

# STATES OF JERSEY



## CONSULTANTS: REPORTING ON THEIR USE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF JERSEY

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Lodged au Greffe on 12th June 2019  
by Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence

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STATES GREFFE

## **PROPOSITION**

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –**

to request the Chief Minister to present a report to the States on a six-monthly basis on the use of consultants by the Government of Jersey, with each report to include the following information –

- (a) the total number of consultants employed or engaged by the Government of Jersey for a contract value of £1,000 or greater, within the previous six-month period, broken down by department;
- (b) the projects / engagements on which such consultants are working or have worked in the preceding six-month period;
- (c) a description of the purpose of the consultant's engagement;
- (d) the estimated total cost of the engagement;
- (e) the final total cost of the engagement (as soon as practical after the end of the engagement);
- (f) the daily or monthly rate of engaging or employing each such consultant and the total cost to date of that engagement or employment;
- (g) confirmation of whether or not each such consultant was engaged or employed following a tender process or quote-selection process;
- (h) confirmation of whether or not a structured needs assessment was undertaken before the selection process was started;
- (i) the expected date on which the engagement or employment of each consultant is expected to end;
- (j) confirmation of whether or not a structured post-consultant engagement evaluation was undertaken;
- (k) confirmation of whether or not the contract has been, or is expected to be, extended; and
- (l) the title of the accounting officer responsible for the engagement.

DEPUTY K.F. MOREL OF ST. LAWRENCE

## REPORT

As the subject of countless questions by States Members, and a regular topic of headlines and social media conversations, the use of consultants by the States of Jersey is an issue of great concern to Islanders.

Knowing this, however, hasn't motivated the Government to take many steps that will enable Islanders to more easily hold the Government to account with regard to its use of consultants, and so today, the task of finding out about any single consultancy engagement is as complicated and time-consuming as it has ever been.

For the purposes of clarification, this proposition uses the term "consultant" as defined in Financial Direction 5.6U –

*"Any individual or organisation engaged on behalf of the States of Jersey to provide independent intellectual input into decision making."*

### **Increasing openness, transparency and accountability**

This proposition aims to make it easier for the Government to be open and transparent about its use of consultants. Its adoption will bring greater accountability to the issue of the engagement of consultants and, in so doing, will provide Islanders with an easy-to-access overview of their continuing use by the Government of Jersey.

Importantly, there is nothing in this proposition that seeks to regulate or hinder the Government's use of consultants. Instead, it is focused entirely on providing a window for Islanders so they can more easily satisfy themselves that the Government is engaging consultants in a worthwhile and cost-efficient manner that generates significant value for the Public.

### **Encouraging action where previously there has been none**

One clear indication of the inertia that is symptomatic of this issue, is the fact that the only recent review into the Government's use of consultants is an October 2016 report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, entitled, *Use of Consultants* ([R.107/2016](#)).

Unfortunately, nearly 3 years later, the Government is yet to implement most of the report's 15 recommendations.

The report provides figures for the annual cost of consultants between 2011 and 2015, putting the average spend at £3.9 million, or approximately 0.5% of annual expenditure. The fact that there is no ongoing total provided by the Government is testament to the lack of transparency that clouds this issue.

As drafted, the proposal is intentionally prescriptive about the data the 6-monthly report that it calls for, would provide. The reason for requiring these 12 items of information is that together, they deliver the minimum amount of information the Public needs in order to gain a comprehensive overview of the Government's use of consultants.

### **Greater openness means less suspicion**

If this proposition is adopted, the Chief Minister will have to publish a 6-monthly report that provides high-level details of those consultants engaged by the Government in the previous 6 months. The report will enable Islanders to see more easily the amounts departments are spending on consultants, the number of times consultants are engaged, and whether or not basic practices are in place to ensure the effective management of consultant engagements.

Importantly, the last of these points (see paragraphs (h) and (j) above) are in line with recommendations 6 and 14 of the Comptroller and Auditor General's 2016 report. They are vital pieces of information that will help Islanders gain a clearer understanding of whether the Government is properly managing its consultancy engagements in order to gain maximum value for the Public.

All States Members know that the Public is concerned and suspicious of the continuing use of consultants by the Government. By encouraging greater openness, this proposition will help the Government counter such suspicion, and by enabling greater accountability, this proposition will nurture better use and management of consultants by the Government of Jersey.

### **Financial and manpower implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this proposition.

There are minor manpower implications, because the proposition requires that each department will collate and share, with the Chief Minister, basic information about their use of consultants. After an initial set-up exercise, this work should require no more than a couple of hours from each department, every 6 months.