaches under section 16 of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013. Ten have been paid so far and five remain outstanding. One company has been dissolved.

■ Employment: Human Rights

Caroline Lucas: [\[44409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the concluding observations and recommendations of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the UK's sixth periodic report in relation to working conditions, discrimination against migrant workers, the national minimum wage and trade union rights; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

In paragraph 73 of the UN recommendations, the UN requested that the UK submits its next period report under the Covenant (inclusive of a response to all the recommendations from this year's examination) by 30 June 2021; it would therefore not be appropriate for me to pre-empt this report by anticipating what we, or indeed a future UK Government in 2021, might say.

■ Equal Pay

Dawn Butler: [\[44040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many equal pay cases were not taken forward after post-claim conciliation in each year since 2010.

Margot James:

We are currently collating this information and will place this in the Libraries in due course.

■ Fireworks

Martyn Day: [\[44367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will assess the potential effect on (a) public safety and (b) animal welfare of restricting fireworks displays to regulated organised displays only.

Margot James:

[Holding answer 7 September 2016]: Limiting firework displays to regulated organised displays only is not supported, on public safety grounds, by the current available evidence. Official statistics, from NHS Digital, demonstrate that there is a downwards trend in hospital admissions in England, arising from the discharge of fireworks, with 114 such admissions in 2014/15. The Government will continue to focus on reducing accidents and nuisance by encouraging industry, retailers and others to promote responsible use through guidance and public education.

The Government accepts that fireworks can have a detrimental effect on some animals. However, we consider that if users follow guidance on the correct and sensible use of fireworks, and owners of animals take appropriate precautions, these can help to avoid or reduce any detrimental effects.

Martyn Day:

[\[44618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to require individuals and organisations to be licensed to purchase fireworks.

Margot James:

[Holding answer 7 September 2016]: I have no plans to require individuals and organisations to be licensed to purchase fireworks.

There is already legislation dealing with the sale and purchase of fireworks, including age restrictions and a ban on the general public from purchasing fireworks with higher levels of risk and noise.

■ Minimum Wage

Caroline Lucas:

[\[44312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the total amount of arrears recovered by HM Revenue and Customs for non-compliance with the national minimum wage is in 2016-17 to date; how many (a) workers and (b) employers those arrears relate to; and how many of those employers (i) were issued a financial penalty, (ii) self-corrected and paid those arrears back to the workers concerned without being issued a financial penalty and (iii) have been named and shamed for that non-compliance.

Margot James:

HM Revenue and Customs do not provide ad-hoc data for National Minimum Wage/National Living Wage enforcement, although mid-year figures will be available later in the year.

Employers found to have broken minimum wage law will be issued with a Notice of Underpayment by HMRC and will have 28 days to appeal against it. If the employer does not appeal or an appeal has been unsuccessful, HMRC will issue a case closure letter to the employer and refer them to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to be considered for naming and shaming. The employer will then have 14 days from the date of the case closure letter to make written representations to BEIS outlining whether they fall under any of the exceptional circumstances for not being named under the scheme. Employers issued with a case closure letter after 1 April 2016 will be named by BEIS in future naming rounds.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[44786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's press release of 11 August 2016, entitled Largest ever list of National Minimum Wage offenders published, how much additional money declared by each social care employer which was identified in that press release was owed to its workforce after the use of HM Revenue and Customs' self-correction process.

Margot James:

Employers who self-correct arrears owed to workers are not named for any additional arrears identified. Due to the small number of cases involved, publishing aggregate self-

correction data could allow individual employers to be identified, and would amount to naming them for a second time.

Paul Blomfield: [\[44820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the press release of 11 August 2016 entitled Largest ever list of National Minimum Wage offenders published, what checks HM Revenue and Customs conducted at those social care employers where workers were found to be owed arrears to ensure that all workers at those employers were not paid below the national living and minimum wage.

Margot James:

HM Revenue and Customs respond to 100% of worker complaints, and where applicable open an investigation to ensure that the National Minimum Wage has been paid. The aim of enforcement is to ensure all arrears owed to workers are paid back.

■ New Businesses: Loans

Chris Elmore: [\[44821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what options his Department provides to people whose application for a Start Up Loan has been unsuccessful due to their credit score.

Margot James:

I refer the hon Member to the answer I gave to Question UIN [44747](#).

■ Paternity Leave

Caroline Lucas: [\[44641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy that all employees are entitled to paternity leave from the first day of employment; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas: [\[44642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to introduce a paternal allowance for people who do not qualify for statutory paternity pay; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

The Government is taking a range of steps to improve provision for working parents . The eligibility rules for statutory paternity entitlements balance the needs of parents and the cost both to employers and to the taxpayer.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Cabinet Committees: Airports****Bob Blackman:**[\[43921\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has to re-establish the Economic Affairs (Airports) sub-Committee.

Ben Gummer:

A full updated list of the Cabinet Committees will be published in the coming weeks. In line with the previous arrangements, there will be a Cabinet sub-Committee to consider airport capacity in the South East of England.

■ Government Departments: Cost Effectiveness**Justin Tomlinson:**[\[44629\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what total reduction in government spending has been attributed to policies drawn up by the Behavioural Insights Team since 2010.

Ben Gummer:

The Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) does not track the cumulative impact of all its work over time, only some of which focus on reducing spending or increasing revenue collection.

However, BIT has now run some 350 trials, each of which shows the impact of different policy interventions in different contexts. These show that the team has helped to save or bring forward hundreds of millions of pounds of revenue and has made efficiency improvements in many different areas of UK Government policy.

This includes:

- changing the messages in letters from HMRC to late tax payers was part of a group of trials that helped bring forward more than £200m of late tax debts;

- changing the messages in letters sent by Local Authorities to late payers of Council Tax is estimated to bring forward an extra £3m in one local authority alone;

- changing the way that Jobcentres support people back to work has been rolled out to some 25,000 Job Advisors and is expected to help hundreds of thousands of people back to work faster.

- informing GPs who overprescribe antibiotics that most practices prescribe fewer antibiotics than theirs reduces the number of unnecessary prescriptions by around 150,000 per year; and

- working with HMCTS to send personalised text messages to people who were delinquent in their court fines. This intervention, which significantly increased payment rates prior to a bailiff intervention, could raise £860,000 per week if rolled out nationally and prevent up to 150,000 bailiff interventions per year.

BIT also works with governments around the world and is seeing similar effects in its work in Australia, Singapore and with cities across the USA.

These findings, and many others, are published once a year in BIT's Update Report. The next edition of this is due later this month [September 2016].

■ Government Departments: Credit Cards

Justin Madders: [\[45025\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, from which sources does the Government receive credit card fees from people paying for services offered by its departments and agencies; and what the total amount received was in (a) 2013-14, (b) 2014-15 and (c) 2015-16.

Ben Gummer:

The Cabinet Office does not collect data on behalf of Government on the receipt of credit card fees from people paying for services offered by its departments and agencies. If available, individual departments and agencies will hold this information.

■ Government Departments: Data Protection

Justin Tomlinson: [\[44862\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to ensure that government departments and executive agencies return people's personal identification documents by secure delivery.

Ben Gummer:

Personal identification documents can be requested by departments to verify an individual's identity for a service that they provide. It is for each department to determine the most appropriate method for returning these documents to the individual, taking into account the risk of loss and potential for fraud. Departments that regularly handle personal identification documents are expected to have clear procedures in place to return documentation to the owner.

The government has also launched 'Verify' on the GOV.uk website. As more government services are provided online and using the Verify service, the need for personal identity documents to be sent in hard copy through the postal network will be reduced.

■ Government Departments: Disclosure of Information

Justin Tomlinson: [\[44630\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to improve data-sharing (a) across government departments and (b) between government departments and local authorities.

Ben Gummer:

The Cabinet Office has consulted public authorities, academics, civil society organisations and privacy groups to explore how data-sharing can be used to improve public services to better support citizens in need, tackle fraud and debt and inform better policy making through world class research and statistics.

The government has included a number of provisions within the Digital Economy Bill to enable government to share data more effectively, whilst also including a set of principles to strengthen the safeguards around the use of data.

The government has also worked to establish a Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing, supporting public sector organisations and government departments in identifying and overcoming the organisational and cultural issues that limit effective sharing.

■ Ministerial Policy Advisers: Business Interests

Tom Watson: [44095]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many applications from former special advisers of his Office have been received under the business appointment rules for civil servants since 13 July 2016.

Ben Gummer:

Under the Business Appointment Rules, applications by former special advisers in the Prime Minister's office are the responsibility of the Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary takes decisions on any such applications, taking account of the advice of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments in respect of the most senior appointees. A List of the advisory committees is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/advisory-committee-on-business-appointments>

Summary details of applications from special advisers equivalent to SCS1 and above are published.

■ Nick Clegg

Tom Watson: [44045]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what arrangements have been made for the process of approval of expenses claims submitted by the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Hallam under the Public Duty Cost Allowance.

Tom Watson: [44048]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, for how long provision has been made under the Public Duty Cost Allowance for payments to the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Hallam.

Tom Watson: [44049]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, from which date the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Hallam began claiming expenses under the Public Duty Cost Allowance.

Tom Watson: [44053]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which former Deputy Prime Ministers have claimed expenses under the Public Duty Cost Allowance after leaving office.

Tom Watson: [\[44054\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what budget has been allocated under the Public Duty Cost Allowance for payments to the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Hallam.

Tom Watson: [\[44055\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, who authorised provision under the Public Duty Cost Allowance for the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Hallam after he left office as Deputy Prime Minister.

Tom Watson: [\[44056\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which expenses have been claimed by the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Hallam under the Public Duty Cost Allowance.

Ben Gummer:

The purpose of the Public Duties Cost Allowance is to assist former Prime Ministers with the costs of continuing to fulfil duties associated with their previous position in public life. Exceptionally, the then Prime Minister agreed that the former Deputy Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Member for Sheffield Hallam, should be able to have access to the allowance to recognise the special position he held in the Coalition Government. Other former Deputy Prime Ministers are not eligible for the allowance. The allowance is set at a maximum limit of £115,000 per annum. The amounts paid are a reimbursement of expenses, accounted for in the published Cabinet Office Annual Reports and Accounts. The former Deputy Prime Minister is eligible for the allowance from the date of leaving ministerial office for the duration of this Parliament.

TREASURY

■ Childbirth

Kirsten Oswald: [\[43972\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what comparative assessment he has made of the (a) short-term and (b) long-term economic effect on households of (i) multiple births and (ii) single births; and whether any difference in cost is reflected in the provision of support for families.

Jane Ellison:

No assessment has been made on the short and long-term economic effect of single and multiple births.

Child Benefit can be claimed by an eligible person responsible for a child under the age of 16, or a 16-19 year old in approved education or training. Child Benefit is not a means tested benefit and is currently paid at a rate of £20.70 per week for the first child and £13.70 per week for any subsequent children.

Child Tax Credit is made up of four elements which determine how much a claimant can receive. The Family Element entitles all Child Tax Credit claimants to a basic amount of up to £545 a year. The Child Element currently pays up to £2,780 for each child. Then

on top of this, the Disabled Child element pays up to an additional £3,140 and the Severely Disabled Child element pays up to a further £1,275 on top for each qualifying disabled or severely disabled child in the household.

■ Concentrix: Standards

Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh:

[44771]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions has he had with Concentrix on standards of service in its work to support the administration of the tax credits system.

Mr David Gauke:

I can confirm that HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) closely monitors Concentrix standards of Service. Full details can be found in the Contract. Please see link to the Contract: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/85d1b730-5e4e-4be8-ae4c-3ac1f359afc7>

■ Concentrix: Telephone Services

Mark Durkan:

[44445]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he plans to introduce a MP hotline number for Concentrix.

Mr David Gauke:

I refer the Right Honourable gentleman to the answer I gave on 1 December 2015 (17151).

■ Diabetes

Justin Tomlinson:

[43917]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people with type 1 diabetes are not disproportionately affected by the introduction of the soft drinks industry levy.

Jane Ellison:

There will continue to be a range of drinks containing natural sugars which will not be subject to the Soft Drinks Industry Levy. These include fruit juices and smoothies. The NHS recommends drinking pure fruit juice as a way to combat low sugar levels that can affect type 1 diabetics.

On 18th August, the Government published a consultation on the Soft Drinks Industry Levy and we will carefully consider all the points raised.

■ Energy: Taxation

Mark Pawsey:

[44578]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to announce the outcome of the consultation on reforming the business energy efficiency tax landscape which closed in March 2016.

Jane Ellison:

The government announced its response to the business energy efficiency tax landscape consultation at the March Budget 2016 and the accompanying consultation response document can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-reforming-the-business-energy-efficiency-tax-landscape>.

■ **Film: Tax Allowances**

Deidre Brock: [43703]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much was claimed in film tax relief in each year of its operation.

Jane Ellison:

In 2014-15, there were 530 claims for film tax relief for an amount of £304 million. In 2015-16, there were 325 claims for film tax for an amount of £185 million – however, this is a provisional figure which will be revised upwards as claims continue to be submitted to HMRC.

HMRC published statistics for the Creative Industries tax reliefs on 20 July 2016, including the number and amounts of claims for film tax relief. The statistics cover all years since the relief was introduced and can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/creative-industries-statistics-july-2016>

■ **Financial Ombudsman Service: Small Businesses**

Julian Knight: [44010]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to minimise the administrative effect on small businesses of information requests from the Financial Ombudsman.

Simon Kirby:

The issue raised is a matter for the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) who are operationally independent from Government.

The question has been passed on to the FOS. The FOS will reply directly to the Honorable Member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ **Infrastructure: West Yorkshire**

Craig Whittaker: [44437]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to support infrastructure development in West Yorkshire.

Mr David Gauke:

The government is taking steps to improve infrastructure across the UK, including committing to over £100 billion capital investment by the end of the Parliament.

Since 2010, more than 200 schemes have been delivered in Yorkshire and the Humber. The National Infrastructure Pipeline sets out 29 projects and programmes worth £6.6bn

for the region. This includes nearly £1bn for the West Yorkshire Plus transport fund, to help increase employment opportunities and economic growth by creating 20,000 jobs.

■ Money Laundering

Deidre Brock: [\[43554\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether it is his policy that existing money laundering regulations made under section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972 should remain in force in the UK after the UK leaves the EU.

Simon Kirby:

Tackling money laundering and terrorist financing is a priority for the Government. The UK is a leading member of the international standard setter for anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing, the Financial Action Task Force, and supports full compliance with the standards which we implement domestically. The UK will continue to cooperate closely with our international partners to improve the effectiveness of the standards, and to ensure the global anti-money regime is robust and responsive to emerging threats.

■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties

Scott Mann: [\[43976\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of replacing Vehicle Excise Duty with a roads fund fuel levy that charges motorists excise duty based upon how many miles they drive; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Ellison:

No assessment has been made of a roads fund fuel levy as described by the Hon. Member. The government has previously considered calls to replace Vehicle Excise Duty with a supplement on fuel duty, but has concluded that this would not be fair. It would have a disproportionate burden on certain groups such as businesses and households in rural areas without ready access to public transport alternatives.

■ Revenue and Customs: Contracts

Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh: [\[44770\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what measures are in place to monitor the service standards of third party contractors supporting the tax credits system.

Mr David Gauke:

HMRC utilise a wide and varied range of third party contractors to support the tax credit system (in addition to the activity performed in-house by HMRC staff) with services such as IT, accommodation, estates, print and post, analytics etc. The main third party supplier supporting tax credits is SYNEX-Concentrix UK limited; they provide additional capacity to review and correct tax credit claims that are potentially based on incorrect information.

HMRC implement a range of third party performance monitoring measures, tailored to the requirements of specific contracts, which follow accepted commercial and contract management best practice. Such measures include - but are not restricted to - active supplier and performance management via dedicated teams and against defined targets; regular service delivery reviews; collation of defined performance management information against targets; the implementation of key performance indicators and with associated service credit regimes if appropriate. HMRC also utilise appropriate contractual clauses and contract management best practice to measure and review the performance, as appropriate, of subcontractors in relation to prime contracts it has directly with third party suppliers.

■ Tobacco: Excise Duties

Philip Davies:

[\[43852\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an estimate of the effect of tobacco legislation on levels of revenue received by HM Treasury in the last 10 years.

Jane Ellison:

Impact assessments for legislative changes are published by the department responsible. HM Revenue and Customs and HM Treasury publish Tax Information and Impact Notes which estimate the impacts of tax and operational changes.

The forecast for tobacco duty receipts is published twice a year by the Office for Budget Responsibility. The latest forecast can be found on page 116 of the Economic and Fiscal Outlook published in March 2016:

<http://cdn.budgetresponsibility.org.uk/March2016EFO.pdf>.

■ Treasury: Consultants

Margaret Hodge:

[\[44319\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish a list of all secondees to (a) his Department and (b) HM Revenue and Customs from (i) PwC, (ii) Deloitte, (iii) Ernst and Young, (iv) KPMG and (v) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

Simon Kirby:

As has been the case under successive administrations, the Treasury benefits from secondees from a wide variety of organisations.

It is not possible to provide the names or current role of individual secondees, as to do so could breach data protection guidelines. However, information relating to the number of secondees to HM Treasury is as follows:

FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/2016

Organisation	Number of staff
Boston Consulting Group	1

FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/2016

Deloitte Touche	1
Ernst and Young	1
Grant Thornton	1
KPMG	1
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	1
Turner & Townsend	2

Financial Year 2014/2015

Organisation	Number of staff
Ashurst LLP	1
Deloitte Touche	1
Grant Thornton	1

Financial Year 2013/2014

Organisation	Number of staff
AECOM	3
Deloitte Touche	1
KPMG	1
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	1
Turner & Townsend	1

HM Revenue and Customs does not have any secondees from the firms mentioned, and can only answer the question on secondees for previous years at disproportional cost.

■ **Treasury: Staff**

Graham Jones:

[\[44831\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many full-time members of staff in his Department (a) were working on the Northern Powerhouse initiative before the EU referendum, (b) are currently working on the initiative and (c) are projected to work on the initiative in 2016-17.

Mr David Gauke:

Our ambitious plans to build a Northern Powerhouse remain a government priority. The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury and Minister for the Northern Powerhouse will

lead the work across the whole of government to help make the North a powerhouse for the UK economy. This will build on the strong progress made over the last two years.

The Northern Powerhouse cuts across a range of policy areas within the Treasury, including devolution, local growth, transport, trade and investment, enterprise and innovation and skills and education. Officials from across these wider policy areas continue to be engaged on the Northern Powerhouse agenda.

■ Video Games: Tax Allowances

Justin Tomlinson: [43669]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the benefits to the UK economy of video games tax relief.

Jane Ellison:

The creative industries make a valuable cultural contribution to the UK, they are also an important part of a dynamic and diversified economy.

In its first two years the video games tax relief aided the production of 135 games, supporting £417 million of production spending in this country.

The latest statistics on all of the creative sector tax reliefs can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/creative-industries-statistics-july-2016>

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Communities and Local Government: Living Wage

Frank Field: [43502]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many people working for his Department or its executive agencies on a (a) directly employed, (b) agency or (c) outsourced basis are paid less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation; and how many of those people are employed on zero-hours contracts.

Mr Marcus Jones:

My department does not employ any staff earning less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, or any staff employed on zero-hour contracts.

One of our agencies, the Planning Inspectorate, currently has four agency staff employed on a temporary basis earning above the National Living Wage but less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. They will be paid the higher Living Wage Foundation rate after 12 weeks employment.

Another of our agencies, the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, has an outsourced contract for catering on-site. The contractor employs 42 staff earning the National Living Wage, but less than the Living Wage Foundation rate. These staff are on zero-hour contracts.

At present, there are 154 staff employed by an outsourced company to work within the DCLG Facilities Management contract. Of these 111 are paid at or above the National

Living Wage but beneath the Living Wage Foundation rate. There are 28 zero hour contracts in place.

The Department maintains a position that the level of employee payment is for our external contractors to determine, while encouraging payment of a living wage.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Dyslexia

Kevin Foster:

[\[44156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps are being taken to prevent discrimination against people with dyslexia in the Armed Forces.

Mark Lancaster:

Dyslexia is one of four specific learning difficulties (SpLD, including dyspraxia, dyscalculia and scotopic sensitivity syndrome) recognised by the Armed Forces which are not a bar to recruitment or service in the Armed Forces, as long as all applicable recruitment, training and job performance standards are met in full. SpLD are viewed by the Armed Forces as naturally occurring differences in learning that, through targeted support and the implementation of coping strategies, can generally be successfully mitigated. Many dyslexic Armed Forces personnel are enjoying successful careers.

Individuals affected by SpLD are eligible for specific support which may include reasonable adjustments to training and working environments. SpLD is recognised as being an issue that is principally and proactively managed by the individual, supported where necessary by their Chain of Command and not a condition which should draw undue attention, impractical or unmanageable special measures or stigma.

Detailed policy guidance on SpLD is accessible at unit level through Joint Service Publication (JSP) 898 'Defence Direction and Guidance on Training, Education and Skills'. In addition, the single Services have trained SpLD advisors who can offer advice, guidance and a range of strategies to help individuals get the support they need. These advisors administer the dyslexia adult screening test (DAST) to assess personnel once a trainer, trainee, line manager or member of the Services suspect dyslexia. The test is not mandatory; it is administered only with the individual's consent. The DAST result will determine whether further specialist assessment by an educational psychologist is required and also provide a profile of strengths and weaknesses which will support any necessary remedial training programme.

■ Armed Forces: Housing

Clive Lewis:

[\[44893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate his Department has made of the potential cost of terminating and re-tendering the Carillion Amey housing contract.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence has put in place a strategy to provide an alternative solution should CarillionAmey fail to sustain performance. The Department continues to assess CarillionAmey's performance to determine whether the implementation of this strategy is necessary.

I will be meeting senior CarillionAmey staff in September to hold them to account for their performance.

■ Armed Forces: Northern Ireland

Danny Kinahan: [\[44296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reasons people who are from or live in Northern Ireland are required to complete a counter terrorist check as part of an application to join the armed forces.

Mark Lancaster:

Every eligible applicant, irrespective of their background, residency or nationality undergoes appropriate security vetting as part of the selection process to join the UK Armed Forces.

■ Armed Forces: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Justin Tomlinson: [\[44560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the provision of support for post-traumatic stress disorder provided to (a) serving regular armed forces personnel, (b) serving reserve personnel and (c) veterans.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence is committed to looking after the mental health of our Armed Forces, and our medical services are configured to provide community-based healthcare in line with national best practice. In the UK, we have 14 military Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMHs), which are located to be convenient for major centres of military population, and which support the provision of healthcare that is available through Service primary care facilities. The DCMH mental health teams comprise psychiatrists and mental health nurses, with access to clinical psychologists and mental health social workers. A wide range of psychiatric and psychological treatments are available, including medication, psychological therapies, and environmental adjustment where appropriate. In-patient care, when necessary, is provided in dedicated psychiatric units through a central contract with an in-patient psychiatric care provider.

Mobilised Reservists are entitled to the same mental healthcare from the Defence Medical Services as their Regular colleagues. Both current and former Reservists can access the Veterans and Reserves Mental Health Programme (VRMHP) for a full mental health assessment, followed by a course of treatment at a military Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH) if their condition is assessed as attributable to operational experience. We have been actively engaged with the Department of Health to ensure that NHS GPs are aware of this service, and of the referral process.

Veterans in England, Scotland and Wales are entitled to priority treatment at NHS hospitals for Service-related conditions (subject to the clinical need of all patients) and a Veterans' Transition Protocol ensures any Service person discharged with a diagnosed mental health disorder is handed over appropriately to the NHS in England and the Devolved Administrations. A number of enhancements have been made to the care available for them, including more NHS veterans mental health nurses, follow-up of Service leavers twelve months after discharge, and a 24-hour mental health helpline sponsored by Combat Stress.

■ **Defence: Expenditure**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[45162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the change in defence spending has been since May 2015.

Michael Fallon:

The Spending Review 2015 set out the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) budget for the rest of this Parliament reflecting the Government's commitment to spend at least 2% of GDP on defence. The MOD budget will increase by 0.5% above inflation each year from 2016-17 to 2020-21, during which time the Department will have access to the new Joint Security Fund.

The Defence Budget for 2016-17 is £35 billion.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Consultants**

Margaret Hodge:

[\[44327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish a list of all secondees to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

Mark Lancaster:

Fewer than five employees from PwC, Deloitte, Ernst and Young, KPMG and other consulting firms were seconded to the Ministry of Defence within the last three years. Due to the low numbers involved, a breakdown of companies and job roles has not been provided.

■ **Royal Naval Reserve**

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[45176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what vessels of all types are available to the Royal Naval Reserve for training.

Mark Lancaster:

The Royal Naval Reserve has access to all types of Royal Navy vessels to deliver effective and quality training opportunities for all Royal Naval Reservists, depending on their specialisation.

EDUCATION■ **Degrees**

Paul Blomfield: [\[44294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many institutions in England (a) held and (b) were granted taught degree awarding powers in each year since 2006.

Joseph Johnson:

Based on the information available to us, there were 103 institutions in England that held taught degree awarding powers in 2006. The number of such awards in each year since then is as follows:

2007 – 7

2008 - 2

2009 - 6

2010 - 0

2011 - 0

2012 - 3

2013 - 1

2014 - 2

2015 - 3

2016 - 3 (as of 5 September 2016)

■ **Higher Education: Refugees**

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[44362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many people with refugee status have undertaken study at the level of higher education in the UK in each of the last six years.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 7 September 2016]: The Government has a longstanding and proud tradition of providing a safe haven to those who have no choice but to leave their home country because of endangerment to their lives or those of their families.

Student support is available to those recognised as refugees (and their spouses, civil partners and children named on the initial application for asylum), provided they have been ordinarily resident in the British Islands since being recognised by the Government as a refugee and are ordinarily resident in England on the first day of the first academic year of the course. They are exempt from the three year residence requirement.

Asylum seekers who are recognised as refugees after the start of their course may qualify for support for the remainder of their studies as follows:

- living cost support in any subsequent years of the course (and in the quarters following the award in the year of the award); and

- fee assistance in any subsequent years of the course (and in the year of the award if the award is made within three months of the first day of the academic year of the course).

Information on the total number of students with a refugee status undertaking Higher Education courses in the UK is not available.

Information is available from the Student Loans Company (SLC) on applicants with refugee status awarded student finance. Management information from the SLC showing the number of refugee applicants awarded loans in England in each of the last six years can be found in the table below:

English Domiciled applicants with a refugee status awarded student loans

Academic years 2009/10 to 2014/15 (data effective as at the end of each academic year)

ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER OF REFUGEES AWARDED LOANS
2009/10	2,000
2010/11	2,500
2011/12	3,000
2012/13	3,700
2013/14	3,800
2014/15	3,900

Source: SLC, Management Information

Note: Awards do not necessarily translate into payments. An awarded applicant will only receive payments once SLC has received confirmation from the student's provider at the start of the academic year that the student has been registered on the course.

■ **Students: Fees and Charges**

Diana Johnson:

[\[43573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions she has had with the European Commission on (a) the status of EU students at British universities and (b) the status of British students at universities within the EU; and whether it is her policy that such student will be eligible for international student fees once Britain has left the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

No discussions have taken place yet. There are no immediate changes following the EU Referendum, including in the circumstances of British citizens studying, or planning to study, in the EU.

Future arrangements for studying abroad will need to be considered as part of wider discussions about the UK's relationship with the EU. For further information, see the

Government Statement at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-higher-education-and-research-following-the-eu-referendum>.

■ Students: Finance

Philip Davies: [43945]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional financial assistance is available to students whose maintenance loans do not fully cover the costs of accommodation; and what estimate she has made of the proportion of students who are so affected.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government's policy is that maintenance support is provided to cover a range of student expenditure, and is only a contribution to students' costs. Maintenance support is linked to parental income, to ensure that students from lower income backgrounds receive the highest rates of loan, and for new students beginning study this academic year, maintenance support has increased by up to 10.3% on the previous year.

In addition to their maintenance support, students may be eligible for financial assistance from their university. In 2016/17, £745 million is expected to be spent by universities on measures to support the access and success of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including through bursaries and fee waivers. Such assistance is over and above the other sources of income students may have such as their families or from paid work.

■ Teachers: Training

Gloria De Piero: [43795]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, in which secondary school subjects her Department has been unable to recruit enough trainee teachers to fill the number of training places allocated in each of the last five years for which data is available.

Nick Gibb:

The Department's teacher recruitment targets for each academic year are calculated on an annual basis and take into account changes in the overall workforce from the previous year and wider economic changes that impact on retention and recruitment. Therefore the absolute targets change each year.

The statistics at the following link show new entrants to initial teacher training (ITT) as a proportion of the targets, for each subject, for academic years 2011/12 to 2015/16. Proportions above 100 per cent represent an over recruitment and proportions below 100 per cent represent a shortfall in recruitment against the target in the year in question.

The relevant statistics are available in Table 1c of the 'Initial Teacher Training: trainee number census 2015 to 2016', available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-trainee-number-census-2015-to-2016>

Equivalent statistics for academic year 2016/17 are due to be published in November.

Philip Davies:

[\[43944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what new measures she is implementing to encourage take-up of teacher training.

Nick Gibb:

The latest published figures from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service show that teaching remains a hugely popular profession; nearly 28,000 people have been recruited to postgraduate teacher training courses in England in 2016/17, with several weeks of the recruitment cycle remaining.

Our 2017/18 teacher recruitment marketing campaign will commence in the autumn and will feature a new television advert, alongside print, online and social media advertising. Forty recruitment events will take place across the country, and teaching will be promoted also at over thirty graduate fairs where our advisors will meet students, setting out the benefits of a career in teaching.

To support recruitment in 2017/18, we will also be announcing a new package of financial incentives, including bursaries and scholarships to attract top graduates in priority subjects such as physics and maths, in early autumn.

In addition, we are spending up to £67 million on a programme of measures to upskill the existing maths and physics teaching workforce, and increase the number of new maths and physics specialists entering teaching. This package aims to recruit up to 2,500 new teachers and upskill up to 15,000 existing teachers over the term of this parliament.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Diana Johnson:

[\[43705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the Government plans to devolve agricultural subsidies to the devolved administrations once Britain exits the Common Agricultural Policy.

George Eustice:

Across the UK, agriculture will receive the same level of funding that it would have received under the Common Agricultural Policy until at least the end of the Multi-Annual Financial Framework in 2020, even if the UK leaves the EU before this point.

The UK Government will be working closely with the devolved administrations as we work on future agriculture policy.

■ Air Pollution

Diana Johnson:

[\[43707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her policy is on future collaboration with the EU on air pollution and the transposition into UK law of Directive 2008/50/EC.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union (EU) and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the Government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation. The outcome of these negotiations will determine what arrangements apply in relation to EU legislation and funding in future once the UK has left the EU.

The subject matter of the Ambient Air Quality Directive (Directive 2008/50/EC) is devolved. As regards England, the Directive was transposed by the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010.

■ Air Pollution: EU Law

Lisa Nandy: [\[44797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether it is her Department's policy that the UK should comply with the air pollution limits set out in the EU Industrial Emissions Directive.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government takes air pollution seriously and is committed to improving the UK's air quality, reducing health impacts, and fulfilling our legal obligations.

As a full member of the European Union (EU), the UK aims to comply with all the rights and obligations of EU membership, including the air pollution limits set out in the Industrial Emissions Directive 2010/75/EU.

■ Beverage Containers: Recycling

Lyn Brown: [\[44382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will take steps to reduce the number of non-recyclable paper coffee cups used in the UK.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Paper coffee cups are covered by the Packaging Waste Regulations. The UK meets its packaging waste recovery and recycling targets through a market-based approach. These targets are reviewed periodically to encourage more recycling of packaging, including paper and cardboard. Packaging producers who put more than 50 tonnes a year of packaging materials on the market and have an annual turnover of more than £2 million are required to recover and recycle a proportion of their packaging waste. As a result, major coffee chains pick up a financial obligation to recycle their packaging waste, including paper coffee cups, through this mechanism.

We are aware of many major chains who are taking their own action to incentivise environmentally friendly behaviour, for example, offering a reusable cup discount on drinks if people bring their own cups.

Industry has also put in place the Paper Cup Recycling and Recovery Group (PCRRG). As part of this, a manifesto signed by over 40 companies was launched on 27 June this

year, with the aim of “significantly increasing paper cup recovery and recycling rates by 2020”.

■ **Diesel Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions**

Mr David Lammy:

[\[43782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans the Government has to implement a diesel scrappage scheme to tackle air pollution.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Current plans for improving air quality are set out in our national plan for nitrogen dioxide, published on 17 December last year. The plan sets out a comprehensive approach to improving UK air quality. The priority measure in the plan is the introduction of new Clean Air Zones to tackle the most polluting vehicles in air pollution hotspots. Clean Air Zones will be introduced in five cities in England (Birmingham, Leeds, Southampton, Nottingham and Derby), along with the Ultra Low Emission Zone in London.

The plan sets out a range of other measures. For example, we are also planning to consult in the Autumn on proposals to control emissions from generators, which have the potential to cause breaches in air quality limits for nitrogen dioxide. The proposed controls will apply from 2019.

■ **Moorland: North of England**

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[44581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of whether the Walshaw Moor Estate's management of its blanket bog habitats is in compliance with the Habitats Directive; and when she intends to answer the letter of 29 April 2016 from the European Commission giving formal notice on that matter.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

We do not comment on ongoing legal proceedings.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **Bangladesh: Human Rights**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[45040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the human rights record of the government of Bangladesh; and if he will make a statement.

Alok Sharma:

As I said during the adjournment debate on Bangladesh on 8 September, we are concerned about the protection of human rights in Bangladesh. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office named Bangladesh as one of 30 Human Rights Priority Countries

in its 2015 report. The report cited the confrontational actions of the two main political parties, extremist attacks against secular writers and religious minorities and pressure on free speech, plus continued use of the death penalty as particular areas of concern.

■ Kashmir

Paul Blomfield: [\[44188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had at the UN on implementation of Security Council Resolution 47 on Kashmir.

Alok Sharma:

The United Kingdom does not intend to support an international conference or a plebiscite on Kashmir in line with UN Security Council Resolution 47. I have not had any discussions at the UN on this issue. The longstanding position of the UK is that it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to act as a mediator.

■ Kashmir: British Nationals Abroad

Imran Hussain: [\[44279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what support the British High Commissions in India and Pakistan are providing to British citizens affected by the violence in Kashmir.

Alok Sharma:

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office encourages all British nationals to check the FCO's Travel Advice web pages before travelling. This highlights the current unrest in Indian-administered Kashmir. It explains that due to the accessibility and current unrest in the area, the level of consular assistance that the FCO can provide is extremely limited.

■ Sri Lanka: Water

Tom Brake: [\[44404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Sri Lankan government on water pollution from the Chunnakam Oil Plant in the Jaffna Pensinsula.

Alok Sharma:

The British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka visited Jaffna in June and raised concerns about water contamination with the local authorities. He received assurances that they were aware of the issue and were addressing it. They also discussed water quality in general and longer term plans for providing water through desalination.

■ Tibet: Human Rights

Tom Brake:

[\[44792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answers of 10 May 2016 to Questions 36574 and 36576, in what way his Department carried out its assessment of the human rights situation in Tibet; and for what reasons the 2015 Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy contained no relevant information on that situation.

Alok Sharma:

Our assessment of the situation of Tibet is based on range of credible sources and information gathered by diplomats and officials. I draw the Hon. Members attention to the most recent version (updated in July 2016) of the Human Rights and Democracy report where we outline a number of concerns relating to Tibet. We raise these concerns regularly, for example I raised two Tibetan cases involving freedom of expression (Tashi Wangchuk and Druklo (Shokjang)) with the Chinese Ambassador on 1 August.

■ United Nations

Steve McCabe:

[\[44298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many UN special envoy missions there have been in each of the last five years.

Alok Sharma:

This response answers PQ 44298 and PQ 44301. For the purpose of these PQs we have defined 'UN special envoy missions' as Special Political Mission thematic cluster I, which covers special and personal envoys and advisers of the UN Secretary General.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office pays the UK's assessed contributions for these as a part of our contribution to the UN Regular Budget, which are mandatory under the UN Charter. The UK's fixed percentage share of the budget for each Special Political Mission was 6.604% during 2011 and 2012, and 5.179% from 2013 to 2015. The peacekeeping budget does not fund Special Political Missions. The UK does not hold a central register of UK voluntary contributions to SPMs

The table below provides the total number, annual budget and UK contribution to the cluster I SPM for calendar years 2011-2015. Year Number Total budget (UK contribution) in US\$ millions 2015 11 \$37.3m (\$1.93m) 2014 10 \$24.9m (\$1.29m) 2013 8 \$16.7m (\$0.866m) 2012 7 \$11.43m (\$0.755m) 2011 6 \$8.69m (\$0.574m)

■ United Nations: Finance

Steve McCabe:

[\[44301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much the UK contributed to the funding of UN special envoys through (a) the UN regular budget, (b) the UN peacekeeping budget and (c) voluntary contributions in each of the last five years.

Alok Sharma:

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The table below provides the total number, annual budget and UK contribution to the cluster I SPM for calendar years 2011-2015.

Year	Number	Total budget (UK contribution) in US\$ millions
2015	11	\$37.3m (\$1.93m)
2014	10	\$24.9m (\$1.29m)
2013	8	\$16.7m (\$0.866m)
2012	7	\$11.43m (\$0.755m)
2011	6	\$8.69m (\$0.574m)

HEALTH■ **Hepatitis****Greg Mulholland:**[\[43826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent estimate he has made of the number of people in the UK affected by each strand of the hepatitis virus.

Nicola Blackwood:

Public Health England receives laboratory reports of confirmed cases of hepatitis A, C and E from England and Wales and from England for hepatitis B.

In 2014, 300 reports were received for hepatitis A, 488 for hepatitis B, 11,997 for hepatitis C and 886 for hepatitis E.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT■ **Department for International Development: Consultants****Margaret Hodge:**[\[44334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will publish a list of all secondees to her Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

Rory Stewart:

DFID has not seconded any individuals from PWC, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, KPMG in the last 3 years. Nor have we seconded any individuals from any other consulting firm in the same period.

Margaret Hodge:

[\[44354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many times her Department has used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what (i) work was undertaken and (ii) the cost to the public purse was on each such occasion.

Rory Stewart:

Detail on all DFID spend is available via our departmental website.

■ **Developing Countries: Economic Growth**

Kate Osamor:

[\[44493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how her Department plans to fund support for economic development in developing countries.

Priti Patel:

My department remains committed to providing support for work on economic development. We are currently developing our Economic Development Strategy and will be considering funding allocations as part of our wider aid reviews.

■ **Developing Countries: Food**

Dr Eilidh Whiteford:

[\[44479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department plans to take to (a) track and (b) report progress made against the Sustainable Development Goals by applying the Food Insecurity Experience Scale.

James Wharton:

DFID helped to establish the use of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale. This is the method the UN's Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators has recommended for tracking and reporting on the prevalence of food insecurity for Global Goal 2.

DFID is in the process of reviewing its results framework and is also considering ways to apply the Food Insecurity Experience Scale in relevant programmes. For example, this year DFID supported the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme to agree a new Monitoring and Evaluation framework which will use the Food Insecurity Experience Scale to track progress on food security for households supported by the programme.

■ **Overseas Aid**

Kate Osamor:

[\[44492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the Government's policy is on maintaining its commitment to spending 0.7 per cent of gross national income on overseas aid.

Priti Patel:

This Government remains committed to continuing the UK's leading role on international development, including through spending 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) on overseas aid.

As an outward-looking, globally engaged nation, we believe that the UK should work to tackle international problems at their source – not wait for them to arrive on our doorstep.

■ **Overseas Aid: Migrant Camps**

Tom Elliott: [\[44497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much funding from the public purse for each refugee camp has been given in each of the last five years; and on what that funding has been spent in each of those years.

Rory Stewart:

DFID supports refugee camps in many different countries as part of our wider programming to assist those displaced by conflict, persecution and fear. It is not possible to say how much is spent on each individual camp.

■ **Palestinians: Overseas Aid**

Craig Whittaker: [\[44440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the (a) effectiveness and (b) value for money of the UK's aid assistance to the Palestinian Territories.

Rory Stewart:

As I have recently taken up my new role, I am conducting an examination of DFID's support to the Occupied Palestinian Territories to ensure UK taxpayers' money is spent in the right places and in the right way. The UK remains committed in its support for a negotiated settlement leading to a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state.

■ **South Sudan: Armed Conflict**

Mark Durkan: [\[44783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the humanitarian situation in South Sudan; what estimate she has made of the number of (a) refugees, (b) displaced people and (c) people with severe malnutrition in that country.

James Wharton:

The humanitarian situation in South Sudan remains dire. More than 2.4 million people are displaced; over 785,000 of them to neighbouring countries as refugees. 4.8 million South Sudanese people, almost half of the population, are at risk of severe food insecurity. Although famine has not yet been declared, there is a looming risk in parts of

Unity State. Through DFID, the UK remains the second largest bilateral donor to South Sudan.

■ **Tibet: Climate Change**

Tom Brake: [\[44791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 11 May 2016 to Question 36578, what the findings relevant to Tibet were of her Department's-funded assessments of glacial melt and rivers in the Himalayas.

Rory Stewart:

As noted in the Answer of 13 April 2013 to Question 151281, DFID funded two assessments on glacial melt in the Himalayan region. It has since piloted a method of assessing glaciers in the region using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). The studies indicate that the Himalayan glaciers have been shrinking overall at 0.4-0.5% per year since the 1950s. The studies are available on DFID's Research for Development website.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ **Department for International Trade: Ministers**

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which Minister in his Department has responsibility for tackling corruption.

Dr Liam Fox:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my rt hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office, Ben Gummer, on 6 September 2016, UIN: [44131](#).

■ **Foreign Investment in UK**

Justin Tomlinson: [\[43670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if his Department will look at examples of best practice in attracting foreign direct investment (a) in Swindon and (b) across the UK.

Greg Hands:

The Department is continuously seeking to identify and share best practice from across the UK.

The Department works in partnership with Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Swindon Borough Council to deliver foreign direct investment to Swindon. My officials will continue to work with them to look at further examples of best practice.

■ Jamaica: Overseas Trade

Dawn Butler: [\[43600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans his Department has to develop a trade deal with Jamaica.

Greg Hands:

Until we have left the EU, the UK will remain a member of the EU with all of the rights and obligations that membership entails.

In due course, Britain will be leaving the EU. This offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate, in time, our own trade agreements, including with developing countries, and to be a positive and powerful force for free trade. The Prime Minister has established the Department for International Trade to promote British trade across the world and ensure the UK takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. The Government is currently reviewing its trade policy. We will engage fully with a broad range of stakeholders, including both governments and business over the coming weeks and months as we prepare for the negotiation with the EU and other international partners.

■ Trade Agreements

Tom Brake: [\[41898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what countries the Government has made representations to on negotiating trade deals as a result of the outcome of the EU referendum.

Mark Garnier:

Leaving the EU offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate our own trade agreements and to be a positive and powerful force for free trade.

We have been consulting, and will continue to consult, a broad range of stakeholders, including governments and business, on the implications of the referendum result.

Andrew Rosindell: [\[41919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, of which governments states have made official representations to the Government since 24 June 2016 on negotiating a free trade deal with the UK.

Mark Garnier:

Leaving the EU offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate our own trade agreements and to be a positive and powerful force for free trade.

We have been consulting, and will continue to consult, a broad range of stakeholders, including governments and business, on the implications of the referendum result.

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[43283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which countries the Government has approached or been approached by to discuss trade deals; and when he plans to commence such discussions.

Greg Hands:

My Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister has established the Department for International Trade to promote British trade across the world and ensure the UK takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. We are exploring a range of options to maximise the opportunities for the UK's future trading relations. However, until we leave, the UK will remain a full member of the EU, with all of the rights and obligations.

Tom Watson:

[\[43749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the options for new forms of economic relationships with countries outside the EU.

Greg Hands:

Leaving the EU offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate our own trade agreements and to be a positive and powerful force for free trade.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has established the Department for International Trade to promote British trade across the world and ensure the UK takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. We are exploring a range of options to maximise the opportunities for the UK's future trading relations.

Emma Reynolds:

[\[43799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many trade negotiators are employed by the Government.

Greg Hands:

You will be aware that my Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister has created a new Department for International Trade, which is responsible for promoting British trade across the world and ensuring the UK takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. We are building up our trade policy capability and are working closely with other Government Departments including the Department for Exiting the European Union, DEXEU. The Department for International Trade has begun a process to recruit and train staff to work on the UK's trade policy. We will adapt the resource devoted to trade policy in line with future demands.

■ Trade Agreements: Mercosur

Mark Menzies:

[\[43476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps his Department is taking to negotiate a trade deal with the Mercosur trading bloc.

Greg Hands:

The EU is currently negotiating a trade deal with Mercosur. Until we have left the EU, the UK will remain a member of the EU with all of the rights and obligations that membership entails.

In due course, Britain will be leaving the EU. This offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate, in time, our own trade agreements and to be a positive and powerful force for free trade. The Prime Minister has established the Department for International Trade to promote British trade across the world and ensure the UK takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. The Government is currently reviewing its trade policy. We will engage fully with a broad range of stakeholders, including both governments and business over the coming weeks and months as we prepare for the negotiation with the EU and other international partners.

■ **World Trade Organisation**

Diana Johnson:

[\[43547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what preparations have been made for the UK having its own representative at the World Trade Organisation.

Greg Hands:

The UK has been a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in its own right since the establishment of the WTO in 1995. The UK Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the WTO is currently Julian Braithwaite.

JUSTICE■ **Ministry of Justice: Living Wage**

Frank Field:

[\[43508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people working for her Department or its executive agencies on a (a) directly employed, (b) agency or (c) outsourced basis are paid less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation; and how many of those people are employed on zero-hours contracts.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The table below shows the number of staff directly employed by the Department or its executive agencies who are paid less than the living wage (LW) as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, none of which are employed on zero hours contracts. This data is shown as at 31 March 2016.

	NUMBER BELOW LIVING WAGE	HEADCOUNT
MoJ inc MoJ HQ, HMCTS, OPG, 913 CICA and LAA.		22,539
NOMS (including the National Probation Service)	490	45,909

Information on contractors paid less than the rate defined by the Living Wage Foundation as a LW could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

■ Personal Injury: Compensation

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[43967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for what reason her Department has increased the small claims limit for minor whiplash claims.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The government remains concerned about the number and cost of low value personal injury claims and has announced robust new measures to tackle them - including raising the small claims limit for personal injury claims to £5,000. This change has not yet been made.

■ Prisoners

Caroline Flint: [\[43950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the effect of recent reduction in staff numbers in prisons on (a) prisoners' access to education and (b) prisoners' access to recreational activities.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

As the Justice Secretary said in the House on 6 September, the retention of staff is a very important issue, and we are stepping up our recruitment efforts. Prison officers and teachers are vital in turning around offenders and getting them the education and skills they need to succeed outside. Our prison officers are doing a fantastic job getting prisoners into education.

■ Prisoners: Self-harm

Caroline Flint: [\[43953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps her Department has taken to reduce the incidence of self-harm in prisons.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Government is committed to reducing the incidence of self-harm in prisons. All prisons are required to have procedures in place to identify, manage and support people who are at risk of harm to themselves. These include the Assessment, Care in Custody

and Teamwork (ACCT) process, which is a prisoner-centred, flexible care planning system for prisoners identified as at risk of suicide or self-harm.

An additional £10m of new funding, supplemented by £2.9m from existing budgets, was recently allocated to the 69 prisons with the most concerning levels of violence and self-harm. The Justice Secretary is clear that safety in prisons is fundamental to the proper functioning of our justice system and a vital part of our reform plans.

■ Prisons: Crimes of Violence

Caroline Flint: [\[43952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the causes of recent increases in violent incidents towards staff in prisons; and what steps she plans to take to reduce such incidents.

Caroline Flint: [\[43954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the causes of recent increases in violent incidents between prisoners; and what steps she plans to take to reduce such incidents.

Caroline Flint: [\[43955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of a minimum safety standard for staff in public and privately-run prisons.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The level of violence in our prisons is unacceptable. I am clear that safety in prisons is fundamental to the proper functioning of our justice system and a vital part of our reform plans.

There are a number of factors including the availability of psychoactive substances in prisons which must be tackled. It will take time to address there long-standing problems. I am determined to make sure our prisons are safe and places of rehabilitation.

■ Prisons: Drugs

Caroline Flint: [\[43951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps her Department is taking to tackle access to and use of psychoactive substances in prisons.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Justice Secretary is clear that safety is fundamental to the proper functioning of our justice system and a vital part of our reform plans. There are a number of factors, including the availability of psychoactive substances in prisons, which must be tackled in order to make our prisons safe and places of rehabilitation.

We have introduced tough new laws which will see those who smuggle packages over prison walls, including new psychoactive substances, face up to two years in prison. Those who involve themselves in the distribution of drugs in our prisons should know that they could face prosecution and extra time behind bars. We have a comprehensive

range of security measures and searching techniques in place to detect drugs, and to prevent smuggling into prisons.

■ Terrorism

Justin Tomlinson:

[43479]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what information the Government makes available to people (a) injured in and (b) who have witnessed a terrorist attack about (i) who they should contact for help and support and (ii) what support is available to them.

Dr Phillip Lee:

This Government is committed to ensuring that victims of terrorism can access effective and timely support to help them cope, and as far as possible, recover from the trauma they have experienced.

Where an individual is a victim of a terrorist attack in England and Wales they are entitled to emotional, practical and specialist support as set out in the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

Witnesses in the criminal justice system, including witnesses of terrorist attacks, are also entitled to support as set out under the Witness Charter for England and Wales. Witnesses who have suffered a qualifying mental injury may also be eligible for compensation if they meet the criteria.

Information on support services is provided both locally, by Police and Crime Commissioners who commission and fund the majority of support for victims of crime at local level, and nationally through the Victims' Information Service. The Victims' Information Service can be contacted by phone on 0808 168 9293 which is free to call. Further details can be found on the following website:

<https://www.victimsinformation.service.org.uk/>.

Victims in Scotland and Northern Ireland can contact their local Victim Support teams by telephoning the Victim Support line on 0845 60 39 213 (Scotland) or 028 9024 3133 (Northern Ireland) or visiting their website at www.victimsupportscotland.org.uk or www.victimsupportni.co.uk.

Where a British National is a victim of a terrorist attack overseas the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) will offer immediate consular assistance to respond to the specific practical needs of the individual. This includes information on how to access support once back in the United Kingdom. The Government works with the British Red Cross to provide the British Red Cross Relief Fund which provides immediate financial help to people who have been seriously injured or bereaved by terrorist incidents overseas. Eligible victims will also be able to access compensation under the Government funded Victims of Overseas Terrorism Compensation Scheme.

Those affected by the recent terrorist attacks in Tunisia, Paris and Brussels and resident in England, have been offered a mental health check. More information is available at:

- England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-attacks-mental-health-check-and-treatment>

- Scotland: Rivers Centre for Traumatic Stress, NHS Lothian – 0131 537 6743 or via email: Rivers.Centre@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk
- Wales: <http://www.callhelpline.org.uk/> - Freephone 0800 107 0900 or text the word "help" to 81066

■ Wills

Justin Tomlinson:

[43584]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment her Department has made of the adequacy of the existing regulatory regime relating to the will writing industry.

Sir Oliver Heald:

In 2013 the Legal Services Board (LSB) recommended that will writing be made a reserved legal activity, so that only authorised persons under the Legal Services Act 2007 could provide this service. The Government at that time considered that the evidence provided in the LSB report did not adequately demonstrate that reservation was the best solution to the identified problems in the will writing market, or that other measures had been sufficiently exhausted in seeking to address these problems.

We will consider any recommendations from the Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) when they publish their Legal Services Market Study. The CMA's interim report published on 8 July made reference to a need to consider possible changes to the current regulatory framework.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ Leader of the House of Commons: UK Withdrawal from EU

Karl McCartney:

[44250]

To ask the Leader of the House, what steps his Office has taken to prepare for the UK to leave the EU since 23 June 2016; and what further such steps his Office plans to take in the remainder of 2016.

Mr David Lidington:

The Department for Exiting the European Union has responsibility for overseeing preparations for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and conducting these withdrawal negotiations in support of the Prime Minister. In doing this it is working very closely with other government departments, including the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons, and a wide range of other interested parties.

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Electoral Register: Northern Ireland**

Tom Elliott: [\[44178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what the estimated cost to the public purse is of implementing online voter registration in Northern Ireland.

Kris Hopkins:

The cost of extending the digital registration service to Northern Ireland is being met by the Cabinet Office as part of the wider project to implement digital registration throughout the UK.

This work is ongoing and the current estimate of costs is approximately £250,000.

■ Northern Ireland Office: UK Withdrawal from EU

Karl McCartney: [\[44251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for the UK to leave the EU since 23 June 2016; and what further such steps his Department plans to take in the remainder of 2016.

Kris Hopkins:

The Department for Exiting the European Union has responsibility for overseeing preparations for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and conducting these withdrawal negotiations in support of the Prime Minister.

In doing this it is working very closely with other government departments, including the Northern Ireland Office, and a wide range of other interested parties.

PRIME MINISTER**■ Prime Minister: UK Withdrawal from EU**

Karl McCartney: [\[44252\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what steps 10 Downing Street has taken to prepare for the UK to leave the EU since 23 June 2016; and what further such steps 10 Downing Street plans to take in the remainder of 2016.

Mrs Theresa May:

I refer the hon. Member to the Oral Statement I gave to the House on 7 September 2016, *Official Report*, column 336.

■ UN Refugees and Migrants Summit

Steve McCabe: [\[44275\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she plans to attend the UN General Assembly meetings on refugees and migrants on 19 and 20 September 2016.

Mrs Theresa May:

I refer the hon. Member to the Oral Statement I gave to the House on 7 September 2016, *Official Report*, column 336.

TRANSPORT

■ Bus Services

Daniel Zeichner: [44310]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 29 February 2016 to Question 27306, if his Department will undertake analysis to understand the potential benefits for bus passengers of the municipal bus company model.

Andrew Jones:

There are only 8 existing municipal bus companies operating services in England and the Department does not currently have any plans to undertake analysis on the potential benefits of the municipal bus company model.

■ Bus Services Bill (HL)

Daniel Zeichner: [44453]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with private bus operators on Clause 21 of the Bus Services Bill.

Andrew Jones:

The Secretary of State recently met with the Confederation of Passenger Transport and private bus operators to discuss the Bus Services Bill, which included discussion of Clause 21.

■ Bus Services: Standards

Daniel Zeichner: [44451]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the level of (a) fuel efficiency and (b) journey times of buses.

Andrew Jones:

The Department has not carried out a recent detailed assessment of trends in the level of the fuel efficiency of buses. However, information on average journey times for buses is collected as part of the National Travel Survey and can be found in table NTS0311 at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/456304/nts0311.xls

■ Level Crossings: Bridgend

Chris Elmore:

[44769]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to make alterations to the rail crossing in Pencoed.

Paul Maynard:

Network Rail has responsibility for level crossings and operates at arm's-length from the Department for Transport. Any alterations will be an operational decision for Network Rail and they are engaging with local stakeholders about options for this rail crossing.

■ Railway Stations: West Yorkshire

Craig Whittaker:

[43793]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the number of people using railway stations in West Yorkshire since 2010.

Paul Maynard:

The Office of Rail and Road publish estimates of passenger demand for all railway stations in West Yorkshire since 2010. These figures can be found in their 'Estimates of Station Usage' publication, which can be found at the following link:

<http://orr.gov.uk/statistics/published-stats/station-usage-estimates>.

■ Railways: Compensation

Justin Tomlinson:

[44626]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made on introducing automatic compensation for rail users whose trains arrive late.

Paul Maynard:

The majority of train operators now operate the Delay Repay scheme and we are continuing to roll this out to all train operators through refranchising and / or as opportunities arise.

It is important that claims can be made easily and that passengers are made aware of their rights. This can be supported by automated systems that notify passengers when they are eligible to claim and electronic claims forms.

Some train operators have introduced fully automatic Delay Repay compensation: Virgin Trains West Coast for Advance tickets purchased through the operator's website or app for registered passengers, and by c2c for all passengers with a registered c2c Smartcard. This is feasible when the passenger has a ticket for a specific train purchased from the operator or a smartcard.

Northern, TransPennine Express and East Anglia are also planning to introduce fully automatic compensation for certain passengers who buy Advance or Season tickets.

■ Railways: Cumbria

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[44391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will visit the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line between Carlisle and Whitehaven.

Paul Maynard:

I regret that due to pressures on my diary I will not be able to visit the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line in the near future. However, I will be writing to the Hon. Member to respond to the concerns he has raised with the Secretary of State about the progression of enhancements to the line to support proposed economic development in his constituency.

■ Railways: Staff

Lilian Greenwood: [\[43561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department has spent in addition to his Department's obligations under franchise agreements on driver training or driver recruitment by each train operating company since May 2010.

Paul Maynard:

None, as this falls under the franchise agreement and is for the Train Operating Companies to spend.

■ Railways: Standards

Lilian Greenwood: [\[43657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2016 to Question 40286, asked by the hon. Member for Greenwich and Woolwich, what the title is of the group that meets monthly.

Paul Maynard:

The title of this group is the South East Quadrant.

■ Railways: West Yorkshire

Craig Whittaker: [\[43792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what change there has been in passenger numbers on trains in West Yorkshire since 2010.

Paul Maynard:

Information on the number of journeys made by rail is shown below.

YEAR	NUMBER OF JOURNEYS IN WEST YORKSHIRE
2014/15	44,419,978
2013/14	42,584,787

YEAR	NUMBER OF JOURNEYS IN WEST YORKSHIRE
2012/13	40,775,454
2011/12	39,676,018
2010/11	38,552,743
2009/10	34,779,614

Source: The Office of Rail and Road

■ South Wales Railway Line: Electrification

Chris Elmore: [\[44773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent progress has been made on the electrification of the railway line in South Wales.

Paul Maynard:

Progress is being made on the Severn Tunnel autumn works which run from the 12 September until the 21 October. This will enable works to be carried out to electrify the tunnel which is the key link into South Wales.

■ Taxis: Licensing

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[43881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether taxi and private hire vehicles require additional licences while working outside their primary licensing authority area.

Andrew Jones:

Licensed taxi drivers can only work as a taxi (e.g. ply for hire) in the area they are licensed in. They can work as a private hire vehicle (PHV) outside their primary licensing authority. As a PHV though, they can only accept journeys that have been pre-booked.

Licensed PHV drivers do not need additional licences to pick up a booking elsewhere in the UK, however a PHV operator can only invite and accept bookings within the area the operator is licensed.

Daniel Zeichner: [\[44675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on changes in the number of licensed private hire vehicles in England in the last 12 months; and what assessment his Department has made of the effect of that change on (a) congestion and (b) consumer safety.

Andrew Jones:

The Department for Transport's taxi statistics provide information on the number of licensed taxis and private hire vehicles in England and Wales. Data are derived from the department's survey of licensing authorities in England and Wales, which takes place every 2 years. The last survey was published in August 2015. It showed a total 166,100

private hire vehicles in England in March 2015, an increase of 11.8% since March 2013. The Department has not made a further assessment of any impacts of that change.

■ **Taxis: Regulation**

Daniel Zeichner: [\[44421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will introduce new national regulations for private hire driver licences in line with Transport for London's new regulations for private hire drivers which will come into force on 1 October 2016.

Andrew Jones:

The Government wants to see taxis and private hire vehicles prosper in London and elsewhere. The regulations issued by Transport for London are a matter for them as the local licensing authority. The legislation that provides for licensing of taxi and private hire vehicle services is enabling in its nature, giving local licensing authorities the discretion to set standards that they deem to be appropriate for their area.

Daniel Zeichner: [\[44562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will bring forward primary legislation to regulate the taxi and private hire vehicle industries in the current session.

Andrew Jones:

Clause 145 of the Policing and Crime Bill currently being considered by Parliament would enable the Secretary of State to issue Statutory Guidance to taxi and private hire licensing authorities so as to protect children, and vulnerable individuals who are 18 or over, from harm.

There is at present no plan to bring forward further primary legislation to reform the legislative framework for taxis and private hire vehicles in the current session.

■ **Taxis: Vetting**

Daniel Zeichner: [\[44569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make Disclosure and Barring Service checks a statutory requirement for taxi and private hire vehicle driver licenses.

Andrew Jones:

The Policing and Crime Bill contains a power to enable the Secretary of State for Transport to issue Statutory Guidance to licensing authorities in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. There will be a consultation on draft guidance, which I intend will include guidance on Disclosure and Barring Service checks. It is expected that a consultation on this, and any Statutory Guidance, would be launched early next year.

■ **West Coast Railway Line: Public Consultation**

Daniel Kawczynski: [\[44103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department took to publicise its consultation on the West Coast Mainline franchise.

Paul Maynard:

The public consultation for the next InterCity West Coast (ICWC) rail franchise was launched on 10 May and enabled passengers to have their say on rail services. We want to make sure that passengers' views are taken into consideration in developing the specification for the future franchise.

The consultation was widely publicised through a range of channels including posters, leaflets, websites, social media and key stakeholder communication channels. There was also coverage in the regional and trade press. My predecessor also wrote to all MPs, MSPs and AMs with constituencies on the ICWC route and the Scottish and Welsh Government Transport Secretaries to ensure they were informed of the consultation which serves their parts of the UK. The consultation document and associated material was published in English and Welsh both on the web and in hard copy.

We also organised a series of events for the public and stakeholders in Scotland, Wales and England for people to come along to speak to the project team about the consultation and ask any questions to help inform their response.

The consultation closed on 2 August and we are now reviewing and analysing the information. A summary of the responses will be published in due course.

WALES**■ Wales Office: UK Withdrawal from EU****Karl McCartney:**[\[44255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for the UK to leave the EU since 23 June 2016; and what further such steps his Department plans to take in the remainder of 2016.

Alun Cairns:

The Department for Exiting the European Union has responsibility for overseeing preparations for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and conducting these withdrawal negotiations in support of the Prime Minister.

In doing this it is working very closely with other government departments, including the Wales Office, and a wide range of other interested parties.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Bereavement Benefits: Cohabitation****Alex Chalk:**[\[44102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will amend the eligibility criteria for bereavement benefits to enable unmarried couples who have cohabited for many years to claim the same bereavement benefits as married couples and civil partners.

Caroline Nokes:

A key principle of the National Insurance system is that all rights to benefits derived from another person's contributions are based on the concept of legal marriage or civil partnership. This is a long-standing position in bereavement benefits and will continue under the new Bereavement Support Payment, the provisions of which were debated during the passage of the Pensions Act 2014.

Marriage and civil partnerships are legal contracts that are associated with certain rights, including inheritance, recognition in the tax system and entitlement to certain benefits. Given this legal position, the Government has no plans to extend eligibility for bereavement benefits to cohabitants.

However, cohabitants do have access to income-related benefits. They may also qualify for help with funeral costs from the Social Fund and may of course choose to provide security for their families by way of private pension or life insurance arrangements.

NHS: Insurance**Charlotte Leslie:**[\[44166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much the NHS Injury Cost Recovery scheme successfully claimed back by charging insurance companies for the costs associated with the treatment of customers who were involved in road traffic accidents in (a) England, (b) Wales, (c) Scotland and (d) Northern Ireland in each year since 2010.

Charlotte Leslie:[\[44167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in how many individual cases the NHS received payment from insurance companies for the costs associated with the treatment of customers who were involved in road traffic accidents in (a) England, (b) Wales, (c) Scotland and (d) Northern Ireland in each year since 2010.

Caroline Nokes:

The table below is for Great Britain only since information regarding Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland. Accurate and robust data can only be provided from 2012 due to system archiving in line with our departmental records management policy. Please note the breakdown of figures you have requested is derived from operational processes and systems. As such, it has not been subjected to the rigorous quality assurance checks applied to our published official statistics. It may change due to operational reasons and we recommend that caution be applied when using it.

Financial Year	Data	COUNTRY			Total
		ENGLAND	WALES	SCOTLAND	
2012 - 2013	Number of Cases	143,451	12,071	9,536	165,058
	Amount Recovered	£135,898,125	£9,894,685	£9,872,118	£155,664,927
2013 - 2014	Number of Cases	131,196	10,807	9,042	151,045
	Amount Recovered	£133,803,563	£9,312,992	£9,884,527	£153,001,081
2014 - 2015	Number of Cases	113,462	8,871	8,975	131,308
	Amount Recovered	£121,074,583	£8,305,619	£9,816,385	£139,196,587
2015 - 2016	Number of Cases	104,785	8,079	8,628	121,492
	Amount Recovered	£111,746,264	£7,549,742	£9,544,194	£128,840,200

■ Universal Credit: Housing

John Healey:

[\[44024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 16 February 2016 to Question 26142, if he will publish the names of the successful bidders to become trusted partner pilots for the purposes of universal credit alternative payment arrangements.

Damian Hinds:

The landlords selected give a representative sample and consist of stock owning Local Authorities, Arm's length managed organisations (ALMOs) and Housing Associations.

The six Housing Associations below form the original proof of concept landlords who have continued to pilot Trusted Partner since it began in March 2015.

- Magenta Living
- First Choice Homes Oldham
- Places for People
- Community Gateway

- Your Housing Group
- New Charter

The individual landlords below form the second phase of the Trusted Partner Pilot:

- A2Dominion Group
- Aster Group
- Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils
- Catalyst Housing Ltd
- Eildon Housing Association
- Highland Council
- Home Group Ltd
- Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing
- London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
- NPT Homes
- Riverside
- Sanctuary Housing Association Ltd
- Shoreline Housing
- Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing
- Southampton City Council
- Together Housing Group
- Wheatley Housing Group
- Your Homes Newcastle
- Cardiff consortium

This is a group of social landlords piloting a collaborative working approach where they are building on an existing partnership working approach towards housing in Cardiff.

The members of the group are:

- Cardiff Council
- Wales & West Housing Association
- United Welsh Housing Association
- Linc Cymru
- Cardiff Community Housing Association
- Hafod Housing Association
- Taff Housing Association
- Cadwyn Housing Association

■ Work Capability Assessment

Rosie Cooper:

[44001]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether Atos and the Centre for Health and Disability Assessments are required to refund costs incurred by people in supplying the medical information to those bodies required by his Department.

Penny Mordaunt:

Claimants are not required to obtain further medical evidence for which they may be charged. Health and disability assessment providers will contact the individual's GP should they feel additional evidence is required. No refund will be provided to a claimant should they choose to obtain additional evidence.

■ Working Conditions: Temperature

Holly Lynch:

[44106]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the efficacy of maximum workplace temperature regulations in protecting workers' health and well-being.

Penny Mordaunt:

A review of maximum workplace temperatures took place in 2010 and concluded that the legislation and supporting guidance is sufficient.

The existing law on workplace temperature, the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, places a legal obligation on employers to provide a 'reasonable' temperature in the workplace. A meaningful figure is not set out in regulations due to the factors, other than air temperature, which determine thermal comfort (for example, the radiant temperature, humidity and air velocity). These factors become more significant and the interplay between them more complex as the temperature rises.

Detailed guidance on workplace temperature and thermal comfort is available on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/temperature/>). This includes how to undertake a thermal comfort assessment and measures that can be taken to improve thermal comfort.