

Friday 20 December 2013

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

### Enterprise and Environment

**John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent):** To ask the Scottish Government whether it plans to develop infrastructure to help Kishorn become a centre for the renewables industry.

(S4W-18762)

**Fergus Ewing:** Kishorn Port is one of the priority sites noted in the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan as capable of servicing the offshore renewables sector. As a result the Scottish Government and its agencies are keen to support the efforts of Kishorn Port Ltd to develop the port.

**John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Independent):** To ask the Scottish Government which ministers received a copy of the Scottish Enterprise-commissioned report, Scottish Aerospace, Defence & Marine Industry Study 2010, and what its response is to the findings.

(S4W-18765)

**Fergus Ewing:** The Scottish Aerospace, Defence & Marine Industry Study 2010 was welcomed by the Minister for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism, who noted the strong and vital contribution the aerospace, defence and marine industry makes to Scotland's economy, substantially enhancing Scotland's excellent reputation for innovation and technology, and supporting thousands of jobs.

The publication of the industry baseline study was important in helping to illustrate clearly the impact and size of the sector, particularly defence manufacturing, in Scotland and also helped inform the Scottish Government's response to the *UK Strategic Defence and Security Review* also published in 2010.

**Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what assurances it will provide to the fishing industry that it will pursue as a priority the removal of the west coast prawn fleet from the Cod Recovery Plan in light of reported new evidence that it has a minimal impact on cod stocks.

(S4W-18813)

**Richard Lochhead:** The Scottish Government is working now with the Scottish Fishermen's Federation and the Clyde Fishermen's Association to secure the exemption of prawn fishing vessels active in the Clyde and Kintyre area from time at sea limits imposed under the EU's Cod Recovery Plan. The Government is strongly committed to pursuing an exemption.

The Government has provided funding of £133,000 for at sea observers who are now gathering new evidence about the very low cod catches of Scottish prawn vessels. By 2 December 2013, 133 fishing trips had been observed and catch data is being collated and analysed. Initial results are very positive in terms of the very low levels of cod catches recorded.

The Government is confident that the data gathered will provide the basis for an application for exemption from effort control under Article 11 of the Cod Recovery Plan. It is planned at present to submit an application to the European Commission before the end of January 2014, in order that it may be considered at a meeting of the European Commission's scientific advisory committee, scheduled for March 2014.

The Government is also continuing discussions with representatives of prawn vessels in the remaining parts of the west coast, where over 60 vessels are exempt already.

### Governance and Communities

**Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with (a) local government and (b) the UK Government regarding providing support to councils to ensure that restoration projects at opencast coal sites are taken forward.

(S4W-18839)

**Fergus Ewing:** The UK Government's Department of Energy and Climate Change, the Coal Authority and local authorities are represented on the cross-party Scottish Coal Industry Taskforce chaired by Mr Ewing, Energy Minister. Restoration is a principle part of the discussions of this group. Scottish Government officials are in regular contact with councils through the taskforce activity.

The UK Coal Authority collects royalties of £0.17 from each tonne of coal extracted in Scotland which amounts to circa £15 million (since 1995). Mr Ewing has written to the UK Energy Minister Mr Fallon to ask that this money be used to help fund the legacy of unrestored open cast coal sites in Scotland.

Mr Ewing, Energy Minister, set up the Restoration Bonds Working Group in October 2012 which includes all relevant council planning departments to develop alternatives to restoration bonds.

Mr Ewing launched the Scottish Mines Restorations Trust in April 2013, an independent body which exists solely to help facilitate with councils, communities and other stakeholders the development of their restoration plans.

On 5 December 2013 the Scottish Government launched its consultation 'Opencast Coal Restoration: Effective Regulation' which is open to all for response including local authorities. The consultation period runs until February 2014.

**Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government what assistance local authorities can seek from the (a) Coal Authority and (b) Department of Energy and Climate Change when taking forward restoration projects at former opencast coal sites.

**(S4W-18840)**

**Fergus Ewing:** The UK Government's Department of Energy and Climate Change and the Coal Authority and local authorities are represented on the Scottish Coal Industry Taskforce chaired by Mr Ewing, Energy Minister and local authorities are of course free to consult either of these bodies in the preparation of their restoration plans.

The UK Coal Authority collects royalties of £0.17 from each tonne of coal extracted under licence in the UK. In Scotland this has amounted to £15 million (since 1995). Mr Ewing has written to the UK Energy Minister Mr Fallon to ask that this money be used to help fund the legacy of unrestored open cast coal sites in Scotland.

#### **Health and Social Care**

**Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what the difference is between the life expectancy of (a) women and (b) men in deprived areas (i) in general and (ii) for people with mental health issues.

**(S4W-18853)**

**Michael Matheson:** The general life expectancy for women and men by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD2009) is published on the National Records of Scotland's website and is available through the following link:

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/life-expectancy/scottish-areas/2008-2010/index.html>

The National Records of Scotland does not publish specific life expectancy statistics for people with mental health issues.

**Liz Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what actions (a) it is and (b) the organisers of the 2014 Commonwealth Games are taking to address the predicted shortfall in security provision for the games.

**(S4W-18856)**

**Shona Robison:** The Scottish Government, working with the Organising Committee and Police Scotland has agreed that a mixed workforce solution involving police, military and private industry resources would be the most robust structure to ensure a safe and secure games.

This decision has incorporated lessons learned from the Olympics and this mixed workforce solution will ensure that there is no shortfall of resources to implement safety and security planning.

## Learning and Justice

**Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government for what reason not more than 10% of Skills Development Scotland apprenticeships are directly contracted to further education colleges.

(S4W-18810)

**Angela Constance:** This information is not held centrally. I will ask the chief executive of Skills Development Scotland to write to you on this matter.

## Strategy and External Affairs

**Clare Adamson (Central Scotland) (Scottish National Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what information it can provide regarding the Minister for External Affairs and International Development's visit to the United Arab Emirates and Qatar in November 2013.

(S4W-19007)

**Humza Yousaf:** I visited Abu Dhabi (10-11 November) and Dubai (11-13 November) in the United Arab Emirates and Doha in Qatar (13-14 November) where I undertook an intensive programme of meetings and engagements to strengthen business, education, cultural and government ties with the region.

During the visit I led Scotland's largest ever delegation to the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC), with over 40 Scottish companies and higher education institutions represented at one of the largest oil and gas events in the world.

My attendance at ADIPEC also provided a significant platform for me to raise the profile of Scotland's wide-ranging strengths across the oil and gas sector to the broader Middle East audience, notably via my participation in a conference panel discussion and Q&A on the importance of skills and training in the industry and my meetings with both the UAE Energy Minister, H.E Suhail Mohammed Al Mazrouei, and with the President of the Abu Dhabi Petroleum Institute. These discussions reiterated the significant opportunities which exist for partnership and collaboration between Scottish and Middle Eastern companies and resulted in an agreement to hold a joint Scotland Abu Dhabi workshop in Abu Dhabi in 2014. I also met with the CEOs of major energy companies including Bob Dudley of BP and Carl Sheldon of TAQA.

To date, five companies, Scotmas, Doosan Babcock, FoundOcean, Peak Consultancy and SafeHouse Habitats (Scotland) Ltd have confirmed new partnerships with local Emirate partner organisations, cementing the companies' foothold in a key global oil and gas market and establishing the basis for continued growth of their Scottish operations. Further detail on these partnerships:

Kelso-based water and air specialists, Scotmas Ltd, finalised a £300,000 contract for the delivery of a water disinfection system for the Qatar Electricity and Water Company (QEW) expected to treat up to a quarter of Qatar's drinking water. The company also formed an Egyptian Joint Venture company focused on delivering the company's unique chlorine dioxide water disinfection technology into the rapidly developing oil and gas sector in North Africa.

Doosan Babcock and Abu Dhabi-based Emirates Link Technology Group formed a Joint Venture Company to provide maintenance and shut down solutions to the oil and gas industry in the region. This partnership will bring significant growth opportunities to the company's Renfrew facility.

FoundOcean, whose expanded offshore service base in Livingston was officially opened by Minister Fergus Ewing last year, announced the opening of their newest office in the Middle East in partnership with Emdad LLC.

Aberdeen based Peak Consultancy Ltd signed an MoU with Abu Dhabi's Almansoori Specialised Engineering to provide services to the region's oil and gas sector.

Dundee-based Safehouse Habitats (Scotland) Ltd signed a strategic agreement with Al Yaseah Group on 13th December at ADIPEC to provide Safehouse's Positive Pressure Habitat Solutions to the Oil and Gas sector in Abu Dhabi.

In addition, Glasgow based MJB International also announced during ADIPEC that the company has secured a multi-million euro, six year contract to provide support services for gas turbines in the Netherlands

I visited the fit up for the Abu Dhabi Science Festival, which is being managed by the Edinburgh Science Festival and met with His Excellency Ahmed Al Calily, Director General, Abu Dhabi Technology Development Committee who fund the Abu Dhabi Science Festival.

In Dubai, I took part in an Open Conversation organised by the Emirates Festival of Literature, attended by 16-18 year old students from local schools, discussing the role of young people in democracy.

I met with more young people when touring the new extension to the Dubai Heriot-Watt campus. I announced Heriot-Watt's new PHD programmes in the following schools in Dubai: Management and Languages, Engineering and Physical Science and Built Environment.

In Qatar I met with Qatar Airlines in order to seek assurances on their commitment to establishing a new flight route to Edinburgh following a period of significant activity to support this from Team Scotland partners and following your own meeting with the company last year. During our discussion, the company confirmed their commitment to launch the route and announced six days later that flights would commence on 28 May 2014.

I also met the Minister for Culture, Arts and Heritage HE Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kuwari. I also met with the Qatar Foundation to discuss links around renewable energy, education and research, and met with Sumantra Ghose, the Head of Cultural Diplomacy projects at the Qatar Museums Authority where I discussed potential collaboration between our galleries and museums. I met with the general manager of Katara Village, Dr Khalid bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti, to discuss how we can further embed cultural collaboration between our countries. My visit finished with Scotland Day celebrations at Katara, featuring Scottish landscapes, music, food and dancing.

I undertook four broadcast interviews throughout the visit with Sky News Arabia (TV), BBC World News, ME Business Report (TV), Dubai Eye Drive time radio show at Arabian Radio Network and CNBC Arabia (Radio). Engagement with print media resulted in widespread coverage across the Gulf.