

## **2.9 Deputy J.A. Martin of the Deputy Chief Minister regarding the Corporate Management Board:**

Would the Deputy Chief Minister inform Members who sits on the Corporate Management Board, how often it meets, whether proper minutes are kept and who the minutes are distributed to?

### **Senator T.A. Le Sueur (Deputy Chief Minister):**

The Corporate Management Board is made up of the Chief Officers of the 10 departments of the Executive, together with the Chief of Police and the Director of Human Resources. In addition, the Greffier of the States and the Director of Property Holdings are invited to attend. The board meets fortnightly and minutes are prepared by a research project officer in the Chief Minister's Department. Copies of the minutes are distributed to board members and their secretaries as well as to the Greffier of the States and the Director of Property Holdings. Copies of the minutes are also sent to the Deputy Chief Executive and the Policy Adviser in the Chief Minister's Department.

### **2.9.1 Deputy J.A. Martin:**

I have asked this question because I am trying to get hold of a copy of some minutes, and the Chief Executive's reply to me differs slightly - or maybe my interpretation differs slightly. The circulation of the minutes is restricted to the Chief Officers who are on the Corporate Management Board, Sir. They meet fortnightly to ensure that the workforce and the resources of the States are managed efficiently. If these minutes are restricted, and all the Ministers who are supposedly in charge of their Chief Officers do not regularly see these minutes, is it not, Sir, a case of the tail wagging the dog very, very clearly?

### **Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

No, Sir. It is certainly not a case of the tail wagging the dog. The Council of Ministers implement the policy in respect of the Strategic Plan agreed by this House. It is then up to the officers to implement that policy. That implementation is for them to carry out. As far as the circulation list is concerned, the Chief Executive may have said it was to the 10 chief officers; that is certainly true. I made the answer as full as possible by advising the Deputy of other people who got it as a sort of *ex officio* arrangement.

### **2.9.2 Deputy C.J. Scott Warren:**

Could the Minister inform Members whether a Minister or Assistant Minister is ever present at board meetings, as the Chief Officer is obviously present at the Council of Ministers meetings?

### **Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

No, Sir. No Minister attends the meetings of the Management Board.

### **2.9.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

As with the minutes of the Council of Ministers, whereby even 'B' minutes or titles are widely circulated, since the Corporate Management Board deals with the application of policy, should not the minutes of such meetings have wider circulation, and in particular, should Scrutiny not have access to them?

### **Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

I think, Sir, the question of access to those minutes by Scrutiny Panel is an important one, and certainly there is no intention that Scrutiny Panel should necessarily invariably be denied access to them. I think it has to be done on a selective basis as and when the subject arises, not on a blanket basis of giving every copy of every minute to every Scrutiny Panel in case there is something of interest. I think these sort of matters, Sir, need to be investigated further, and possibly through the mechanism of the Privileges and Procedures Committee, as to how a formal Scrutiny arrangement can be made in respect of these minutes, in an effort to be helpful to those Panels.

**2.9.4 Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville:**

To be clear, under the freedom of information codes, if a States' Member requested a copy of the minutes, would there be any particular reason why they should not receive it?

**Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

I think if the States' Member in question could justify good reason for wanting the relevant minutes there would be no reason to withhold them, Sir. There may occasionally be matters of sensitive personal information in respect of an individual, in which case my answer might be qualified in that respect, but in general terms, no, Sir, it would be available.

**2.9.5 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

I wonder if the Deputy Chief Minister could explain what is so secret about the workings of this board that requires these minutes to be kept virtually under lock and key. Could he investigate the possibility of a wider circulation and perhaps retaining only those matters which are sensitive?

**Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

I do question, Sir, whether it is the role of government to get involved in minutiae of implementing policy decisions. Our role, surely, is to make policy. Now, to the extent that that policy, having been made, is not being implemented, then there is justification for going and looking at those minutes, Sir. But I think we are in grave danger here of micro-managing and getting down to every little detail of every little part of the States organisation. I am quite happy to try to be helpful in the interests of freedom of information, but I think we have to be realistic about what our role is and what the role of officers is.