

**Vol. 781
No. 33**



**Wednesday
5 April 2017**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Whip
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Department for International Development
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, Wales Office
Lord Bridges of Headley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Baroness Buscombe	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Dunlop	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office and Northern Ireland Office
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Henley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions, Whip
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Baroness Mobarik	Whip
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
Lord O'Shaughnessy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health, Whip
Lord Price	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Baroness Shields	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Young of Cookham	Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 5 April 2017

Register of Beneficial Owners of Overseas Companies and Other Legal Entities: Call for Evidence

[\[HLWS592\]](#)

Lord Prior of Brampton: Today we are publishing a call for evidence seeking views on a new register that will show who owns and controls overseas companies and other legal entities that own UK property or participate in UK Government procurement.

The intention to create this register was announced at the International Anti-Corruption Summit held in the UK last May. In providing greater transparency, the register will play a vital role in helping to combat corruption and money laundering. Greater transparency will also enhance the UK's reputation as an open and stable place to invest.

Last year the UK became the first country in the G20 to introduce a register of UK company beneficial ownership. The new register will impose similar requirements on overseas entities that choose to invest in property in the UK or bid to provide central Government contracts here. The creation of this register will ensure that the UK continues to be at the forefront of the corporate transparency and anti-corruption agenda.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 5 April 2017

Air Force: Training

Asked by **Lord Stevens of Kirkwhelpington**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the annual cost of pilot training to the RAF. [HL6453]

Earl Howe: Pilot training costs cannot be readily broken out of overall training costs. Information regarding the annual cost of pilot training to the RAF is not held centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Air Pollution: Greater Manchester

Asked by **Baroness Featherstone**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many deaths have been attributed to air pollution in Greater Manchester in each of the last five years. [HL6287]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The fraction of annual all-cause adult mortality attributable to anthropogenic (human-made) particulate air pollution (measured as fine particulate matter, PM_{2.5}) is provided by the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) indicator 3.01.

This calculates the mortality burden associated with long-term exposure to anthropogenic particulate air pollution at current levels, expressed as the percentage of annual deaths from all causes in those aged over 30.

The following table shows the fraction of mortality (%) attributable to particulate air pollution extracted from the PHOF 3.01 indicator, for the period 2010-2015, for England, North West and areas within the Greater Manchester Area (GMA), as GMA is not an administrative area.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Greater Manchester</i>					
Bolton	5.0	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.2
Bury	5.2	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.0
Manchester	5.4	5.1	5.2	5.1	4.3
Oldham	5.3	5.0	5.0	4.9	4.2
Rochdale	5.2	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.0
Salford	5.5	5.2	5.3	5.2	4.3
Stockport	5.2	4.8	4.9	4.7	4.1
Tameside	5.4	5.0	5.0	4.8	4.2
Trafford	5.1	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.1
Wigan	4.8	4.6	4.9	4.7	4.3
North West	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.1
England	5.4	5.1	5.3	5.1	4.7

Average Earnings

Asked by **Lord Triesman**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the average per capita gross annual pay in each of the last five years, broken down by electoral division in the 23 June 2016 referendum. [HL6191]

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

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL6191 table [HL_6191 (1).xlsx]

Letter from UKSA [HL6191 v.02 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-03-20/HL6191>

Bahrain: Prisoners

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will make representations to the government of Bahrain for the release from prison of (1) Abduljalil al-Singace, (2) Hussain Hubail, and (3) Hasan Mushaima, in the light of their medical conditions. [HL6324]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We encourage all those with concerns about their treatment in detention to report these directly to the Ministry of Interior Ombudsman. We also continue to encourage the Government of Bahrain to deliver on its international and domestic human rights commitments. We continue to raise concerns about human rights with the Bahraini authorities both in private and in public.

Brexit

Asked by **Lord Teverson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union on 2 February (HC Deb, col 1226), to which local councils the Minister of State for Exiting the European Union has sent invitations to discuss Brexit. [HL6179]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The Government is seeking to engage local councils as we exit the European Union. The leaders of local government associations in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland were invited and met with the Minister of State for Exiting the European Union on 21 February. The Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union has committed to meeting combined authority mayors once they are elected in May and further ministerial engagement with councils is planned after the May local government elections.

Asked by Lord Teverson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the White Paper The United Kingdom's exit from, and new partnership with, the European Union, Cm 9417, how many of the around 150 stakeholder engagement events held across the UK by ministers from the Department for Exiting the European Union took place in (1) the South-West of England, and (2) Cornwall. [HL6180]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The DExEU Ministerial team has committed to visiting every region of the UK. Ministers from the whole of Government have held meetings across the country to prepare for the negotiations. Ministers have visited the South West of England twice since the creation of the Department; DExEU ministers are yet to visit Cornwall

We are planning more regional visits throughout the UK, including to the South West of England, as we continue to build a national consensus around our negotiating position

Details of Ministerial meetings will be published in the Department's Quarterly Transparency Returns, which will be made publicly available on GOV.UK.

Asked by Lord Teverson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what engagement the Department for Exiting the European Union has had with Cornwall since that Department was formed in July 2016. [HL6181]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The DExEU Ministerial team has committed to visiting every region of the UK. Ministers from the whole of Government have held meetings across the country to prepare for the negotiations. Ministers have visited the South West of England twice since the creation of the Department; DExEU ministers are yet to visit Cornwall.

We are planning more regional visits throughout the UK, including to the South West of England, as we continue our engagement and seek to build a national consensus around our negotiating position.

Details of Ministerial meetings will be published in the Department's Quarterly Transparency Returns, which will be made publicly available on GOV.UK.

Cervical Cancer: Developing Countries

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what priority they give to the detection and treatment of cervical cancer in developing country programmes, in the light of the WHO's Projections of mortality and causes of death 2015 and 2030 which indicates that global deaths from cervical cancer will be more than twice the level of the global maternal mortality rate by 2030. [HL6437]

Lord Bates: The UK government recognises the significant burden of cervical cancer in developing countries. The UK is the largest contributor to Gavi, the

Vaccine Alliance, which vaccinates girls in developing countries against Human Papillomavirus, the virus that causes cervical cancer. By 2020, Gavi will vaccinate 40 million girls against Human Papillomavirus, preventing 900,000 deaths.

Chemicals: Seas and Oceans

Asked by Lord Hunt of Chesterton

To ask Her Majesty's Government which organisation is responsible for providing public information about chemicals which are dispersed into the seas surrounding the UK; and what steps they are taking to require industry and UN organisations to reduce such dispersals. [HL6319]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Defra and the Devolved Administrations have provided information to the public about chemicals dispersed to the UK seas through their public consultations on the assessment of the State of the UK Seas set out in UK Marine Strategy Part 1. This assessment will be updated in 2018.

Under the Marine Strategy Part 3, Defra and the Devolved Administrations have set out a programme of measures which reduce contaminant concentrations in the marine environment to acceptable levels. These include various pollution reduction requirements for emissions and discharges from industry, and measures for coastal waters that are set out in the Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plans, published by the UK environment agencies.

The UK also contributes to, and implements, the obligations of several UN initiatives, which protect the world's oceans from mercury, persistent organic pollutants, hazardous wastes, hazardous chemicals and pesticides.

The UK, as a signatory to the Oslo and Paris Convention (OSPAR), submits annual returns of the quantities of contaminants which enter UK seas. This information is made available via the OSPAR website.

The UK Government is committed to the effective delivery of UN Sustainable Development Goal 14, including target 14.1 "By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution". The Government welcomes the fact that the 3 United Nations Environment Assembly will focus on all forms of pollution, including marine pollution.

Conditions of Employment

Asked by Lord Monks

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the interests of UK workers are taken into account during Article 50 negotiations. [HL6238]

*Asked by **Lord Monks***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend to involve the TUC and trade unions in the Article 50 negotiations. [HL6240]

Lord Bridges of Headley: This government has made a clear commitment to protect workers' rights, and ensure that they keep pace with the changing labour market as we leave the EU. Furthermore, we do not need to be part of the EU to have strong protections for workers' rights - the UK already goes beyond EU minimum standards in a number of areas.

Both DExEU Ministers and senior officials have met a wide range of interested organisations to hear concerns and gather insight. So far, the Secretary of State, the Permanent Secretary, and DExEU officials have met the TUC, and the Secretary of State has met UNISON. This engagement will continue as we move into the negotiation phase of our exit from the EU and will help to inform our negotiating positions.

Details of Ministerial meetings, and those of senior officials, will be published in the Department's Quarterly Transparency Returns, which will be made publicly available on GOV.UK.

Fly-tipping

*Asked by **Baroness Byford***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by the Earl of Courtown on 8 March (HL Deb, col 1357), whether, following a successful prosecution by the Environment Agency for fly-tipping, landowners will receive recompense for costs incurred in having rubbish removed. [I] [HL6459]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Where a person is convicted of an offence under section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (the 'fly-tipping'), section 33B (2) of that Act provides that "loss or damage resulting from the offence" in section 130 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 specifically includes costs incurred or to be incurred by a relevant person in removing the waste deposited or disposed of in or on the land; taking other steps to eliminate or reduce the consequences of the deposit or disposal; or both.

A "relevant person" is defined for these purposes in section 33B (3) as including the occupier of the land and the owner of the land.

A court can order the person convicted of fly-tipping to pay compensation to the occupier or owner of the land in respect of costs incurred or to be incurred in removing the waste and/or associated clean-up costs. Whether a court would in any particular case make such an order will depend on the nature of the case, any other form of punishment to which the offender is to be sentenced, and the financial means of the offender to pay. Once a compensation order is made the courts have a role in enforcing that order to ensure that monies are paid. This is reflected in the sentencing guideline. The application of

the guideline is a matter for the court to decide. A copy of this document will be placed in the Library.

In Vitro Fertilisation

*Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the award by the Licence Committee of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority of a licence to Centre 0017 to carry out pronuclear transfer between embryos to prevent transmission of serious mitochondrial disease, what safeguards Centre 0017 has put in place to ensure that early pronuclear transfer will take place during treatment at precisely the same epigenetic stage in donor and recipient embryos, given the rapid rate of DNA demethylation and the different rates of embryo development at the early pronuclear stage. [HL6372]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised the expert panel considered all the evidence that it believed was relevant to the safety and efficacy of mitochondrial donation techniques. The panel did not make any recommendations relating to epigenetics and so the HFEA has placed no such requirements on centres wishing to offer mitochondrial donation.

*Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, with reference to paragraph 2.3 of the minutes of 9 March 2017 of the Licence Committee of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, which non-CE marked reagents will be used by Centre 0017 for the purposes of treatment involving pronuclear transfer between embryos to prevent transmission of serious mitochondrial disease; which laboratories will test the non-CE marked reagents for sterility and toxicity; and why non-CE marked reagents are being used. [HL6373]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority has advised that it is a condition of a licence that CE marked medical devices must be used wherever possible. In the case of pronuclear transfer, there are no appropriate CE marked reagents, meaning that for treatment to take place, non-CE marked reagents must be used. In this case, the centre must adhere to paragraph 26.5 in Guidance Note 26 of the Authority's code of practice, which states that if a centre modifies a CE marked product or uses a product "off label", it must complete a risk assessment and validation to ensure the product is safe. A copy of the Guidance Note 26 is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Guidance Note 26 [Guidance_Note_26_-_Equipment_and_materials.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-03-28/HL6373>

Iraq: Islamic State

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the discovery of a further mass grave in Khafsa, Iraq, what progress is being made in establishing international judicial mechanisms to bring to justice supporters of ISIS who are accused of genocide and crimes against humanity. [HL6329]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The recent discovery of the mass grave in Khasfa provides further evidence of the appalling crimes Daesh have committed against the people of Iraq. We are committed to bringing Daesh to justice for these crimes. Investigative and prosecutorial work is already underway across the world. We are working closely with the Government of Iraq and other international partners to identify further ways to take this work forward, including at the UN.

Islamic State

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for a British political, diplomatic and intelligence presence in north and north-east Syria to support the struggle against Daesh in Syria and Iraq. [HL6323]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The British Embassy in Damascus suspended all services in March 2012. Diplomatic personnel were withdrawn from Syria because of the deteriorating political and security situation. We continue to advise against all travel to Syria.

UK officials at the British Embassies in Beirut and Amman and the Consul General in Istanbul follow developments in Syria closely, as do staff in London. We meet a wide range of Syrian representatives, including from north-east Syria. As a leading member of the Global Coalition, we also work closely with coalition partners in the fight against Daesh, routinely consulting on all aspects of the campaign to defeat Daesh.

Married People: Tax Allowances

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was budgeted for the Marriage Allowance in (1) 2015–16, and (2) 2016–17; and what are future expenditure projections for Marriage Allowance to 2019–20. [HL6282]

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was spent on Marriage Allowance in (1) 2015–16, and (2) 2016–17. [HL6283]

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) individuals, and (2) couples, currently in receipt of

Universal Credit are eligible for the Marriage Allowance. [HL6284]

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the income profile of Marriage Allowance claimants. [HL6285]

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people in the lowest two income deciles claim Marriage Allowance. [HL6286]

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was budgeted for Married Couples Allowance in 2016–17; and what are their future expenditure projections. [HL6304]

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was spent on Married Couples Allowance in 2016–17. [HL6305]

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have data on the income profile of Married Couples Allowance claimants; and if so, how many claimants are in the top half of the income distribution percentiles 50–99, and how many in the bottom half, broken down into percentiles (1) 1–20, and (2) 21–49. [HL6306]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The Marriage Allowance was introduced in 2015–16 to recognise the importance of marriage in the tax system. Around 1.8m people have claimed the allowance to date.

Our current best estimate assessment of the initial cost of this allowance is £140m in 2015–16, but this does not include the impact of any expected future claims, which can be backdated to this year. We forecast the total cost of this allowance to rise to £385m in 2015–16 once these claims are taken into account.

An estimate of the initial cost of this allowance for 2016–17 will not be available until the end of the tax year. We forecast an eventual cost to the exchequer of £425m, once all backdated claims are taken into account.

Marriage Allowance claims can be made up to 4 years after the tax year has finished. The expected future projections of the Marriage Allowance final cost for 2019–20 is not available because this depends on our forecast of backdated applications, and the forecast period does not currently extend out to 2023–24.

HM Treasury does not hold information relating to the income deciles of claimants or successful applicants of the Marriage Allowance. Previous analysis of the total eligible population has shown the majority of the benefits of this policy go to the bottom half of the income distribution. Only basic rate taxpayers and non-taxpayers will benefit.

HM Treasury does not hold information about how many individuals claiming Universal Credit are eligible for the Marriage Allowance.

The number of claimants of Married Couple's Allowance by the income groups requested is set out for the latest outturn year available (2014-15):

Percentile Groups (ranged on total income before tax)	Thousand		
	Bottom 20%	20%-50%	Top 50%
2014-15	31	304	385

The cost of the Married Couples Allowance is forecast to be £220m in 2016-17. It is expected that the cost of this relief will decline, as it is restricted to couples where at least one of them is born before 6 April 1935.

Mesothelioma

Asked by Lord Wills

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord O'Shaughnessy on 27 March, whether any data is collected on the cost of mesothelioma to the NHS; and if so, what. [HL6371]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: Data on the cost of mesothelioma to the National Health Service is not collected centrally.

NHS: Negligence

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord O'Shaughnessy on 27 March (HL6013), and in the light of the summary of the cause and injury codes used by the NHS Litigation Authority, what is the total number and value of claims associated with each code, suitably normalised and broken down into (1) cause and injury codes with 5 or more claims associated, (2) cause and injury codes with between 2 and 4 claims associated, (3) cause and injury codes with only 1 claim associated, and (4) cause and injury codes with no claim associated, for the last full financial year for which records are available. [HL6394]

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord O'Shaughnessy on 27 March (HL6013), whether ad hoc analysis has been undertaken over the last five years to match claims or injury codes to particular diseases or broader activities, either by the NHS Litigation Authority or by third parties such as academics or consultants with access to their data; for which diseases those analyses have been undertaken, when and by whom; whether summary results from those analyses are available, and if so, where; and how

many claims were associated with each of those diseases at the time of the analysis. [HL6395]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The National Health Service Litigation Authority (NHS LA) has not undertaken any ad hoc analysis over the last five years to match claims or injury codes to particular diseases or broader activities.

Due to the large amount of data in relation to the cause and injury codes used in the NHS LA claims management system to identify five claims or more, this information is attached.

It is not possible to provide data on cause and injury codes with between two and four claims associated and with only one claim associated, as this could lead to the re-identification of an individual.

The following table shows the number of claims by primary cause codes with 0 claims associated for 2015 – 16.

Number of clinical negligence claims received 2015/16 by primary cause with total claim value as at 31 March 2016

Primary Cause	Number of claims
Electro convulsive therapy treatment	0
Fail/Delay Avail Of SCBU Beds	0
Fail/Delay Obtain Cord PH	0
Incident In Community By absconding/discharge patients	0
In hospital Maternal Death Post Partum Haemorrhage Caesarean Section	0
Injury To Others By Patient	0
Inpatient Suicide- Non Collapsible Rails	0
Intravenous Administration of Misselec Concentrate Potassium Chloride	0
Mendelsohn's Syndrome	0
Unlawful Detention – mental Health	0
Wrong Application Of Electrode	0

Source : NHS LA

The following table shows the number of claims by primary injury code with 0 claims associated for 2015-16.

Number of clinical negligence claims received 2015/16 by primary injury with total claim value as at 31 March 2016

Primary Injury	Number of claims
Foetal Anti-Convulsant Syndrome.	0
ISO Immunisation	0
Klumpke's Paralysis	0
Liver Transplant	0
Pierced Ear Drum	0

<i>Primary Injury</i>	<i>Number of claims</i>
Stunted Growth	0
Swine Flu	0

Source: NHS LA

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Cause and Injury Codes 5 claims or more [Cause and Injury Code tables HL6395, HL6394.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-03-28/HL6394>

North Korea: Electronic Warfare

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) North Korean cyber attacks, and (2) reports that the regime has been responsible for a \$81 million bank cyber heist. [HL6330]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: As detailed in the National Cyber Security Strategy, we know that there are several established and capable states and state-sponsored groups seeking to penetrate UK networks. The UK currently considers public attribution of cyber attacks on a case-by-case basis. In 2014, the FBI found that North Korea was responsible for the malicious cyber activity against Sony Pictures Entertainment. The former Foreign Secretary (Mr Hammond) publicly condemned this activity. We are aware of reports linking North Korea with cyber-enabled crime.

To meet the challenges of cyber threats, on 1 November 2016 the Government launched the National Cyber Security Strategy. Supported by £1.9 billion of transformational investment, the strategy sets out ambitious policies and capabilities to protect the UK in cyber space.

North Korea: Terrorism

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 5 November 2015 (HL 2969) which stated that "the DPRK is not known to have sponsored any terrorist acts since 1987", whether they classify as the sponsoring of terrorist acts (1) the plot by a North Korean defector to kill Park Sang-hak in 2012, (2) the plot by two North Korean military officers to kill Hwang Jang-yop in 2010, and (3) the claims made by Won Jeong-hwa that she had been given orders by North Korea to assassinate two South Korean army intelligence officers with poison; and if not, why not. [HL6328]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We are aware of reports which allege the involvement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) government in these unlawful events in the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the actions

taken by the ROK authorities in response to these incidents. Whether or not they amount to acts of terrorism under our domestic legal definition would be a matter for the investigating authorities to establish. We continue to have significant ongoing concerns regarding the DPRK's flagrant disregard for international norms and standards. We regularly raise these issues directly with the DPRK government.

Occupational Pensions: Tax Allowances

Asked by Baroness Altmann

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the cost of extra tax relief due to lower than expected opt-out rates from workplace automatic enrolment in the tax years (1) 2013–14, (2) 2014–15, and (3) 2015–16. [HL6276]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: Estimates are not available for the extra tax relief due to lower than expected opt-out rates from workplace automatic enrolment. However, the Government remains committed to supporting people saving for retirement.

Automatic Enrolment has produced a significant change in private pension saving and has already reversed the decline seen in the decade prior to its introduction. As at the end of February, over 7.5 million people had been enrolled into a workplace pension.

Palestinians: Hospitals

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of a reported increase in permit denials for medical staff of al Makassed Hospital who live in the West Bank and Gaza, what assessment they have made of the impact of those denials on patient treatment. [HL6414]

Lord Bates: According to the World Health Organisation, permit denials for medical staff of Al Makassed hospital increased in 2016 with 21 reported permit denials compared to 10 permit denials in 2015. Permit delays and denials can lead to missed appointments and interrupted treatments. Movement of Palestinian medical staff from the West Bank and Gaza is essential for effective healthcare. HMG has consistently called on Israel to improve movement and access for Palestinians, including medical staff.

Pensions: Tax Allowances

Asked by Baroness Altmann

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the savings to HM Treasury in terms of tax relief which would be gained if the annual allowance for pension contributions were reduced from £40,000 a year to (a) £30,000 a year, (2) £25,000 a year, and (3) £20,000 a year. [HL6274]

*Asked by **Baroness Altmann***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the savings of (1) tax, and (2) National Insurance relief, of restricting the annual allowance for pension contributions in defined contribution pension schemes to £25,000 a year. [HL6277]

*Asked by **Baroness Altmann***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the savings of reducing the annual allowance for pension contributions in defined benefit pension schemes to £25,000 a year. [HL6278]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The impacts of reducing the Annual Allowance from £40,000 a year would depend upon a number of factors including earnings growth and behavioural response to the policy change.

A costings note for the reduction of the Annual Allowance from £50,000 to £40,000 and the Lifetime Allowance from £1.5 million to £1.25 million was published at Autumn Statement 2012 ^[1].

[1] This policy costings document was published alongside Autumn Statement 2012

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/221551/as2012_policy_costings.pdf

The Answer includes the following attached material:

policy costings [as2012_policy_costings.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-03-23/HL6278>

*Asked by **Baroness Altmann***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the cost of restricting pensions tax relief to basic rate tax relief only. [HL6275]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The cost of restricting pensions tax relief to basic rate tax relief only would depend on how any changes were implemented. The impacts on tax receipts would also be subject to behavioural effects.

Qatar: Industrial Health and Safety

*Asked by **Lord Triesman***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate (1) they, and (2) the International Labour Organisation, have made of the number of (a) deaths, and (b) serious injuries, which have occurred on stadium and hotel building sites in Qatar in the last two calendar years. [HL6193]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Government is aware of the death of five construction workers over the past two years – of which two were workplace accidents on world cup building sites, and the other three were

health-related. We do not have any figures for serious injuries and do not estimate them.

RAF Northolt

*Asked by **Lord Stevens of Kirkwhelpington***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have considered opening RAF Northolt to scheduled commercial flights. [HL6451]

Earl Howe: No.

Religious Freedom

*Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what instructions have been given to FCO country desk officers to ensure that freedom of religion or belief is included in their work. [HL6376]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Advancing human rights - including the right to freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) - is embedded across the work of our diplomats. In order to enhance the capabilities of staff working to promote FoRB in their country context, the FCO issued a revised toolkit in October 2016. This coincided with our London Conference on FoRB and Countering Violent Extremism, which was attended by a number of country desk officers. The FCO also routinely provides training and seminars to increase religious literacy amongst staff.

Schools: Publications

*Asked by **Lord Hunt of Chesterton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to ensure that the number of textbooks and library books available in maintained schools is not reduced, and that that number is not reduced in comparison to the number of books available in private schools. [HL6423]

Lord Nash: We want all schools to have the resources they need, and through our careful management of the economy we have been able to protect the core schools budget in real terms. School funding is now at its highest level on record at more than £40bn in 2016-17 - and that is set to rise, as pupil numbers rise over the next two years, to £42 billion by 2019-20.

We agree that high quality textbooks are important in delivering high quality education. Schools are best placed to determine appropriate teaching resources which they fund from within their budgets. We do not collect detailed information on the purchase of books in schools.

We believe that school libraries play a key role in encouraging young people to read for pleasure. We believe that it should be for schools to decide whether to provide and maintain a library service for their pupils.

Somaliland: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are providing to Somaliland to enhance political stability in that country. [HL6170]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK remains committed to enhancing political stability in Somalia, including in Somaliland. We are supportive of dialogue between Somaliland and neighbouring Puntland, and with the Federal Government of Somalia on areas of mutual interest.

In Somaliland, the UK is an active member of a group of international donors which provide technical, financial and political support to the National Electoral Commission and the broader electoral cycle in Somaliland. This included £2.18million in UK support to plan, prepare and deliver biometric voter registration in Somaliland.

Southern Africa: Elections

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last held discussions with the Chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) about SADC's commitment to ensuring free and fair elections in SADC member states. [HL6272]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK representative to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) participated in the annual general conference of the Electoral Commission Forum of SADC countries in August 2016, attended by President Khama of Botswana, the previous Chair of SADC. We also regularly emphasise the importance of free, fair and credible elections, in accordance with SADC's own guidelines, in our bilateral dialogues with countries in the region. We are also providing practical support, for example, we accredited a team of observers to last year's local elections in South Africa and will do the same for this year's general elections in Lesotho. Her Majesty's Government

is also working through a multi-donor programme to improve the electoral environment in advance of elections in Zimbabwe in 2018

Syria: Females

Asked by Baroness Afshar

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect the rights of women in Syria, as part of their overseas operations in that country. [HL6162]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: All of the projects the UK funds through the Conflict Stability and Security Fund in Syria incorporate awareness of gender equality issues and work to promote the empowerment of women. In particular, we have supported women-led projects through a governance programme, which has enabled women to participate in community engagement activities, project development and decision-making at the local level.

Zimbabwe: South Africa

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on the Zimbabwe economy of the announcement by the South African Home Affairs Minister on 7 February that Zimbabweans who previously acquired permits to work, conduct business, or study in South Africa under special dispensation will have to follow the normal channel of applying for work and study visas when their permits expire in December, and of the extent to which those new requirements will lead to Zimbabweans holding such permits losing their jobs and rights of residence. [HL6270]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The South African Government has the right to apply their own rules about visas and work and study permits. It is for the South African and Zimbabwean authorities to comment on the impact this might have on the Zimbabwean economy and on jobs held by Zimbabweans in South Africa.

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