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7 Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour of the Chief Minister regarding the impact of ground water contaminated from the Airport on the health of the population: [9764]

Since 1st January 2000, what decisions, if any, have been taken by any States body to monitor or survey the health of the population in relation to the impact of any ground water contaminated from the airport?

Senator I.J. Gorst (The Chief Minister):

[**Aside**] Sorry, I do apologise. Could I ask for this question to be answered by the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources under whose remit this area falls?

Connétable J.M. Refault of St. Peter (Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources - rapporteur):

There have been no decisions made by any States department to monitor the health of the population in relation to the impact of any airport contaminated ground water. Water supplies with the potential for contamination by P.F.O.S. (perfluorooctane sulfonate) from firefighting foam from the airport have been monitored for many years by the airport, now Ports of Jersey, and that process was overseen by Environmental Health. Those in properties where supplies were at risk of contamination have been offered alternative supplies, therefore there is no reason for anyone to be adversely affected through consumption of P.F.O.S. contaminated water and no reason to monitor the health of the population in this respect. The very small number of people involved would render any such monitoring statistically unreliable and, furthermore, I am pleased to advise that there have been no reports from health professionals of illness caused by this problem, including G.P.s who would of course be the first to see any evidence of that.

3.7.1 Deputy K.C. Lewis:

It was basically not just talking about the groundwater, it is the monitoring thereof in the health of the people concerned. We are talking about P.F.O.S. and P.F.O.A. (perfluorooctanoic acid), one is a sulphate and one is an acid in the water supply. Why was there never any decision taken given that a pernicious carcinogenic and persistently harmful chemicals were known to have entered parts of the water table and to have been consumed by members of the public before it was discovered?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

The Environment Protection Agency over in the United States have done a lot of work looking into this problem. They are very clear that the likelihood of contamination by perfluorooctane sulfonates is going to be across the whole population irrespective of whether P.F.O.S. foams were in use at the time. These perfluoroalkyl substances were used to make carpets, clothing, fabrics for furniture, packaging for paper, for food and other materials and anything that is resistant to water and grease. It is likely that a test across a population would indicate that most people have some form of this chemical remaining within their body. Therefore to try and determine whether there is any difference to those living down in St. Ouen's Bay for the relatively short period of time that they were contaminated would be unprovable.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I find that quite unbelievable. Basically admitting that the people down there have been contaminated but that it is not suitable to do any testing at the moment. I will do more research and come back with further questions.