

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY, 28th FEBRUARY 2006

Question

With regard to ro/ro ferry services between Jersey, the U.K. and France, will the Minister advise –

- (a) whether the current service provided by the operator(s) fully meets the Service Level Agreement or other agreements that the States of Jersey have with them?
- (b) whether he is satisfied with the current timetables published by the operator(s) and what action, if any, he intends to take to ensure that accurate and up to date timetables are produced and made available to customers by the operator(s)?
- (c) what guarantees have been made regarding continuity of service?
- (d) what plans, if any, he has in the event that the current operator withdraws from service?

Answer

- (a) Currently there is only a service level agreement for the passenger/car carrying ferry service between Jersey and the UK (the northern route). This is now more than 8 years old in its design and only has the remainder of this year to run. A new service level agreement will be negotiated for 2007 and 2008.

For the period from 1st January 2009, an opportunity is presented for Jersey and Guernsey to work together, in planning the future provision of roll on roll off ferry services between all the Islands, the UK and France.

There is currently no service level agreement on the southern route but it is my intention to put an agreement in place for the period up to the end of 2008 as soon as possible.

In designing a new service level agreement I am fully aware of the need to address the interests of the consumer and to aid this process a 'Ferries User Group' is to be established. This group will provide a focus for consumer concerns and aid the design of the consumer element of service level agreements in the future.

Overall I can confirm that the service provided by Condor on the northern route has met the service level agreement terms and conditions.

What is important going forwards, is to recognise that any service level agreement should be seen as a document that can accommodate the commercial realities of the market place whilst serving the Island's needs for a reliable, robust and reasonably priced service of sufficient quality and frequency.

- (b) The service level agreement for the northern route requires the publication of brochures containing details of the daily schedules, and information on the fares and charges payable. This information is published on the company's website and the operator has confirmed that a printed brochure is available for the northern route as required by the service level agreement. Schedules for the southern route have not been produced recently. However, as explained in the above answer, there is no service level agreement requiring the operator to produce such schedules for that route at present. I am advised that it is Condor's intention to produce a printed schedule for the southern route as soon as possible. The only reason why one has not yet been printed is because of the changes to service provision arising from the uncertainty surrounding Emeraude's intentions on the southern route.
- (c) In December 2004, as required by its service level agreement, Condor signalled its intention to both the

Jersey and Guernsey authorities that it wished to have its ramp licence renewed beyond 2006. The company has also agreed schedules with Jersey Harbours for this year and has expressed its intention to honour those schedules. Public statements also have been made by Condor of its commitment to continue to provide services on both the northern and southern routes.

- (d) As explained above, we plan to put in place service level agreements for the period until the end of 2008. I have no reason to believe that Condor will withdraw from the route.