

2.6 Deputy P.J. Rondel of St. John of the Chief Minister regarding the Computer Services Department's ability to provide 24-hour technological supporting the event of a system breakdown:

Given that the Hospital and Emergency Services work 24/7 and the States is totally reliant on its Computer Services, would the Chief Minister advise why support staff from the Computer Services Department are not on duty 24/7 to provide technological support in the event of a systems breakdown?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur (The Chief Minister):

Information Services out of hours cover is provided to the main data control centres and departments on a formal on-call basis to ensure the availability and good function of key systems. The level of support to particular departmental systems is determined on a department by department basis in consultation with their local Information Services Business Support Group to ensure that core services are supported on a 24-hour basis. A balance has to be struck between the operational risk and cause of interruption of a service with the cost of funding everything 24/7 or other out of hours cover. The existing States system has significant backup and resilient facilities to cover breakdown. The cover provided to departments out of hours is provided with an on-call shift pattern of Information Support staff, one of whom is always contactable via mobile telephone. The number of incidents over the last 12 months requiring out of hours support has been 83.

2.6.1 The Deputy of St. John:

Given the Minister has given us a résumé of how it is all supposed to work, will he please explain, given that we are going to be seeing our staff possibly working to rule, is he quite happy that the support that will be required in any emergency will be in place because I have experience of ringing up at 3.00 a.m. in the morning and you had to get a person out of bed before you could get the situation resolved. If somebody is not on duty but on a standby basis, there is a big difference in the time lag in the event of an emergency and is he happy that that time lag would be acceptable in a proper emergency?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I am quite confident that, in the event of the situation that the Deputy suggests, cover will be maintained. I accept that at 3.00 a.m. in the morning, the person may well be in bed and still nonetheless willing to respond immediately to such a call, and I praise the way in which the on-call staff do provide this service at inconvenient hours on the rare occasion that it is required.

2.6.2 The Deputy of St. John:

I understand where the Chief Minister is coming from but I have got real concerns that we are not prepared to look after our staff but the Minister - and I am talking by way of a pay rise - is expecting our staff to look after us and does he not think he is a bit unjust and a bit ingenuous to expect people to come out at night in an emergency when his department are not prepared to help them with a pay increase?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I am perfectly confident that our policies in respect of cover for Information Services and other incidents of an emergency nature are fully operational, fully resilient and I have no concerns at this stage about the level of support we are providing. I think the

Deputy may sometimes be mixing up support to emergency services and support generally across the board, and I accept that general support for non-emergency matters can and sometimes will have to wait until the following day. But in terms of real emergency cover, yes, I am confident that we can maintain the proper level of support required and that we do have staff who are prepared to do that.