Margaret McDougall (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it plans to put provisions in place to ensure that small landholdings that are no longer tenanted are maintained to a reasonable standard by the landlord.

Holding answer issued: 27 August 2012  (S4W-08918)

Stewart Stevenson: The Scottish Government has no plans to ensure that small landholdings that are no longer tenanted are maintained to a reasonable standard by the landlord. It is to be hoped that vacant holdings will soon be re-let and the new tenant will maintain them.

Landlords of land held under small landholding tenure are required by the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act 1911 to inform the Scottish Government where a legatee or statutory successor cannot be found. The landlord cannot re-let the holding without the Scottish Government’s approval to any person other than a neighbouring holder to enlarge his holding or to a new holder.

If a new or neighbouring landholder cannot be found, the Scottish Government may use discretionary powers, under section 17 of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act 1911 to enable landlords to let the land under another form of land tenure. In addition, the landlord may apply to the Scottish Land Court to resume a holding (remove it from small landhold tenure).

Margaret McDougall (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what (a) support is available for and (b) it can do to reduce the cost to small-landholding farmers who wish to convert to crofting.

Holding answer issued: 27 August 2012  (S4W-08919)

Stewart Stevenson: On application by the tenant of a small landholding in an area designated by Scottish ministers for crofting tenure, the Crofting Commission has the power to convert the small landholding to crofting tenure. Before conversion can take place, the Crofting Commission must be presented with a certificate obtained from the Scottish Land Court confirming that the holding is tenanted under Small Landholdings legislation and providing evidence that appropriate compensation has been paid.

Support may be available for legal matters relating to acquiring the necessary certificate or for the process of having a valuer appointed by the Scottish Land Court and for any appeals against the assessment of compensation before the Lands Tribunal for Scotland. However, it should be noted that assistance does not extend to cover the costs or the valuer’s services.

The availability of legal advice and representation for people who could not otherwise afford it is an issue that the Scottish Government takes very seriously and for which it provides substantial levels of funding. Advice and assistance may be provided by a solicitor on any matter of Scots law subject to a test of financial eligibility carried out by the solicitor. Civil legal aid, which provides for representation before a court, such as the Scottish Land Court and the Lands Tribunal for Scotland, may also be available provided that the three tests contained in the Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986 are met; which are that applicants must qualify financially, they must have a legal basis for their case, and it must be reasonable in the particular circumstances of the case that legal aid is provided.

The amount of compensation to be paid is a private matter between landlord and tenant. Conversion to crofting tenure brings a number of benefits, including access to grant assistance specific to crofting. The Scottish Government does not consider it appropriate to use public funds to subsidise the costs of conversion because it is a private legal matter between two parties and has an individual rather than a public benefit.

Margaret McDougall (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it plans to allow farmers of small landholdings to buy the land without having to convert it to a croft.
Stewart Stevenson: The Scottish Government considers that tenants of small landholdings may already enter into arrangements with their landlords to purchase their holdings. There is no requirement for the small holding to be converted to a croft before the land can be sold. Conversion to a croft carries with it the possibility of exercising the right to buy that exists for crofts. There is no equivalent right to buy a small holding.

Margaret McDougall (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it (a) considers that an accurate record is kept and (b) plans to keep a central register of small landholdings.

Stewart Stevenson: The Scottish Government has no current plans to compile and keep a central register of small landholdings.

The Scottish Land Court holds a number of records, among which will be orders relating to small landholdings, but does not hold a central register.

Margaret McDougall (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it plans to review legislation relating to small landholding in the current parliamentary session.

Stewart Stevenson: The Scottish Government has no current plans to review legislation relating to small landholding in the current parliamentary session.

Margaret McDougall (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what legislative provision covers the wrongful removal of a small landholding from the small landholdings register.

Stewart Stevenson: Section 17 of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act 1911 is the legislative provision covering the removal of a small holding from the requirement for the land to be let as a small landholding.

Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will make a submission to the European Commission regarding a prioritised action framework for the funding of the management of natura sites and, if so, what steps it has taken regarding this, and whether it will consult on the matter.

Stewart Stevenson: Work to prepare the Scotland component of a UK Prioritised Action Framework is under way. Consultation with relevant parties is accounted for in the provisional timetable.

Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how its common strategic framework and associated partnership agreement for the co-ordination of expenditure of EU funds will take account of its prioritised action framework for the funding of the management of natura sites, and whether it will consult on the matter.

Stewart Stevenson: Prioritised Action Frameworks are intended as planning tools whose purpose is to identify key priorities and provide an integrated overview of how to achieve them with regard to different financing instruments. It is too early to predict how this might be accounted for by the common strategic framework and associated partnership agreement for the co-ordination of expenditure of EU funds.
Governance and Communities

Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what public interest tests must be met before the compulsory purchase of land by a public body can proceed; where details of these tests are available and what review procedures there are.  

(S4W-09012)

Derek Mackay: Circular 6/2011: Compulsory Purchase Orders set out that in deciding whether to confirm a compulsory purchase order Scottish Ministers will weigh up the public benefit in the public body’s proposals against the interests of the people affected. The public body should properly assess the public benefit in its proposals and the impact on the people affected. The circular suggests some issues the public body may wish to consider when assessing the public interest. The statement of reasons which accompanies the submission to ministers of the compulsory purchase order for consideration should set out the public benefit.

Where a compulsory purchase order has been confirmed by ministers, there is a six week period, beginning from the date that the public body first publishes notice of the confirmation of the order, in which the validity of the order can be challenged in the Court of Session. The challenge may only be made on the grounds of the lawfulness, rather than the merits, of the decision.

Health and Social Care

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what the average response time is for an ambulance in the NHS Grampian area.  

(S4W-07992)

The Scottish Government has supplied the following corrected answer:

Nicola Sturgeon: Average ambulance response times (in minutes) for the last five years across the NHS Grampian area are set out in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Category A</th>
<th>All Emergency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
*Information provided by the Scottish Ambulance Service.
**“All Emergency” is defined as Category A, B and C calls.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government on what date the 2012 Scottish Diabetes Survey will be published and what were the publication dates for the survey in each of the last four years.  

(S4W-08977)

Michael Matheson: The Scottish Diabetes Survey Monitoring Group aims to collate all survey data, quality assure these data, and finalise and publish the Scottish Diabetes Survey report within 12 months of the end of each calendar year.

The Scottish Diabetes Survey 2012 will therefore be published in 2013.

The Scottish Diabetes Survey 2011 was published on 20 August 2012. The report is available at: www.diabetesinscotland.org.uk/Publications.aspx. It is understood that the 2011 survey is one of the most comprehensive and complete accounts of diabetes care available anywhere in the world. We expect that this survey, and future publications, will serve diabetes services as useful performance management tool.

The Scottish Diabetes Survey 2010 was published in August 2011.

The Scottish Diabetes Survey 2009 was published in March 2010 to coincide with a National Diabetes Conference.
The Scottish Diabetes Survey 2008 was published in July 2009.

**Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government how many people have Type 1 diabetes, and how many of them receive insulin pump therapy, broken down by NHS board.

(S4W-08979)

**Michael Matheson:** This information is contained within the Scottish Diabetes Survey which was published on 20 August 2012 and is available at the following link:


The survey indicates that there are 28,272 people with type 1 diabetes in Scotland.

The survey also provides a breakdown of the number of people with type 1 diabetes who are on an insulin pump as of December 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NHS Board</th>
<th>Type 1 Population</th>
<th>Number Of Pumps</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ayrshire and Arran</td>
<td>2,217</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borders</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumfries and Galloway</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fife</td>
<td>1,976</td>
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<td>Forth Valley</td>
<td>1,618</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grampian</td>
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<td>72</td>
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<td>56</td>
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<td>4,184</td>
<td>208</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shetland</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tayside</td>
<td>1,866</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Isles</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Chief Executive Letter CEL 4 (2012) on Insulin Pump Therapy for People with Type 1 Diabetes, issued on 27 February, makes it clear that we expect all NHS boards to triple the number of insulin pumps for both adults and children with type 1 diabetes over the next three years.

The progress that all NHS boards are making with increasing insulin pump provision will continue to be published in the annual Scottish Diabetes Survey.

**Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government how many people it estimates will have Type 1 diabetes on (a) 1 November 2012 and (b) 1 February 2013, and how many of them will receive insulin pump therapy, broken down by NHS board.

(S4W-08981)

**Michael Matheson:** The information requested is not centrally held.

There are, however, around 960 people diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in Scotland each year. We expect the numbers of people with type 1 diabetes to increase in line with previous years as recorded on page 12 of the 2011 Scottish Diabetes Survey. The survey is available at the following link:


The Survey also provides a breakdown of the number of people with type 1 diabetes who are on an insulin pump as of December 2011.

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The progress that all NHS boards are making with increasing insulin pump provision will continue to be published in the annual Scottish Diabetes Survey.

**Annabelle Ewing (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government what recent reviews it has carried out of the accessibility of NHS premises for wheelchair users.

*(S4W-09026)*

**Nicola Sturgeon:** There have been no recent reviews carried out of the accessibility of NHS premises for wheelchair users as compliance with statute is a normal part of NHS board business.

**Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government for what reason it has not yet published the findings of its consultation on the draft standards for wheelchairs.

*(S4W-09052)*

**Nicola Sturgeon:** The findings of the public consultation on the draft clinical standards for NHSScotland’s wheelchair and specialist seating services were published on 25 May 2011 and may be viewed on the Publications section of the Scottish Government website:

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/05/25092915/0.

**Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government what (a) recruitment, (b) training and (c) apprenticeship targets have been set for the Scottish Futures Trust’s proposed south west hub programme, also broken down by (i) project and (ii) the programme’s alliance community partnerships that have received preferred bidder status.

*(S4W-09063)*

**Nicola Sturgeon:** As the South West hub territory is still in the final bidding process and has not yet reached contract signature, the content of the preferred bidder’s offering has to remain commercially confidential at this stage. Specific details in relation to this territory are therefore not yet available.

**Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government what (a) local and (b) national (i) recruitment, (ii) training and (iii) apprenticeship targets have been set for each of the Scottish Futures Trust’s established hub programmes, also broken down by project.

*(S4W-09065)*
Nicola Sturgeon: Each hub bidder proposes specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) during the hub procurement process, including targets for recruitment and training opportunities. Each hub territory has different project specific objectives based on those proposed by the successful hub bidder. Individual project targets are established by agreement between the Participant organisation and hubco on a project specific basis in line with Participant requirements (i.e. health board or local authority).

Details of the individual targets set for each project that has reached financial close to date are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Opportunities &amp; Work Experience for Under 16s (measured in number of days - min 2 persons)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Opportunities &amp; Work Experience for Over 16s (measured in number of days - min 2 persons)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Opportunities and site visits by schools (measured in number of days – up to 10 people per visit)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Opportunities/ site visits by colleges (measured in number of days – up to 10 people per visit)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment &amp; Training Direct Employment - Operative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment &amp; Training Indirect Employment - Operative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment &amp; Training Professional Employment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment &amp; Training - Apprentices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment &amp; Training - Trainees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Hub Territory Projects</th>
<th>DBFM Project 1 [Aberdeen Health Village]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship Schemes – number of apprentices that are being provided on a project by project basis</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Placements – number of graduates that are being provided on a project by project basis</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mark McDonald (North East Scotland) (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what guidance it has issued to retailers regarding the Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula (Scotland) Regulations 2007.

(S4W-09072)

Michael Matheson: Guidance notes on the Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula Regulations 2007 were first published on the website of the Food Standards Agency in May 2008. This guidance was revised in March 2009 to reflect an amendment to the 2007 Regulations. These UK-wide guidance notes aim to help food businesses, enforcement officers and other interested parties interpret the provisions of the Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula Regulations 2007 and 2008.

Mark McDonald (North East Scotland) (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what penalties can be imposed for breaches of the Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula (Scotland) Regulations 2007.

(S4W-09073)

Michael Matheson: Regulation 28 of the Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula (Scotland) Regulations 2007 sets out the penalties for contravention of or failure to comply with these Regulations. Any person found guilty of an offence is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (currently £5,000).

Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on the report, “Giving the wrong impression: food and beverage brand impressions delivered to youth through popular movies”, which was published in The Journal of Public Health, November 2011, and whether this will impact on its strategy for tackling obesity.
Michael Matheson: Scottish Government policy on this issue will continue to be informed by the latest evidence. We are mindful of the impact that marketing of food high in fat, salt and sugar can have on the nation’s dietary health and obesity levels so our commitment to look for ways to restrict such marketing activity, especially to children, remains.

As this report highlights, product placement is one of many ways in which brands are promoted to viewers. We would strongly urge companies to take a responsible attitude to any such promotion, not only with product placement but also with any sponsorship and advertisements around movies and other media.

Learning and Justice

Colin Beattie (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it plans to ask (a) district and (b) sheriff courts to produce a summary of court decisions for the media.

Kenny MacAskill: We have no plans to ask the Scottish Court Service to produce a summary of justice of the peace and sheriff court decisions for the media. The Scottish Court Service does already publish the decisions of the Court of Session, High Court of Justiciary and sheriff courts on their website where there is a significant point of law or particular public interest.


Strategy and External Affairs

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what evidence James Murdoch provided to the Scottish Government that a successful bid by News Corporation for full control of BSkyB would create or secure jobs in Scotland; on what date, and how.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what specific assurances James Murdoch provided regarding any connection between jobs in Scotland and a successful bid by News Corporation for full ownership of BSkyB and whether the Scottish Government will publish related correspondence and minutes.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012

Fergus Ewing: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-06912 on 10 May 2012 (Bib. number 53943) and to the proceedings of the Leveson Inquiry. The First Minister also covered this during First Minister’s questions on 14 June 2012:


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.

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it remains the position of the First Minister that he did not leak a possible date for an independence referendum in 2014 to The Scottish Sun on Sunday, as set out in his testimony to the Leveson Inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012

Fiona Hyslop: The First Minister covered this in his evidence to the Leveson Inquiry, which can be found at the following link http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp.
inaugural edition of *The Scottish Sun on Sunday* regarding a possible date for an independence referendum.

**Fiona Hyslop:** The First Minister covered this in his evidence to the Leveson Inquiry, which can be found at the following link: [http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp](http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp).

**Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the First Minister’s testimony to the Leveson Inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press, whether it remains his position that he believes that his bank account was illegally accessed and whether any discussions have taken place with the police in relation to this matter.

**Fiona Hyslop:** The First Minister covered this in his evidence to the Leveson Inquiry, which can be found at the following link: [http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp](http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp).

Reporting this incident to the police is a matter for the First Minister as the victim to decide, and his current view is that he would simply prefer that the newspaper in question investigates these activities. The Information Commissioner’s Operation Motorman report in December 2006 revealed 103 examples of data “illegally obtained” by *The Observer*.

**Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Executive, further to the First Minister’s testimony to the Leveson Inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press, who the source was of the allegation that his bank account had been accessed by *The Observer* in 1999.

**Fiona Hyslop:** A former journalist from *The Observer* informed the First Minister of this, as he made clear in his evidence to the Leveson Inquiry, which can be found at the following link [http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp](http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp).

**Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Executive whether the First Minister has employed any former journalists at *The Observer* as special advisers and, if so, who and how long they were employed.

**Fiona Hyslop:** The Scottish Government does not disclose details of past employment of its staff.

**Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Executive whether the First Minister’s special adviser, Alex Bell, has been involved in discussions regarding the allegations set out at the Leveson Inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press that the First Minister’s bank account had been illegally accessed by *The Observer* and, if so, what the nature of those discussions was.

**Fiona Hyslop:** The Scottish Government does not hold a record of such alleged discussions.

**Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Executive whether the First Minister responded to the letter from the managing editor of the Guardian Media Group of 27 July 2011 requesting further information in order to investigate allegations regarding unauthorised access to his bank account set out in his letter of 22 July 2011.

**Fiona Hyslop:** All correspondence on the matter is included in the First Minister’s evidence to the Leveson Inquiry, which can be found at the following link: [http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp](http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/evidence/?witness=alex-salmond-msp).
Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what representative of News Corporation indicated that BSkyB jobs in Scotland would be at risk if its bid for full control of BSkyB was unsuccessful; on what date, and how.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012 (S4W-08015)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-06912 on 10 May 2012 (Bib. number 53943) and to the proceedings of the Leveson Inquiry.

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.

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive whether BSkyB jobs in Scotland are at risk following the withdrawal of News Corporation’s takeover bid for BSkyB and, if so, which jobs.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012 (S4W-08016)

Fiona Hyslop: In a dynamic, global economy all companies are subject to competitive pressures. I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-06912 (Bib. number 53943) on 10 May 2012, for information given by the former chairman of News International, on the economic benefits of its bid for BSkyB.

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.

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it considers it appropriate for a company to threaten job losses in the event that a takeover bid for full control of one of its subsidiaries is not supported by the Scottish Government.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012 (S4W-08017)

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government is not aware of the circumstances described having ever occurred.

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive what independent assessment it received regarding the likely impact on Scottish jobs of a successful News Corporation takeover bid for BSkyB.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012 (S4W-08018)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the proceedings of the Leveson Inquiry and to the answers to questions:

S4W-06912 on 10 May 2012 – Bib. number 53943
S4W-06958 on 11 May 2012 – Bib. number 53955
S4W-06959 on 11 May 2012 – Bib. number 53956
S4W-06960 on 11 May 2012 – Bib. number 53957
S4W-06972 on 11 May 2012 – Bib. number 53968.

The Scottish Government works continuously to secure and protect jobs in Scotland.

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.

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it has previously informed the Parliament of an assertion by James Murdoch that jobs in Scotland would be at risk if News Corporation’s bid for full control of BSkyB did not proceed.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012 (S4W-08019)
Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-06950 (Bib. number 53951) on 11 May 2012 and the proceedings of the Leveson Inquiry.

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.

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it can confirm that the loss of 2,000 jobs averted by HEROtsc’s winning a contract referred to at First Minister’s Questions on 14 June 2012 (Official Report, c. 10118) was averted despite the withdrawal of News Corporation’s bid for the takeover of BSkyB.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012  
(S4W-08021)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-06948 (Bib. number 53949) on 11 May 2012 and to the proceedings of the Leveson Inquiry.

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.

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it considers that the First Minister’s position that it would not take media plurality into account in representations regarding News Corporation’s bid for BSkyB as it is a reserved matter is consistent with the Scottish Government’s establishment of a Scottish Broadcasting Commission and representations to broadcasting outlets submitted in evidence to the Leveson Inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012  
(S4W-08022)

Fiona Hyslop: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-06914 (Bib. number 53945) on 10 May 2012 and the proceedings of the Leveson Inquiry.

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.

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Executive when it will provide substantive answers to those written questions on the relationship between it and News Corporation lodged prior to the First Minister’s appearance at the Leveson Inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press that have received a holding answer.

Holding answer issued: 2 July 2012  
(S4W-08023)

Fiona Hyslop: All such questions have been answered.

Transport Scotland

Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assistance is given to Orkney and Shetland Islands Councils to provide inter-island ferry links.

(S4W-09019)

Keith Brown: The Scottish Government is providing local government in Scotland with around £11.5 billion in 2012-13. Orkney Islands Council will receive over £76 million this year, whilst Shetland Islands Council will receive over £98.5 million. The vast majority of this funding, including funding for ferry services, is provided by means of a block grant. It is then the responsibility of each local authority, as an independent corporate body, to allocate the total financial resources available to it on the basis of local needs and priorities, having first fulfilled its statutory obligations and the jointly agreed set of national and local priorities.

Alex Fergusson (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government when the fourth generation contract for the South West Unit Trunk Road Operating Company will be announced; for what reason the original tender date of May 2012
was missed; when the work will start, and which agency will provide on-going maintenance and winter services until then.

(S4W-09079)

Keith Brown: Transport Scotland is currently evaluating the tenders for the South West (and North West) contracts in accordance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. As this is a live procurement exercise it would be inappropriate to disclose any details relating to the evaluation at this time.

The Commencement of Service date for the fourth generation South West (and North West) contracts is scheduled for 1 April 2013, and the incumbent Operating Companies, Amey in the South West (and Scotland TranServ in the North West) will continue to provide the maintenance and winter service specified under the terms of their contracts until that date.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether there was a contingency plan to ensure that a lifeline ferry service to and from Shetland would have been operated had the proposed strike action on Serco NorthLink Ferries in July 2012 taken place.

(S4W-09105)

Keith Brown: In response to concerns raised by the RMT union about the new Northern Isles ferry services contract, on 23 July 2012 Serco NorthLink’s Managing Director met with representatives from both the RMT and Nautilus. A framework for representative dialogue was agreed with both unions and a formal exchange of correspondence followed between Serco NorthLink and the RMT.

On 30 July 2012, the RMT issued a news release stating that its major concerns had been addressed by Serco NorthLink and confirming that the proposed ballot for industrial action had been cancelled. As Serco NorthLink were able to swiftly satisfy the RMT’s concerns, the ferry operator did not reach the stage where contingency planning was required.