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Thursday
12 September 2024

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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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Smith of Basildon	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Lord Collins of Highbury	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on Trent	Whip
Baroness Blake of Leeds	Whip
Baroness Chapman of Darlington	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Coaker	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Hanson of Flint	Minister of State, Home Office
Baroness Hayman of Ullock	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill	Minister of State, Department for Transport
Lord Hermer	Attorney-General
Lord Hunt of Kings Heath	Minister of State, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
Baroness Jones of Whitchurch	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business and Trade and Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and Whip
Lord Kennedy of Southwark	Chief Whip
Lord Khan of Burnley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Lord Leong	Whip
Lord Livermore	Financial Secretary, HM Treasury
Baroness Merron	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
Baroness Sherlock	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Baroness Smith of Malvern	Minister of State, Department for Education
Baroness Taylor of Stevenage	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Lord Timpson	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
Baroness Twycross	Whip
Lord Vallance of Balham	Minister of State, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
Baroness Wheeler	Deputy Chief Whip

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Written Statements

Thursday, 12 September 2024

AUKUS Strategic Partnership

[HLWS90]

Lord Coaker: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (The Right Hon John Healey) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

AUKUS is a groundbreaking strategic defence and security partnership, and a clear demonstration of our long-term commitment to support the security and stability of the Indo-pacific region and beyond. Against an increasingly unpredictable, interconnected landscape, with a war in Europe and rising tensions in the Middle East, partnerships with our closest allies are vital to deterring our adversaries and maintaining that strategic advantage. The following statement is to update the House on AUKUS developments since this Government was elected.

Built on decades of integration, sharing and cooperation on defence and technology between our three nations, it is particularly significant that we secured landmark export control changes to benefit AUKUS partners last month. This marks a historic breakthrough in defence trade collaboration between AUKUS nations, which will streamline future cooperation, create jobs and boost growth.

On 16 August 2024, the Government published the UK's AUKUS Nations Open General Licence. Combined with a new exemption to the US International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) for the UK and Australia, alongside further national exemptions for the UK and US in Australia's export control framework, this is a milestone moment in deepening the potential of our tri-nation partnership. Taken together, these changes will significantly ease our licencing requirements for the export and sharing of certain defence products within and between the UK, US and Australia, including advanced capabilities, technical data, and defence services.

These groundbreaking reforms will facilitate faster and more efficient collaboration between our scientists, engineers, and defence industries. These changes alone will support up to £500 million in UK defence exports each year, generating billions of dollars of trade across all three nations – improving access to international trade with our closest allies, whilst driving economic growth in communities across the UK.

We can also report further progress in delivering on the ambitious pathway to support Australia's acquisition of a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability.

On 5 August 2024, AUKUS partners signed a trilateral Agreement on Cooperation Related to Naval Nuclear Propulsion. This is a significant step that will facilitate the

sharing of submarine naval nuclear propulsion information between partners as well as enabling the future transfer of material and equipment to Australia for the safe and secure construction, operation and sustainment of this important capability. The Agreement was laid in Parliament on 2 September 2024, as part of the UK ratification process; it is undergoing similar processes in the US and Australia.

This Agreement reaffirms and is consistent with partners' respective non-proliferation commitments: our cooperation will continue to be undertaken in a way that is fully consistent with our international obligations and sets the highest non-proliferation standard whilst protecting classified and controlled information, material and equipment.

As part of our and the US's support to Australia, AUKUS partners commenced the Submarine Tendered Maintenance Period at HMAS Stirling in Australia, on 23 August 2024. This represents another important advance for the partnership, with Australian personnel, supported by a U.S. Submarine Tender and observed by Royal Navy officers, participating for the first time in the maintenance of a nuclear-powered submarine – to ensure Australia are on track to operate, maintain and regulate their future conventionally-armed nuclear-powered submarine (SSN) capability.

AUKUS is making significant progress. As a long-term strategic partnership, it is appropriate that this Government considers how best to deliver on the UK's considerable ambition for AUKUS and to maximise the benefits of this national endeavour.

To capitalise on the full suite of economic and security benefits of AUKUS, Sir Stephen Lovegrove has been appointed as the UK Government's AUKUS Adviser, to assess UK progress against AUKUS goals. Sir Stephen has invaluable experience, having served as Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence and as National Security Adviser at the time of the AUKUS announcement in September 2021.

The AUKUS report will be completed rapidly and will set out any existing barriers to success alongside areas of opportunity the UK could be taking advantage of, ensuring defence and economic benefits are properly considered. Sir Stephen's findings will be presented to the Prime Minister, the Defence Secretary, the Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor, with the report's conclusions reflected in the broader Strategic Defence Review already underway.

AUKUS is the most significant defence, security, and diplomatic arrangement the UK has entered in the past 60 years. This Government is fully committed to this national endeavour: working with partners, stakeholders and industry to achieve the maximum economic and security benefits possible, while upholding stability, peace, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

Data and Digital Infrastructure: Security and Resilience

[HLWS89]

Baroness Jones of Whitchurch: I am repeating the following Written Ministerial Statement made today in the other place by my Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Data Protection and Telecoms; Chris Bryant MP:

The security and resilience of the UK's data and digital infrastructure are of central importance to the Government's strategic objectives. This statement provides two updates on the Government's approach to safeguarding connectivity and the foundations of the digital economy.

Designating UK Data Infrastructure as Critical National Infrastructure

Data infrastructure - the physical data centres and cloud infrastructure which provide the foundations of the digital economy - faces significant risks and challenges that threaten the day-to-day lives of citizens and other critical infrastructure in the UK. We are today taking a significant step to meet these challenges by designating UK data infrastructure as Critical National Infrastructure (CNI), putting our digital foundations in the same category as Energy and Water.

Data infrastructure underpins essential services that are critical to the UK economy and our way of life and will only become more vital as technologies like AI require greater data centre and cloud capacity. The data it contains is highly valuable, and as such attracts security threats from cyber and physical attacks. Data centres are also vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which is increasing the risk of environmental hazards like flooding, heatwaves, and other extreme weather that can disrupt operations and result in a compromise or loss of crucial services.

Although the sector already has high standards, CNI designation enables better mitigation of risks the sector faces through an improvement to the Government's visibility and engagement with the data centre and cloud service industry. It signals the Government's intention to better partner with the UK's data infrastructure sector to work together to mitigate these. We will also explore further how to ensure the right conditions are in place to drive necessary capacity expansion to support economic growth and innovation.

As the Department responsible for monitoring, protecting and enhancing the security and resilience of data infrastructure, DSIT will be working to better understand industry operators' existing risk mitigations and identify areas for Government support. Data infrastructure will be managed under existing cross-Government CNI structures led by the Cabinet Office, as a sub-sector of Communications. We will work closely in a joined-up approach with internal colleagues, other Government Departments and their respective CNI sectors, such as Energy and Water, contributing to cross-sector work and planning.

I am confident that these measures, taken together and implemented in close consultation with industry, will provide a high level of security and resilience for this increasingly critical infrastructure, giving confidence to the public and investors, and supporting the growth of the UK economy.

Telecoms Supply Chain Diversification Advisory Council Report

In addition, I want to thank the independent Telecoms Supply Chain Diversification Advisory Council, who will today publish a new report setting out recommendations to government on telecoms diversification policy.

A healthy and diverse supply chain for the technology that goes into our telecoms networks is essential for resilience – ensuring that UK network operators can deliver good, reliable connectivity for all. Concentration of that supply chain into a very small number of companies means the UK network is more vulnerable to disruption and means that outages, when they occur, may have greater impact. It is important that we take action to address this, working closely with international partners and allies.

I will review the Council's recommendations carefully and will provide a government response and update to this House on our efforts to maintain secure telecoms networks, supported by a healthy, diverse supply chain. I value the ongoing collaboration of the technology vendors and UK operators that have been engaging productively with government on this matter.

A copy of the report will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

I look forward to continuing work to strengthen, secure and expand our data and digital infrastructure, working with stakeholders across the economy and international partners.

Exercise of Powers over the Office for Nuclear Regulation

[HLWS88]

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: Later today, the annual report to Parliament setting out the use of the Secretary of State's powers exercised to the Office for Nuclear Regulation during the year, will be published. This is in accordance with Section 108(1) of the Energy Act 2013.

Food and Drink: Advertising Restrictions

[HLWS91]

Baroness Merron: My Hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health and Prevention (Andrew Gwynne MP) has made the following Written Statement:

I wish to update the House on the Government's progress to deliver our Manifesto commitment to implement restrictions on junk food advertising on TV and online.

The country wants to see our broken NHS fixed. Our Health Mission makes clear that this requires a prevention revolution, tackling the drivers of preventable illness and reducing demand on health services. One of these pressures is the childhood obesity crisis, setting up children for an unhealthy life and generating yet greater pressures on the NHS. More than one in five children in England are overweight or living with obesity by the time they start primary school, and this rises to more than one third by the time they leave. We want to tackle the problem head on and that includes implementing the restrictions on junk food advertising on TV and online without further delay. We will introduce a 9pm watershed on TV advertising, and a total ban on paid-for online advertising. These restrictions will help protect children from being exposed to advertising of less healthy food and drinks, which evidence shows influences their dietary preferences from a young age.

I am today confirming that we have published the Government's response to the 2022 consultation on the draft secondary legislation. This is a key milestone which confirms the definitions for the products, businesses and services in scope of the restrictions. This provides the clarity that businesses have been calling for and will support them to prepare for the restrictions coming into force across the UK on 1 October 2025.

As part of our response, we will clarify how the regulations will apply to Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) which delivers television live over the internet. Our proposal is to make clear in the regulations that IPTV services regulated by Ofcom will be subject to the broadcast 9pm watershed in the same way as other TV and Ofcom-regulated on-demand programme services. This requires clarification within the secondary legislation and, in line with our statutory duty to consult, we are launching a targeted consultation which is open for four weeks from today.

These steps mean we can move forward to laying the final legislation and publishing guidance. I will provide a further update to the House when the secondary legislation is laid to implement the advertising restrictions on 1 October 2025.

The Government's response to the 2022 consultation and the IPTV consultation have been published on GOV.UK.

Grangemouth Oil Refinery: Jobs

[HLWS93]

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (the Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP) made the following Statement today:

It is deeply disappointing to learn that Petroineos has confirmed its previous decision to close the oil refining operation at Grangemouth. All of my thoughts are with the workers and their families and the wider Grangemouth community.

The site will now convert to an import terminal, which will continue to provide a secure and flexible fuel supply for Scotland.

The government will stand with the workforce in these difficult times. That is why we are announcing a package of investment to help the workforce find good, alternative jobs, invest in the community and deliver a viable industrial future for the Grangemouth site, with potential for future support from the National Wealth Fund.

Since taking office, I have taken joint action with the Scottish Government to urgently engage with the company and its shareholders, leaving no stone unturned to find a viable long-term future for the site. As it is clear that there is no viable commercial future for the current refinery operations, the UK and Scottish Governments have today announced a package that seeks to chart a new future for Grangemouth. This includes:

- £100 million package for Falkirk and Grangemouth, including £20 million in joint funding from the UK and Scottish Governments announced today, on top of £80 million in joint funding from the two governments for the Falkirk and Grangemouth Growth Deal. This funding will support the community and its workers, investing in local energy projects to create new opportunities for growth in the region.
- Investment in the site's long-term future. The £1.5 million joint-funded Project Willow study has identified a shortlist of three credible options to begin building a new long-term industry at the refinery site, including low carbon hydrogen, clean eFuels and sustainable aviation fuels. We will work with the community to seek a commercially viable proposition, with the potential for future support from the National Wealth Fund.
- Immediate career support for workers. The UK and Scottish Governments will provide tailored support that will help affected workers in finding new employment – and Grangemouth will be among the first areas that the new Office for Clean Energy Jobs will work with to help deliver a just transition.

Alongside the Scottish Government, I will also be holding an extraordinary meeting of the Grangemouth Future Industry Board today to discuss next steps with local industry leaders, Falkirk Council, and trade bodies and unions.

Hong Kong: Six-monthly Report

[HLWS94]

Baroness Chapman of Darlington: My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (David Lammy), has today made the following statement:

The latest Six-monthly Report on the implementation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong was published today, and is attached. It covers the period from 1 January – 30 June 2024. The report has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. A copy is also available on

the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/six-monthly-report-on-hong-kong-january-to-june-2024>. I commend the report to the House.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Six-Monthly Report on Hong Kong January-June 2024 [Six-Monthly Report on Hong Kong January - June 2024.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2024-09-12/HLWS94/>

London Luton Airport Development Consent Order: Decision Extension

[HLWS92]

Lord Henty of Richmond Hill: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Louise Haigh), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

This statement confirms that it has been necessary to extend the deadline for the decision for the London Luton Airport Development Consent Order under the Planning Act 2008.

Under section 107(1) of the Planning Act 2008, a decision must be made within 3 months of receipt of the Examining Authority's report unless the power under section 107(3) to extend the deadline is exercised and a Statement is made to Parliament announcing the new deadline.

The Examining Authority's report on the London Luton Airport Development Consent Order application was received on 10 May 2024. The current deadline for a decision is 4 October 2024, having been extended from 10 August 2024 to 4 October 2024 by way of [Written Ministerial Statement dated 24 May 2024](#).

The deadline for the decision is to be further extended to 3 January 2025 (an extension of 3 months). The reason for the extension is to enable the Applicant further time to provide requested information, and for that information to be considered, including by Interested Parties, before the final determination of the application.

The decision to set a new deadline is without prejudice to the decision on whether to give development consent for the above application.

Procurement Act 2023

[HLWS87]

Baroness Twycross: My Hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office, Georgia Gould MP, has today made the following statement:

The Procurement Act 2023 aims to create a simpler and more transparent regime for public sector procurement that will deliver better value for money, and reduce costs for business and the public sector. This Government will use this legal framework to deliver greater value for money and improved social value, which will help raise standards, drive economic growth and open up public

procurement to new entrants such as small businesses and social enterprises.

Under the Act, the previous administration published a National Procurement Policy Statement to which contracting authorities will have to have regard. But this Statement does not meet the challenge of applying the full potential of public procurement to deliver value for money, economic growth, and social value. I have therefore taken the decision to begin the vital work of producing a new National Procurement Policy Statement that clearly sets out this Government's priorities for public procurement in support of our missions.

It is crucial that the new regime in the Procurement Act goes live with a bold and ambitious Statement that drives delivery of the Government's missions, and therefore, I am proposing a short delay to the commencement of the Act to February 2025 so this work can be completed. I am confident that the extra time to prepare will allow for a more seamless transition, ensuring a smoother and more effective implementation process for both contracting authorities and suppliers.

Letters to withdraw the previous administration's Statement will be issued to both Houses shortly and the Government intends to make regulations to set a new date for the commencement of the Procurement Act 2023 of 24 February 2025.

I have also written to the relevant Ministers in the Welsh Government and the Northern Irish Executive seeking their agreement to the new date and assuring them of my commitment to working together in implementing the Procurement Act.

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill

[HLWS95]

Lord Hanson of Flint: My hon Friend the Minister of State for Security (Dan Jarvis) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Government has today introduced the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill to the House of Commons.

The Government would like to pay tribute to the 22 victims of the horrific Manchester Arena attack in 2017, and to Figen Murray, mother of one of the victims, Martyn Hett. Her campaigning has been crucial in driving this Bill forward.

Against the backdrop of an increasingly complex, evolving and enduring threat picture, the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill will deliver on the Government's manifesto commitment to "strengthen the security of public events and venues".

The Bill seeks to improve protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK. It will require those responsible for certain premises and events to take steps to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack and reduce harm in the event of a terrorist attack occurring. In addition to this, certain larger premises and events must also take additional steps to reduce the vulnerability of the premises to terrorist attacks.

Through the Bill, qualifying premises and events should be better prepared and ready to respond in the event of a terrorist attack.

Bill development

This Government has reflected on the scrutiny provided throughout the Bill's development. As well as the extensive engagement that has taken place with security partners, business and victims' groups including Figen Murray and the Martyn's Law Campaign Team, the Survivors Against Terror, as well as Parliamentarians.

That is why important changes have been made to the Bill to ensure that we can both achieve public protection outcomes and ensure there are no undue burdens on businesses and other organisations:

- We have raised the standard tier threshold from 100 to 200, to create a more appropriate scope of the duty;
- The 'reasonably practicable' standard of requirements, now applicable in both tiers, is designed to allow procedures and measures to be tailored to the specific circumstances of a premises or event. This will enable duty holders to take into consideration what is within their control and the resources they have available to them, as well as what is suitable and appropriate for their premises or event; and
- We have removed the requirements for a specific, prescribed form of training and the completion of a mandatory Standard Terrorism Evaluation form – in recognition that a one size fits all approach is not appropriate and could be onerous.

We are confident these changes ensure the Bill is more appropriate whilst still delivering on its core aim of enhancing public safety.

Bill proposals

Scope

A person will be subject to the main requirements of the Bill if they are responsible for a qualifying premises or events.

A person who has control of premises in connection with their relevant Schedule 1 use is responsible for qualifying premises. For example, the operator of an arena or governing body of a school will be responsible for fulfilling the requirements of the Bill at their respective premises.

A person who will have control of the premises at which an event is to be held in connection with their use for the event will be responsible for a qualifying event.

Control over premises has been utilised in other regulatory regimes, such as fire safety.

Standard duty premises

The Bill establishes a tiered approach linked to the activity that takes place at premises or an event and the number of individuals it is reasonable to expect may be present on the premises at the same time.

Persons responsible for a standard duty premises, i.e. qualifying premises where it is reasonable to expect that

between 200 and 799 individuals may be present at the same time, will be required to:

- notify the regulator of their premises; and
- put in place appropriate and reasonably practicable public protection procedures (as set out in Clause 5 of the Bill).

These procedures are to be followed by people working at the premises if an act of terrorism was to occur at the premises or in the immediate vicinity, which may be expected to reduce the risk of physical harm being caused to individuals. This includes ensuring there are procedures in place to provide information to individuals on the premises and to evacuate, invacuate or lockdown the premises.

The requirements for standard duty premises are focused on simple, low-cost activities surrounding policies and procedures, which are to be followed by staff in the event of terrorist attack or suspected terrorist attack occurring. The aim of these requirements is to improve staff preparedness and responses. There is no requirement to put in place physical measures in this tier. Furthermore, the reasonably practicable element will enable standard duty premises to tailor their approach to the resources they have available.

Enhanced duty premises and qualifying events

“Enhanced duty premises” and “qualifying events” are premises or events where it is reasonable to expect that 800 or more individuals may be present on the premises or attend the event at the same time. In addition to the same procedures as standard duty premises, persons responsible for enhanced duty premises and qualifying events will be required to:

- notify the regulator of their premises/event;
- put in place appropriate and reasonably practicable public protection measures that could be expected to reduce both (i) the vulnerability of the premises or event to an act of terrorism occurring at the location, and (ii) the risk of physical harm being caused to individuals if an attack was to occur there or nearby. For example, an enhanced duty premises will be required, insofar as reasonably practicable, to implement measures relating to the monitoring of the premises and their immediate vicinity; and
- document the public protection procedures and measures in place, or proposed to put in place, and provide this

document to the regulator. This document should include an assessment as to how those procedures and measures may be expected to reduce, so far as is reasonably practicable, vulnerability and risk of harm.

Where the responsible person for an enhanced duty premises or qualifying event is not an individual, they must appoint an individual as a designated senior individual with responsibility for ensuring that the relevant requirements are met.

Special categorisations and exemptions

There will be some limited exclusions and exemptions from the Bill's requirements, in particular where premises are already subject to existing requirements to consider and mitigate threats that achieve comparable security outcomes.

All places of worship will be placed into the standard tier where there are 200 or more individuals present at the same time (even if that number is 800 or greater). The Government considers it is appropriate that such places of worship take forward the standard duty procedures. However, places of worship are different to other premises in scope, in being readily accessible and welcoming to all, without the same commercial drivers as other premises, usually having no restrictions on entry, or staff routinely present. The Government recognises this, and will continue its work with faith communities to respect the unique nature of places of worship and how they operate, whilst considering how we can support them to reduce their vulnerability to terrorism and hate crime. This includes developing measures to better mitigate threats through local police engagement and Government funded work programmes.

Primary, secondary and further education establishments have been placed within the standard tier even if their capacity is greater than 800 individuals. Existing safety and safeguarding requirements at these establishments mean they have a range of appropriate security procedures and access controls measures in place.

However, premises belonging to higher education institutions (e.g. universities) could be in either tier, depending on the number of individuals that can reasonably be expected on the relevant premises. This is because they are, in the main, more freely accessible and so should be subject to the full requirements of the Bill.

The regulator

The Bill establishes a regulator to oversee and enforce compliance of the Bill's requirements. This regulator will operate as a new function of the Security Industry Authority.

As an arm's length body, the Security Industry Authority is operationally independent of the Home Office whilst being accountable to Home Office Ministers. Because the Security Industry Authority is an existing Home Office public safety regulator, we assess that this is the most appropriate way to deliver this critical function. Utilising an existing arm's length body also follows the Cabinet Office guidance and precedent set across Government for establishing new regulators. With its years of experience in inspection and enforcement around public safety at venues, alongside the work it already does with our security partners to promote best practice around counter terrorism protective security.

Sanctions and enforcement

Compliance with the Bill's requirements will be overseen by the Security Industry Authority. The core principle of the regulator's activity will be to support, advise and guide those responsible for premises and events in meeting the requirements of this legislation. Due to the severity of the risk posed by terrorism, it is important that the Security Industry Authority has the necessary tools to investigate suspected non-compliance and, where it is found, remedy serious or persistent non-compliance.

To that end, the Security Industry Authority will have powers to issue a range of civil sanctions such as monetary penalties. Due to the seriousness of some actions and in line with other regimes, the Bill also includes a limited number of underpinning criminal offences - for example, it will be a criminal offence to impersonate an inspector.

The Security Industry Authority must set any penalty at an amount that is reasonable and proportionate and take into account a range of factors including (but not limited to) an organisation's ability to pay.

The Bill also makes amendments to the Licensing Act 2003 and the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 to protect premises plans from being used for the purposes of terrorism.

Dedicated guidance and support will be provided for duty holders to ensure that those in scope have the required information on what to do and how best to do it.

Next steps

We believe it is now time that this cross-party commitment to improve the safety and security of venues in the wake of the Manchester Arena Attack is delivered without further delay. The public rightly deserve to feel safe when visiting public premises and attending events and we see it as reasonable that, in many locations, they should take appropriate, reasonably practicable steps to protect staff and the public from the horrific impacts and effects of terrorism.

I look forward to engaging with you in Parliament on this important piece of legislation. I will be holding a drop-in session in due course, should you wish to learn more about the Bill, and would be happy to answer any of your questions. Details will be provided shortly.

The Bill and accompanying documents will be available online here <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3765> and further information, including factsheets on the key elements of the Bill, can be found on gov.uk here www.gov.uk/government/collections/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-2024.

Written Answers

Thursday, 12 September 2024

Arms Trade: Israel

Asked by **Lord Leigh of Hurley**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many licences for arms export to Israel were granted in (1) July, and (2) August; and how those numbers compare to the number granted in the first half of 2024. [HL650]

Baroness Jones of Whitchurch: The UK operates one of the most transparent export licensing systems in the world. We publish quarterly and annual statistics on all our export licensing decisions, including information on export licences granted, refused and revoked. On 11 June 2024, we published an ad hoc data release on export licensing relating to Israel. That ad hoc release was done due to the exceptional circumstances and the Parliamentary and public interest at the time. Since then, in June 2024, the Government released Official Statistics covering all licensing decisions from July to December 2023. Official Statistics for July and August 2024 have not yet been published. Information covering January to July 2024 are planned to be released by November 2024.

Autism: Diagnosis

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to improve (1) the diagnosis of autism, and (2) support for those who are assessed as having autism. [HL759]

Baroness Merron: The Department is currently considering the next steps to improving diagnostic assessment and support for autistic people. It is the responsibility of integrated care boards (ICBs) to make available appropriate provision to meet the health and care needs of their local population, including autism assessment and support services, in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines.

On 5 April 2023, NHS England published a national framework and operational guidance to deliver improved outcomes in all-age autism assessment pathways. This guidance will help ICBs and the National Health Service to deliver improved outcomes for children, young people, and adults referred to an autism assessment service. The guidance also sets out what support should be available before an assessment, and what support should follow a recent diagnosis of autism, based on the available evidence.

In 2024/25, £4.3 million is available nationally to improve services for autistic children and young people, including autism assessment services.

General Practitioners

Asked by **Lord Turnberg**

To ask His Majesty's Government what support they offer to general practitioners in meeting the demands placed on them. [HL831]

Baroness Merron: We hugely value the critical role that general practitioners (GPs) play, and we are determined to address the issues they face by shifting the focus of the National Health Service beyond hospitals and into the community.

We have committed to training thousands more GPs across the country, as well as taking pressure off those currently working in the system. The inclusion of newly qualified GPs into the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) will also support the recruitment of GPs.

The ARRS provides funding for a number of additional roles to help create bespoke, multi-disciplinary teams. All these roles are in place to assist GPs in reducing their workload and assisting patients directly with their needs, allowing doctors to focus on more complex patients and other priorities, including continuity of care.

General Practitioners: Vacancies

Asked by **Lord Turnberg**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many vacancies are currently available for general practitioners in primary care, and how many newly qualified general practitioners are seeking appointment. [HL830]

Baroness Merron: The data requested is not held centrally.

Health Services: Research

Asked by **Lord Cashman**

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the letter from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to all members of the House of Lords on 8 August, who will be conducting the observational research study; who will be included within this study; how long will the study run for; and when they expect results from the study to be published. [HL792]

Baroness Merron: A study into the potential benefits and harms of puberty suppressing hormones being used as one of the treatment options for children and young people with gender incongruence is being developed through a joint programme between NHS England and the National Institute for Health and Care (NIHR), the research arm of the Department. The research will be co-sponsored by King's College London and the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. It is planned that recruitment into the study will be through specialist National Health Service gender services, ensuring that individuals accessing hormone suppression through the study do so following a holistic multidisciplinary assessment within the services above.

The study team has submitted their research application, which is currently undergoing scientific review.

Subject to the study achieving the necessary approvals, including ethics approval, the NIHR will publish details of the award, including the planned trial duration and study completion date, on its website. The study forms part of a wider joint programme of research and evaluation underpinning the delivery of new services for children and young people with gender incongruence. Further research will be needed to continue to build the evidence base, and our understanding of best practice in this important clinical area, including for psychosocial interventions. Work will continue with a broad range of stakeholders, to inform further study priorities.

House of Lords: Reform

Asked by **Baroness Smith of Llanfaes**

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Smith of Basildon on 30 July, what plans they have to consult on their proposals to reform this House; when any such consultation will (1) be published, and (2) close; and what specific proposals will be in scope. [HL540]

Baroness Smith of Basildon: The Kings Speech included the House of Lords (Hereditary Peers) Bill which has now been introduced into the House of Commons. Other proposed reforms include the appointment process, retirement and participation. I have already started engaging with colleagues around the House and welcome their input. I look forward to continuing this dialogue. As outlined in our manifesto, in the longer term the Government will consult on further reforms to ensure that an alternative second chamber is more representative of the nation and regions.

Industrial Strategy Council

Asked by **Baroness Bonham-Carter of Yarnbury**

To ask His Majesty's Government when they plan to convene the Industrial Strategy Council announced in the King's Speech on 17 July; and what will be the process of appointing members to the council. [HL579]

Asked by **Baroness Bonham-Carter of Yarnbury**

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to have representatives from the creative industries on the Industrial Strategy Council. [HL580]

Baroness Jones of Whitchurch: The Industrial Strategy Council will be an independent body which is responsible for monitoring and advising the government on the delivery of the Industrial Strategy, through wide engagement with stakeholders and the development of a strong evidence base. The government will legislate to make this a statutory body. In the meantime, it will form an advisory council made up of leading figures with wide

ranging experience, the membership of which will be announced in due course.

Infant Foods: Labelling

Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the accuracy and compliance of baby milk powder labels with existing regulatory requirements, and what plans they have to bring the law into compliance with WHO provisions on the marketing of infant formula. [HL782]

Baroness Merron: There is specific legislation in place covering the composition, labelling, and standards, including marketing, to ensure infant formula and follow-on formula provide all the nutrients a healthy baby needs for development and growth, and to ensure consumers are informed correctly about their contents and uses.

The legislation also gives effect, in part, to the World Health Organization's *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes* and subsequent resolutions, which is a set of recommendations to promote breastfeeding and regulate inappropriate marketing of breast-milk substitutes.

Legislation also requires manufacturers of infant formula and some follow-on formula to notify the Department when they are placing a new product on the market. The Department assesses individual product labels against legislative requirements. It is the responsibility of individual businesses to ensure their compliance with the law, and the responsibility of local authorities to enforce the law. The Department does not monitor enforcement of legislation by local authorities.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is undertaking a market study into competition in the infant formula sector in the United Kingdom, and is expected to publish an interim report in October 2024. We look forward to the CMA's interim report and we will carefully consider any findings and recommendations following publication.

Solar Power: Land Use

Asked by **Lord Roborough**

To ask His Majesty's Government what consultation and information gathering on food security and rural employment they undertook prior to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero's decision to approve large new solar farms on agricultural land. [HL761]

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: The Planning Act requires applicants to carry out consultations of their proposals at the pre-application stage of the process. During the application stage the Examining Authority will also undertake consultation with Interested Parties and advisory organisations such as the Statutory Nature Bodies.

As the decision takers, Ministers consider all the evidence and views on both positive and negative impacts and weighs these up with reference to the relevant National Policy Statement. This consideration is detailed in the published Decision Letter and accompanying assessments for each case. This statutory process is followed for all significant energy infrastructure, including large solar farms.

Treaties: Dispute Resolution

Asked by Lord Browne of Ladyton

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to assess whether current investor-state dispute settlement mechanisms within treaties to which the UK is a signatory have produced outcomes that are in the UK's national interest. [HL742]

Baroness Jones of Whitchurch: The UK is party to over 80 Bilateral Investment Treaties and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, which contain investment protection and Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions.

The UK is a significant capital exporter and investment protection provisions backed by ISDS provide UK investors with legal protection against arbitrary, discriminatory or unfair treatment and expropriation without compensation. ISDS provides a framework to resolve disputes with host governments through independent arbitration.

Wind Power: Seas and Oceans

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the results of the Contracts for Difference Allocation Round 6, which allocated 1.63 per cent of the total megawatts available to applicants from Wales, with which stakeholders in Wales they held discussions prior to reaching that decision. [HL774]

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: The Contracts for Difference scheme is geographically neutral and does not award contracts to projects based on regional quotas. All projects in Great Britain that met the eligibility criteria were able to apply into Allocation Round 6 (AR6). Eligible projects competed in an auction, run independently by National Grid ESO, designed to bring forward the most cost-effective projects in each delivery year.

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the results for floating offshore wind project applications in the Contracts for Difference Allocation Round 6, on what basis were (1) 400 megawatts of contracts awarded to projects in Scotland, and (2) no contracts awarded to projects in Wales. [HL775]

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: All projects in Great Britain that met the eligibility criteria were able to apply into Allocation Round 6 (AR6). Eligible projects competed in an auction, run independently by National Grid ESO, designed to bring forward the most cost-effective projects in each delivery year. The scheme is geographically neutral and does not award contracts to projects based on regional quotas.

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