

Monday 9 September 2013

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Enterprise and Environment

Kevin Stewart (Aberdeen Central) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has on how many breeding pairs of gull there have been in each of the last 10 years, broken down by species.

(S4W-16704)

Paul Wheelhouse: Seabird 2000 which took place between 1998 and 2002 was the last national census of seabird populations. Further details of Seabird 2000 can be found at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-3120>

Between national censuses, the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) collects data on breeding numbers and breeding success of 26 species of seabirds which enables populations to be estimated, where there is sufficient data to do so. Further details of the SMP and the data held can be found at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1550>

For the gull species the following estimates can be derived:

Gull Species	Seabird 2000 population estimate of breeding pairs for Scotland	% Population change between Seabird 2000 population estimate and 2012	Estimated 2012 population of breeding pairs for Scotland
Black-headed gull	43,191	n/a	n/a
Common gull	20,467	-36	c. 13,000
Lesser black-backed gull	25,057	n/a	n/a
Herring gull	72,130	-20	c. 58,000
Great black-backed gull	14,776	-60	c. 6,000
Black-legged kittiwake	282,213	-59	c. 116,000

Notes:

All figures refer to the number of breeding pairs.

Figures quoted for 2012 are derived estimates, not actual population counts.

The data for common gull refers to coastal populations only (which held only 42% of the total population during Seabird 2000).

Finance

James Kelly (Rutherglen) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it has a monitoring system to ensure that companies contracted by it do not use so-called zero-hour contracts and, if so, how this operates.

Holding answer issued: 4 September 2013

(S4W-16624)

Nicola Sturgeon: Companies bidding for significant contracts are required to state whether they have been found guilty of any criminal offences, or have committed any acts of grave misconduct in the course of their business.

The Scottish Government's standard terms and conditions of contract also require that in performing the contract, the contractor must comply with all applicable law, including employment law. We are not aware of any evidence that contractors to the Scottish Government are using zero hours contracts inappropriately. If anyone has such evidence they should bring it to our attention and we will consider what action might be appropriate.

The Procurement Reform Bill will also address the ways in which purchasers assess a contractor's approach to recruitment and terms of engagement of persons involved in delivering the contract.

Learning and Justice

Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government what recent meetings it has had with NATO regarding an independent Scotland and what was discussed.

(S4W-16734)

Nicola Sturgeon: An introductory meeting between representatives of the Scottish Government and NATO took place at NATO HQ in Brussels on 8 July 2013.

John Wilson (Central Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government who attended the recent meeting between it and NATO regarding an independent Scotland; what input it had into what was discussed; whether it will publish a record of the meeting and who requested that the meeting be held.

(S4W-16735)

Nicola Sturgeon: This was an introductory visit to NATO's HQ in Brussels by officials from the Scottish Government's International Division, Resilience Division and EU Office. It was arranged by the UK Delegation to NATO at the Scottish Government's request. We can confirm that a useful initial discussion was had.

Christina McKelvie (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it plans to bring forward a bill containing new measures to combat human trafficking.

(S4W-17017)

Kenny MacAskill: Scottish trafficking legislation is kept under review and the Scottish Government will respond as appropriate to any developments to reflect our commitment to tackle this crime. Trafficking is an international and cross border crime and a partnership approach is the most effective way to tackle the crime. The Scottish Government notes that the UK Government intends to bring forward a Modern Slavery Bill. We will give careful consideration to the UK Bill and explore with the UK Government the possibility of that Bill covering Scottish interests.

Transport Scotland

Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-16541 by Keith Brown on 21 August 2013, whether it will provide the information requested regarding whether it will involve action groups for other ferry services in a similar way.

(S4W-16819)

Keith Brown: Further to the answer to S4W-16541, we will involve action groups regarding other ferry services as and when appropriate. The level and type of involvement for such groups can be considered by ministers on a case by case basis.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the recent advice issued by the British Transport Police regarding luggage theft, what its position is on the adequacy of luggage space on trains in Scotland and whether it will make it a condition of the next franchise process that this should be increased.

(S4W-16834)

Keith Brown: Within the next franchise, specification of the franchisee will be requested to improve upon the facilities for storing on-train, large items of luggage within sight/proximity of passengers when seated and overhead storage for smaller items of hand luggage.

The following questions received holding answers:

S4W-16692

S4W-16693

S4W-16702