

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS BY
DEPUTY S. PITMAN OF ST. HELIER**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 13th MAY 2008

Question

Would the Minister provide details of the qualifications and experience of the individual members of the Working Group overlooking the police investigations into historic child abuse police investigation and advise who appointed these individuals?

Answer

It is not correct to say that there is a working group overlooking the police investigation of the Historical Abuse Enquiry. Rather, in accordance with best practice, States of Jersey Police commissioned an independent review of the investigation by a senior team of UK experts. The review team recommended that the Senior Investigating Officer follow best practice by appointing an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) of local people who could act as 'critical friends' during the enquiry.

Independent Advisory Groups came about in the aftermath of the Macpherson Enquiry into the death of Steven Lawrence. The concept underlying such groups is that they can advise the police on any specific community issues and concerns. The representatives sitting on the IAG can also be a conduit for any community concerns to be taken up and for reassurance to be given if necessary to others from the community that the investigation is thorough and appropriate. The role primarily is to advise as to culture and community sensitivities.

Where similar groups have been set up elsewhere, the selection has always been with the police consistent with the notion of the separation of powers. This is the case here.

The individual members of the Independent Advisory Group are:

Rev Geoff Houghton –	Minister for Trinity church, Vice Dean
Carol Canavan –	retired local lawyer
Kevin Keen –	Businessman and Chair of Chamber of Commerce
Stephen Regal –	Jewish council and advisor to States of Jersey Police on diversity
Emma Martins –	Data Protection Commissioner

The group has met regularly and the Senior Investigating Officer confirms that he values their support.