



Parliamentary Question – Slavery

Date: 23 January 2020

Ref: 7278

Asked by:

Dr Lisa Cameron

**(East Kilbride, Strathaven and
Lesmahagow)**

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has plans to implement a licensing system to protect people in the UK working in fast fashion garment factories from modern slavery; what discussions she has had with retailers on working practices in garment factories; and if she will make a statement.

Response:

The Government is committed to tackling labour exploitation and protecting workers' rights and we have taken a number of steps to deal with the issues in the textiles sector.

We have widened the remit of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority through the Immigration Act 2016, giving it new powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 to investigate serious labour market offences, including in the textiles sector.

In November 2018, we launched 'The Apparel and General Merchandise Public and Private Protocol', a partnership between labour enforcement bodies and industry partners, including, the GLAA, the British Retail Consortium, UK Fashion and the Textile Association. The protocol commits its signatories to work together to eradicate slavery and exploitation in textile supply chains.

We recently ran a public consultation on the establishment of a new Single Enforcement Body for employment rights, which included questions on extending licensing to other high-risk sectors. We will publish a response to this consultation in due course.