

2.1 Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding Jersey Field Squadron R.E. personnel serving in Iraq:

Would the Minister inform Members how many personnel from the Jersey Field Squadron are currently serving in Iraq and whether the announcement that some 1,600 British troops are to be withdrawn in the not too distant future will have any effect on the Jersey T.A. Unit?

Senator W. Kinnard (The Minister for Home Affairs):

There are no members of the Jersey Field Squadron currently serving in Iraq. The last person to serve in Iraq returned last November. I have not been informed that the plan for withdrawal of British troops will have any effect on the Jersey Field Squadron. The Field Squadron will still be trained to support the regular army in its commitments to ongoing operations, particularly those currently taking place in Bosnia and Afghanistan and Iraq. Indeed, we currently have 4 individuals, 2 officers and 2 other ranks, on pre-deployment training to join the 26th Engineering Unit in Afghanistan in March. This will be for a 7-month tour of duty.

2.1.1 Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Supplementary, Sir. I did not quite catch all of the Minister's answer there. Are there any plans to send members of the TA to Afghanistan?

Senator W. Kinnard:

Yes. In my answer I explained that there were 4 individuals, 2 officers and 2 of other ranks, on pre-deployment training for joining the 26th Engineering Unit in Afghanistan in March.

2.1.2 Senator B.E. Shenton:

The T.A. Unit has run consistently over budget during recent years. Can the Home Affairs Minister confirm that she does have full control of the T.A. budget?

Senator W. Kinnard:

The budget, in fact, for 2006 shows an under-spend of £4,000.