

2.13 The Deputy of St. John of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the manning of commercial Jersey-registered fishing vessels by non-residentially qualified foreign nationals:

Firstly, can I congratulate the Minister and his wife on the new addition to his family. [Approbation] Possibly that is why you were taking it easy on him because he is having sleepless nights at the moment. I will now put the question. Could the Minister indicate whether any commercial Jersey-registered fishing vessels are being manned by non-residentially qualified foreign nationals and, if so, advise whether members of the crews involved hold certificates in personal sea survival, first aid, fire prevention and fire fighting and radio licences issued by the U.K. Radio Communications Agency plus a qualification under the regulations of undertaking for living and working on-Island?

Senator A.J.H. MacLean (The Minister for Economic Development):

Could I start by thanking the Deputy of St. John for his kind wishes, and Members as well. I might add that, although I am experiencing sleepless nights, I suspect some of them are due to the questions posed by the Deputy. [Laughter] I can firstly answer the questions of the Deputy by saying yes and go on to say that the Jersey shipping legislation does not dictate the nationality of persons employed on Jersey shipping vessels. However, a very small number of non-locally qualified persons work on fishing boats based in Jersey, having followed the appropriate application and approval process through Regulation of Undertakings and Development. All persons employed on Jersey-registered fishing vessels are required to be trained and to hold the appropriate certification in line with the Shipping (Fishing Vessels - Safety Training) (Jersey) Order 2004.

2.13.1 The Deputy of St. John:

Has the Minister and officers from the Harbour Office or Harbour Department been asked to attend a meeting with Fisheries, Customs, States Members, *et cetera*, but have refused to do so?

Senator A.J.H. MacLean:

I do believe that a meeting was requested and I do believe it is in connection with a specific case which is undergoing an investigation currently by my department. It was felt by the department that it was inappropriate to attend what they believed to be an open meeting, where sensitive matters and issues might be discussed, until an investigation has been completed.

2.13.2 The Deputy of St. John:

On that issue, firstly, can I say it was not an open meeting; the Minister was approached, he gave the delegation to his Assistant Minister and the response we received, which I have to put in the public domain, was that he was conflicted. I cannot believe that a States Member can be conflicted when the Minister has 2 Assistant Ministers; the Minister himself should have attended if his Assistant Minister was conflicted. Will the Minister please explain what he meant by conflicted?

Senator A.J.H. MacLean:

First of all, for the purposes of clarity, I was not conflicted; I believe it was my Assistant Minister who was requested to attend the meeting and he, in fact, said that

he was conflicted. I believe the reasoning was that he felt it inappropriate to attend a meeting, as indeed did officers from the Harbours Department, while the matter was under investigation, on the understanding that the meeting was going to be an open meeting. It since has transpired, I believe, that it was not and, in fact, I see no reason why a private and confidential discussion with the Deputy could not proceed.

2.13.3 The Deputy of St. John:

That being the case, will the Minister attend the meeting with the Customs and the appropriate other members that were originally pulled together?

Senator A.J.H. MacLean:

I was not originally asked to go to the first meeting, just for clarity sake, however if a request comes forward for a meeting, that is to be held and treated as confidential until an investigation is completed, I am more than happy to attend.

2.13.4 Deputy S. Power of St. Brelade:

Would the Minister not agree with me that the meeting that was called, that was in actual fact called by me, was in relation to a specific Jersey-registered fishing vessel that had a non-Jersey or a foreign captain on board, which is not approved by the Harbours Department or by, as far as I understand, the Population Office or by his department. Would the Minister not agree that that is the issue?

Senator A.J.H. MacLean:

That may well be the issue as far as the Deputy is concerned; there are many issues, however, with regard to this particular case, that is why it is under investigation and that is why I do not wish to comment in any great detail. However, I will say that as far as the non-qualified captain that the Deputy refers to, that is not the case as we understand it but, as I say, it is under full investigation and once the investigation is complete then I am sure that the Deputy and others will be fully informed.

2.13.5 Deputy S. Power:

Would the Minister not agree with me that this meeting was called 6 weeks ago and this is the worst example of procrastination I have heard in this Chamber from this department in ...

Senator A.J.H. MacLean:

Would the Deputy confirm that he has sent a request for me to attend a confidential meeting because, as far as I am concerned, I have not been requested to attend a meeting? I have just said to the Deputy of St. John that I will attend a meeting if it is treated confidentially; the matter is under investigation and I think that is perfectly appropriate.

Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

May I allow Deputy Power to continue first then pick up, please?

2.13.6 Deputy S. Power:

I do not want to blow a gasket but the Minister knows that it was a closed meeting between the officers and myself, Deputy Duhamel and the Deputy of St. John and he is still procrastinating.

The Bailiff:

Is that a question?

Deputy S. Power:

Yes. Does the Minister not agree? [Laughter]

Senator A.J.H. MacLean:

No, I will not agree and I certainly hope that the good Deputy does not blow a gasket. I was informed of the meeting after the event and I have made my position perfectly clear; I was not informed of the meeting prior to it occurring.

2.13.7 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

In order to calm the waters a little and return the Chamber to its normal sense of good nature could I ask if any of these fishermen are licensed taxi drivers? [Laughter]

Senator A.J.H. MacLean:

Not as far as I am aware.