

Monday 2 September 2013

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Enterprise and Environment

Gavin Brown (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-16196 by John Swinney on 24 July 2013, how much of the Business Innovation and Growth Programme funding comes from (a) underspends returned from projects, (b) anticipated underspends and (c) unallocated funding being allocated for the first time.

Holding answer issued: 22 August 2013

(S4W-16516)

John Swinney: Variations in the value of the programmes caused by exchange rate fluctuations means that it is not possible at this stage to provide this breakdown. The decision to allocate funding in this way is based on lessons learned from previous programmes which show that the Scottish Government needs to commit more than the value of the available funding in order to allow it to reallocate underspends and recoveries that will emerge late in the programme period. If the Scottish Government does not declare sufficient spending, the unspent funds would be lost to Scotland. To ensure that the commitment to programmes is at the right level, the Scottish Government works closely with project sponsors to monitor delivery, identify underspends and recover funds when appropriate.

Gavin Brown (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-16191 by John Swinney on 24 July 2013, how much of the £20 million for the Business Innovation and Growth Programme is new money.

Holding answer issued: 22 August 2013

(S4W-16517)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16516 on 2 September 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Gavin Brown (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many applications it has received and at what total value for the Business Innovation and Growth Programme in the (a) Lowlands and Uplands and (b) Highlands and Islands programme area.

Holding answer issued: 22 August 2013

(S4W-16518)

John Swinney: 101 applications were submitted for the Lowlands and Uplands Scotland Programme; seeking approximately £71 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) grant. 43 of these have been invited to proceed to Stage 2 of the application process. 34 applications were submitted for the Highlands and Islands Programme; seeking approximately £14 million from the ERDF grant. 20 of these have been invited to proceed to Stage 2 of the application process.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when Scottish Enterprise became aware of difficulties at Railcare in Springburn.

Holding answer issued: 2 September 2013

(S4W-16580)

John Swinney: Scottish Enterprise (SE) has enjoyed a good relationship with the company, meeting the management in Scotland every six months. SE had been aware that new owners were being sought for Railcare. SE became aware of Railcare's current difficulties on Tuesday 30 July, when Scottish Government officials contacted the organisation looking for confirmation of the support being provided to the company in Scotland.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when Scottish Enterprise alerted it to difficulties at Railcare in Springburn.

Holding answer issued: 2 September 2013

(S4W-16581)

John Swinney: Scottish Enterprise, acting on behalf of Scottish Ministers, has supported Railcare as an account-managed company. This has meant regular dialogue with the company and support for the developments that have been undertaken. Scottish Government Ministers were informed the company might be about to go into administration on Tuesday 30 July.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it became aware of difficulties at Railcare in Springburn.

Holding answer issued: 2 September 2013

(S4W-16582)

John Swinney: Scottish Enterprise have been providing support to Railcare at Springburn through the account management approach. Through this dialogue Scottish enterprise was aware that Railcare was in talks about new ownership.

Scottish Government officials in Transport Scotland were advised on 29 July 2013 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (DBIS) that it was likely Railcare would be placed into administration within the next 24 to 48 hours. DBIS again contacted Transport Scotland officials on 31 July 2013 and advised that Railcare had unfortunately been placed into administration.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it will take to assist Railcare in Springburn.

(S4W-16583)

John Swinney: I met the administrator, BDO, on 7 August 2013 and emphasised that the Scottish Government is committed to providing assistance to achieve the best possible outcome for all involved. I also met union representatives and gave them my assurance that I would take any steps possible to secure the future of the company.

Through our Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) initiative, we have supported Railcare staff since the company went into administration. Representatives from our local PACE team were on site to provide support when employees were made redundant and have continued to provide support to those employees.

I am delighted to see that Railcare has now been bought by the German company, Knorr Bremse, and very much welcome their commitment to pay staff their wages. Railcare has a loyal workforce and a healthy order book and I am sure the company will now go forward on a healthy footing, helping to deliver the significant rail investment programme underway in Scotland. I understand Scottish Enterprise will now engage with the new owners to assist them in consolidating and strengthening their operation in Scotland.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what contact it has had with the UK Government concerning difficulties at Railcare in Springburn and when.

(S4W-16585)

John Swinney: Scottish Government officials were advised on 29 July 2013 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (DBIS) that the company was having difficulties and again on 31 July 2013 when the company went into administration.

On 27 August 2013, DBIS informed Scottish Government officials that Knorr Bremse had bought Railcare on 26 August 2013.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what contact it has had with the administrators appointed to Railcare and when.

(S4W-16587)

John Swinney: I met the administrators, BDO, on 7 August 2013. In addition, PACE colleagues first made contact with BDO on our behalf on 31 July 2013 to offer PACE support to Railcare employees, and are in continuing contact.

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it can take to assist the administrators of Railcare to find a new buyer for the company.

(S4W-16589)

John Swinney: I had a very useful discussion with the administrator BDO, and was assured that they were actively pursuing possible purchasers for the company. I offered active support from the Scottish Government in trying to reach a solution. I was therefore delighted to hear the announcement on 27 August 2013 that Railcare has now been bought by the German company, Knorr Bremse. I understand Scottish Enterprise will now engage with the new owners to assist them in consolidating and strengthening their operation in Scotland.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many deaths due to failure to meet air quality standards there have been in each year since 2007.

(S4W-16601)

Paul Wheelhouse: Data are not currently collected in ways that would allow the direct attribution of any individual death to exposure to air pollution. To separate out the specific impact of poor air quality from the many other influencing factors would be a complex piece of work for which we do not at present have a suitable methodology.

It is extremely unlikely that anyone dies directly from exposure to poor air quality alone. However, long term exposure to poor air quality is likely to be a contributory factor that will reduce the life expectancy further of anyone with pre-existing poor health.

The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution, an expert committee that provides advice to the UK Government and devolved administrations on all matters concerning the effects of air pollutants on health, has developed a methodology to allow assessment of the theoretical impact of air pollution on mortality at a local authority level. It is anticipated that data resulting from this methodology will be available later in 2013, although the exercise will not provide any information on the actual impacts of air pollutants on individuals.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many people have experienced poor health due to failure to meet air quality standards in each year since 2007.

(S4W-16602)

Paul Wheelhouse: Data are not currently collected in ways that would allow the direct attribution of any individual poor health effects to exposure to air pollution. Many different environmental and socio-economic factors interact to produce an overall effect on an individual's health and to separate out the specific impact of poor air quality would be a complex piece of work for which we do not at present have a suitable methodology.

Exposure to air pollutants is a factor that may exacerbate the symptoms of anyone suffering from pre-existing lung disease such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or from heart disease. Extended exposure to poor air quality may worsen the course of these diseases in those who already have them, but is unlikely to have a significant impact on otherwise healthy individuals.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what (a) economic and (b) social damage has been caused by poor air quality in each year since 2007.

(S4W-16603)

Paul Wheelhouse: Data are not currently collected in ways that would allow the direct attribution of any such damage to poor air quality on an annual basis. To separate out the specific impact of poor air quality would be a complex piece of work for which we do not at present have a suitable methodology.

Cost benefit analysis is routinely undertaken to assess the potential impact on air quality of introducing or removing specific policies. However this approach produces only very broad estimates of future scenarios and does not generate any information on past trends nor on overall air quality.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many (a) children have experienced poor health as a result of and (b) children's already poor health has been exacerbated by failure to meet air quality standards in each year since 2007.

(S4W-16605)

Paul Wheelhouse: Data are not currently collected in ways that would allow the direct attribution of poor health in individual children to the effects of exposure to air pollution. Many different environmental and socio-economic factors interact to produce an overall effect on children's health and to separate out the specific impact of poor air quality would be a complex piece of work for which we do not at present have a suitable methodology.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide a breakdown by socio-economic class of the health impacts that have arisen from failure to meet air quality standards in each year since 2007.

(S4W-16606)

Paul Wheelhouse: Data are not currently collected in ways that would allow the direct attribution of any poor health effects to exposure to air pollution in relation to socio-economic class. Many different factors interact to produce an overall effect on the health of any sub-group in the overall population and to separate out the specific impact of poor air quality would be a complex piece of work for which we do not at present have a suitable methodology.

Exposure to air pollutants is a factor that may exacerbate the symptoms of anyone suffering from pre-existing lung disease such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or from heart disease. Extended exposure to poor air quality may worsen the course of these diseases in those who already have them, but is unlikely to have a significant impact on otherwise healthy individuals.

The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution, an expert committee that provides advice to the UK Government and devolved administrations on all matters concerning the effects of air pollutants on health, has developed a methodology to allow assessment of the theoretical impact of air pollution on mortality at a local authority level. It is anticipated that data resulting from this methodology will be available later in 2013, although the exercise will not provide any information of the actual impact by socio-economic class.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4F-01345 by Alex Salmond on 2 May 2013 (Official Report, c. 19317), whether it remains Scottish Government policy that it would not seek an opt-out from EU pensions regulations in an independent Scotland.

(S4W-16616)

John Swinney: Scottish Government policy is as set out by the First Minister. We agree with the assessment by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland that discussions on this issue between the Scottish Government, the UK Government and the EU should start as soon as possible.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with the European Commission regarding an opt-out from pensions regulations for an independent Scotland.

(S4W-16618)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16616 on 2 September 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how it would split pension schemes between an independent Scotland and the rest of the UK.

(S4W-16619)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16616 on 2 September 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it will publish its paper on pensions in an independent Scotland.

(S4W-16620)

John Swinney: The Scottish Government will in due course publish a paper on pensions in an independent Scotland covering the future of the State pension, private pensions and public sector pensions.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the comments by the First Minister reported in The Sunday Post on 4 August 2013 that the way to deal with pension fund deficits is to "get a derogation so nobody is forced into a more accelerated settlement of the pension deficit", whether it considers that an opt-out from pensions regulations is required.

(S4W-16621)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16616 on 2 September 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Iain Gray (East Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government on what date Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland 2012-13 will be published.

(S4W-16632)

John Swinney: Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland 2012-13 has been pre-announced for publication in March 2014. This information is available on the Scottish Government website "Forthcoming Publication" page. The exact date will be added at least one month in advance of publication. This is in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Iain Gray (East Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether any of the methodologies applied in Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland 2012-13 will differ from previous editions and, if so, which.

(S4W-16633)

John Swinney: The methodologies used to produce Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland are peer reviewed, subject to consultation, and are widely accepted to be the best methods

currently available. As with all such estimation methods they are subject to on-going refinements to improve the quality of the publication and to ensure that it continues to meet users' needs. As with all National Statistics publications, any changes to the methodology will be communicated to users in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The chief statistician has final responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures used to produce national statistics, as set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it last reviewed the list of birds protected by special penalties as set out at Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; what its position is on whether this legislation is fit for purpose, and what criteria it used to determine the birds to list.

(S4W-16649)

Paul Wheelhouse: Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 may be amended by Scottish Ministers at any time and remains open to review as necessitated by consideration of the conservation needs of wild birds. Amendments in recent years include the addition of red kite, golden eagle and hen harrier to Schedule 1A in 2013 (along with the addition of golden eagle to Schedule A1), the addition of white tailed eagle to Schedules A1 and 1A in 2004, and the addition of capercaillie to Schedule 1 in 2001.

There are no set criteria to determine the birds on the list. Changes are normally initiated by advice from statutory advisors and are subject to public consultation.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 provides the right to (a) cross land and (b) use any structure designed to facilitate passage, such as a level crossing.

(S4W-16669)

Paul Wheelhouse: The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003:

- a) provides that everyone has statutory access rights to cross land in Scotland, except land specified in or under section 6 of the Act. A person has access rights only if they are exercised responsibly.
- b) does not specifically consider the position of level crossings.

In 2010 the Law Commission and the Scottish Law Commission published a joint consultation paper setting out a number of proposals and questions about how the law relating to level crossings might be reformed. In this, the commissioners refer to private level crossings as crossings over which there is a private right of way. There is no statutory definition of a private level crossing.

In their joint consultation paper the commissions took the view that: The public do not automatically have a right of way over a private level crossing, but such a right could be established by operation of the law of prescription, namely uninterrupted use of the crossing over a continuous period of 20 years. In the absence of a core path, access rights do not apply in respect of private level crossings over an operational railway there is no automatic right under Scots law for a member of the public to use a private level crossing (as opposed to a public level crossing).

The 2010 consultation document on level crossings (Scottish Law Commission Discussion Paper 143) is available at:

<http://www.scotlawcom.gov.uk/publications/discussion-papers-and-consultative-memoranda/2010-present>

The Commissions' Report on Level Crossings is expected to be published in autumn 2013.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the legal definition is of a private crossing and whether such crossings are exempt from provisions relating to (a) rights of way, (b) core paths and (c) access.

(S4W-16670)

Paul Wheelhouse: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16669 on 2 September 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Apps2/Business/PQA/Default.aspx>.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether the public has an automatic right under Scots law to use a crossing for access.

(S4W-16671)

Paul Wheelhouse: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16669 on 2 September 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Apps2/Business/PQA/Default.aspx>.

Governance and Communities

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether Scotland's access to the internet is dependent on internet exchange points in London and Manchester and whether there are plans to establish (a) an internet exchange point in Scotland and (b) direct connections to internet exchange points in other European countries.

(S4W-16471)

Nicola Sturgeon: Most internet traffic to, from and within Scotland currently goes through one of three internet exchange points in London, Manchester or Leeds.

As part of our work to improve Scotland's digital infrastructure and achieve world class connectivity by 2020, the Scottish Government is facilitating discussions with industry aimed at establishing an internet exchange point in Scotland.

This work is being taken forward by LINX (London Internet Exchange Ltd), a not-for-profit member led organisation that operates exchanges in London and Manchester. Excellent progress is being made and we anticipate that an internet exchange, called IXScotland, will be installed in Edinburgh in October this year. It will be for LINX to determine what connections are required to equivalent exchange points in Europe. These are negotiated and delivered depending on the needs of exchange members.

Angus MacDonald (Falkirk East) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it is considering amending the Neighbour Notification Scheme to require planning authorities to notify premises within a wider area of a proposed development.

Holding answer issued: 29 August 2013

(S4W-16549)

Derek Mackay: We are considering the issues raised by Petition 1469, which is currently before the Public Petitions Committee and relates to concerns about neighbour notification of applications for wind turbines. However, we have no plans at present to amend the neighbour notification requirements.

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of its target to eradicate fuel poverty, what assessment it has made of the measures called for by the Energy Bill Revolution campaign and what information it has on how many properties in Scotland could be made more energy efficient if the UK Government used the estimated £4 billion collected from carbon taxes over the next 15 years to fund the measures called for by the campaign.

(S4W-16700)

Margaret Burgess: Fuel poverty is a devolved issue and the Scottish Government is already committing funding to support the installation of measures to make homes in Scotland more energy efficient, as called for by the Energy Bill Revolution. Unlike England, where the only funding to improve household energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty comes from obligations placed on energy

companies in the Energy Bill and private funding through the Green Deal, the Scottish Government is doing all it can to improve the energy efficiency of homes in Scotland.

The new Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland were launched on 1 April 2013 and offer a package of support to help all those who are struggling to pay their energy bills and keep themselves warm. The Scottish Government is providing £79 million in the current year to support these area-based and national schemes and lever in energy company investment to create the £200 million fund. Over time all households should see positive benefits from improvements in energy efficiency as a result of these schemes and may help them reduce their fuel bills.

It is estimated funding allocated in the first funding round of the area based scheme will see 25,000 to 30,000 households receive around 40,000 measures to improve the energy efficiency of their home and help tackle fuel poverty. And it is estimated that around 300,000 poorer households in total are eligible for insulation and/or heating measures under the Affordable Warmth Scheme and Energy Assistance Scheme.

Stuart McMillan (West Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-16302 by Nicola Sturgeon on 15 July 2013, how many of the claims made to the Scottish Welfare Fund since 1 April 2013 were (a) successful and (b) unsuccessful.

(S4W-16840)

Nicola Sturgeon: According to informal monitoring returns from local authorities, there have been 29,021 successful applications, and 19,264 unsuccessful applications made to the Scottish Welfare Fund from 1 April to 31 July 2013.

Strategy and External Affairs

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether all income tax levels in an independent Scotland would remain the same as in the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15868)

John Swinney: Independence would provide the Scottish Government with the key economic and fiscal levers to promote sustainable economic growth and to tackle inequalities as set out in the Fiscal Commission Working Group's first report. The paper can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/02/3017>.

Tax receipts per capita in Scotland, including a geographical share of North Sea oil and gas revenues, are estimated to have been higher than in the UK as a whole in every single year since 1980-81.

Over the last five years for which figures are available Scotland has been in a relatively stronger fiscal position than the UK as a whole to the value of £12.6 billion which had we been independent would have allowed a Scottish Government to take different policy choices.

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the white paper in the run up to the referendum.

Decisions on all specific taxes, including tax rates, allowances and credits, will be made by the parliament and the government of an independent Scotland. Political parties, stakeholders, and individuals will have their own preferences for the policies to be pursued in an independent Scotland and the arguments for and against, and between, the range of policy choices available to an independent Scotland will form a central part of the national debate before the referendum and then in the run up to the 2016 Scottish election.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to increase any forms of taxation if Scotland became independent and when.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15869)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15868 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what changes it would seek to make to personal taxation bands if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15870)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15868 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of reported comments by the Deputy First Minister on 17 April 2013, whether it will seek to introduce a 50p tax rate if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15871)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15868 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what analysis it has undertaken of the impact that a 3% reduction in corporation tax would have on the Scottish economy and whether it will publish this analysis.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15873)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15187 on 03 June 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what analysis it has carried out on a link between a reduction in corporation tax and employment rates if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15874)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15187 on 03 June 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how (a) long it would take and (b) much it would cost to (i) set up and (ii) run on an annual basis, a separate tax administration system if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15876)

John Swinney: Independence would provide the Scottish Government with the key economic and fiscal levers to promote sustainable economic growth and to tackle inequalities. The Scottish Government is currently establishing Revenue Scotland to administer devolved taxation.

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com, including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including further reports from the Fiscal Commission Working group and the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what transitional arrangements it would put in place until a separate tax system was set up if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15877)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimates it has made of the costs to (a) business and (b) individual taxpayers of the transition to a new tax system if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15878)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the reported comments by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth in a Cabinet paper that the annual cost of tax administration in an independent Scotland could be £625 million.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15879)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

The initial estimate for delivery of the devolved taxes by Revenue Scotland was placed in SPICe in June 2012, Bib number 54051.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what impact Scottish independence would have on the double taxation treaties to which the UK is party.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15880)

John Swinney: An independent Scotland would signal its intention to adhere to international tax treaties in force between the UK and other States, the effect being that those tax treaties would continue in force between Scotland and that State. There is international precedent for this, the tax treaties in operation between Czechoslovakia and other countries, including the UK, prior to

Czechoslovakia's dissolution on 1 January 1993 were continued, on the same terms as before, by both the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government at what rate it would seek to set (a) national insurance contributions, (b) corporation tax, (c) fuel duties, (d) tobacco duties, (e) alcohol duties, (f) capital gains tax, (g) the climate change levy and (h) inheritance tax in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15881)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15868 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what resources it would need to support it in independence negotiations with the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15887)

Nicola Sturgeon: Negotiations will be led by Scottish Government Ministers supported by civil servants. The Scottish Government will invite representatives of other political parties and civic Scotland to contribute to the negotiations. More specialist expertise from outside the government will be drawn on as required.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the size of the foreign and diplomatic service in an independent Scotland; how much it would cost to operate, and how many staff would (a) work directly for it and (b) be shared with the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15890)

Fiona Hyslop: An independent Scotland would be represented overseas by a network which worked in the national interests of Scotland. In addition, Scottish Ministers would be open to the sharing of services and facilities with the rest of the UK or with other countries where there was mutual benefit to this. Such arrangements already exist between the UK and other nations, for example, Canada. At present taxes levied in Scotland are used to pay for the UK foreign and diplomatic service.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what its assessment is of the (a) initial and (b) ongoing costs to the (i) public and (ii) private sectors of separate PAYE and personal and business tax assessment and collection systems in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15891)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would try to recruit staff from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to its foreign and diplomatic service and, if so, how many staff it would aim to recruit.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15892)

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government will ensure that all its services are provided by qualified staff, who may come from a range of backgrounds and experience, through opportunities arising from existing open recruitment policies and the possibility of transfers where that is appropriate or desired.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what the (a) approach to fiscal policy and (b) implications for business taxation would be in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15893)

John Swinney: Independence would provide the Scottish Government with the key economic and fiscal levers to promote sustainable economic growth and to tackle inequalities as set out in the Fiscal Commission Working Groups first report. The paper can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/02/3017>.

Scotland is in a stronger fiscal position than the UK and would continue to manage Scotland's finances in a responsible manner under independence. A robust and stable fiscal framework would provide the foundations of a competitive business environment.

Decisions on all specific taxes, including tax rates, allowances and credits will be made by the parliament and government of an independent Scotland. Political parties, stakeholders, and individuals will have their own preferences for the policies to be pursued in an independent Scotland and the arguments for and against, and between, the range of policy choices available to an independent Scotland will form a central part of the national debate before the referendum and then in the run up to the 2016 Scottish election.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of how many (a) embassies and (b) consulates an independent Scotland would require; where these would be based, and how much it would cost to operate them.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15894)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15890 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what the governance arrangements for the Scottish treasury and the revenue collection authority would be in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15895)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how corporate profits earned outwith Scotland would be treated for tax purposes in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15897)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to questions S4W-15868 and S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what tax relief would be available on (a) pension contributions and (b) savings products in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15898)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to questions S4W-15868 and S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether any diplomatic missions shared between an independent Scotland and the rest of the UK would have (a) staff who were dedicated to looking after Scottish interests and, if so, how many and (b) a shared ambassador.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15899)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15890 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether Gift Aid would apply in an independent Scotland and, if so, whether rates would be different to those in the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15900)

John Swinney: The Scottish Government will ensure that charities continue to benefit from tax relief on donations. I refer the member to the answer to questions S4W-15868 and S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in an independent Scotland, what the taxation position will be for (a) Scots with equity investments listed on the London Stock Exchange and (b) foreign investors in companies registered in Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15901)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to questions S4W-15868 and S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what its assessment is of the need for a double taxation treaty between an independent Scotland and the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15902)

John Swinney: Tax affairs between the two countries would be governed by negotiated agreements and these would enable businesses to plan their future operations and also ensure that an independent Scotland is an attractive and competitive place to do business.

The passing of the Scotland Act 2012 already means that very shortly we will have different tax systems in Scotland and the rest of the UK. The two countries would both have an incentive to negotiate agreements that made tax affairs for companies operating in both jurisdictions as straightforward as possible.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what tax rates and relief would be available to the oil and gas sector in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15904)

John Swinney: The Scottish Government published *Maximising the Return from Oil and Gas in an Independent Scotland* on 23 July 2013. This paper sets out the high-level principles that should underpin key aspects of oil and gas policy in an independent Scotland. The paper can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/07/5746/0>

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in an independent Scotland, what impact inheritance tax would have on spouses and partners domiciled outside of Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15905)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to questions S4W-15868 and S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it would seek to continue the UK Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme in an independent Scotland and, if so, what work it has undertaken on how this would operate.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15907)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether research and development tax credits would continue to be available in an independent Scotland and, if so, what work it has undertaken on how this would operate.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15909)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to questions S4W-15868 and S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how much a TV licence would cost in an independent Scotland.

(S4W-15910)

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government has no plans to alter the value of the licence fee after independence. Political parties, stakeholders, and individuals will have their own preferences for the policies to be pursued in an independent Scotland and the arguments for and against, and between, the range of policy choices available to an independent Scotland will form a central part of the national debate before the referendum and then in the run up to the 2016 Scottish election. However, it is a matter of concern that some members of the Conservative party have stated they are not committed to public service broadcasting and would consider privatising those services or abolishing support for them.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how an independent Scotland's diplomatic interests would be represented in the period before it established its own diplomatic missions.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15911)

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com, including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services including transition from the current arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully through taxes and fees levied in Scotland by the UK Government. An independent Scotland would not simply replicate UK structures but would develop services based on the needs of Scotland, best practice and the views of our stakeholders.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what tax relief would be available to (a) video game companies, (b) film companies and (c) other creative enterprises in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15912)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to questions S4W-15868 and S4W-15876 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

The Scottish Government has repeatedly argued for the use of tax incentives to assist video games companies, film production and creative industries. The Scottish Government remains disappointed that after securing a commitment from the previous UK Government to introduce tax incentives for video games companies, this was initially dropped by the current UK Government and has yet to be fully introduced.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the compliance and adaptation costs of business if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15914)

John Swinney: Scotland would comply with EU regulations which affect the conduct of business. Consequently, businesses operating in an independent Scotland would continue to be subject to these compliance requirements as they currently are within the UK; however, within these parameters, Scotland would be able to tailor policies to better reflect the needs of the Scottish economy. Retaining a common currency would facilitate continued trade and investment flows between Scotland and the UK, which is in the interest of businesses in both countries.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has undertaken to establish the impact of an independent Scotland on Scottish companies that sell most of their goods and services to the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15915)

John Swinney: As part of the EU single market, companies would continue to benefit from access to markets across Europe, including the UK. An independent Scotland would retain Sterling as part of a formal monetary union. Retaining a common currency would facilitate continued trade and investment flows between Scotland and the UK, which is in the interest of businesses in both countries.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what body would undertake the functions of the Export Guarantees Advisory Council if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15916)

John Swinney: In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services including transition from the current arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully through taxes and fees levied in Scotland by the UK Government. An independent Scotland would not simply replicate UK structures but would develop services based on the needs of Scotland, best practice and the views of our stakeholders.

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com, including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including further reports from the Fiscal Commission Working group and the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether there would be a distinct Scottish (a) import and export licensing regime for controlled goods and (b) version of the Export Control Organisation to provide guidance and advice to businesses if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15917)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15916 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would automatically become a member of (a) NATO and (b) the United Nations and, if not, what the timetable would be for becoming a member.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15918)

Fiona Hyslop: Following a vote for independence the Scottish Government will formally declare its intention to remain a member of NATO following normal procedures.

Similarly Scotland would also signal its intention to remain a member of the United Nations. Given that Scotland, as part of the UK, already meets membership requirements we do not anticipate any barriers to Scotland's timely membership of international organisations.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how legislation relating to corruption and bribery would operate in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15919)

Kenny MacAskill: The main legislation relating to corruption and bribery in Scotland is the Bribery Act 2010. This legislation modernised bribery law across the UK and extended to Scotland with the agreement of the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament. The 2010 Act would continue to operate in an independent Scotland at the point of independence. Any changes would be the responsibility of a future Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com,

including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of separation from the rest of the UK on (a) access to and support from the Green Investment Bank, (b) the Business Growth Fund, (c) the UK Corporate Governance Code and (d) Scottish brands selling to the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15920)

John Swinney: The decision to site the Headquarters of the UK Green Investment Bank in Edinburgh was based on the city's strengths in finance, the green economy and innovation. These strengths will continue after independence, and the Green Investment Bank would continue to provide essential financial services to Scotland and the rest of the UK.

Similarly, the Business Growth Fund is an independent company backed by five of the UK's main banks and we are confident that the fund will continue to be commercially active in an independent Scotland. In delivering specific functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services, including transition from the current arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully through taxes and fees levied in Scotland by the UK Government. An independent Scotland would not simply replicate UK structures but would develop services based on the needs of Scotland, best practice and the views of our stakeholders.

As part of the EU single market, companies would continue to benefit from access to markets across Europe, including the UK. An independent Scotland would retain Sterling as part of a formal monetary union. Retaining a common currency would facilitate continued trade and investment flows between Scotland and the UK, which is in the interest of businesses in both countries. The attributes that underpin the success of Scottish brands would remain and businesses would have opportunity to increase their profile across existing and new markets.

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including further reports from the Fiscal Commission Working group and the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what supervisory, regulatory and tax regimes would be put in place governing takeovers, mergers and acquisitions in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15924)

John Swinney: An independent Scotland will continue to meet EU requirements in this area. However, within these parameters, an independent Scotland would have scope to ensure that codes of principles and regulations reflect Scottish needs and priorities. At present most aspects of competition policy, including mergers and takeovers, are reserved to Westminster by the Scotland Act 1998; an independent Scotland would have the opportunity to design competition policy to meet the needs of Scotland and our businesses.

In an independent Scotland, the remit of the takeover panel would become the responsibility of the body responsible for competition regulation. Our proposals for competition regulation in an independent Scotland were laid out in the discussion paper *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*. This can be found online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/02/1911>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what corporate governance regulatory body and regimes would be put in place for (a) company directors, (b) accountants, (c) auditors and (d) actuaries in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15927)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answers to questions S4W-15914 and S4W-15924 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how much it expects an independent Scotland would contribute to the regular budget of the United Nations.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15928)

Fiona Hyslop: Scotland's contribution to the United Nations' budgets would be agreed as part of the process of moving from being a member as part of the UK to being an independent member.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what body would undertake the functions of (a) the Financial Reporting Council, (b) Companies House and (c) the Competition Commission in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15929)

John Swinney: Our proposals for competition regulation in an independent Scotland were laid out in the discussion paper *Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland*. This can be found online at:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/02/1911>.

In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services, including transition from the current arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully through taxes and fees levied in Scotland by the UK Government. An independent Scotland would not simply replicate UK structures but would develop services based on the needs of Scotland, best practice and the views of our stakeholders.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether firms in an independent Scotland would be expected to adhere to the existing UK Corporate Governance Code.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15930)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15914 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it expects an independent Scotland to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15935)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15918 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of what role the Supreme Court would have in the appeals process of an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15936)

Kenny MacAskill: The Scottish Government has said in *Scotland's Future: from the Referendum to Independence and a Written Constitution* that it will provide for the Supreme Court of an independent Scotland. The supreme court structure will build upon the existing infrastructure and judicial talent that we have in Scotland. The Court of Session and High Court of Justiciary will continue to hear some cases at first instance and appeals from the lower courts as is the case currently.

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of what would be the final court of appeal in an independent Scotland before a case was referred to the European Court of Justice.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15937)

Kenny MacAskill: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15936 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of an independent Scotland's possible loss of influence with the United Nations Security Council.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15938)

Fiona Hyslop: The only way to ensure the interests and values of the people of Scotland are promoted in international organisations is through a government that reflects those values and which commands the support of the electorate.

The Scottish Government would not, for example, engage in illegal international wars, such as the 2003 war in Iraq.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the international legal obligations that currently apply to the UK that an independent Scotland would have to adhere to.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15939)

Fiona Hyslop: As an independent nation, Scotland would continue to meet all legal obligations that flow from its membership of international organisations and would intend to continue with other current treaty rights and obligations.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has for an independent Scotland's interests to be represented if it is not given a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15940)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15918 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of who would be responsible for policing cross-border (a) rail and (b) air services in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15941)

Kenny MacAskill: The policing of rail services is presently performed by the British Transport Police (BTP). The Scottish Government has repeatedly made the case for the integration of BTP services with the Police Service in Scotland (PSS). Independence would ensure that the functions currently provided by the BTP were provided by the PSS, improving the integration of policing in Scotland.

The policing of air services takes place predominantly at and around airports. This service is presently performed by the PSS, and this situation would continue post-independence.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment has been made of how cross-border trading standards cases would be (a) investigated and (b) enforced in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15942)

John Swinney: An independent Scotland would comply with the European framework for consumer protection, including cross-border regulations. Following a vote for independence the Scottish Government would work closely with the UK Government to ensure consumers and legitimate businesses in both jurisdictions are appropriately protected.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of how independence might impact on areas of Scotland that rely on mobile telephone masts located in England, and whether people in such areas might be subject to international call roaming charges.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15944)

Nicola Sturgeon: Roaming charges are currently applied at the discretion of companies and up to specific EU limits. They are not automatic. The European Commission has cut charges for voice calls, texts and internet access by 75% since 2007, and commissioners voted in June 2013 to abolish mobile roaming charges from as early as July 2014. It is regrettable that the UK Government has decided to issue a misleading statement suggesting roaming charges could be introduced at the very time a decision has been taken to abolish them.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would have its own (a) driver and vehicle licensing and (b) driving standards agency and, if so, how much it would cost to (i) establish and (ii) run.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15945)

Keith Brown: These functions are currently reserved, and on independence would become the responsibility of the parliament and government of an independent Scotland. In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services and would fully meet its international obligations.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether people would have to reapply for driving licences if Scotland separated from the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15946)

Keith Brown: No. The Scottish Government will ensure all licences granted by the DVLA are recognised in Scotland at the point of independence.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would automatically become a member of the European Defence Agency and, if not, what the timetable for becoming a member would be and what impact there would be on Scottish involvement in the agency's work in the interim.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15948)

Nicola Sturgeon: An independent Scotland would play a full and active part in the EU, including in the European Defence Agency. Arrangements to do so would be agreed with the relevant parties following a vote for independence.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of Scotland separating from the rest of the UK on (a) broadband infrastructure investment, (b) investment in satellite broadband technologies, (c) current UK internet domain name registration processes, (d) the cost to business of replacing the internet suffix,.uk, and (e) internet protocol television (i) services and (ii) provision.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15949)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government is already making a significant investment in broadband infrastructure. Our Step Change programme will see an investment of over £410 million to deliver fibre broadband to 85 per cent of Scottish properties by the end of 2015 and around 95 per cent by the end of 2017. Independence will offer Scotland the opportunity to use the full range of levers, aligned to this investment, to support our world class digital ambition. It will allow Scotland to take lessons from the regulatory and policy regimes of European leaders like Sweden where they introduced a 99 per cent coverage obligation as part of the 3G and 4G spectrum auctions which has helped deliver extensive coverage in rural and remote areas.

We do not anticipate any impact on the UK internet domain name registration processes or the cost to businesses as anyone in any country can apply to use dotuk. The Scottish Government is supporting a bid to the International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) for the dotscot domain. The bid was lodged in June 2012 by Dot Scot Registry, an independent not-for-profit company, and is currently being evaluated. The dotscot domain may be available by late 2014, early 2015.

We do not anticipate any particular impact of Scotland becoming independent on internet protocol television services and provision. Decisions relating to: (a) broadband infrastructure investment, (b) investment in satellite broadband technologies, (c) current UK internet domain name registration processes, (d) the cost to business of replacing the internet suffix,.uk, and (e) internet protocol television (i) services and (ii) provision; will be for the government of an independent Scotland elected in 2016.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of an independent Scotland's defence budget.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15951)

Nicola Sturgeon: Ministers have set out their view, including in evidence to the House of Commons Defence Committee on 02 July 2013, that the budget for defence and security in an independent Scotland should be £2.5 billion, a potential saving of nearly £1 billion compared with the amount of money Scottish tax-payers currently contribute to UK spending on defence and security. It would also be well above recent UK defence spending in Scotland.

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

Our plans will ensure that Scotland's people, territory and interests are secure. They will include detail on the scale and capabilities of Scottish defence and security forces, and the means by which Scotland's defence and security procurement would support, and be supported by, its defence and security industries.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of Scotland separating from the rest of the UK on the (a) attractiveness of the country to and (b) pricing structures of internet service providers.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15952)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals for the opportunities of independence in the autumn. Political parties, stakeholders, and individuals will have their own preferences for the policies to be pursued in an independent Scotland and the arguments between the range of policy choices available to an independent Scotland will form a central part of the national debate before the referendum.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what the timetable would be for the transfer of responsibility between the British armed forces and an independent Scotland's defence forces.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15954)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what interim arrangements would be put in place to protect an independent Scotland's interests while responsibility is being transferred from the British armed forces to Scottish defence forces.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15958)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the number of (a) personnel, (b) armoured vehicles and (c) bases in an independent Scotland's army.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15960)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in an independent Scotland, what arrangements it would put in place to ensure cooperation between Police Scotland and forces in the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15961)

Kenny MacAskill: There are well-established arrangements to ensure effective cross-border cooperation between Police Scotland and forces in the rest of the UK. The arrangements operate

effectively to ensure public safety for citizens. The Scottish Government would continue to work with the UK on independence to ensure that these arrangements operate for the benefit of all.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in an independent Scotland, what arrangements it would put in place to ensure cooperation between the Scottish intelligence and security agencies and those in the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15962)

Nicola Sturgeon: As I said at the Foreign Affairs Committee on 28 January 2013, there would be a very close relationship between Scotland and the rest of the UK. It would clearly be in the interests of the rest of the UK and Scotland to work together to ensure the continued security of our shared island.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the number of (a) personnel, (b) ships, (c) submarines and (d) bases in an independent Scotland's navy.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15963)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of an independent Scotland's need to negotiate separate extradition treaties with other countries.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15964)

Kenny MacAskill: An independent Scottish Government would continue with the treaty rights and obligations of the UK which currently apply in Scotland.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what relationship an independent Scotland would have with the proposed National Crime Agency.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15965)

Kenny MacAskill: Well-established arrangements exist to ensure effective cooperation between Police Scotland and the Serious Organised Crime Agency, and will continue once the National Crime Agency becomes operational later this year. Police Scotland will continue to work with the rest of the UK as appropriate to ensure that these arrangements operate in an independent Scotland.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the number of (a) personnel, (b) planes, (c) helicopters and (d) bases in an independent Scotland's air force.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15966)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has for an independent Scotland's cross-border

cooperation on serious and organised crime and how it would compare with the current UK-wide system.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15967)

Kenny MacAskill: Serious and organised crime does not respect or recognise borders between countries. Cross-border information sharing powers already exist in legislation and operate effectively, across the rest of the UK and wider. Current arrangements are equally beneficial for all countries involved. The Scottish Government will work with the rest of the UK to ensure that these arrangements continue.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland's defence forces would include special forces and, if so, how many.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15968)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has for an independent Scotland's representation in foreign embassies and consulates.

(S4W-15969)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15890 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how an independent Scotland would provide for the UK-wide counter terrorism responsibilities currently carried out by the Metropolitan Police and at what cost.

(S4W-15970)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Police Service of Scotland is currently responsible for counter-terrorism policing in Scotland with some specialist capacity provided by partners and this situation would continue post-independence. We do not expect this to give rise to increased costs.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the size of the territorial army in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15971)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has for the recruitment of officers and civilians trained in counter terrorism for an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15972)

Nicola Sturgeon: Building on the responsibilities that it currently discharges, an independent Scotland will have an appropriate range of capabilities to deal with counter terrorism. In the event of independence, the recruitment and training of officers and civilians will be an operational matter for the agencies concerned.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the external (a) crime and (b) security threats to an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15973)

Nicola Sturgeon: As I indicated at the Foreign Affairs Committee on 28 January 2013, in common with many other countries, the threats that an independent Scotland would face include: cyber threat, international terrorism, the threat that comes from global instability and the possibility of failed states, and serious organised crime.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what type of planes an independent Scotland's air force would have, broken down by number.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15974)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what type of ships an independent Scotland's navy would have, broken down by number.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15975)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what impact independence would have on the contracts to assemble HMS (a) Queen Elizabeth and (b) Prince of Wales at Rosyth.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15976)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government is not aware of any impact on the contract to assemble HMS Queen Elizabeth or HMS Prince of Wales that would come from independence.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government to how many contracts relating to Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers it is a signatory.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013 (S4W-15977)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers are procured by the UK Government. Scottish taxpayers contribute towards the cost of, and therefore have a significant stake in, defence assets.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has on future orders for the workforce at Rosyth after completion of its current contracts for Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15978)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government and Scottish Enterprise are in regular contact with Babcock. In addition to Babcock's major role in the build of the Royal Navy's new Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers, the company has been pursuing a plan to secure work in key commercial markets which utilise key facilities and engineering skills at Rosyth. A recent example of this is their contract with BP to build over 70 subsea modules, as part of their QUAD 204 project in the North Sea.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many government orders are expected to be placed with an independent Scotland's shipyards and for what type of ships.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15979)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would have access to the services of an aircraft carrier after 2020.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15980)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with shipyard workers or their representatives about the consequences of independence.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15981)

Nicola Sturgeon: There have been discussions with shipyard workers and their representatives this year:

13 February 2013 – Deputy First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth met Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU) trade union representatives: Jamie Webster, GMB; John Dolan, GMB; Duncan McPhee, UNITE; Billy McKay, UNITE

28 February 2013 – the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth had a teleconference with CSEU representatives

31 May 2013 – The Minister for Transport and Veterans addressed a meeting of shop stewards from the defence and manufacturing sector who are members of CSEU unions

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether British army personnel who joined up in Scotland would be expected to transfer to an independent Scotland's defence forces.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15982)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Scotland has suffered disproportionate reductions in its defence footprint. Between 2000 and 2012 the total number of service and civilian MOD personnel dropped by 53,510 (just under 20%). The reduction disproportionately affected Scotland, with a drop of 8,800 of just over 35%. Scottish Ministers believe that defence service personnel should have reassurance that they will not face compulsory redundancy during their service contract

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether the same range of career opportunities would be available to members of an independent Scotland's defence force as the British armed forces.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15983)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Scottish Ministers also believe that defence service personnel should have reassurance that they will not face compulsory redundancy during their service contract.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the minimum number of experienced personnel who would be required to transfer from the British armed forces in order for an independent Scotland's defence forces to be viable.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15984)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the number of jobs in Scotland dependent on Ministry of Defence contracts.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15985)

Nicola Sturgeon: It cannot be assumed that all defence industry jobs in Scotland are dependent on Ministry of Defence contracts. It should be noted that the numbers working in defence-related industries has been falling from its peak as work on the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers nears completion. Following a 'yes' vote the Scottish Government and its agencies Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Development International would continue to support Scotland's indigenous defence industries in existing, new and emerging markets.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the number of defence sector jobs in Scotland that would be required by an independent Scotland's defence forces.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15986)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the number of defence sector research and development jobs that there would be in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15987)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would have its own (a) security and (b) signals intelligence and, if so, how much it would cost to (i) establish and (ii) operate.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15988)

Nicola Sturgeon: As I indicated at the Foreign Affairs Committee on 28 January 2013, it is envisaged that Scotland would have independent domestic intelligence machinery sitting alongside our police service.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what the timetable would be for an independent Scotland to establish intelligence sharing protocols with other countries.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15989)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at:

www.scotreferendum.com including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would receive a proportionate share of GCHQ's resources.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15992)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish people provide a proportionate contribution to the assets and functions of GCHQ and we expect that this will be reflected in the settlement and any agreements post-independence.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made regarding how separation from the rest of the UK would impact on jobs in the (a) defence and (b) security sector.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15994)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what military resources an independent Scotland would have to protect its overseas interests.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15995)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what consideration it has given to military procurement policy in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15996)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the cost of an independent Scotland losing any economies of scale associated with the UK's military procurement policy.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15997)

Nicola Sturgeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-15951 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what the search and rescue capacity would be in an independent Scotland, broken down by (a) ships, (b) aeroplanes, (c) helicopters and (d) personnel.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-15998)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government takes its search and rescue responsibilities extremely seriously and we disagreed strongly with the UK Government's decision in 2010 to cancel the Nimrod MRA4 programme, leaving the UK with no current maritime patrol aircraft capability. The Scottish Government will ensure that appropriate arrangements for search and rescue (SAR) will continue in an independent Scotland (including cross border agreements), based on capabilities currently its responsibility under devolved arrangements and a process of transition from current arrangements, where those are currently the responsibility of the UK Government.

Police Scotland are responsible for co-ordination of land-based SAR operations and in a SAR emergency the individual Mountain Rescue Teams are tasked by, and operate on behalf of, Police Scotland to undertake any mountain SAR service required, assisted by the military as necessary. The Department for Transport recently announced that the contract for the provision of UK SAR helicopter services has been awarded to the Aberdeen-based company, Bristow Helicopters Ltd. The new contract is due to commence progressively from 2015, with a term of up to 10 years, with nine helicopters based across Sumburgh, Stornoway, Prestwick and Inverness. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency is currently responsible for SAR at sea.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what the timescale would be for establishing a financial regulator in an independent Scotland; how much it would cost to (a) establish and (b) operate; what its governance arrangements would be, and what degree of autonomy it would have.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-16000)

John Swinney: The Fiscal Commission Working Group has set out a robust macroeconomic framework for Scotland post-independence including financial regulation.

In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services, including transition from the current arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully through taxes and fees levied in Scotland by the UK Government. An independent Scotland would not simply replicate UK structures but would develop services based on the needs of Scotland, best practice and the views of our stakeholders.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what body in an independent Scotland would oversee macro-prudential regulation of the financial system.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-16003)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16000 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what body in an independent Scotland would carry out the duties of the (a) Prudential Regulation and (b) Financial Conduct Authority.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-16004)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16000 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would adopt the financial services rules and regulations of the UK and, if not, how long it would take for it to set out its own and what assessment it has made of how these might impact on the competitiveness of businesses.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-16006)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16000 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what body in an independent Scotland would undertake the role performed by the Office of Rail Regulation.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-16008)

Keith Brown: Proposals for economic and competition regulation in an Independent Scotland were published by the Scottish Government earlier this year. This included proposals for the economic and safety regulatory functions for Scotland's railways currently performed by the Office of Rail Regulation. Full details can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2013/02/1911>

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

Decisions on these and other proposals will be made by the parliament and government of an independent Scotland elected in 2016 and thereafter. Political parties, stakeholders, and individuals will have their own preferences for the policies to be pursued in an independent Scotland and the

arguments for and against, and between, the range of policy choices available to an independent Scotland will form a central part of the national debate before the referendum and then in the run up to the 2016 Scottish election.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what impact it anticipates independence would have on the cost of borrowing.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-16009)

John Swinney: Scotland is in a stronger fiscal position than the rest of the UK. Scotland's balance sheet estimates that over the period 2007-08 to 2011-12 as a whole Scotland's relative fiscal surplus was equivalent to £12.6 billion. Additionally, in each of the last 32 years to 2011-12, per capita tax receipts in Scotland have been higher than in the UK. The paper can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00418420.pdf>

Independence would provide the Scottish Government with the key economic and fiscal levers to promote sustainable economic growth and to tackle inequalities. The Fiscal Commission Working Group has set out a robust macroeconomic framework for Scotland post-independence.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of independence on the cost of (a) mortgage and (b) credit card borrowing.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-16011)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16009 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Lending decisions are ultimately based on characteristics of an individual, the outlook for the economy and the lending institution. A number of small countries, including Finland, Austria and Denmark, have lower interest rates on long term housing loans compared to the UK.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of what the (a) international reputation and (b) credit-worthiness of an independent Scotland would be if it did not take a share of UK debt.

Holding answer issued: 24 July 2013

(S4W-16012)

John Swinney: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16009 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would be a member of the G7, G8 or G20.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16312)

Fiona Hyslop: As with other comparable countries, an independent Scotland would not expect to be a member of these groups. However, as a member of the EU, Scotland's interests would be represented at the G8 and G20.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the process by which an independent Scotland could join the World Trade Organization and how long it would take.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16313)

John Swinney: An independent Scottish Government would remain in membership of a range of international organisations and would follow standard procedures to do so. Given that Scotland, as part of the UK, already meets membership requirements, we do not anticipate any barriers to Scotland's timely membership.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact on (a) whisky producers and (b) other manufacturers if they were required to pay import duties during an independent Scotland's negotiations for membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16315)

John Swinney: Since an independent Scotland would be a member of, and represented by, the EU, which the WTO describes as "a single customs union with a single trade policy and tariff", there is no reason why any Scottish company should be required to pay import duties during the period of negotiations.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of (a) the process and (b) how long it would take for an independent Scotland to join the (i) International Monetary Fund and (ii) World Bank.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16316)

John Swinney: An independent Scottish Government would remain in membership of a range of international organisations and would follow standard procedures to do so. Given that Scotland, as part of the UK, already meets membership requirements, we do not anticipate any barriers to Scotland's timely membership.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what level of consular support an independent Scotland would provide for Scottish business and leisure travellers; how this would be provided, and what the (a) start-up and (b) annual running costs would be.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16320)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16321 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government in what countries an independent Scotland would seek to establish diplomatic offices and in which countries where there are currently UK diplomatic offices it would no longer have representation.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16321)

Fiona Hyslop: An independent Scotland would be represented overseas by a network which worked in the national interests of Scotland. In addition, Scottish Ministers would be open to the sharing of services and facilities with the rest of the UK or with other countries where there was mutual benefit to this. Such arrangements already exist between the UK and other nations, for example, Canada. At present taxes levied in Scotland are used to pay for the UK foreign and diplomatic service.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would seek membership of the (a) European Investment Bank, (b) International Civil Aviation Organisation, (c) International Labour Organisation,

(d) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), (e) World Food Programme, (f) World Health Organization, (g) World Meteorological Organization, (h) International Olympic Committee, (i) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), (j) INTERPOL and (k) International Maritime Organization and, if so, what the process would be for each and how long it would take.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16322)

Fiona Hyslop: An independent Scottish Government would remain in membership of a range of international organisations and would follow standard procedures to do so. Given that Scotland, as part of the UK, already meets membership requirements, we do not anticipate any barriers to Scotland's timely membership.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what guarantees it has received from the EU that an independent Scotland would receive the same European Structural Funds income as it currently does.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16333)

John Swinney: Structural funds are allocated on a regional basis (at NUTS 2 region level, of which Scotland has 4). Scotland therefore already has a distinct allocation, although it is distributed to the UK by the commission. The method for national and regional allocations are agreed as part of the overall budget settlement between member states.

With its own seat at the table, Scotland could secure a fair deal for itself by taking a full part in those negotiations. In the most recent negotiations for the 2014-2020 budget, for example, Denmark succeeded in winning, for the first time, a rebate of 130 million euros per year

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of how many votes an independent Scotland would have at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council as an EU member state.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16334)

Fiona Hyslop: Scotland currently has no votes in its own right at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council but would have full voting rights as an Independent state. Independence will ensure that Scotland's government is able to represent Scotland's EU interests as a full and equal partner in the EU system of governance. This is a system of governance in which legislative and policy outcomes are the result of a process of negotiation and discussion, with decisions reached by consensus, where at all possible.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of how fishing quotas would be allocated in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16335)

Richard Lochhead: As a Member State of the EU Scotland would expect its fishing quotas to be allocated in the same way as all other Member States, based on the EU's approach which provides a fixed share of fishing opportunities for EU Member States.

With regard to allocation of quota within Scotland, this is already administered by Scottish Ministers and would continue to be the case in an independent Scotland.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of whether an independent Scotland would be part of the common (a) agricultural and (b) fisheries policy.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16336)

Richard Lochhead: As a member state of the EU, an independent Scotland would enjoy the full range of rights and responsibilities of EU membership including in relation to the Common Agriculture Policy and Common Fisheries Policy.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of whether citizens of an independent Scotland would require passports when travelling to the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16337)

Fiona Hyslop: As a part of the common travel area, Scottish citizens would not require passports to travel to the rest of the UK.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the cost of setting up a separate passport service in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16338)

Fiona Hyslop: In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services including transition from the current arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully through taxes and fees levied in Scotland by the UK Government. An independent Scotland would not simply replicate UK structures but would develop services based on the needs of Scotland, best practice and the views of our stakeholders.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of where an independent Scotland would set its maritime border with the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16339)

Richard Lochhead: The establishment of a single maritime boundary between an independent Scotland and the rest of the UK will be agreed in accordance with well-established international law. Recent research by Professor Alex Kemp of Aberdeen University has suggested that around 98.8 per cent of North Sea oil production in the 30 years from 2011 will come from Scotland's geographical share of the current UK Continental Shelf.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what guarantees it has received from the European Union regarding whether an independent Scotland would be a member of the Common Travel Area.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16340)

Fiona Hyslop: The Common Travel Area is maintained by agreement between the UK and the Republic of Ireland, and is not an arrangement governed by EU legislation.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what guarantees it has received from the EU that an independent Scotland would be exempt from the Schengen Agreement.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16341)

Fiona Hyslop: The UK and the Republic of Ireland are not required by the EU to be a part of the Schengen area, and as a part of the Common Travel Area, the same arrangement would apply to an independent Scotland.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the border controls required in an independent Scotland and the associated costs.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16342)

Kenny MacAskill: The primary function of government is to ensure the security of its citizens and to protect them, their property and way of life against threats; this includes securing the border, not only against the abuses relating to immigration fraud, but also exploitation by organised crime groups and terrorists.

In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services including transition from the current UK arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully.

Independence would allow Scotland to design a border agency which meets the needs of Scotland's immigration policies and would not look to simply replicate the UK structure. There would continue to be a key role for the Border Policing Command of the Police Service of Scotland and any enforcement will need to be based on close collaboration with our neighbours to tackle the range of threats.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of an independent Scotland's asylum policy and the associated costs.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16343)

Fiona Hyslop: In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services including transition from the current arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully through taxes and fees levied in Scotland by the UK Government. An independent Scotland would not simply replicate UK structures but would develop services based on the needs of Scotland, best practice and the views of our stakeholders.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what would operate in place of the Migration Advisory Committee in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16344)

Fiona Hyslop: Scotland currently contributes to the Migration Advisory Committee from taxation but services provided are geared to the UK Government's needs. We would use our share of resources to meet Scotland's needs.

In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services including transition from the current arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully through taxes levied in Scotland by the UK Government. An independent Scotland would not simply replicate UK structures but would develop services based on the needs of Scotland, best practice and the views of our stakeholders.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of whether there would be automatic rights of citizenship for English residents in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16345)

Fiona Hyslop: Citizenship in an independent Scotland will be based upon an inclusive model, recognising our shared history with the rest of the UK.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of whether citizens of an independent Scotland would be able to retain their (a) UK citizenship and (b) British passport.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16346)

Fiona Hyslop: This would be a matter for the UK post-independence to decide. However, Britain already permits dual nationality and passport entitlement for citizens of all other countries and it is reasonable to maintain inclusive and practical mutual arrangements for Scottish citizens.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of whether citizens of an independent Scotland would have the same immigration rights in British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies as citizens of the rest of the UK.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16348)

Fiona Hyslop: The British Overseas Territories can determine their own immigration arrangements and it would be reasonable for them to continue similar arrangements for Scottish citizens and those of the rest of the UK. The Crown Dependencies are part of the Common Travel Area and with Scotland within the Common Travel Area, Scottish citizens would have freedom of movement to these islands.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether the BBC would remain the main public broadcaster in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16349)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16351 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how the assets of the BBC would be divided if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16350)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16351 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what broadcasting licence fees and charges would apply in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16351)

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government has no plans to alter the value of the licence fee after independence. Political parties, stakeholders, and individuals will have their own preferences for the policies to be pursued in an independent Scotland and the arguments for and against, and between, the range of policy choices available to an independent Scotland will form a central part of the national debate before the referendum and then in the run up to the 2016 Scottish election.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the cost of using the BBC iPlayer in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16352)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16351 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether there would be advertising on a Scottish public broadcaster in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16353)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16351 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what body would regulate the media in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16354)

Fiona Hyslop: In relation to broadcasting I refer the member to the Scottish Government's paper on Economic and Competition Regulation in an Independent Scotland, published on 28 February 2013 and available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00415411.pdf>

In relation to the printed media, the Scottish Government believes in an all-party approach to promote the principle of independent self-regulation.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would have access to all BBC programmes and, if not, whether there would be a reduced licence fee for receiving BBC Scotland programming only.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16355)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16351 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether the eligibility criteria for a free TV licence would remain the same in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16356)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16351 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

It should be noted that the current UK Deputy Prime Minister has questioned whether pensioner benefits, such as the free TV licence, should continue to be provided on a universal basis.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would have its own media regulator and, if so, what assessment it has made of any gaps in skills, expertise and knowledge to staff such a body.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16357)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16354 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would have its own broadcasting code for radio and television.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16358)

Fiona Hyslop: The regulatory authority for broadcasting would inherit the existing Broadcasting Code at independence and could amend it over time as necessary to suit Scottish circumstances, within the requirements set by the European Audio-Visual Media Services Directive.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what would operate in place of the Advertising Standards Authority in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16359)

Fiona Hyslop: As advertising is self-regulated by the industry it would be a matter for the industry to decide how best to configure, fund and staff its regulation after independence. There is no reason why the Advertising Standards Authority should not continue to operate in an independent Scotland.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would have its own advertising regulator and, if so, what assessment it has made of any gaps in skills, expertise and knowledge to staff such a body.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16360)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16359 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how an independent Scotland's (a) advertising and (b) media regulator would be funded.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16361)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16357 and S4W-16359 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how Scotland becoming independent would affect a Scottish city's status as UK City of culture.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16362)

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government would be delighted if the decision reached in November 2013 is for Dundee to become the UK City of Culture 2017, as we recognise the significant contribution Dundee makes to Scotland's rich cultural life and economy. Such commitment and recognition should be honoured as part of the continuing cultural celebration and collaboration.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what would operate in place of the Civil Aviation Authority in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16363)

Keith Brown: These functions are currently reserved, and on independence would become the responsibility of the Parliament and Government of an independent Scotland. In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services and would fully meet its international obligations.

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at www.scotreferendum.com including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would have its own aviation regulator and, if so, what assessment it has made of any gaps in skills, expertise and knowledge to staff such a body.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16364)

Keith Brown: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-16363 on 30 August 2013. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how any aviation regulator in an independent Scotland would be funded.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16365)

Keith Brown: Under the existing model, the CAA's costs are met by those who it regulates. The Scottish Government would see this as the basis for resourcing civil aviation regulation after independence.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the implications of independence for air traffic control.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16366)

Keith Brown: Scottish independence would have no effect on air traffic control operations. Scotland would meet its international obligations.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the implications of independence for duty free trading at airports.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16367)

John Swinney: An independent Scotland will continue to operate within the common custom union of the EU.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what would operate in place of the Office of Rail Regulation in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16368)

Keith Brown: These functions are currently reserved, and on independence would become the responsibility of the Parliament and Government of an independent Scotland. In delivering these functions, an independent Scotland would ensure continuity of services including transition from the current UK arrangements to which Scotland currently contributes fully. Proposals for economic and competition regulation in an independent Scotland were published by the Scottish Government earlier this year. This included proposals for the economic and safety regulatory functions for Scotland's railways currently performed by the Office of Rail Regulation. Full details can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2013/02/1911>

The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at www.scotreferendum.com

including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

Decisions on these and other proposals will be made by the Parliament and Government of an independent Scotland elected in 2016 and thereafter. Political parties, stakeholders, and individuals will have their own preferences for the policies to be pursued in an independent Scotland and the arguments for and against, and between, the range of policy choices available to an independent Scotland will form a central part of the national debate before the referendum and then in the run up to the 2016 Scottish election.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether an independent Scotland would take over the proportion of Network Rail debt and interest that can be attributed to the network in Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16369)

Keith Brown: The Scottish Government has always been very clear that it will accept its fair share of both assets and liabilities following a vote for independence.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of independence on future Network Rail investment, given that it borrows against its asset base.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16370)

Keith Brown: Network Rail is a private company. The Scottish Government already specifies and funds Network Rail's operation, maintenance, renewal and enhancement of the rail infrastructure in Scotland. Last year we set out an ambitious programme of investment for Scotland's railway infrastructure that Network Rail will deliver between 2014 and 2019 irrespective of the independence vote.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of any impact of independence on cross-border subsidy for loss-making railway services.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16371)

Keith Brown: Scotland will remain an integral part of the rail network in the British Isles. With the exception of the Caledonian Sleepers, cross border rail services are currently let by the UK Government and the Scottish Ministers are limited to providing advice on the specification of these services. Overall, cross border passenger growth has increased significantly; many of these services are profitable for operators and the UK Government. Additionally, given the economic importance of these routes to both Scotland and the rest of the UK, cross border services would continue to operate in an independent Scotland, and opportunities will arise to ensure these services continue to best meet the needs of the people of Scotland.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of independence on cross-border sleeper services that are subsidised by the UK Government and the Scottish Government.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16372)

Keith Brown: There will be no impact on cross border sleeper services. There are no cross-border sleeper services subsidised by the UK Government. The Scottish Government is responsible for letting, managing and providing on-going funding for the Caledonian Sleeper franchise, therefore there will be no impact to these services. The UK Government provided a one-off contribution to the upgrade of the Caledonian Sleeper service, which was matched by the Scottish Government. However on-going costs are being, and will continue to be, met by the Scottish Government.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what body would be responsible for the franchising and running of cross-border rail services if Scotland became independent.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16373)

Keith Brown: Both the UK and Scottish Governments would continue to be responsible for ensuring provision of cross-border services.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of any impact that independence would have on plans for high-speed rail services between London and Scotland and the associated cost to Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16374)

Keith Brown: There are currently no committed plans to extend high speed rail to Scotland, despite a proposed £43 billion investment to connect London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds, and deliver economic benefits to those cities.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of any impact that independence would have on the protection afforded to air links between Scotland and England under EU law.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16375)

Keith Brown: There will be no threat to these links from independence. The Scottish Government would still have the ability to promote public service obligations on those routes considered to be of particular economic importance and control of air passenger duty would enable the Scottish Government to reform aviation taxation to stop it from being so damaging to industry and burdensome on passengers.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the cost of establishing the new state structures required in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16376)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government will publish its detailed white paper with positive proposals on the opportunities and gains of independence in the autumn. Material on the referendum and the Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland can be found at: www.scotreferendum.com, including published papers and speeches. This site will be regularly updated with additional material including the Scottish Government's white paper in the run up to the referendum.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of how long it would take to establish the new state structures required in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16377)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government publication *Scotland's Future: from the Referendum to Independence and a Written Constitution* published in February 2013 sets out the Government's position on the transition from a vote for independence to Scotland's independence day.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the number of additional staff it would need to employ in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013

(S4W-16378)

John Swinney: The number of civil servants required to administer the full range of policies and services that will become the responsibility of an independent Scotland will be dependent on a number of variables, including the overall public sector landscape that is inherited at the point of independence and the decisions taken by Scottish Ministers on the delivery, transition to and design of Scottish policies and services thereafter.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government who would have the right to vote in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16379)

Nicola Sturgeon: The franchise for elections to the Scottish Parliament in an independent Scotland will be similar to the franchise that is currently used, which is based on residency. The Scottish Government believes that the voting age should be lowered to 16 for all elections.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government who would be eligible to stand for election in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16380)

Nicola Sturgeon: Eligibility for candidacy in Scottish Parliament and Scottish Local Government elections will be similar in an independent Scotland to current eligibility requirements.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to establish an electoral commission in an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16381)

Nicola Sturgeon: Following a vote for independence, the Scottish Government will ensure that the necessary measures are in place for the organisation and regulation of the 2016 Scottish Parliamentary elections and subsequent elections in Scotland.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it has plans for an upper chamber in the parliament of an independent Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16382)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government publication *Scotland's Future: from the Referendum to Independence and a Written Constitution* published in February 2013 sets out the Government's position on parliamentary structures.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether the monarch of the rest of the UK would be the head of state of an independent Scotland and, if so, what the impact would be of the Scottish Parliament taking a different position from the rest of the UK on the line of succession.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16383)

Nicola Sturgeon: The Scottish Government publication *Scotland's Future: from the Referendum to Independence and a Written Constitution* published in February 2013 sets out the government's position on continuity of the monarchy in an independent Scotland.

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether, in an independent Scotland, people would have the right to be members of trades unions that wanted to organise across the rest of the UK and Scotland.

Holding answer issued: 6 August 2013 (S4W-16385)

John Swinney: In an independent Scotland people would still have the right to be a member of a trade union. It is for the unions themselves to decide on what basis they wish to be organised.

Transport Scotland

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it was informed by Transport Scotland that FirstGroup would be paid a bonus of £51,989 following the Service Quality Incentive Regime outcomes for April to June 2013.

(S4W-16607)

Keith Brown: No, there is no requirement for Transport Scotland to notify the Scottish Government of individual or quarterly payments or penalties. For the SQUIRE Year (23 June 2012 – 22 June 2013) the overall annual financial result was a penalty of £133,126 (Before RPI).

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on the awarding of bonuses to private companies for meeting the standards required of franchises.

(S4W-16608)

Keith Brown: Transport Scotland's well established Service Quality Incentive Regime provides incentives to the franchisee (First ScotRail) for above "benchmark" performance and penalties for areas that fall below. This covers 36 different areas which affect rail passengers experience.

Over the period of the current franchise, ScotRail has never received an overall annual incentive payment for SQUIRE. Penalties have reduced year on year since the regime was rolled out to all Scottish stations and trains. Annual figures have reduced from £938,959 (before RPI) in 2009 to £133,126 (before RPI) in 2013. This indicates that performance has improved without the Scottish Government providing additional payments.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on whether the Service Quality Incentive Regime for the ScotRail franchise requires bonus payments or whether penalties for not meeting targets would be sufficient.

(S4W-16609)

Keith Brown: The Service Quality Incentive Regime is a vital aspect of the Franchise Agreement as it encourages and incentivises investment by the Franchisee to actually surpass the benchmark level thus improving the performance of facilities and services for passengers. Failure to meet the benchmark level can result in penalties to the Franchisee.

The robust and thorough regime has received numerous positive comments within the rail industry and from Audit Scotland.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to ensure that future ScotRail franchises do not include bonus payments.

(S4W-16610)

Keith Brown: The two new franchise contracts, Caledonian Sleeper and ScotRail, will include refinements of the current SQUIRE regime.

In the case of the Caledonian Sleeper Franchise, SQUIRE assessments of station and train quality will be undertaken. These will commence without any financial penalty or incentive payments, but the financial regime will be triggered if quality levels fall below the pre-agreed thresholds.

For the ScotRail franchise, a refined SQUIRE regime with penalty and incentive payments will be in place from commencement. Other aspects of service quality will not be subject to out-performance or bonus payments from the Scottish Government in either franchise.

The following questions received holding answers:

S4W-16580

S4W-16581

S4W-16582
S4W-16584