

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 21 March 2023 10:25
To: [Redacted] **Subject:** FW: Media Query - UKSA letter on renewable energy - The Times

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 08 November 2022 18:10
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Media Query - UKSA letter on renewable energy - The Times

Content, but I'd extend the actual quote so that it reads as below:

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“Upon identifying this error, the First Minister immediately requested a correction to the Official Report – in line with established procedures for Members to make such amendments.

“The equivalent of 98.8% of Scotland’s gross electricity consumption is already provided by renewable energy sources.

“In its response to Mr Kerr, the UK Statistics Authority confirms that, in 2020, “gross electricity consumption in Scotland (electricity generated less net transfers) was 32,518 GWh, or approximately equal to renewable generation.

“The UK Statistics Authority also highlights that the Scottish Government’s target to have the equivalent of Scotland’s whole electricity demand generated by renewable sources is further explained on its [Scottish Energy Statistics Hub](#).”

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 08 November 2022 18:01
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Media Query - UKSA letter on renewable energy - The Times

SpAds

Sorry to press – grateful to know if you’re content to re-issue the lines, with factual additions added to background as outlined below.

[Redacted]
From: [Redacted]
Sent: 08 November 2022 17:09
To: [Redacted] **Subject:** Media Query - UKSA letter on renewable energy - The Times

SpAds,

Further to the below - The Times have just been in touch on this as I believe Stephen Kerr raised a point on this in the chamber this afternoon. His comments as follows:

Stephen Kerr said: "SNP ministers and MSPs have been repeating the claim made by the first minister on September 29 that 98.8 per cent of our energy was from renewable sources." "The first minister corrected her incorrect claim quietly in the official record but it remains inaccurate." "The chairman of the UK Statistics Authority has written to stating the first ministers clarification is incorrect." "The figures are, for the record, 63.1 per cent. Whether the first minister misled parliament, consciously or otherwise, it is a matter for her conscience...correcting the official record behind the scenes and on the quiet is not enough." "Furthermore the official record should not be treated by ministers as a 1984 Ministry of Truth giving ministers a 'get out of jail card' for mistaken or misleading statements." "It has been said in the past if you tell a lie big enough and often enough people will believe it. The truth is important...we must find a way to avoid the perception that lies are being told for political ends."

There's nothing new in these comments. If anything, I'd suggest Mr Kerr is getting slightly confused by the nuances involved in equivalent, gross etc.

Therefore suggest re-issuing the lines – perhaps with a couple of lines in background lifted from the UKSA response to emphasise that what is on the OR is correct ([Sir Robert Chote to Stephen Kerr MSP – Renewable energy – UK Statistics Authority](#)).

Grateful to know if you're content with this approach.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"Upon identifying this error, the First Minister immediately requested a correction to the Official Report – in line with established procedures for Members to make such amendments.

"The equivalent of 98.8% of Scotland's gross electricity consumption is already provided by renewable energy sources."

Background

In its response to Mr Kerr, the UK Statistics Authority confirms that, in 2020, "gross electricity consumption in Scotland (electricity generated less net transfers) was 32,518 GWh, or approximately equal to renewable generation."

The UK Statistics Authority also highlights that the Scottish Government's target to have the equivalent of Scotland's whole electricity demand generated by renewable sources is further explained on its [Scottish Energy Statistics Hub](#). The accompanying commentary states that "this does not mean that Scotland would be fully dependent on renewables generation, but rather that renewables would form the key part of the overall electricity mix."

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 02 November 2022 17:23

To: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For consideration; The Sun, Express; UKSA letter on renewable energy

Ok, thanks – good to go in that case.

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 02 November 2022 17:21

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For consideration; The Sun, Express; UKSA letter on renewable energy

Hi [Redacted],

It has, was [issued to STV at the weekend.](#)

Thanks,

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 02 November 2022 17:19

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For consideration; The Sun, Express; UKSA letter on renewable energy

Hi [Redacted],

Just double checking – has this line already been cleared and previously issued?

If so, then we're content.

Thanks

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 02 November 2022 17:16

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For consideration; The Sun, Express; UKSA letter on renewable energy

Hi SpAds,

Sorry to chase – can I check your thoughts on this one?

Thanks,

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted] **Sent:** 02 November 2022 16:04

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: For consideration; The Sun, Express; UKSA letter on renewable energy

Hi SpAds,

We've been approached for comment by the Sun and the Express after [the UKSA responded](#) to a complaint on the FM's use of energy figures raised by Stephen Kerr. Specifically, the Sun are looking to us to respond to calls for the FM to apologise to Parliament (comment below), and the Express are asking if the FM has been briefed on this (info also below).

We would recommend reissuing the below lines. Grateful for your thoughts.

Thanks,

[Redacted]

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"Upon identifying this error, the First Minister immediately requested a correction to the Official Report – in line with established procedures for Members to make such amendments.

"The equivalent of 98.8% of Scotland's gross electricity consumption is already provided by renewable energy sources."

Sun query

Alex Cole-Hamilton said:

"The first thing Nicola Sturgeon should do at First Minister's Questions is apologise for misleading parliament.

"Even more than that, she should apologise for her ministers and MSPs repeating her lies over and over.

"The First Minister should level with the people of Scotland, rather than repeatedly try to pull the wool over their eyes."

Express query

The line we are focusing on is this one: Where statements are made in public debate it should be clear what the underlying statistics measure, to avoid misinterpretation. We have asked the Chief Statistician in Scotland to ensure that the First Minister's office is briefed on this matter.

Was wondering if the first minister has been briefed on this and whether she accepts the recommendation from the UKSA?