

SPICe Fact Sheet

Duilleagan Fiosrachaidh SPICe

18 January 2023

Urgent and emergency questions

This Fact Sheet provides a list of urgent and emergency questions asked in the Scottish Parliament from 12 May 1999 to present.

It is arranged by date and includes the name and party of the MSP who asked the question. It also includes the subject of the question with a link to the Official Report. The name and title of the Minister or SPCB member who answered the question is also provided.

Tables providing data on the number of questions asked by party and on the number of questions answered by Minister or SPCB member are also provided by Session.

Party	Abbreviation
Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party	Con
Scottish Green Party	Green
Scottish Labour	Lab
Scottish Liberal Democrats	LD
Scottish National Party	SNP
Scottish Senior Citizen's Unity Party	SSCUP
Scottish Socialist Party	SSP
Independent MSPs	Ind
No Party Affiliation	NPA
Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body	SPCB

What is an 'urgent question'?

From 4 September 2017, following the report of the Commission on Parliamentary Reform, emergency questions became known as urgent questions. They are a category of Parliamentary Questions which allow Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to get information and comment on a matter of immediate concern. They can only be lodged on days when the Parliament has a plenary meeting and must be lodged before 10.00 on the day that the MSP is requesting an oral answer.

After it is lodged it is the Presiding Officer (PO) who decides if the question is sufficiently urgent enough to require being put as an urgent question. If the answer is

yes then a revised Business Bulletin (BB) is published containing the question and the time it will be taken and the BB is updated on the website. At the allocated time the member may ask their question and one supplementary. At the discretion of the PO any member may ask further supplementary questions.

The answers are given by the relevant Scottish Government Minister or Law Officer or the First Minister.

If the PO does not allow the question to be put the question falls and will not appear in the Business Bulletin and will not be answered unless the member resubmits it as an oral or written question.

Urgent Questions are defined in the Standing Orders, [Rule 13.8](#) and further information is available in the Guidance on Parliamentary Questions, [Paragraph 12.7](#) (406KB pdf)

Urgent questions for Session 5 are also available on the [Scottish Parliament website](#).

What is an Urgent SPCB question?

Urgent SPCB questions became possible from 12 May 2021 as a result of motion S5M-24366 being agreed by the Parliament on 17 March 2021.

This change was recommended by the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee in its 8th Report 2021, Standing Order Rule changes – Urgent questions to the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, for occasions when urgent questions need to be raised with the SPCB.

Urgent SPCB questions are defined in the Standing Orders, Rule [13.9A](#). An urgent question under this Rule may be put to and answered by any member of the Parliamentary corporation.

Urgent questions from 4 September 2017 – to date

17 January 2023

Monica Lennon MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Gender Recognition Reform \(Scotland\) Bill](#). It was answered by Shona Robison MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government.

10 January 2023

Neil Bibby MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Amazon \(Gourock\)](#). It was answered by Ivan McKee MSP, Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise.

14 December 2022

Rachael Hamilton MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [For Women Scotland](#)

[\(Judicial Review\)](#). It was answered by Shona Robison MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government.

7 December 2022

Liam Kerr MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [United Kingdom Climate Change Committee Reports](#). It was answered by Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport.

6 December 2022

Michael Marra MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Breast Cancer Care \(NHS Tayside\)](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

30 November 2022

Jamie Greene MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Deaths in Custody](#). It was answered by Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans.

23 November 2022

Douglas Ross MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Independence Referendum \(Supreme Court Ruling\)](#). It was answered by Angus Robertson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture.

8 November 2022

Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP (LD) asked an urgent question on [Accident and Emergency Waiting Times](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

1 November 2022

Maurice Golden MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Disorder \(Dundee\)](#). It was answered by Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans.

5 October 2022

Jackie Baillie MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry](#). It was answered by John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery.

27 September 2022

Graham Simpson MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Ferries Contract](#). It was answered by John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery.

20 June 2022

Russell Findlay MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Forensic Testing \(Delays\)](#). It was answered by Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans.

8 June 2022

Graham Simpson MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [ScotRail Timetable \(Hampden\)](#). It was answered by Jenny Gilruth MSP, Minister for Transport.

9 March 2022

Michael Marra MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Scottish Qualifications Authority \(Examination Guidance\)](#). It was answered by Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

8 December 2021

Michael Marra MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Storm Barra \(Power Cuts\)](#). It was answered by John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery.

23 November 2021

Paul Sweeney MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Children Refugees](#). It was answered by Shona Robison MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government.

16 November 2021

Meghan Gallacher MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [NHS Lanarkshire \(Support\)](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

27 October 2021

Sue Webber MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [NHS Lothian](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

26 October 2021

Mark Griffin MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Council and Education Workers Pay Deal](#). It was answered by Kate Forbes MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy.

5 October 2021

Paul Sweeney MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Rail Strike](#). It was answered by Graeme Dey MSP, Minister for Transport.

30 September 2021

Brian Whittle MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry](#). It was answered by John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery.

14 September 2021

Gillian Mackay MSP (Green) asked an SPCB urgent question on [Scottish Parliament \(Designated Status\)](#). It was answered by Claire Baker MSP (Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body).

7 September 2021

Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP (LD) asked an urgent question on [Accident and Emergency Departments \(Waiting Times\)](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

23 June 2021

Jackie Baillie MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Royal College of Nursing Scotland \(Trade Dispute\)](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

1 June 2021

Jamie Greene MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Homicide Law](#). It was answered by Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice.

26 May 2021

Michael Marra MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [National Qualifications 2021 \(Appeals Process\)](#). It was answered by Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

20 May 2021

Sue Webber MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Care Homes \(Transfers from Hospitals\)](#). It was answered by Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care.

20 May 2021

Ariane Burgess MSP (Green) asked an urgent question on [Covid-19 \(Protection from Eviction\)](#). It was answered by John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery.

18 May 2021

James Dornan MSP (SNP) asked an urgent question on [Police Scotland and Rangers Football Club \(Engagement\)](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice.

18 May 2021

Sandesh Gulhane MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Covid-19 \(Glasgow\)](#). It was answered by John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

18 May 2021

Monica Lennon MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Greensill Capital](#). It was answered by Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture.

14 May 2021

Patrick Harvie MSP (Green) asked an urgent question on [Immigration Enforcement](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice.

14 May 2021

Jamie Greene MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Scottish Qualifications Authority Examination, Assessment and Awards Process](#). It was answered by John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

14 May 2021

Douglas Ross MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Covid-19 \(Moray\)](#). It was answered by Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister.

18 March 2021

Sarah Boyack MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Lothian Buses \(Suspension of Services\)](#). It was answered by Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

24 February 2021

Jackie Baillie MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Crown Office \(Correspondence\)](#). It was answered by James Wolffe, The Lord Advocate.

9 February 2021

Willie Rennie MSP (LD) asked an urgent question on [Covid-19 Vaccination Centres \(Delays\)](#). It was answered by Jeane Freeman MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport.

2 December 2020

Donald Cameron MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on the [COVID-19 vaccine roll out](#). It was answered by Joe Fitzpatrick MSP, Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing.

Daniel Johnson MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Retail Sector \(Jobs\)](#). It was answered by Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills.

11 November 2020

Jackie Baillie MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Test and Protect \(Contact Tracing Performance\)](#). It was answered by Jeane Freeman MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport.

21 May 2020

Neil Bibby MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Untested Patients in Care Homes \(Inverclyde\)](#). It was answered by Jeane Freeman MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport.

12 May 2020

Neil Findlay MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Covid-19 cases in Edinburgh](#). It was answered by Jeane Freeman MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport.

07 January 2020

Rhoda Grant MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Scottish Government Budget](#). It was answered by Derek Mackay MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work.

06 March 2019

Michelle Ballantyne MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Severe Disablement Allowance](#). It was answered by Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People.

20 November 2018

Murdo Fraser MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [New School Butterstone \(Closure\)](#). It was answered by John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

06 November 2018

Jenny Marra MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Michelin Factory \(Closure\)](#). It was answered by Derek Mackay MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work.

20 March 2018

Kate Forbes MSP (SNP) asked an urgent question on [Brexit Transition Agreement \(Fishing Industry\)](#). It was answered by Fergus Ewing MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity.

21 February 2018

Liam McArthur MSP (LD) asked an urgent question on [British Transport Police in Scotland and Police Scotland \(Merger\)](#). It was answered by Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice.

31 January 2018

Liam Kerr MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [Firefighters' Pay and Conditions \(Reform\)](#). It was answered by Annabelle Ewing MSP, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs.

17 January 2018

Colin Smyth MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [M74 \(Stranded Motorists\)](#). It was answered by Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for Transport and the Islands.

12 December 2017

Mike Rumbles MSP (LD) asked an urgent question on [Forties Pipeline](#). It was answered by Paul Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy.

5 December 2017

Mairi Gougeon MSP (SNP) asked an urgent question on [European Union \(Regulatory Alignment\)](#). It was answered by Michael Russell MSP, Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe.

Miles Briggs MSP (Con) asked an urgent question on [NHS Lothian \(Waiting Times\)](#). It was answered by Shona Robison MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport.

28 November 2017

Jackie Baillie MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Council Reserves](#). It was answered by Derek Mackay MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution.

25 October 2017

Claire Baker MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Scottish Fire and Rescue Service](#). It was answered by Annabelle Ewing MSP, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs.

21 September 2017

Pauline McNeill MSP (Lab) asked an urgent question on [Combustible Cladding \(Glasgow\)](#). It was answered by Angela Constance MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities.

Emergency questions until 3 September 2017

2 October 2013

Neil Findlay MSP (Lab) asked an emergency question on [NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde \(IT\)](#). It was answered by Alex Neil MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing.

27 March 2013

Jackie Baillie MSP (Lab) asked an emergency question on [Bedroom Tax \(Emergency Legislation\)](#). It was answered by Nicola Sturgeon MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities.

23 September 2010

Bill Butler MSP (Lab) asked an emergency question on [Commonwealth Games \(Delhi\)](#). It was answered by Shona Robison MSP, Minister for Public Health and Sport.

1 June 2006

David Davidson MSP (Con) asked an emergency question on [Lord President](#). It was answered by Jack McConnell MSP, First Minister.

1 April 2004

Richard Lochhead MSP (SNP) asked an emergency question on [December Fisheries Agreement](#). It was answered by Allan Wilson MSP, Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural Development

20 December 2001

Duncan Hamilton MSP (SNP) asked an emergency question on [Caledonian MacBrayne](#). It was answered by Lewis Macdonald MSP, Deputy Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning.

21 November 2001

Pauline McNeill MSP (Lab) asked an emergency question on [Atlantic Telecom](#). It was answered by Wendy Alexander MSP, Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning.

4 April 2001

Richard Lochhead MSP (SNP) asked an emergency question on [Common Fisheries Policy](#). It was answered by Rhona Brankin, Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural Development.

25 May 2000

Jamie McGrigor MSP (Con) asked an emergency question on [Caledonian MacBrayne](#). It was answered by Sarah Boyack, Minister for Transport and the Environment.

Table 1: Emergency questions asked during Session 1, by Party

Party	Number of questions
Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party	1
Scottish Green Party	0
Scottish Labour Party	1
Scottish Liberal Democrats	0
Scottish National Party	2
Scottish Senior Citizens' Unity Party	0
Scottish Socialist Party	0
Independent	0

Table 2: Emergency questions answered during Session 1, by Minister

(In Session 1 the Parliamentary year ran from 12 May to 11 May)

Minister	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning	0	0	1	0
Deputy Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning	0	0	1	0
Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural Development	0	1	0	0
Minister for Transport and the Environment	0	1	0	0

Table 3: Emergency questions asked during Session 2, by Party

Party	Number of questions
Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party	1
Scottish Green Party	0
Scottish Labour Party	0
Scottish Liberal Democrats	0
Scottish National Party	1
Scottish Senior Citizens' Unity Party	0
Scottish Socialist Party	0
Independent	0

Table 4: Emergency questions answered during Session 2, by Minister

(In Session 2 the Parliamentary year ran from 7 May to 6 May)

Minister	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning	1	0	0	N/A
First Minister	0	0	1	N/A

Table 5: Emergency questions asked during Session 3, by Party

Party	Number of questions
Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party	0
Scottish Green Party	0
Scottish Labour Party	1
Scottish Liberal Democrats	0
Scottish National Party	0
Independent	0

Table 6: Emergency questions answered during Session 3, by Minister

(In Session 3 the Parliamentary year ran from 9 May to 8 May)

Minister	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Minister for Public Health and Sport	0	0	0	1

Table 7: Emergency questions asked during Session 4, by Party

Party	Number of questions
Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party	0
Scottish Green Party	0
Scottish Labour Party	2
Scottish Liberal Democrats	0
Scottish National Party	0
Independent	0

Table 8: Emergency questions answered during Session 4, by Minister

Minister	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities	0	1	0	0	0
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing	0	0	1	0	0

Table 9: Emergency questions during Session 5, by Party 12 May 2017 – 3 September 2017

No Emergency questions were asked or answered during this time.

Table 10: Urgent questions asked during Session 5, by Party from 4 September 2017 – to 4 May 2021

Party	Number of questions
Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party	5
Scottish Green Party	0
Scottish Labour Party	12
Scottish Liberal Democrats	3
Scottish National Party	2

Table 11: Urgent questions answered during Session 5, by Minister from 4 September 2017 – to 4 May 2021

(In Session 5 the Parliamentary year runs from 12 May to 4 May. However, the 2017-2018 column counts the period 4 September 2017 to 4 May 2018)

Minister	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2021
Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities	1	0	0	0
Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs	2	0	0	0
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution	1	0	0	0
Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe	1	0	0	0
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport	1	0	3	1
Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy	1	0	0	0
Minister for Transport and the Islands	1	0	0	0
Cabinet Secretary for Justice	1	0	0	0
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity	1	0	0	0
Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work	0	1	1	0
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills	0	1	0	0
Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People	0	1	0	0
Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills	0	0	1	0
Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing	0	0	1	0

Minister	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2021
Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity	0	0	0	1
The Lord Advocate	0	0	0	1

Table 12: Urgent questions asked during Session 6, by Party from 12 May 2021 – to date

Party	Number of questions
Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party	16
Scottish Green Party	2
Scottish Labour Party	12
Scottish Liberal Democrats	2
Scottish National Party	1

Table 13: Urgent questions answered during Session 6, by Minister from 12 May 2021 – to date

Minister	2021-2022	2022-2023
Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans	3	3
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills	3	
Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise	0	1
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture	1	
First Minister	1	
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills	2	
Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care	1	
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery	2	2
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care	4	2
Minister for Transport	1	1
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy	1	
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government	1	2
Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture	0	1
Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport	0	1

Table 14: Urgent questions to the SPCB asked during Session 6, by Party from 12 May 2021 – to date

Party	Number of questions
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Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party	0
Scottish Green Party	1
Scottish Labour Party	0
Scottish Liberal Democrats	0
Scottish National Party	0

Table 15: Urgent questions to the SPCB answered during Session 6, by member of SPCB from 12 May 2021 – to date

Member of SPCB	2021-2022	2022-2023
Claire Baker	1	

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