

Tuesday 17 December 2013

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Governance and Communities

Iain Gray (East Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the comments in its paper, *Pensions in an Independent Scotland*, that it would “consider the pension terms of all uniformed services”, what projections it has made of the cost of changes to the terms.

Holding answer issued: 15 November 2013

(S4W-17848)

John Swinney: Public sector pensions policy has been imposed on Scotland with insufficient engagement and consultation. In March 2012 the Scottish Government entered into partnership negotiations on the terms of reformed pension schemes in good faith, requiring the new schemes to: be implemented from April 2015; be career average by design, fit within the cost constraints applied by the UK Government. However, pensions policy is currently reserved to Westminster and the UK Government imposed additional constraints on the negotiations through its Public Service Pensions Act.

It would be a matter for future Scottish Governments to set the terms of any such exercise and the financial resources available. The white paper, *Scotland's Future: Your Guide to an Independent Scotland* includes the commitment that under independence, with a full range of powers at its disposal, this Scottish Government would consider the pension terms of uniformed services, including whether they should have access to their occupational pension at a consistent age or whether this should better reflect the role they carry out and the physical impact of their service. This would be informed by the recommendation of its Independent Commission on the appropriate State Pension Age for Scotland.

Mike MacKenzie (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many properties receive support from the small business bonus scheme as part of its rates relief package, broken down by local authority area.

(S4W-18782)

John Swinney: The following table shows the number of properties that receive support from the small business bonus scheme, split by local authority area:

	Total number of recipients as at:					
	October 2008	October 2009	September 2010	September 2011	September 2012	September 2013
Aberdeen City	1,800	1,873	1,784	2,010	1,975	2,041
Aberdeenshire	4,016	4,501	4,726	5,040	5,170	5,330
Angus	1,854	1,904	2,067	2,125	2,190	2,212
Argyll and Bute	3,152	3,507	3,589	3,885	4,220	4,362
Clackmannanshire	509	569	637	696	741	787
Dumfries and Galloway	3,224	3,475	3,666	3,979	4,079	4,401
Dundee City	1,494	1,747	1,899	2,047	1,952	2,171
East Ayrshire	1,127	1,341	1,430	1,469	1,534	1,551
East Dunbartonshire	626	833	936	1,014	1,068	1,112
East Lothian	1,244	1,324	1,467	1,529	1,556	1,587
East Renfrewshire	550	613	676	693	737	747
Edinburgh, City of	4,728	5,601	6,275	6,316	6,691	6,163
Eilean Siar	405	561	507	735	821	885
Falkirk	1,365	1,579	1,675	1,719	1,879	1,947
Fife	3,912	4,581	5,004	5,365	5,516	5,800
Glasgow City	4,713	6,083	6,870	7,476	7,962	8,440
Highland	5,642	6,487	7,302	7,808	8,383	8,715
Inverclyde	604	715	793	872	921	983
Midlothian	779	948	1,081	1,124	1,127	1,107

	Total number of recipients as at:					
	October 2008	October 2009	September 2010	September 2011	September 2012	September 2013
Moray	1,509	1,722	1,772	1,815	1,863	2,018
North Ayrshire	1,847	2,086	2,271	2,425	2,477	2,604
North Lanarkshire	2,340	2,799	3,085	3,352	3,576	3,768
Orkney Islands	835	1,019	1,044	1,036	1,132	1,171
Perth and Kinross	2,893	3,203	3,441	3,798	3,991	4,166
Renfrewshire	1,797	2,091	2,242	2,258	2,503	2,432
Scottish Borders	2,809	2,981	3,281	3,414	3,489	3,580
Shetland Islands	407	551	551	626	671	700
South Ayrshire	1,625	1,848	1,944	2,019	2,063	2,164
South Lanarkshire	2,694	3,224	3,376	3,558	3,597	3,965
Stirling	1,716	1,859	1,909	2,076	2,155	2,224
West Dunbartonshire	655	773	977	1,079	1,111	1,194
West Lothian	1,308	1,541	1,744	1,841	1,937	2,054
Scotland	64,179	73,939	80,021	85,199	89,087	92,381

Health and Social Care

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide a list of the hospitals where inspection reports by the Healthcare Environment Inspectorate or reports by Healthcare Improvement Scotland on the care of older people in acute hospitals have included requirements that have been (a) repeated and (b) repeated on more than two inspections, broken down by requirement, in each of the last 10 years.

(S4W-18609)

Alex Neil: Hospitals where Healthcare Environment Inspectorate (HEI) Healthcare Associated Infection (HAI) inspection reports have included requirements that have been (a) repeated and (b) repeated on more than two inspections in inspections carried out since the HEI was established in 2009:

Hospital	(a) Repeated requirement	(b) Requirement repeated on more than two inspections
Arran War Memorial Hospital	Mattress checking. Estates reporting system.	None
University Hospital Ayr	Mattress checking. Compliance with Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs).	None
University Hospital Crosshouse, Kilmarnock	Isolation procedures.	None
Borders General Hospital, Melrose	Role of infection control manager (ICM). Communication between senior management Infection control Team (ICT) and ward staff. Management of waste. Cleaning frequencies for patient equipment. Dissemination of HAI info to public.	Cleaning schedules for patient equipment.
Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary	Communication and understanding re audit & surveillance data. Dissemination of HAI information to public.	None
	Mattress checking. Fridge temperature recording.	None

Hospital	(a) Repeated requirement	(b) Requirement repeated on more than two inspections
Queen Margaret Hospital, Dunfermline	Dress code compliance. Cleaning of patient equipment.	None
Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy	Accountability and responsibilities of ICT/ICM.	None
Stirling Royal Infirmary	Staff awareness/ understanding of surveillance data. Up-to-date Infection Control Manual. Cleaning frequencies. Dissemination of HAI info to public.	None
Aberdeen Maternity Hospital ¹	Cleaning of patient equipment.	None
Aberdeen Royal Infirmary	SICPs compliance (sharps disposal). SICPS compliance (waste disposal). Isolation procedures. Dissemination of HAI info to public. PVC compliance. Cleaning of patient equipment.	Isolation procedures. SICPS compliance (waste management)
Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital	Patient equipment. Cleaning schedules. Use of PPE.	Mattress checking
Gartnavel General Hospital, Glasgow	PVCs. Core HAI information being readily available.	None
Glasgow Royal Infirmary	Infection control manual. PVC compliance.	None
Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Greenock	PVC compliance.	None
Southern General Hospital, Glasgow	Assurance systems for cleaning.	None
Victoria Infirmary, Glasgow	PVC compliance. Cleaning of patient equipment.	Relating to PVC compliance and the cleaning of patient equipment.
Western Infirmary, Glasgow	Communication between estates. management and ward staff Patient isolation. PVC compliance.	None
Caithness General Hospital, Wick	Patient information. Cleaning duties and frequency.	None
MacKinnon Memorial Hospital, Broadford	SICPs.	None
Raigmore Hospital, Inverness	Cleaning schedules. Staff education. Dissemination of HAI information.	None

Hospital	(a) Repeated requirement	(b) Requirement repeated on more than two inspections
Hairmyres Hospital, East Kilbride	Environmental audits. SICPs. Staff training records.	None
Monklands Hospital, Airdrie	Mandatory training for staff. Risk assessments for isolation rooms. PVC compliance.	SICPs (sharps).
Wishaw General Hospital	Cleaning. Distribution of HAI information.	None
Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Edinburgh	SICPs.	None
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	Communication to staff. SICPs.	SICPs Compliance with national dress code. Mattresses.
St John's Hospital, Livingston	Ensuring patients and visitors have access to up-to-date HAI information.	None
Western General Hospital, Edinburgh	Effective communication. Risk assessment of patients. Cleaning of patient equipment. SICPs and implementation of policy.	None
Balfour Hospital, Kirkwall	SICPs.	None
Ninewells Hospital, Dundee	Reviewing lines of accountability in directorate of infection control. Implementing sharps and linen management policies. Implementing the colour coding scheme for cleaning equipment. Food fridge temperatures. Risk assessment of patients. Cleaning schedules. Communication. Up-to-date HAI information. Link requirement about completing implementation of cleaning schedules which were being developed in April 2011.	None
Western Isles Hospital, Stornoway	Role of ICM. Reporting faults. Fridge temperatures. Refurbishing floor. Decontamination of nasendoscopes.	None
Scottish Ambulance Service	SICPs. Risk assessment and communication about patients' infection status. Policy for station and vehicle cleaning. Communication and implementation of the policy with regards to the provision and use of mops.	None
State Hospital, Carstairs	Infection control manual. Implementation of HDL(2005)7(<i>Infection Control and Cleaning: Nursing Issues</i>). Finalising and observing dress code policy.	None

Hospital	(a) Repeated requirement	(b) Requirement repeated on more than two inspections
	Food fridge temperatures.	

¹The Inspection Report published on 29 October 2013 combined three inspections in one published report. The repeat requirement above was previously identified in November 2011 report.

All published HEI reports can be found at:

http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/inspecting_and_regulating_care/hei_inspections/all_hei_reports.aspx

Hospitals where Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) inspections on the care of older people in acute hospitals have included requirements that have been (a) repeated:

Hospital	Date of initial inspection	Date of follow up inspection	Repeat requirement
Glasgow Royal Infirmary	2–4 May 2012	31 July–1 August 2012	1 requirement: access to toilet facilities
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	27–29 August 2012	14–15 February 2013	9 requirements: Nurse call handsets. Screening and assessment for cognitive impairment in A&E. Request and record key personal information about people with dementia or other cognitive impairments Improvements to the ward environment to make it more suitable for people with dementia and cognitive impairment Range of activities and stimuli to help keep patients active. All patients have their height and weight recorded within 24 hours of admission ensure that patients' intake of food and fluid is accurately recorded, monitored assessment for the risk of developing pressure ulcers within six hours of admission to hospital Care plans are in place and followed for patients identified as at risk of developing pressure ulcers.

Hospitals where Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) inspections on the care of older people in acute hospitals have included requirements that have been (b) repeated on more than two inspections.

There have been no occasions so far where repeat inspections of the same hospital have been carried out in relation to the care of older people in acute hospitals.

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it has taken regarding inspection reports by the Healthcare Environment Inspectorate or reports by Healthcare Improvement Scotland on the care of older people in acute hospitals in which (a) requirements have been repeated or (b) escalation to local managers/senior clinical staff has had to be made since such inspections have taken place.

(S4W-18610)

Alex Neil: Healthcare Environment Inspectorate (HEI)

(a) A range of actions are taken by the Scottish Government in response to HEI inspection reports. Ministers and senior officials review all HEI reports and NHS board local action plans. Where a report highlights areas of particular concern, the Scottish Government will instruct Health Protection Scotland to co-ordinate support for the board to address the issue(s) identified as per the National Framework¹ for support. This framework sets out the requirements for national support and includes drawing on the support of national organisations such as NHS Education for Scotland, Health Facilities Scotland or with Healthcare Improvement Scotland where required.

(b) Since the inception of the Healthcare Environment Inspectorate (HEI) in 2009, there have been three escalations to the Scottish Government²:

Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in October 2009

Ninewells Hospital in November 2010

Aberdeen Maternity in October 2013

The HEI can escalate matters of concern via both formal and informal routes. The severity of the issue arising will determine how and to whom the concern will be escalated to. In some circumstances, the HEI may pursue formal escalation of a serious issue without first engaging in informal escalation activity with the NHS board.

The HEI will inform the NHS board on the day of inspection or as soon as possible of its concerns. This is to allow them to take immediate steps to address the issues, and protect the safety and welfare of patients, staff and the wider public.

The HEI's escalation procedures and definitions can be found at the following link:

http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/inspecting_and_regulating_care/hei_policies_and_procedures/escalation_procedure.aspx

1 CNO (2010)¹

2 Source: Healthcare Environment Inspectorate.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland inspections on the Care of Older People in Acute Hospitals:

a) Follow up inspections noted improvement in the areas identified. Following inspection, an action plan is developed by the NHS board. The Scottish Government expects NHS boards to take urgent action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement.

(b) There have been no formal escalations to local manager/senior clinical staff however, escalation to senior staff at the time of inspection is undertaken by the inspection team.

Learning and Justice

Hugh Henry (Renfrewshire South) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, if Scotland decides to separate from the rest of the UK, whether students from EU states would have to pay university tuition fees if the country did not immediately become an EU member.

(S4W-18633)

Michael Russell: If the people of Scotland vote 'Yes' on the 18 September 2014, the Scottish Government has proposed an 18 month period between the referendum and independence, which we believe is realistic for the terms of Scotland's independent membership of the EU to be agreed and all the necessary processes completed. It also provides sufficient time for the Scottish Government to undertake the necessary legal and institutional preparations for independent EU membership.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the costs involved in allowing schools to decide which Higher examinations pupils can take in 2015.

(S4W-18670)

Alasdair Allan: There are no anticipated additional costs.

The decision to 'dual run' the new Highers with current Highers in 2014-15 was taken several years ago, primarily to enable S6 learners to take the Higher qualification which would best fit their earlier learning and teaching experience. Costs for dual provision have therefore always been factored into the Scottish Qualification Authority's programme budget.

We have made clear that the new Highers provide smooth progression from the National 5 qualification and we consider it the natural option for young people in Scotland next session. However, school education is the responsibility of local authorities and we recognise that there needs to be some scope for local flexibility based on professional judgment. Where other options are being considered, teachers should work closely with their senior management, local authority and parent body to come to a decision. That decision, should be in the interest of learners, and involve all parties, rather than be taken by a single person. As there should be no additional costs involved, cost should not be a factor in decision-making.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government in how many primary (a) 1, (b) 2 and (c) 3 classes team teaching is used, broken down by local authority.

(S4W-18671)

Michael Russell: The following table shows for each local authority the number of primary 1, 2 and 3 classes that had more than one teacher as at September 2012. Composite classes with one or more pupils in primary 1, 2 or 3 and more than one teacher are shown separately:

	Primary 1	Primary 2	Primary 3	Composites with P1-P3 pupils
Aberdeen City	5	0	1	2
Aberdeenshire	1	0	0	0
Angus	0	0	1	1
Argyll and Bute	0	0	0	1
Clackmannanshire	1	1	1	1
Dumfries and Galloway	2	0	0	2
Dundee City	6	0	0	0
East Ayrshire	1	1	0	2
East Dunbartonshire	0	0	1	0
East Lothian	0	0	0	0
East Renfrewshire	11	0	0	0
Edinburgh City	23	8	13	1
Eilean Siar	0	0	0	0
Falkirk	0	0	0	0
Fife	4	4	6	5
Glasgow City	11	4	13	3
Highland	0	0	0	0
Inverclyde	0	3	1	0
Midlothian	0	0	0	0
Moray	1	1	2	2
North Ayrshire	1	1	0	1
North Lanarkshire	2	0	1	2
Orkney Islands	0	0	0	0
Perth and Kinross	0	0	0	0
Renfrewshire	1	2	3	2
Scottish Borders	3	0	1	3
Shetland Islands	0	0	0	1
South Ayrshire	0	0	0	0
South Lanarkshire	22	9	10	16
Stirling	3	1	2	1
West Dunbartonshire	0	0	1	0
West Lothian	2	0	0	4
All Local Authorities	100	35	57	50

Stewart Maxwell (West Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many overseas students are studying at university in Scotland; how many there were in 2010; whether it considers that the changes in the rules governing international student visas since 2010 have impacted on this and, if so, how.

(S4W-18683)

Michael Russell: Data on the number of overseas (i.e. Non-EU) students at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Scotland is produced by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The latest data is for academic year 2011-12. The total number of overseas students studying at Scottish HEIs increased by 2% from 27,840 in 2010-11 to 28,470 in 2011-12, with overseas entrants increasing by 2% over the same period. These figures demonstrate the appeal of Scotland's world-class universities in the face of the UK Government's tightening of student visa criteria. However, it must be noted that although overall entrant numbers have increased, entrants from some countries have declined considerably during this period.

The UK Government has closed the post-study work visa to new students. This change came into effect in April 2012; however it was announced in March 2011. This may therefore have influenced the decision of some overseas students to study in Scotland in 2011-12. In 2011-12, the number of new entrants to Scottish HEIs from India decreased from 1,985 in 2010-11 to 1,330 in 2011-12, a reduction of 33%; and the number of new entrants from Pakistan decreased from 400 in 2010-11 to 270 in 2011-12, a reduction of 32%. These were mostly post-graduate students. It is Scottish Government policy that a post-study work visa would be re-introduced in an independent Scotland to encourage more talented people from around the world to further their education in Scotland, providing income for Scotland's educational institutions and contributing to the local economy and community diversity.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether the Law Officers have given an opinion on the policy in the white paper on independence of charging UK students tuition fees.

(S4W-18826)

Michael Russell: The white paper is consistent with and informed by legal advice the Government has received. It is the long-standing practice of the Scottish and UK Governments, as is recognised in their respective Ministerial Codes, not to disclose the fact or content of advice from the Law Officers other than in the most exceptional circumstances.

Strategy and External Affairs

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether Pentland Ferries will be entitled to a proportion of the subsidy paid to Serco under the terms of the Northern Isles ferry contract during January 2014 when it fulfils requirements for lifeline passenger ferry services across the Pentland Firth.

(S4W-18589)

Nicola Sturgeon: No. Pentland Ferries will gain commercial benefit from the additional traffic carried during this period.

The MV Helliar is able to carry all expected freight vehicles and up to 12 passengers. Serco NorthLink Ferries held constructive dialogue with Pentland Ferries to ensure that ferry connectivity was maintained during this period of scheduled unavailability. Pentland Ferries has confirmed to Serco NorthLink Ferries that they are able to accommodate the overall travel demand across the Pentland Firth during this period. Serco NorthLink Ferries are providing courtesy buses between Scrabster and Gills Bay and Stromness and St Margaret's Hope to minimise any inconvenience to passengers. It is anticipated that the effective liaison between both operators will continue to ensure effective connections to and from Orkney.

Transport Scotland

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether the replacement of MV Hamnavoe with MV Helliar on the Stromness to Scrabster route in January 2014 is compliant with the terms of the contract that it signed with Serco in 2012.

(S4W-18587)

Keith Brown: The replacement service that will be provided in January 2014 is compliant with the terms of the public service contract signed between the Scottish Ministers and Serco Limited.

The contract requires the operator to provide a suitable replacement vessel to undertake the service between Scrabster and Stromness during periods of scheduled unavailability. On this occasion, the operator has fully demonstrated that, although they have sought to charter a suitable Ro-pax vessel, using international searches through shipbrokers, the scarcity of such charter tonnage means that the operator now intends to utilise the MV Helliar as the replacement vessel to provide all the freight services and some of the passenger services. This is compliant with the contract and contingency arrangements for such periods of scheduled unavailability.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether, as a result of the decision to operate the MV Helliar on the Stromness to Scrabster route in January 2014, Serco will be liable for fines under the terms of the contract for ferry services to the Northern Isles and, if so, how much those fines are expected to be.

(S4W-18588)

Keith Brown: The contract provides an overall regime of performance measures, with deductions to be applied, for failure to meet the performance measures. Performance measures cover reliability, punctuality, compliance and reporting.

During a period of scheduled unavailability, the contract permits departure from the contracted timetable, provided arrangements for delivery of the service are made which meet anticipated demand. A revised timetable has been agreed and should Serco NorthLink Ferries fail to deliver this the normal performance deductions as set out in the contract will apply.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many working hours extensions have been granted for (a) marine and (b) exceptional works since the start of construction on the Forth Replacement Crossing project.

(S4W-18676)

Keith Brown: The Code of Construction Practice allows for 24 hour working on marine works, which has taken, and continues to take, place other than for planned shut downs at holiday periods and as a result of adverse weather. No working hours extensions have been granted for exceptional works.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many applications there have been to the employer's representative to permit the extension of working hours for (a) marine and (b) exceptional works on the Forth Replacement Crossing project.

(S4W-18677)

Keith Brown: The Code of Construction Practice allows for 24 hour working on marine works, which has and continues to take place other than planned shut downs at holiday periods and as a result of adverse weather. No applications have been made for working hours extensions for exceptional works.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many hours have been worked on construction on the Forth Replacement Crossing project outwith normal working hours as defined in the Forth Replacement Crossing Code of Construction Practice.

(S4W-18678)

Keith Brown: The Code of Construction Practice allows for 24-hour working on marine works, which has and continues to take place other than planned shut downs at holiday periods and as a result of adverse weather. For non-marine works, the total number of approved hours out with normal working hours is 3,495 and relate predominantly to the principal contract concrete batching plant in Rosyth

docks, and some overnight works on Fife ITS and M9 Junction 1a for gantry erection and asphaltting. The actual number of hours worked of the approved total is not recorded centrally.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many hours have been worked on Sundays since the start of construction on the Forth Replacement Crossing project.

(S4W-18679)

Keith Brown: The Code of Construction Practice allows for 24 hour working on marine works, which has and continues to take place other than planned shut downs at holiday periods and as a result of adverse weather. For non-marine works, the total number of approved hours on Sundays is 698 and relate predominantly to the principal contract concrete batching plant in Rosyth docks, and some overnight works on Fife ITS and M9 Junction 1a for gantry erection and asphaltting. The actual number of hours worked of the approved total is not recorded centrally.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many hours have been worked on the Forth Replacement Crossing project (a) after 7pm on Monday to Friday and (b) after 6pm on Saturday.

(S4W-18680)

Keith Brown: The Code of Construction Practice allows for 24-hour working on marine works, which has and continues to take place other than planned shut downs at holiday periods and as a result of adverse weather. For non-marine works, the total number of approved hours after 7pm on Mondays to Fridays and after 6pm on Saturdays is 1,245 and relate predominantly to the principal contract concrete batching plant in Rosyth docks, and some overnight works on Fife ITS and M9 Junction 1a for gantry erection and asphaltting. This total does not include main crossing works undertaken on Saturdays between 6pm and 7pm, which are permitted in the Code of Construction Practice. The actual number of hours worked of the approved total is not recorded centrally.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide a timetable for the completion of each phase of the Forth Replacement Crossing project.

(S4W-18681)

Keith Brown: The Fife ITS scheme was completed in November 2012.
The M9 Junction 1a scheme was completed six weeks ahead of schedule in February 2013.
The Contact and Education Centre was completed in December 2012.
The principal contract for the Queensferry Crossing is programmed for completion by the end of 2016.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether the Forth Replacement Crossing project is on schedule.

(S4W-18682)

Keith Brown: Following the on-schedule completion of the Fife ITS and Contact and Education Centre contracts, and the early completion of the M9 Junction 1a contract, the principal contract remains on schedule to complete by the end of 2016.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how much the Air Discount Scheme has cost to administer in each of the last five years.

(S4W-18686)

Keith Brown: The cost of resourcing the Air Discount Scheme administration team was as follows:

2008 - £217,644
2009 - £203,819

2010 - £191,295
2011 - £193,325
2012 - £178,511

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many claims for discounted flights under the Air Discount Scheme have been made in each of the last five years, and how many were approved.

(S4W-18687)

Keith Brown: The figures are as follows:

2009: Claims made-144,725
2010: Claims made-185,633
2011: Claims made-161,402
Flights not approved-124
2012: Claims made-136,607
Flights not approved-268
2013: Claims made-124,959
Flights not approved-174

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many times people have been prevented from accessing the Air Discount Scheme because their journey was for non-personal reasons since the regulations were changed to prevent the scheme being used for business travel.

(S4W-18688)

Keith Brown: We do not hold a record of this.