

**PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FAO: LOCAL REPORTERS**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017

**SNP MSP FOR KIRKCALDY CALLS FOR £140 MILLION TO BE REPAYED TO SCOTLAND'S  
EMERGENCY SERVICES**



David Torrance MSP has backed calls for the UK Government to pay up the £140 million funding owed to our emergency services.

Scottish emergency services are the *only* ones in the UK that cannot reclaim their VAT bills,

Speaking recently in Parliament, David Torrance MSP raised the issue of withheld VAT from Scotland's emergency services with Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Michael Matheson.

Commenting SNP MSP David Torrance said;

“Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have no VAT exemption, unlike other police forces and fire services in the UK.

“The disparity that exists between Scotland's emergency services and those across the rest of the UK is simply unacceptable. The UK government cannot be allowed to go on withholding £140 million of funding – our frontline services need these vital funds.

“There are mechanisms which would allow this to happen and precedent has been set. Since the creation of Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, an array of bodies have been included in the Value Added Tax Act 1994 – allowing them to recover VAT. These include Health Education England, the Health Research Authority, the strategic highways company—Highways England—the London Legacy Development Corporation and academy schools.

“I find abhorrent that the UK Government consider it acceptable to make these changes for some bodies whilst refusing to consider it necessary to do so for our vital emergency services”

The current VAT arrangements for Scotland’s emergency services could cost the Scottish public purse £280 million by the end of the current parliamentary session in 2020-21.

**ENDS**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

David Torrance MSP - Portfolio Question - Question S5O-01080 – 7<sup>th</sup> June 2017

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=10999&i=100505&c=2007721>

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

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