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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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Lord Collins of Highbury	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Whip
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Lord Cryer	Whip
Baroness Gustafsson	Minister of State, Department for Business and Trade and HM Treasury
Lord Hanson of Flint	Minister of State, Home Office
Baroness Hayman of Ullock	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for 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
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Lord Leong	Whip
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Baroness Merron	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
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Baroness Smith of Cluny	Advocate-General for Scotland
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, Whip
Lord Timpson	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
Baroness Twycross	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture Media and Sport, Spokesperson, Cabinet Office, 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

Wednesday, 15 January 2025

Firearms Licensing Fees

[HLWS363]

Lord Hanson of Flint: My rt hon Friend the Minister of State for Policing, Fire and Crime Prevention (Dame Diana Johnson) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Government is today laying a statutory instrument before Parliament which will increase firearms licensing fees to provide full-cost recovery for police forces, giving effect to a commitment in the Government's manifesto.

The fees for firearms licensing applications administered by police forces were last increased in 2015 and they no longer meet the cost of the service provided. It is essential for both public safety and police efficiency that full cost recovery fees are introduced so that service improvements can be made. The need to increase fees to

help address shortcomings in firearms licensing was highlighted as essential for public safety by the Senior Coroner in his Preventing Future Deaths reports into the fatal shootings in Plymouth in August 2021.

As well as supporting public safety, the increased fees will support police forces to provide an improved service to firearms applicants, through better resourced and trained licensing teams.

The Home Office will conduct more regular reviews of firearms licensing fees in the future, to ensure they keep pace with police costs.

The Government's manifesto commitment refers to the money raised by full cost recovery fees being used to support youth interventions to prevent serious violence. However, we have decided instead that firearms fees income must be retained by police forces to support improvements in police firearms licensing. Delivering the youth interventions element of the manifesto commitment remains a priority and will be funded by the Home Office.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 15 January 2025

Avian Influenza: Disease Control

Asked by *Lord Randall of Uxbridge*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much they have spent on compensation, disinfection of premises and other costs associated with avian flu outbreaks at poultry and game farms, in each of the last five years. [HL3898]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: Figures include (i) compensation claims related to the avian influenza compensation scheme; and (ii) operational costs, which includes culling, disposal, and cleaning and disinfection at infected premises.

2023/24 Total costs of £13.1 million, made up of £2.9 million compensation claims and £10.2million of operational costs;

2022/23 Total costs of £84.5 million, made up of £38.3 million compensation claims and £46.2 million of operational costs;

2021/22 Total costs of £24.8 million, made up of £6.5 million compensation claims and £18.3 million of operational costs;

2020/21 Total costs of £4.5 million, made up of £1.5 million compensation claims and £3.0 million of operational costs; and

2019/20 Total costs of £0.1 million, made up of £0.1 million in operational costs, there were no compensation claims.

Asked by *Lord Randall of Uxbridge*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of existing measures in place to both respond to, and reduce the risk of, outbreaks of avian flu at poultry and game farms. [HL3899]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: Defra's approach to avian influenza is set out in the [Notifiable Avian Disease Control Strategy for Great Britain](#) supported by the [Mitigation Strategy for Avian Influenza in Wild Birds in England and Wales](#). Current policy reflects our experience of responding to past outbreaks of exotic animal disease and is in line with international standards of best practice for disease control.

All avian influenza disease control and prevention measures are kept under regular review as part of the government's work to monitor and manage the risks of avian influenza, and all decisions regarding these measures are based on risk assessments containing the latest scientific and ornithological evidence and veterinary advice.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Avian disease strategy [avian-disease-control-strategy1.pdf]

Migration strategy [Mitigation_Strategy_for_Avian_Influenza.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2025-01-08/HL3899>

Civil Service: Translation Services

Asked by *Lord Gilbert of Panteg*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Baroness Twycross on (1) 3 December (HL2738), and (2) 17 December (HL3301), why the Written Answer of 3 December stated that no guidance on translation had been issued by the Cabinet Office but the Written Answer of 17 December stated the Guidance on Diversity and Inclusion and Impartiality for Civil Servants, published on 14 May, remains in force; and whether they will now correct the official record. [HL3662]

Baroness Twycross: No specific guidance has been directly issued by the Cabinet Office on the topic of reducing spending by the civil service on translation into foreign languages. The Guidance on Diversity and Inclusion and Impartiality Requirements for Civil Servants signposts to another department's guidance that was issued in 2013.

Consumer Goods: Safety

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask His Majesty's Government how they have discharged their legal duty in section 46(1) of the United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020 in respect of the implementation of the European Union's new General Product Safety Regulation. [HL3736]

Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent: This Government is absolutely committed to ensuring the smooth flow of goods across the UK Internal market. The General Product Safety Regulations largely formalise the reality of how businesses are already operating in the UK so the government expects consumers in Northern Ireland generally to be able to access goods as before.

On 3 December, the Department for Business and Trade's Office for Product Safety and Standards published guidance for businesses on the application of the Regulation in Northern Ireland, which makes clear that authorities will continue to take a proportionate, risk-based, and intelligence-led approach to regulating the NI market, prioritising unsafe products.

DBT will continue to engage businesses directly to ensure they are familiar with the guidance and that the Government is supporting them to trade freely across the whole of the UK.

Palace of Westminster: Postal Services

Asked by *Lord Norton of Louth*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker how many items of postal correspondence were received in the Palace of

Westminster in 2024; and, of those, how many were received in the House of Lords. [HL3751]

Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall: The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Services Committee, to respond on his behalf. 856,751 mail items were received on the Parliamentary Estate in 2024. The Administration does not count which House each item goes to but estimates that approximately 10 to 15 per cent of these items were destined for the House of Lords. These figures do not include courier items or internal mail.

Please note that this figure refers to the whole Parliamentary Estate, not just the Palace of Westminster.

Young People: Education and Employment

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Sheffield

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of potentially expanding the new Youth Guarantee to include 16 to 17-year-olds and 21 to 24-year-olds. [HL3768]

Baroness Sherlock: The Youth Guarantee will initially provide support to 18–21-year-olds to ensure young people not accessing higher or further education have a clear pathway to access quality support.

Across the UK, 18 to 21-year-olds have lower employment rates compared to 22 to 24-year-olds, even when taking into consideration their increased participation in full-time education.

DWP provides extensive support at a national and local level for 16–17-year-olds and 22–24-year-olds. This includes flexible provision driven by local need, nationwide employment programmes and support delivered by work coaches based in our Jobcentres and in local communities working alongside partners. These young people will also be able to access tailored support through the DWP Youth Offer, which includes the Youth Employment Programme, Youth Employability Coaches and access to Youth Hubs across Great Britain.

We will continue to monitor the need to expand the Youth Guarantee during the delivery phase and through future evaluation.

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