



# Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

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Dear Tom,

## **FOLLOW UP TO 7 DECEMBER FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ON UK POLICY TOWARDS AFGHANISTAN**

Thank you for your letter of 15 December with questions following the 7 December oral evidence session on UK policy towards Afghanistan.

### **Special Cases**

1. *How many people were given clearance to come to the UK under the Special Cases category, within LOTR?*

During the evacuation, under the arrangements described below, according to our records 1190 Afghan nationals were called forward for evacuation and granted LOTR.

2. *Can you give us a breakdown of those cleared by:*

- a) *the number of principal applicants as opposed to dependents,*

Of the 1190, 295 were principals and 895 were their dependents.

- (b) *the employment categories of principal applicants (e.g. members of Afghan security forces),*

**Annex B** shows a breakdown of LOTR/ Special cases and HMG staff evacuated from Afghanistan (by 30 August).

The individuals selected for LOTR in this period were from the following cohorts: journalists and others in the media, contractors working in exposed roles for the Embassy, current Chevening scholars, women's rights activists, senior government officials who had worked closely with the UK, particularly on counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics, and employees of charities, humanitarian organisations and NGOs

*c) whether they were in fact evacuated? [Q 416]*

Of the 1190 Afghans called forward for evacuation in August under LOTR, 483 were able to reach the airport and were brought out on UK military flights as part of Op PITTING. We have since helped more to leave Afghanistan by other means, and we are in touch with those called forward to enable them to come to the UK as soon as possible.

*3. What was the role of a) the FCDO and b) the Home Office in selecting these individuals? [Q 456]*

The Prime Minister and Ministers made clear from the outset that the priority for Op PITTING was to evacuate British nationals and their eligible dependents, and those accepted for resettlement under the ARAP scheme. On 16/17 August, having been guided that Ministers were minded also to assist some additional Afghan nationals beyond those eligible for ARAP, if and when there was spare capacity on UK military evacuation flights, officials from the FCDO, Home Office and MoD discussed how cohorts for possible evacuation might be identified.

Following that discussion, FCDO officials drafted two submissions recommending cohorts for possible evacuation. These submissions were shared in draft with Home Office and MoD officials, and submitted to the Foreign Secretary, and in parallel to the Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Defence, on 19 and 21 August. The first submission detailed cohorts, which were underpinned by lists of named individuals who could then be called forward for evacuation, if they could be contacted, their dependants identified, and all of them security cleared by the Home Office. The second submission contained additional potential cohorts, and recommended that Ministers expand the list of those potentially eligible, so that we made maximum use of any spare flight capacity which might become available. A military team embedded in the FCDO Crisis Centre started calling them forward as soon as Permanent Joint Headquarters confirmed that there was flight capacity to do so. Border Force officials granted LOTR to those evacuated.

*4. What mechanisms did the Government use to identify people in this category, besides processing email requests for help? [Qs 257, 320]*

The LOTR provision was used for those whom Ministers wished to help where possible, but who did not fit into the ARAP scheme, and were not British Nationals or their eligible dependants. The LOTR cohorts drew on FCDO, MoD, and other interested parts of Government's knowledge of Afghanistan and recent evidence

of actual or likely targeting by the Taliban or other groups. It consisted of individuals who had been identified from a number of sources including by Ministers, Members of Parliament, Peers, UK media organisations, NGOs, and British employers operating in Afghanistan, by UK officials who had worked in Afghanistan, and from wider public correspondence.

5. *Which Ministers were responsible for making decisions about cases under this category? Was advice in relation to such decision prepared jointly by MoD, Home Office, and FCDO, or did each Department prepare its own advice to Ministers? [Qs 333, 389]*

Leave to enter the UK outside the immigration rules, 'LOTR', can only be granted by the Home Secretary, and so all such decisions ultimately had to be approved by her. During the evacuation the Home Secretary made clear that, for the period of the evacuation only, those evacuated by the UK from Afghanistan would be granted Leave to Enter the UK. As described in response to Question 3, officials advised Ministers which cohorts might be evacuated under the LOTR provision.

Lord Ahmad, as Minister of State at the FCDO, with the Minister for the Armed Forces, James Heapey, and Minister for Immigration, Kevin Foster, met daily from 19 August, and thereafter as necessary, with supporting officials and PJHQ, to oversee practical aspects of the evacuation, including the flow of people through the Emergency Handling Centre (Baron Hotel).

6. *Was advice in relation to such decision prepared jointly by MoD, Home Office, and FCDO, or did each Department prepare its own advice to Ministers?*

As explained above, officials in the three Departments co-ordinated their advice to Ministers closely and worked together to ensure that Ministers were presented with consistent advice.

7. *What estimate was made on or around 16 August of the extent of the spare capacity on flights and of the number of people in this category that it would be possible to evacuate? [Qs 258, 387-92, 402]*

On 16 August, the evacuation had to be temporarily suspended when large numbers of Afghan civilians gathered on the Kabul airport runway. On 21 August PJHQ advised that there was capacity to start calling forward Afghans for evacuation under LOTR. The US led negotiations with the Taliban to try to extend the evacuation period beyond 31 August, but these were ultimately unsuccessful.

8. *How many people were given clearance to come to the UK under category 4 of ARAP?*

*by:*

- a) *the number of principal applicants as opposed to dependents,*

- b) the employment categories of principal applicants (e.g. members of Afghan security forces),
- c) whether they were in fact evacuated?

The ARAP scheme is administered by the MoD and questions of detail on numbers or other aspects are a matter for them.

9. *What was the FCDO's role in selecting these individuals? [Qs 262, 398]*

The ARAP scheme is administered by MOD, and MOD is best placed to answer questions about ARAP, including about ARAP Category 4 as a whole. These answers relate to the FCDO's role.

As the evacuation approached, the Secretary of State for Defence with the Foreign Secretary and the Home Secretary agreed that Ministers in the FCDO, MOD and Home Office should have discretion to agree individuals as eligible under Category 4 of ARAP. During the evacuation, under Category 4 of ARAP, FCDO officials recommended and FCDO Ministers agreed the eligibility of:

- 24 principals who had been employed by, or worked closely with, FCDO or other Government Departments, but who had for a range of reasons not already been agreed for ARAP;
- 12 individuals in Afghanistan's criminal justice system who had supported the UK's national security objectives;
- some British Council contractors. Ministers also agreed that a remaining group of British Council contractors should be considered after the evacuation, case by case. This group will now be considered for possible resettlement under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

FCDO officials worked with other organisations accountable to FCDO Ministers to make recommendations under Category 4. ARAP Category 4 was intended primarily for those involved in the security sphere, and as explained in the Home Office Explanatory Memorandum of 14 December is now explicitly limited to those who furthered the UK's military and security objectives. It would not be appropriate to provide a more detailed breakdown here.

Officials in the three Departments shared their draft submissions, so FCDO officials also saw in draft and had input to other Departments', and in particular MOD's submissions.

### **MPs correspondence**

10. *Is it true that, for a period in late August, the FCDO Special Cases team opened emails but did not record their details? If so, what was the reason for this? [AFG0038]*

Until 25 August, a Special Cases Correspondence Team sought to consider all e-mails received, with the goal of identifying those who might be within ARAP Category 4, or the cohorts agreed by Ministers for the LOTR provision. However given the unprecedented volume of incoming correspondence, particularly after the announcement of the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme, the team prioritised cases with the highest chance of successful evacuation, or those with the greatest vulnerability.

From 25 August, it was clear that US negotiations with the Taliban to extend the evacuation had been unsuccessful, and that the evacuation would therefore end very shortly, meaning that it was no longer likely to be possible to call additional people forward under the LOTR provision. This could not be announced publicly without risking a dangerous surge of people trying to get to the airport, which would only have made it more difficult for those who had already been called forward to reach the Baron Hotel and be processed by our Rapid Deployment Team. During this period the team in London opened e-mails to see if any of them contained new cases of particularly high priority, in case, against expectation, the situation improved and there were opportunities to assist them.

11. *What role did requests from MPs have in the process of prioritising requests for evacuation under the Special Cases category? [Q399, 417]*

See below.

12. *What was the definition of the "significance / sensitivity" criterion that was used to prioritise cases within this category? [Qs 402-4, 417]*

Sensitivity related to the individual's role in support of HMG objectives: where the specific nature of activities/association led to an increased threat of targeting; or where there would be specific threat to HMG from data disclosure. When prioritising for evacuation, officials considered support from an MP and Ministerial interest to be possible indicators of a contribution to UK objectives. Neither was relevant under the sensitivity criterion.

### **British nationals in Afghanistan**

13. *Before the evacuation, what methods did the FCDO use to track the number of British nationals in Afghanistan? [Q 256]*

For many years, the FCDO has not required British nationals to register with an Embassy or High Commission when they travel or live abroad. Any registration process would quickly become dated, as British nationals travel frequently and would not always update their location.

For the purposes of evacuation contingency planning, we drew on estimates maintained by the British Embassy in Kabul of the number of British passport holders and other Eligible Persons likely to be in Afghanistan. Our Embassy had a good sense from their own contacts of the number of British expatriates working for NGOs, private security companies, or other organisations operating in Afghanistan. But it was never possible for them to know how many dual national British/Afghan citizens, many of whom had homes or family in both countries and travelled between them, were in Afghanistan at any time.

Before 15 April 2021 our travel advice already advised against all travel to virtually the whole of Afghanistan. On 15 April 2021, in the wake of the decision to withdraw NATO troops, we specifically warned people of our reduced ability to provide consular support, and advised them to consider leaving Afghanistan if they were present in the country, and advised against all travel into the whole country. On 6 August, when the first provincial capital fell to the Taliban, we advised them to 'Leave Now' while regular commercial flights remained available.

It was clear from the numbers who sought evacuation by the UK military in August that many British passport holders had chosen not to act on this advice. The experience of our Rapid Deployment Team processing applicants in Kabul was that, in many cases, this was because those British nationals had Afghan dependents or other relatives who lacked British passports or visas, who might not have been eligible for UK visas under the immigration rules, or who lacked even Afghan passports.

Recognising the exceptional circumstances of the situation in Afghanistan, the FCDO has introduced a 'Confirm Your Presence' system for British nationals who remain in Afghanistan. This has enabled us to send six update messages to British nationals since 8 September, and we continue to advise all British nationals to sign up to FCDO Travel Advice updates on Afghanistan. It has also enabled us to identify those British nationals and their dependants who are eligible to come to the UK, and to help over 1,400 more leave Afghanistan since August, mainly via Pakistan or on Qatari flights.

In total, the UK has supported over 3,400 individuals to leave Afghanistan since the end of Op PITTING. This includes over 1,200 British nationals and eligible Dependents.

## **The crisis response**

14. *Could you give us a breakdown of staffing in the Government's Afghanistan crisis response, by dates, type of personnel, grade, Department, and location? [Qs 303, 385]*

In total, 1,336 FCDO staff were rostered and took part in the crisis response from 18 August until 27 September. This does not include the large number of staff working on correspondence in September.

Grades in the crisis structure are variable depending on experience – Gold roles were filled by SCS2 officers, Silver by SCS or experienced G6/7 officers, Bronze by HEO/SEO or G6/7, and Team members largely EO and HEOs. We do not track the number of people by grade but a rough breakdown of a shift would be:

Gold – 1

Silvers – 6

Bronzes – 20

Team members - at the peak of the operation (from 18 August until 30 August), between 100 and 120 during a day shift

Due to Covid 19 and social distancing requirements, and the unprecedented scale of this crisis, our response was necessarily a hybrid, between the crisis centre and remote workers both in the UK and around our network of overseas Posts. Seats in the crisis centre were prioritised for Gold/Silver/Bronze roles, embeds from other Government Departments and call handlers.

See **Annex A** for table of staff numbers

15. *Could you set out the dates when the FCDO made key decisions to increase numbers of personnel working on the crisis response, including the numbers of staff, and the methods used to recruit and allocate individuals to roles?*

The Acting PUS agreed that we should go into Crisis Mode to handle the fast evolving situation in Afghanistan on 11 August. That decision automatically triggered the commitment of staff from our Crisis Management Department experienced in crisis work to bolster the existing Afghanistan team and to staff the FCDO Crisis Centre (because of Covid and the number of staff needed, this was from the outset a hybrid crisis response, with many staff working from home, from their desks elsewhere in FCDO, or from our Posts around the world). The FCDO remained formally in Crisis Mode on Afghanistan for 47 Days, only coming out of it on 26 September.

From the early days of the crisis, it was clear that we needed to scale up at speed and a number of decisions were taken throughout the crisis to address key areas. FCDO staff working on crises are drawn from across the FCDO and network requiring a wider reprioritisation of other key work to enable the release of staff. In addition, Crisis teams draw on the Crisis trained cadres to form the initial teams: the on call London Response Team, and when the scale is larger, the Directorate Crisis Lists, which enables 20% of each Department to be released to work on crisis response. The scale of the Afghanistan response and specific challenges such as correspondence meant further calls for staff across the entire network were required.

- 13 Aug – Acting PUS writes to London Response Team and Directors underlining importance of releasing staff and activating the DCL.
- 15 Aug – Acting PUS writes to Directors requesting additional staff with hostile environment training to assist RDT deployments and requesting reprioritisation exercise to release more DCL staff to assist with Crisis staffing.
- 1 Sept – PUS writes to Directors to release a further 120 staff to assist with correspondence.
- 8 Sept – PUS writes to Directors to release a further 150 staff to assist on correspondence.
- 14 Sept – Director HR writes to Directors to enable 270 per day to work on correspondence (35-40 staff from each Department)
- 23 Sept - Director HR writes to Directors to request more staff are released to reach required numbers.

16. *What steps were taken to ensure that those with country knowledge and language skills were available to assist staff in the FCDO Crisis Centre processing applications? [Qs 365, 409]*

Staff from British Embassy Kabul and others with experience of Afghanistan were recruited into the Crisis Centre and allocated as most appropriate to the need and their skills. The Panels considering cases for evacuation always included former staff of British Embassy Kabul.

17. *Could you set out the dates of visits by a) Sir Philip and b) the Foreign Secretary to the Crisis Centre? [Qs 297, 298, 457]*

I visited the Crisis Centre on 27 August and held a number of meetings in the Crisis Centre with Golds during the week beginning 30 August and in September. I visited the Crisis Centre on several other occasions to check in with staff on an ad hoc basis and the times/dates were not noted in diaries.

The former Foreign Secretary visited the Crisis Centre on 17 and 27 August (on the 27th accompanying the Prime Minister). He was in regular contact with the team in the Crisis Centre, including multiple meetings each day with Crisis Golds, Silvers, Bronzes and other crisis team members.

### **Night shifts**

18. *How many people were working on each night shift in the Crisis Centre between 15- 31 August?*

<b>15</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>16</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>17</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>18</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>19</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>20</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>21</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>22</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>23</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>24</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>25</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>26</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>27</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>28</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>29</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>30</b> <b>/8</b>	<b>31</b> <b>/8</b>
6	3	6	18	17	27	28	32	26	32	30	32	29	22	7	7	3

Evacuation flights stopped on 28 August.

19. *How were these individuals divided between teams, roles, grades, and Departments?*

- Silver Consular
- Silver Briefing
- Bronze Relocations + Desk Officers
- Bronze Confirmation + Desk officers
- Bronze Correspondence
- Bronze Call Handling + Call Handlers
- Bronze Wrap-Around
- Bronze Consular
- Additional Bronze Consular
- Consular Desk Officers
- LORT/Special Cases Team
- Crisis Hub Super User
- Night Mailbox manager/Logistics runner
- International Engagement

The above show the types of roles covered during nightshifts. These would fluctuate depending on priority and need - e.g. if a flight was scheduled the next day, a larger consular team would be required overnight dealing with flight ops and calling people forward.

Silver roles were generally filled by SCS or experienced G6/7 officers. Bronze roles were a mix of EO, HEO or G6/7. Team roles were a mix of grades, but largely filled by EO/HEO officers.

20. *How many night shifts were not fully staffed during this period?*

The crisis roster does not record this detail. In general terms the majority of staff attended shifts as rostered, and no significant issues with people not turning up were recorded. It is always the case in any crisis that some staff might encounter last minute unavoidable problems preventing them from attending – such as a new crisis arising in their own normal jobs. Over the period of 14 August to 24 September there were 408 staff in total working night shifts.

21. *Do you have a record of the proportion of those rostered who attended their shifts?*

No, the roster does not record this detail. In general terms the majority of staff attended shifts as rostered. There were no significant issues with people not turning up more than is usual for rostering, for example due to last minute unavoidable problems staff might encounter.

### **Annual leave taken by senior leaders**

22. *What were the dates of the Foreign Secretary's annual leave in August? [Q 310]*

The former Foreign Secretary has provided a full statement on this matter.

23. *Which Ministers were assigned to cover for other Ministers in August, on what dates, and in what capacities?*

The FCDO always has a duty Minister in place as standard, based on a rota system. This system is in keeping with practice across HMG and with the Ministerial Code. Duty Ministers are not assigned to cover other, individual Ministers. The duty Minister is responsible for any time sensitive business when other members of the ministerial team are unavailable, for example when travelling overseas

24. *How was decision-making relating to the evacuation delegated by Sir Philip during his annual leave? [Q331]*

Throughout the evacuation period an Acting PUS was in place. A separate Director General was also in place to lead our Afghanistan work. The PUS remained in regular contact with colleagues across the department working on Afghanistan, including on key decisions, for example around the safety and security of FCDO colleagues in Kabul.

### **Contact between Ministers and the UK Ambassador to Afghanistan**

25. *In August, what contact did the then Foreign Secretary have with Ambassador Bristow, with the date and type of each contact? [Q 272]*

The then-Foreign Secretary was regularly in touch with Ambassador Bristow throughout this period, and was regularly receiving advice which had his input.

Laurie Bristow attended all of the Ministerial COBR meetings with the Foreign Secretary in August.

26. *Was the Times accurate when it reported that then-Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab: “banned ambassadors from speaking to ministers in other departments without his permission”?*

Ministers and other Departments had access to advice from Ambassadors.

### **Ministerial meetings**

27. *On what dates did FCDO Ministers speak with counterparts in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries in each month of this year, up to and including August? We ask that you provide full details across this time period, including the first two weeks of August. [Qs 313-4]*

**Annex C** shows a table of engagements at Ministerial level. This was submitted as part of the follow up to the former Foreign Secretary’s evidence session.

28. *On what dates did the then-Foreign Secretary speak to the US Secretary of State and the Secretary General of NATO in July and August?*

**Annex C** shows a table of engagements at Ministerial level including calls with the US Secretary of State and the Secretary General of NATO.

### **Reopening the British Embassy in Kabul**

29. *Under what circumstances would the Government reopen the Embassy in Kabul?*

We intend to re-establish a diplomatic presence in Kabul as soon as the security situation allows us to deliver our duty of care to our staff. Obviously the situation is now significantly changed and many critical security and life support measures (access to regular international flights in and out, the presence of NATO troops, friendly Afghan Government security forces ensuring security and free movement within the Kabul international zone, access to international standard emergency medical facilities) are no longer available. We are co-ordinating with likeminded international partners who share a wish to re-establish a presence in Kabul when security allows.

30. *Would this constitute a de facto recognition of the governing regime?*

It is long standing HMG policy to recognise states, not governments. Having a diplomatic presence in Kabul would not of itself constitute recognition of the Taliban as the legitimate Government of Afghanistan. Other states have maintained a diplomatic presence in Kabul while withholding such recognition.

## **Nowzad evacuation**

31. *When was the decision made, and by whom, to allow the Nowzad evacuation, for a) staff and b) animals? [Qs 348, 429-433, 452]*

Nowzad staff were included by officials in the potential cohorts to be considered for evacuation if space became available under LOTR, covered by the submissions referred to in answer to Question 3 and confirmed in information provided to Ministers on 22 August. As space became available they were called forward, this was towards the very end of the evacuation.

Once Nowzad staff had been called forward for evacuation, the Defence Secretary made a public statement that, if Pen Farthing brought the animals in Nowzad's care to the airport, MoD would seek a landing slot for the charter flight Nowzad had organised. That charter flight left Kabul only after the evacuation of all civilians had been completed and the cross-Government civilian Rapid Deployment Team, which had been processing civilians for evacuation, had left. Nowzad's Afghan staff were unable to access the airport and later left Afghanistan by a different route.

32. *What was the FCDO's role in this decision, and how and when was it informed of the decision?*

The FCDO's interest was first and foremost with the safety of Pen Farthing as a British national. From the start of Op PITTING, FCDO Consular staff repeatedly urged Mr Farthing to take advantage of the offer of UK military evacuation. As set out above, FCDO officials included Nowzad's Afghan staff in the list of potential cohorts to be considered for evacuation under LOTR, if space became available, in the submissions referred to in answer to Question 3 above. As space became available, they were called forward for evacuation towards the very end of the evacuation.

- 33, 34. *Do you, Sir Philip, have any reason to believe that there was support for this decision in No. 10, or from the Prime Minister? Do you have any reason to believe that FCDO staff attributed this decision to the Prime Minister? [Q 433]*

I am not aware of that, beyond speculation in the public domain

35. *Did Nigel Casey receive any correspondence referring to the Prime Minister's intervention in the Nowzad case?*

No.

- 36, 37. *Did an internal investigation launched in response to complaints by Raphael Marshall find that the criteria for evacuation were not followed in one case as a*

*result of a ministerial decision taken elsewhere in Government, as asserted by Mr Marshall? If so, was this a reference to the Nowzad case? [AFG0038]*

The internal investigation into Mr Marshall's complaints found no evidence that pressure from any quarter had led to decisions which contravened the policy the Government had adopted when it came to the granting of LOTR. In one case Ministers elsewhere in Government disagreed with the advice of officials. The report did not include details of any specific cases.

*38. Can you give an estimate of the time of a) MOD civilian b) military personnel and b) FCDO staff that was spent processing the Nowzad evacuation? [Q 339]*

It is not possible to estimate the amount of time officials spent on any one case. Cases in which Ministers, MPs, or in this case, the wider public, took an interest consumed a significant amount of staff time. This was inevitable and a legitimate part of a Minister or MP's responsibilities. Mr Farthing was, as a British national, offered evacuation and was repeatedly contacted by FCDO Consular staff to urge him to take up that offer.

*Philip Barton*

**Philip Barton**

## Annex A

The numbers below reflect only the staff from other departments working on the FCDO Crisis Response Team. Many departments also had their own crisis response teams some of which were of significant size.

<b>London</b>	<b>15-Aug</b>	<b>16-Aug</b>	<b>17-Aug</b>	<b>18-Aug</b>	<b>19-Aug</b>	<b>20-Aug</b>	<b>21-Aug</b>
FCDO	47	60	101	105	172	193	136
MOD	8	8	8	9	10	30	88
Home Office	2	4	6	12	21	21	21
Call Handlers	8	12	26	57	67	107	122
Correspondence surge (located outside main crisis structure)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	5	5	5	5	5	7	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>374</b>

<b>London</b>	<b>22-Aug</b>	<b>23-Aug</b>	<b>24-Aug</b>	<b>25-Aug</b>	<b>26-Aug</b>	<b>27-Aug</b>	<b>28-Aug</b>
FCDO	151	233	249	318	315	205	170
MOD	88	103	103	103	104	46	46
Home Office	21	27	29	30	30	21	15
Call Handlers	126	140	141	123	109	94	70
Correspondence surge (located outside main crisis structure)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	7	7	7	7	7	7	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>307</b>

<b>London</b>	<b>29-Aug</b>	<b>30-Aug</b>	<b>31-Aug</b>	<b>01-Sep</b>	<b>02-Sep</b>	<b>03-Sep</b>	<b>04-Sep</b>
FCDO	146	163	140	119	99	125	98
MOD	45	38	5	1	0	0	0
Home Office	5	4	2	2	1	0	0
Call Handlers	9	6	6	6	0	0	0
Correspondence surge (located outside main crisis structure)	0	0	20	20	25	25	15
Other	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>98</b>

<b>London</b>	<b>05-Sep</b>	<b>06-Sep</b>
FCDO	113	140
MOD	0	11
Home Office	0	0
Call Handlers	0	0
Correspondence surge (located outside main crisis structure)	10	50
Other	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>166</b>

## Annex B

Breakdown of LOTR/ Special cases and HMG staff evacuated from Afghanistan (by 30 August)

Category	Number arriving in UK
	<b>287</b>
<b>Journalists and media</b>	<b>(71 principals and 216 dependents)</b>
<b>Women's Rights Activists</b>	<b>65</b> <b>(11 Principals and 54 dependents)</b>
<b>Senior government and law enforcement officials, including judges (LOTR-ACC + GOV + JUD categories)</b>	<b>62</b> <b>(12 Principals and 50 dependents)</b>
<b>ARAP family member (AFM)</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Chevening Scholars</b>	<b>58</b> <b>(22 Chevening scholars and 36 dependents)</b>
<b>Extremely vulnerable individuals</b>	<b>37</b> <b>(8 principals and 29 dependents)</b>
<b>Initial total</b>	<b>520</b>
<b>Adjustment (37 people double counted under ARAP. This number could increase by a further 7 depending on data reconciliation)</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Total LOTR/ Special Cases</b>	<b>483</b>

## Annex C

### Timeline of FCDO Ministerial and PM engagement on Afghanistan – March 2021 to September 2021

Date	Minister	International Engagement
W/C 27/09/2021	Minister Morton	Visit to Spain. Bilateral with Minister for Foreign and Global Affairs
W/C 27/09/2021	Prime Minister	Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Janša is visiting the UK. (Also meeting FS, but no request Afghanistan no on agenda.)
22-24/9/2021	Lord Ahmad	US visit for UNGA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dinner on the Road Ahead for Afghanistan hosted by Qatar and the International Peace Institute (IPI) 22 Sep,</li> <li>- G20 FMs' meeting on Afghanistan, 22 Sep</li> <li>- Meetings with: Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, UNHCR High Commissioner, USG DiCarlo, Qatar, SRSG Pramila Pastten, UAE</li> <li>- Khalifa Shaheen Al Marar, UAE Minister of State (MFA), (22 Sep) (UAE PR Lana Zaki Nusseibeh accompanied)</li> </ul>
20/9-22/9/2021	Foreign Secretary (accompanying PM)	US Visit for UNGA and White House. Planned meetings (check) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FM Jordan</li> <li>- PM-Biden bilat</li> <li>- Blinken (US FM)</li> <li>- Powers (US AID)</li> <li>- FM Iran</li> <li>- FM India</li> <li>- FM Australia</li> <li>- FM France (tbc)</li> <li>- Quad FMs</li> <li>- P5 FMs + UN Sec Gen</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- G20 FMs (tbc)</li> <li>- FM Russia</li> <li>- Maybe others</li> </ul>
15/09/2021	Lord Ahmad	Visit to Doha for Afghanistan evacuation talks
14/09/2021	Lord Ahmad	Official visit to Uzbekistan. Meetings with Foreign Minister (+ Deputy Chair of Senate, Justice and Investment Ministers).
13/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Iranian Foreign Minister Abdollahian
13/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	UN Geneva Humanitarian Meeting
08/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi
08/09/2021	Lord Ahmad	Meeting with Uzbekistan Deputy Chair of the Senate, Sodiq Safoev
08/09/2021	Lord Ahmad	Call with Uzbekistan Deputy Foreign Minister
08/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	US German led G7+ Foreign Ministers Coordination Meeting
08/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi
07/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Canadian Foreign Minister Garneau
06/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Bangladesh Foreign Minister Momen
06/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister, Abdulziz Kamilov
06/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Canadian Foreign Minister Garneau
03/09/2021	Prime Minister	Call with Dutch Prime Minister
03/09/2021	Lord Ahmad	Call with Turkmen Deputy Foreign Minister Hajiev

03/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	FS met FM Qureshi, PM Khan and Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Bajwa
03/09/2021	Lord Ahmad	Call to Turkmen DFM Hajiev
03/09/2021	Lord Ahmad	Meeting with UAE Advisor to the Emir, Anwar Gargash
03/09/2021	Lord Ahmad	Visit to Tajikistan, meeting w. Tajik DFM Huseinzoda in Dushanbe
02/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Meetings with Amir and Foreign Minister of Qatar, Doha
02/09/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with Indonesian Foreign Minister
02/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Tajik Foreign Minister Muhriden
01/09/21	Foreign Secretary	Call with Indian FM Jaishankar
01-03/09/2021	Foreign Secretary	Visit to Qatar & Pakistan
31/08/21	Foreign Secretary	Call with New Zealand FM Mahuta
30/08/21	Foreign Secretary	Call with G7, Qatar, Turkey, NATO Ministerial VTC on Afghanistan
30/08/21	Prime Minister	G7+2 Meeting
28/08/21	Prime Minister	Call with German Chancellor Merkel
28/08/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with Dr Abdullah Abdullah
27/08/21	Foreign Secretary	Call with Pakistan Foreign Minister Qureshi
26/08/21	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary of State Blinken
26/08/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with Uzbek FM Kamilov
25/08/21	Foreign Secretary	Call with Belgian Foreign Minister Wilmes
25/08/21	Foreign Secretary	Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu
25/08/21	Foreign Secretary	Call with Indian Foreign Minister Jaishankar
25/08/21	Minister Cleverly	Call with Assistant Foreign Minister HE Al-Khater, Qatar

25/08/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Kamilov
25/08/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with Tajikistan Deputy Foreign Minister Salim,
24/08/21	Prime Minister	G7 Leaders' call
24/08/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with US Undersecretary for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human rights
23/08/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with Turkmenistan Deputy Foreign Minister Hajiev
23/08/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with Tajikistan Deputy FM Farhod Salim
23/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Jean Arnault Afghanistan Envoy for the Secretary General of the United Nations (UNSG)
23/08/21	Lord Ahmad	Call with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
22/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Dutch Foreign Minister Kaag
22/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with Turkish President Erdogan
21/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Dutch Foreign Minister Kaag
21/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with French Foreign Minister Le Drian
21/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary of State Blinken
21/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with UN Secretary General Guterres
20/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Turkish FM Cavusoglu
20/08/2021	Lord Ahmad	Call with UNICEF Executive Director Fore
20/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with German Foreign Minister Maas
20/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Danish Foreign Minister Kofod
20/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	NATO Foreign Ministers

20/08/2021	Lord Ahmad	Call with UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict , Pramilla Patten
19/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with Australian Prime Minister Morrison
19/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi
19/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	G7 Foreign Ministers
19/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu
19/08/2021	Lord Ahmad	Call with Foreign Minister Atmar
18/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed
18/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with Italian Prime Minister Draghi
18/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary of State Blinken
18/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Indian Foreign Minister Jaishankar
18/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Australian Foreign Minister Payne
17/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with US President Biden
17/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with German Chancellor Merkel
17/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with Pakistan Prime Minister Khan
17/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with USAID Administrator Samantha Power
17/08/2021	Lord Ahmad	Call with Foreign Minister Atmar
16/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with French President Macron
16/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary of State Blinken
16/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Qatari Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Al Thani
15/08/2021	Lord Ahmad	Call with Foreign Minister Atmar
15/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg

15/08/2021	Prime Minister	Call with UN Secretary General Guterres
15/08/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Pakistan Foreign Minister Qureshi
15/08/2021	Minister Cleverly	Call with Canadian Foreign Minister Garneau
26/07/2021	Minister Morton	Call with Uzbek Deputy Foreign Minister Fazilov
23/07/2021	Lord Ahmad	Meeting with Afgan National Security Adviser Mohib and State Minister for Peace Naderi
23/07/2021	Lord Ahmad	Meeting with Indian Foreign Secretary (PUS Equivalent) Shringla
19/07/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with USAID Administrator Samantha Power
15-16/07/2021	Lord Ahmad	Visit to Tashkent for South/Central Asia Connectivity Conference (met Indian Foreign Minister Jaishankar (briefly discussed Afghanistan) and Afghan President Ghani as well as Uzbek Foreign Minister Kamilov and the following: Pakistan PM Khan; Turkey Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu; US Special Rep, Afghanistan, Khalilzad; Bangladesh FM Momen; Afghanistan FM Atmar; UN Special Rep to Afghanistan, Deborah Lyon; Iranian DFM.
05/07/2021	Foreign Secretary	Afghanistan NSC

01/07/2021	Lord Ahmad	Bilateral with Ambassador Greenfield, Permanent Representative of the US
30/06/2021	Lord Ahmad	Meeting with Ambassador T. S. Tirumurti, India's Permanent Representative to the UN. The meeting briefly discussed issues concerning Afghanistan, Myanmar, Syria and UN reform.
29/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	Bilateral with India's Jaishankar
29/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	Bilateral with Turkish FM Cavusoglu (G20)
29/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	G20 Foreign Minister's Meeting, Italy
28/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	Norwegian FM Soreide (GCAD)
28/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	Global Coalition Against DAESH Ministerial Meeting, Italy
23-24/06/2021	Lord Ahmad	Visit to Pakistan, called on PM Khan and FM Qureshi
11/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	Bilateral dinner with US Secretary Blinken
10/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	Bilateral with US Secretary Blinken (G7 Leaders Meeting)
07/06/2021	Prime Minister	PM spoke with PM Khan
02/06/2021	Lord Ahmad	Meeting with Afghanistan Foreign Minister Atmar

02/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	Bilateral with Jens Stoltenberg, NATO General
01/06/2021	Foreign Secretary	NATO Foreign and Defence Ministerial
27/05/2021	Foreign Secretary	Afghanistan SMG
20/05/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary General
18/05/2021	Foreign Secretary	Meeting with HRH Countess of Wessex
06/05/2021	Foreign Secretary	Bilateral with India's Minister Jaishankar
3-5/05/2021	Foreign Secretary	G7 F&DMs, Afghanistan was on the Agenda
03/05/2021	Foreign Secretary	Bilateral with US Secretary Blinken (G7 F&DMs)
15/04/2021	Foreign Secretary	Afghanistan & Russia NSC
14/04/2021	Foreign Secretary	FS spoke with FM Qureshi (Pakistan)
14/04/2021	Foreign Secretary	Afghanistan Framework – Foreign Ministers Meeting (US Secretary Blinken, German FM Maas, Italian FM Di Maio, and Turkish FM Cavosoglu with US Defence Secretary Austin)
12/04/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary Blinken

10/04/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary Blinken
24/03/2021	Foreign Secretary	NATO FM's, Afghanistan was on the Agenda
24/03/2021	Foreign Secretary	Meeting with German Foreign Minister, Heiko Maas (NATO FM's)
23/03/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call with India's Minister Jaishankar
23/03/2021	Foreign Secretary	Transatlantic Quad Meeting
23-24/03/2021	Lord Ahmad	Visit to Pakistan: PM Khan and FM Qureshi
18/03/2021	Foreign Secretary	Call w. Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary General
14 – 20/03/2021	Lord Ahmad	Visit to India. Met External Affairs Minister Jaishankar, Foreign Secretary Shringla, Justice Minister Prasad, and Home Minister Reddy. Addressed complex consular and human rights matters. Visited: New Delhi, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Mumbai.
18/02/2021	Foreign Secretary	Transatlantic Quad Meeting
16/02/2021	Foreign Secretary	Afghanistan NSC
11/02/2021	Lord Ahmad	FM Atmar Discussion about peace negotiations
22/12/2021	Lord Ahmad	Letter responding to FM Atmar's thank you letter for UK support at Geneva. Also

		congratulates him on his confirmed appointment.
26/11/2020	Foreign Secretary	Call with NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg
24/11/2020	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary Pompeo
24/11/2020	Lord Ahmad	Spoke during the Afghanistan Geneva Conference
23/11/2020	Lord Ahmad	To speak about Afghanistan's economic development and anti-corruption. Arghandiwal has since been dismissed as Minister of Finance.
20/10/2020	Foreign Secretary	Call with Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto
17/09/2020	Foreign Secretary	Meeting with Senator Lindsay Graham
01/03/2020	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary Pompeo
23/08/2019	Foreign Secretary	Call with US Secretary Pompeo
23/08/2019	Lord Ahmad	Call with President Ghani
23/08/2019	Prime Minister	Call with President Ghani



## Foreign Affairs Committee

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**From the Chair**  
Tom Tugendhat MP

Sir Philip Barton KCMG OBE  
Permanent Under-Secretary  
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

15 December 2021

Dear Sir Philip

Many thanks for your recent appearance before the Committee to discuss UK policy towards Afghanistan. We are writing with some questions to follow up on that session – please see the annex.

We would appreciate full and detailed responses by 14 January.

**TOM TUGENDHAT**

## Special Cases – LOTR and ARAP

- How many people were given clearance to come to the UK under the Special Cases category, within LOTR?
  - Can you give us a breakdown of those cleared by: a) the number of principal applicants as opposed to dependents, b) the employment categories of principal applicants (e.g. members of Afghan security forces), and c) whether they were in fact evacuated? [Q 416]
  - What was the role of a) the FCDO and b) the Home Office in selecting these individuals? [Q 456]
  - What mechanisms did the Government use to identify people in this category, besides processing email requests for help? [Qs 257, 320]
  - Which Ministers were responsible for making decisions about cases under this category? Was advice in relation to such decision prepared jointly by MoD, Home Office, and FCDO, or did each Department prepare its own advice to Ministers? [Qs 333, 389]
  - What estimate was made on or around 16 August of the extent of the spare capacity on flights and of the number of people in this category that it would be possible to evacuate? [Qs 258, 387-92, 402]
- How many people were given clearance to come to the UK under category 4 of ARAP?
  - Can you give us a breakdown of those cleared by: a) the number of principal applicants as opposed to dependents, b) the employment categories of principal applicants (e.g. members of Afghan security forces), and c) whether they were in fact evacuated?
  - What was the FCDO's role in selecting these individuals? [Qs 262, 398]

## MPs' correspondence

- Is it true that, for a period in late August, the FCDO Special Cases team opened emails but did not record their details? If so, what was the reason for this? [AFG0038]
- What role did requests from MPs have in the process of prioritising requests for evacuation under the Special Cases category? [Q399, 417]
- What was the definition of the "significance / sensitivity" criterion that was used to prioritise cases within this category? [Qs 402-4, 417]

## British nationals in Afghanistan

- Before the evacuation, what methods did the FCDO use to track the number of British nationals in Afghanistan? [Q 256]

## The crisis response

- Could you give us a breakdown of staffing in the Government's Afghanistan crisis response, by dates, type of personnel, grade, Department, and location? [Qs 303, 385]
- Could you set out the dates when the FCDO made key decisions to increase numbers of personnel working on the crisis response, including the numbers of staff, and the methods used to recruit and allocate individuals to roles?
- What steps were taken to ensure that those with country knowledge and language skills were available to assist staff in the FCDO Crisis Centre processing applications? [Qs 365, 409]
- Could you set out the dates of visits by a) Sir Philip and b) the Foreign Secretary to the Crisis Centre? [Qs 297, 298, 457]
- Night shifts – could you please provide us with the following information: [Qs 322-6]

- How many people were working on each night shift in the Crisis Centre between 15-31 August?
- How were these individuals divided between teams, roles, grades, and Departments?
- How many night shifts were not fully staffed during this period?
- Do you have a record of the proportion of those rostered who attended their shifts?

### **Annual leave taken by senior leaders**

- What were the dates of the Foreign Secretary's annual leave in August? [Q 310]
- Which Ministers were assigned to cover for other Ministers in August, on what dates, and in what capacities?
- How was decision-making relating to the evacuation delegated by Sir Philip during his annual leave? [Q331]

### **Contact between Ministers and the UK Ambassador to Afghanistan**

- In August, what contact did the then-Foreign Secretary have with Ambassador Bristow, with the date and type of each contact? [Q 272]
- Was the Times accurate when it reported that then-Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab: "banned ambassadors from speaking to ministers in other departments without his permission"?

### **Ministerial meetings**

- On what dates did FCDO Ministers speak with counterparts in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries in each month of this year, up to and including August? We ask that you provide full details across this time period, including the first two weeks of August. [Qs 313-4]
- On what dates did the then-Foreign Secretary speak to the US Secretary of State and the Secretary General of NATO in July and August?

### **Reopening the British Embassy in Kabul**

- Under what circumstances would the Government reopen the Embassy in Kabul?
- Would this constitute a de facto recognition of the governing regime?

### **Nowzad evacuation**

- When was the decision made, and by whom, to allow the Nowzad evacuation, for a) staff and b) animals? [Qs 348, 429-433, 452]
- What was the FCDO's role in this decision, and how and when was it informed of the decision?
- Do you, Sir Philip, have any reason to believe that there was support for this decision in No. 10, or from the Prime Minister? Do you have any reason to believe that FCDO staff attributed this decision to the Prime Minister? [Q 433]
- Did Nigel Casey receive any correspondence referring to the Prime Minister's intervention in the Nowzad case?
- Did an internal investigation launched in response to complaints by Raphael Marshall find that the criteria for evacuation were not followed in one case as a result of a ministerial decision taken elsewhere in Government, as asserted by Mr Marshall?
  - If so, was this a reference to the Nowzad case? [AFG0038]
- Can you give an estimate of the time of a) MOD civilian b) military personnel and b) FCDO staff that was spent processing the Nowzad evacuation? [Q 339]