

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2009**

Question

Will the Minister inform members on the progress of negotiations to deliver statutory notice payments to ex-Woolworth employees and advise when such payments will be delivered?

Will he further inform members how the moral precedent established by the acceptance of P8/2009 will be applied to further insolvency redundancies, such as the staff of other local retailers and what specific support, if any, Jersey workers made redundant can expect from his Department?

Does the Minister have a timescale for the introduction of an insolvency fund, and if not, when will he produce one?

Answer

A Deed of Assignment has been prepared which was approved by the legal representatives of the former Woolworths employees last Friday. One of the assignments has already been executed and the data to establish the remaining entitlements to be assigned is being verified with those former employees, via their legal representative, this week. Payments will be made via the Social Security Department and I intend that most, if not all of the payments will be delivered to the former employees by the end of this week.

Any other redundancies occurring in the Island, where employees are not given notice, or pay in lieu of notice, due to an insolvency situation will need to be assessed on the particular circumstances of the case.

Officers of the Social Security Department are ensuring that assistance is available to redundant employees. The Department has been in regular contact with the employees of other businesses in the Island that are in potential redundancy situations, offering assistance with anything that the employees might need through these difficult times, including; liaising with the Jersey Advisory and Conciliation Service, offering seminars at the place of work, advice on income support, unemployment credits and job seeking; the ultimate aim being to help anyone who is made redundant to find new employment.

A policy document is currently being prepared by the Department to determine what action will be required to set up an insolvency scheme. A bid for law drafting has been submitted. The availability of law drafting time and legal advice will be the main factor in determining the timescale and I expect to be advised of this shortly.