







[REDACTED],

The latest text looks ok to me.

[REDACTED].

[REDACTED]. In relation to advice around any follow-ups on this, presumably we would just point to the information already released under FOI.

Andy

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>

**Sent:** 16 November 2022 16:34

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Huyton H (Harry) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; DG Net Zero <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Berge K (Kersti) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Permanent Secretary <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McAllister C (Colin) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Raines P (Philip) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Hackett R (Rebecca) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Director of Marine Scotland Mailbox <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Blewett J (Jo) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>

**Subject:** RE: Media query - 25% statistic Topical Question

Hi all,

Thanks for feedback – final version of the line to be cleared by the Cabinet Secretary below.

**A Scottish Government spokesperson said:**

[REDACTED]

---

Given that it has been removed from the line, if any follow-ups from journalists with regard to our plans to update Parliament, we will refer journalists to the [Official Record](#).

Relevant extract below:

*At the time when they cited it, Scottish ministers understood that statistic to be accurate. Now that it has come to our attention that it is not, we are working to update the statistics on how our offshore wind potential compares with that of other countries. We will update the Parliament once that is done and, at that point, we will consider how any legacy documents might need to be updated.*

Grateful for any further views or comments in next 30 mins.



If you receive this email late at night, early in the morning, or at the weekend - it means I am working flexibly. Flexibility works for me, but please do not feel that you should have to pick this up outside of your own normal working hours.

**Mike Palmer**  
**Deputy Director for Marine Planning and Policy**  
**marinescotland**

Scottish Government | Area GB-South | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Tel: [REDACTED]

Mob: [REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]@gov.scot  
w: <http://www.gov.scot/marinescotland>

**From:** Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 16 November 2022 14:48  
**To:** Huyton H (Harry) [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; DG Net Zero <DGNetZero@gov.scot>; Berge K (Kersti) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin) [REDACTED]@gov.scot; Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Raines P (Philip) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Hackett R (Rebecca) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Director of Marine Scotland Mailbox <Directormarinescotland@gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Blewett J (Jo) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Media query - 25% statistic Topical Question

Thanks [REDACTED],

Adding in MS colleagues.

As per Harry's request, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

If we go with this, I would recommend [REDACTED]

Subject to any other views from the copylist – I think this otherwise looks ok to me.

Andy

**From:** Huyton H (Harry) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 16 November 2022 14:33

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; DG Net Zero <DGNetZero@gov.scot>; Berge K (Kersti) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McAllister C (Colin) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Raines P (Philip) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Hackett R (Rebecca) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>  
**Subject:** RE: Media query - 25% statistic Topical Question

Thanks [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>

**Sent:** 16 November 2022 14:11

**To:** DG Net Zero <DGNetZero@gov.scot>; Berge K (Kersti) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; Huyton H (Harry) <[REDACTED@gov.scot] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; McAllister C (Colin) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Raines P (Philip) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; Hackett R (Rebecca) <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>  
**Subject:** Media query - 25% statistic Topical Question

Hi all,

Thanks for the call earlier. Starting a new chain to deal specifically with the media query. Scotsman and Express have been on.

Please see suggested response below.

Grateful for views or any suggested changes by 3.30pm if possible please.

**A Scottish Government spokesperson said:**

[REDACTED]

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

**e:** [REDACTED]

**m:** [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** 16 November 2022 09:25  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Lorna Slater misleading parliament

Hi [REDACTED],

Good to chat.

As discussed, looking for a Scot Gov line on whether you guys are standing behind the suggestion by Lorna Slater that ministers were made aware they were using a "never properly sourced" claim around offshore wind potential on November 8.

In the Twitter thread here, and in the FOI, it appears clear that former energy minister, Paul Wheelhouse, was aware of that fact given the statistic was discussed extensively when considering whether to use it in one of his speeches. Is the government suggesting that no-one within Mr Wheelhouse's ministerial or private office flagged this to him at the time and that this discussion happened without his knowledge?

Minister Slater specifically was asked about when ministers were aware they were using a figure that was "never properly sourced". The answer appears to be October 2020, not November 8, this year.

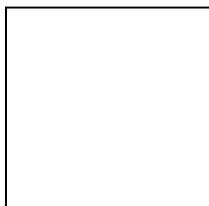
Here's the thread: <https://twitter.com/staylorish/status/1592617334715256832>

Here's the FOI referenced: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/foi-eir-release/2022/09/foi-202200313781/documents/foi-202200313781---information-released/foi-202200313781---information-released/govscot%3Adocument/FOI%2B202200313781%2B-%2BInformation%2Breleased.pdf>

Best,  
[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Mobile:** [REDACTED]  
**Parliament Phone:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



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---

**From:** Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <REDACTED@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 09 November 2022 17:55

**To:** Milne D (Drew) <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; Ingebrigtsen R (Ross) <REDACTED@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <REDACTED@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike) <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; Hogg A (Andrew) <REDACTED@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; (REDACTED) <REDACTED@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: For Clearance - Media Query - 25% of Europe's Offshore Wind Statistic - Various

Hi [REDACTED],

Just belatedly coming back on this – [REDACTED].

[REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

Thanks

**From:** [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 08 November 2022 18:41

**To:** [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; Ingebrigtsen R (Ross) <REDACTED@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special

Adviser) <REDACTED@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike) <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; Hogg A (Andrew) <REDACTED@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <

REDACTED@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <REDACTED@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: For Clearance - Media Query - 25% of Europe's Offshore Wind Statistic - Various

Hi [REDACTED],

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I [REDACTED] I Marine Scotland  
Scottish Government I 1 A South I Victoria Quay I Edinburgh I EH6 6QQ

Tel: [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

[www.marine.gov.scot](http://www.marine.gov.scot)

[www.gov.scot/marinescotland](http://www.gov.scot/marinescotland)

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 08 November 2022 18:26

**To:** Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Ingebrigtsen R (Ross) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: For Clearance - Media Query - 25% of Europe's Offshore Wind Statistic - Various

Thanks, Stuart. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

REDACTED

**From:** Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 08 November 2022 18:17

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Ingebrigtsen R (Ross) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: For Clearance - Media Query - 25% of Europe's Offshore Wind Statistic - Various

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]





Gigawatts of power - nearly triple our renewable energy generation currently in operation.

“The statistic relating to Scotland having 25% of Europe's offshore wind potential was set out in a 2010 publication and was calculated accurately at the time. We recognise that changes in technology and use of marine space mean that this statistic now requires updating and will be undertaking work to update the figure. However, we are confident that Scotland remains at the forefront of the developing offshore wind industry in Europe.”

Thanks  
[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 08 November 2022 10:59  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED@gov.scot]>  
**Subject:** Wind energy potential 'debunked'

Hi [REDACTED],

As discussed, These Islands, a pro-union think-tank have given us sight of a new paper they are publishing tomorrow which debunks the claim Scotland has 25% of Europe's offshore wind energy potential.

The report is attached, but alongside the debunking of the claims themselves, I've got some additional questions around the internal communications on this question.

Specifically, these comments from officials:

"Whilst the 25% figure has been used in the past, we tend not to use this anymore. It has proved very difficult to source." (9th October 2020)

“the 25% estimate has never, to my knowledge, been properly sourced” (20th October 2020)

“Other than our recent exchanges on this request, of course, I’ve nothing to offer – my search of the G drive having unfortunately yielded up nothing more on the [redacted] study in 2001 and why it should have been associated with the “25%” estimate.” (12th January 2021)

“Yes we did recycle those figures quite robotically without really checking them.” (18th January 2021)"

Can you explain why, given the fact the figure has "never been properly sourced", it was repeated by senior Scottish Government politicians and published in papers such as the National Strategy for Economic Transformation?

Has the Government been misleading the public on Scotland's offshore wind potential for decades?

Why are civil servants repeating figures, in official documents, which don't stand up to scrutiny?



Grateful for a view of the following response, please. Ross/John – you joined a call a short while ago where Cab Sec gave some early views.

**A Scottish Government Spokesperson said:**

*“It is fundamentally important to recognise Scotland’s huge renewable generation capabilities. ScotWind, the world’s largest floating offshore leasing round, represents a massive step forward in delivering an energy revolution with ambitions to deliver up to 27.6 Gigawatts of power - nearly triple our renewable energy generation currently in operation. In total this means that the potential pipeline of offshore wind in Scotland is over 40 Gigawatts of power.*

*“We recognise that changes in technology and use of marine space mean that this statistic now requires updating and will be undertaking work to update the figure. However, we are confident that Scotland remains at the forefront of the developing offshore wind industry in Europe.”*

**Background**

*[For The Herald only] The validity of These Islands’ calculation is a matter for the organisation*

[REDACTED]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@newsquest.co.uk>

**Sent:** 10 November 2022 14:01

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: Cole-Hamilton demands SNP ministers correct the record for years of false claims

Hi [redacted],

Thanks for your time on the phone just now.

Probably easier to just send this on – which has all the details. Can I ask what the Scottish Government believes is the true figure – is the 4% to 6% figure by These Islands true?

I’ll have an online story soon which I can add a comment to. I will need something by the close of play today to be included in our print edition.

Many thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The Herald

**From:** Media Team - Scottish Liberal Democrats <[media@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:media@scotlibdems.org.uk)>

**Sent:** 10 November 2022 13:00

To[redacted] <[redacted]@newsquest.co.uk>

Subject: Cole-Hamilton demands SNP ministers correct the record for years of false claims



**Scottish Liberal Democrats**

**Contact: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]**

**Embargo: Immediate**

### **Cole-Hamilton demands SNP ministers correct the record for years of false claims**

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole-Hamilton has today raised a point of order in the Scottish Parliament calling for the Scottish Government to correct the record over years of misleading claims about Scottish wind power.

#### **Mr Cole-Hamilton said:**

“Presiding Officer, I seek your guidance on the procedures surrounding the correcting of the Official Report.

“Yesterday, it was revealed by the thinktank These Islands that a key government statistic is false.

“It is a claim which will be familiar to every single MSP in this Chamber – that Scotland has 25% of Europe’s potential offshore wind resource.

“Over the years this has been referenced countless times both inside and outside this Parliament by SNP ministers and MSPs.

“In this Chamber they include successive environment secretaries, First Minister Alex Salmond and deputy First Minister John Swinney.

“The current First Minister, Constitution Secretary and Net Zero Secretary have made the claim to other audiences. And it was reheated just yesterday by Green Environment Minister Lorna Slater in the Edinburgh Evening News.

“But it is a statistic that has now been proven to be false - a bogus analysis of a mixture of reports dating all the way back to 1993, when the technology was in its infancy, and using a definition of Europe that excluded renewable powerhouses like Sweden, Norway and Finland. It wasn’t the case that it was accurate in 2010 as a spokesperson claimed this week - it was never accurate.

“Civil servants have been privately warning against its use for at least two years, warning it has and I quote “never been properly sourced” and that the figures had been and I again quote: “recycled robotically without really checking them”.

“The true figure for Scotland’s share of offshore wind potential is thought to be around 5% yet still the 25% claim appeared in the Finance Secretary’s National Strategy for Economic Transformation this March, and again multiple times in the SNP-led debate on independence in the House of Commons last week from SNP leader Ian Blackford, Ronnie Cowan, Kirsten Oswald.

“I cannot recall a comparable situation, where a completely fictitious statistic has been relied on so often and so widely.

“This matters because this Scottish Government has put this claim at the heart of the debates around Scotland’s energy security, on independence and on meeting our climate targets.

“I fully support the expansion of Scotland’s renewable sector and I desperately want to see Scotland fulfil our renewable potential. But the strong case for that isn’t helped when the figures used by the Scottish Government leave it open to the charge of misleading and misrepresenting.

“So Presiding Officer, can I seek your guidance on how the Official Report should be corrected in all of these circumstances – where there has been a pattern of misinformation dating back over a decade, leaving bogus claims littered across the transcripts of the numerous sittings of this Parliament?

“And can I ask whether any member of the Scottish Government has approached you Presiding Officer about making a statement to correct these records, given the provisions of Point 5 of the Guidance on the Corrections of Inaccuracies of Information Provided in Parliamentary Proceedings?”

**Following confirmation from the Presiding Officer that the government has not sought to make a statement correcting the record, Mr Cole-Hamilton added:**

“The Scottish Government should immediately come to Parliament and make a statement confirming that they won’t use this statistic again and that it’s previous usage was inaccurate.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

A comprehensive debunking of the Scottish Government’s claims can be found [here](#).

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**From:** Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 14 November 2022 13:27

**To:**[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Hogg A

(Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Nicolson S (Stuart) (Special Adviser) <

[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McFarlane J

(John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot> **Subject:** RE: For Clearance - Media Query - ACH comments on 25% wind potential - Herald/Daily Mail

Hi folks,

Just catching up after being away late last week.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]





<[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>  
**Subject:** For Clearance - Media Query - ACH comments on 25% wind potential -  
Herald/Daily Mail

Hi [REDACTED], PO

As the Cab Sec is aware, we've had requests for comment from The Herald and Daily Mail this afternoon on Alex Cole-Hamilton's point of order after FMQ's today – Lib Dem release below.

In addition to a general comment, The Herald have specifically asked if we believe These Islands' claim that the 25% figure is more like 4-6% to be true.

Grateful for Mr Matheson's clearance of the following response, please. Policy and SpAds are content.

***A Scottish Government Spokesperson said:***

*“It is fundamentally important to recognise Scotland’s huge renewable generation capabilities. ScotWind, the world’s largest floating offshore leasing round, represents a massive step forward in delivering an energy revolution with ambitions to deliver up to 27.6 Gigawatts of power - nearly triple our renewable energy generation currently in operation. In total this means that the potential pipeline of offshore wind in Scotland is over 40 Gigawatts of power. The 25% calculation was based on an estimated maximum potential of 25 Gigawatts.*

*“We recognise that changes in technology and use of marine space mean that this statistic now requires updating and will be undertaking work to update the figure. However, we are confident that Scotland remains at the forefront of the developing offshore wind industry in Europe.”*

*[For The Herald only] “The validity of These Islands’ calculation is a matter for the organisation.”*

Thanks  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@newsquest.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 10 November 2022 14:01  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: Cole-Hamilton demands SNP ministers correct the record for years of false claims

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for your time on the phone just now.

Probably easier to just send this on – which has all the details. Can I ask what the Scottish Government believes is the true figure – is the 4% to 6% figure by These Islands true?

I'll have an online story soon which I can add a comment to. I will need something by the close of play today to be included in our print edition.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Herald

**From:** Media Team - Scottish Liberal Democrats <media@scotlibdems.org.uk>

**Sent:** 10 November 2022 13:00

**To:** [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@newsquest.co.uk>

**Subject:** Cole-Hamilton demands SNP ministers correct the record for years of false claims



**Scottish Liberal Democrats**

**Contact:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

**Embargo:** Immediate

### **Cole-Hamilton demands SNP ministers correct the record for years of false claims**

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole-Hamilton has today raised a point of order in the Scottish Parliament calling for the Scottish Government to correct the record over years of misleading claims about Scottish wind power.

#### **Mr Cole-Hamilton said:**

“Presiding Officer, I seek your guidance on the procedures surrounding the correcting of the Official Report.

“Yesterday, it was revealed by the thinktank These Islands that a key government statistic is false.

“It is a claim which will be familiar to every single MSP in this Chamber – that Scotland has 25% of Europe’s potential offshore wind resource.

“Over the years this has been referenced countless times both inside and outside this Parliament by SNP ministers and MSPs.

“In this Chamber they include successive environment secretaries, First Minister Alex Salmond and deputy First Minister John Swinney.

“The current First Minister, Constitution Secretary and Net Zero Secretary have made the claim to other audiences. And it was reheated just yesterday by Green Environment Minister Lorna Slater in the Edinburgh Evening News.

“But it is a statistic that has now been proven to be false - a bogus analysis of a mixture of reports dating all the way back to 1993, when the technology was in its infancy, and using a definition of

Europe that excluded renewable powerhouses like Sweden, Norway and Finland. It wasn't the case that it was accurate in 2010 as a spokesperson claimed this week - it was never accurate.

“Civil servants have been privately warning against its use for at least two years, warning it has and I quote “never been properly sourced” and that the figures had been and I again quote: “recycled robotically without really checking them”.

“The true figure for Scotland's share of offshore wind potential is thought to be around 5% yet still the 25% claim appeared in the Finance Secretary's National Strategy for Economic Transformation this March, and again multiple times in the SNP-led debate on independence in the House of Commons last week from SNP leader Ian Blackford, Ronnie Cowan, Kirsten Oswald.

“I cannot recall a comparable situation, where a completely fictitious statistic has been relied on so often and so widely.

“This matters because this Scottish Government has put this claim at the heart of the debates around Scotland's energy security, on independence and on meeting our climate targets.

“I fully support the expansion of Scotland's renewable sector and I desperately want to see Scotland fulfil our renewable potential. But the strong case for that isn't helped when the figures used by the Scottish Government leave it open to the charge of misleading and misrepresenting.

“So Presiding Officer, can I seek your guidance on how the Official Report should be corrected in all of these circumstances – where there has been a pattern of misinformation dating back over a decade, leaving bogus claims littered across the transcripts of the numerous sittings of this Parliament?

“And can I ask whether any member of the Scottish Government has approached you Presiding Officer about making a statement to correct these records, given the provisions of Point 5 of the Guidance on the Corrections of Inaccuracies of Information Provided in Parliamentary Proceedings?”

**Following confirmation from the Presiding Officer that the government has not sought to make a statement correcting the record, Mr Cole-Hamilton added:**

“The Scottish Government should immediately come to Parliament and make a statement confirming that they won't use this statistic again and that it's previous usage was inaccurate.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

A comprehensive debunking of the Scottish Government's claims can be found [here](#).

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**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> **On Behalf Of** Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs

**Sent:** 15 November 2022 10:26

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Hogg A (Andrew)

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McFarlane J

(John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Huyton H (Harry) <

[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Low R (Ragne)

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity <

[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Bruce A

(Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** RE: Urgent - Topical Question - Tuesday 15 November

Adding other for awareness

Thanks

[REDACTED]

**From:** : [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 15 November 2022 10:17

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED] >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] >;  
Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]  
@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]  
@gov.scot> >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <  
[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED]  
@gov.scot>; Huyton H (Harry) < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]  
<[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; Minister for  
Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Urgent - Topical Question - Tuesday 15 November

Hi PO Cab Sec NZET and Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and  
Biodiversity

Please find below the suggested answer to Liam Kerr's topical question, which Ms  
Slater has agreed to respond to, for Cab Sec's approval. A background note with  
supplementary questions and answers is also attached for approval.

**S6T-00960:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Directorate for Energy and Climate Change | The  
Scottish Government |  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]@gov.scot

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o  
**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot> >

**Sent:** 17 November 2022 16:25

**To:** [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]  
@gov.scot >; Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne)  
<[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>;  
[REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>>;  
[REDACTED]@gov.scot < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]  
<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] >; [REDACTED]  
<[REDACTED] >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]  
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[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser)  
<[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; Huyton H  
(Harry) < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;  
[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >;  
[REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;  
[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;  
[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;  
[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Cab Sec NZET - Draft Submission - offshore wind statistic

Hi [REDACTED],

One edit from me in the communications section – and to pick up [REDACTED]'s earlier point.

Hope helpful.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Communications: News (Net Zero & Energy/Rural Affairs & Islands )

Communications Team Leader

Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

e: [REDACTED]@gov.scot

m: [REDACTED]

**From:** Blewett J (Jo) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 17 November 2022 15:45

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; Hogg A (Andrew)

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; Palmer MR

(Mike) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED]@gov.scot <

[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED] >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED]

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<[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] >; McFarlane J (John) (Special

Adviser) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>;

Huyton H (Harry) < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED] >; [REDACTED] @gov.scot < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Cab Sec NZET - Draft Submission - offshore wind statistic

Nothing from me thanks [REDACTED].

**From:** : [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >

**Sent:** 17 November 2022 14:47

**To:** Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED]

@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Palmer MR (Mike)

<[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED]@gov.scot < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser)

<[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; Huyton H

(Harry) < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >;

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;  
[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;  
[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;  
[REDACTED] < [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Cab Sec NZET - Draft Submission - offshore wind statistic

Hi all

Please see a draft submission attached for Cab Sec NZET regarding the offshore wind statistic.

Apologies for the tight turnaround but can you please review and send any final comments by 3.30 please? We are aiming to send up at 4pm.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] **Directorate for Energy and Climate Change | The Scottish Government** |  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]@gov.scot



---

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 08 November 2022 15:57

**To:** McFarlane J (John) (Special Adviser) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>

**Cc:** Communications Net Zero & Rural Affairs <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; Palmer MR (Mike) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; Hogg A (Andrew) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Low R (Ragne) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >

**Subject:** SpAd View - Media Query - 25% of Europe's Offshore Wind Statistic - Various

Hi John

The Scotsman, Times and Daily Mail have asked for a comment on the attached material gathered by the *These Islands* group, criticising the SG statistic – first set out in the [2010 offshore wind routemap](#) – that “Scotland has an estimated 25% of Europe's offshore wind potential.”

The attached points to more recent examples of the 25% being used. “With Scotland enjoying a quarter of Europe’s wind potential.” – is referenced in [NSET \(p23\)](#).

The attached also contains Official-level comments, gathered under FOI, which suggest (to *These Islands* and the journalist) that the 25% figure is outdated and the evidence base not strong enough to support the figure.

We've agreed the following response with Policy. Grateful for a view, please.

**A Scottish Government Spokesperson said:**

“Our abundant natural resources, expertise and proven track record in decarbonisation make Scotland perfectly placed to become a global powerhouse of renewable energy.

“ScotWind, the world’s largest floating offshore leasing round, represents a massive step forward in delivering an energy revolution with ambitions to deliver 27.6 Gigawatts of power - nearly triple our renewable energy generation currently in operation.

“The statistic relating to Scotland having 25% of Europe's offshore wind potential was set out in a 2010 publication and was calculated accurately at the time. We recognise that changes in technology and use of marine space mean that this statistic now requires updating and will be undertaking work to update the figure. However, we are confident that Scotland remains at the forefront of the developing offshore wind industry in Europe.”

Thanks  
[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@nationalworld.com>  
**Sent:** 08 November 2022 10:59  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >  
**Subject:** Wind energy potential 'debunked'

Hi [REDACTED],

As discussed, These Islands, a pro-union think-tank have given us sight of a new paper they are publishing tomorrow which debunks the claim Scotland has 25% of Europe's offshore wind energy potential.

The report is attached, but alongside the debunking of the claims themselves, I've got some additional questions around the internal communications on this question.

Specifically, these comments from officials:

"Whilst the 25% figure has been used in the past, we tend not to use this anymore. It has proved very difficult to source." (9th October 2020)

“the 25% estimate has never, to my knowledge, been properly sourced” (20th October 2020)

“Other than our recent exchanges on this request, of course, I've nothing to offer – my search of the G drive having unfortunately yielded up nothing more on the [redacted] study in 2001 and why it should have been associated with the “25%” estimate.” (12th January 2021)







<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Offshore Wind Potential

Thanks Callum – [REDACTED]

Adding Andy for sight/clearance as requested by [REDACTED].

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | Energy Industries Division |  
Directorate for Energy and Climate Change | Scottish Government  
Tel: [REDACTED]

**From:** McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>

**Sent:** 09 November 2022 13:40

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]

@gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]

@gov.scot >

**Subject:** RE: Offshore Wind Potential

With one slight reordering below, that all looks good to me, thanks.

**Callum McCaig**

Special Adviser to the First Minister

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >

**Sent:** 09 November 2022 13:21

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED]

@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]

@gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]

@gov.scot >

**Subject:** RE: Offshore Wind Potential

Sorry – one additional line re investment.

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | Energy Industries Division |  
Directorate for Energy and Climate Change | Scottish Government  
Tel: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 09 November 2022 13:19  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >  
**Subject:** RE: Offshore Wind Potential

[REDACTED]/Callum

I've made some additions/amendments in green below.

Thanks

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Energy Industries Division |  
Directorate for Energy and Climate Change | Scottish Government  
Tel: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 09 November 2022 12:06  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED] @gov.scot >  
**Subject:** FW: Offshore Wind Potential

Hi [REDACTED], can you just check below. [REDACTED]

**From:** McCaig C (Callum) <[REDACTED] @gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 09 November 2022 12:01  
**To:** [REDACTED]<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Offshore Wind Potential

Hi [REDACTED],

Times have the 100% renewables stuff on their front page – they are also referencing the below EIR on the 25% of Europe's offshore wind capacity, with us admitting it is out of date. [Scotland's percentage of Europe's offshore wind and tidal resources: EIR release - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

[REDACTED]

Based on the response to the EIR and some detail on global pipeline of offshore wind, I think the below would work.

Could you/team check in with relevant officials to make sure that it all stacks up.  
[REDACTED]

Thanks,  
Callum

[REDACTED]

**Callum McCaig**

Special Adviser to the First Minister

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*Please note Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot) for information*