

### **3.9 Deputy M.R. Higgins of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding Bellozanne chimney temperature readings:**

Will the Minister advise when the Transport and Technical Services Department intends to respond to my repeated requests over the last 6 months for information concerning the Bellozanne chimney temperature readings and outline the reasons for the delay?

#### **Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):**

We do not monitor chimney temperatures for the Bellozanne incinerator; therefore, the information that Deputy Higgins requested does not exist. However, my department has been trying to meet with Deputy Higgins since March last year to explain this and to explain what data we have available and how he wants it presented. In addition, we are happy to offer Deputy Higgins the opportunity to view any of the thousands of log sheets which we have for the operation of the incinerator over many years. My department has provided the Deputy with the economiser outlet temperatures for the more modern Number 3 stream as this information is on a database. For streams 1 and 2, this information has been manually recorded. Analysis and collation of this data will involve substantial officer time, which I cannot reasonably sanction until we understand the Deputy's requirements. In March, copies of log sheets were provided. Unfortunately, Deputy Higgins has declined the numerous invitations to discuss his requirements. I personally ensure that my department provides information for all States Members and welcomes any reasonable request. I would suggest that any delays intimated could have easily been alleviated by the questioner agreeing to meet. I am committed to running T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) in an open and transparent manner and would like to offer Deputy Higgins yet another invitation to discuss his request and how best we can provide him with the information he requires.

#### **3.9.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

I will just make one comment on that. The department did provide me with information showing temperature readings, first of all, and that is the information which I requested yet again. I asked for an expanded range of temperature readings. The one I had was for a 2-week period; I wanted a longer period. The idea of being invited to attend meetings at the department is a standard tactic that has been used by his predecessor, the Chief Officer, and the current one, to try and not provide the information. I believe the department is hiding the fact that the temperature ...

#### **The Bailiff:**

Are you going to ask a question, Deputy?

#### **Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

Sorry, okay. Would you not accept that the fact that you are not providing the information gives rise to suspicion, speculation that the reason why you are not providing it is the fact that the temperature is operating below the temperature required to destroy dioxins and toxins and therefore the department is endangering the health and wellbeing of the people affected by the plume at Bellozanne?

#### **The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I consider the Deputy's approach... and it seems to be extremely aggressive, and I am keen to provide the information that he wishes, but he has to understand we have

limited officer time and I have to allow that to be proportionate in response to questions. We are keen to provide information. The Deputy will understand the whole system far better if he were to attend and speak to the officers about the technicalities of the operation, which I consider he does not understand by the questions he is putting. I really would urge him to come to a meeting so that we can get this sorted out. We will have to do ...

**The Bailiff:**

Very well, you have made that point. Deputy Southern?

**3.9.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

I am shocked and horrified that the Minister should be suggesting - I believe he did - and can he confirm that he has not got accurate, up-to-date and detailed information on what temperature burn is being ... he succeeded in producing in chimneys 1 and 2? The third chimney is monitored. Surely it is a matter of essential public concern that these temperatures are monitored in order that toxins and other pollutants are ... in order that the public is assured that toxins and other pollutants are not being emitted in even greater amounts from the 3 streams?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Yes, I explained earlier on that the older streams are monitored manually and there are thousands of sheets available for those who wish to look at them, should they so wish. I would emphasise the point that we are well aware that the Bellozanne plant is in need of replacement. We are well aware of emissions coming from the chimney and the construction of the new plant at La Collette will remove that. As soon as that is done, in my opinion, the better.

**3.9.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Will the Minister agree to come to the House with sufficient detail on temperatures achieved to prove that his department is doing its best to minimise toxins and pollutants in the atmosphere around Bellozanne where I indeed live?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Of course. We are, at present, doing that. No, I cannot come to the House with sheets of information because it would be totally meaningless. The only way to put meaningless information across to Members is for Members to come and discuss exactly what they want. I contend that those asking the questions do not understand what they are asking.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Sir ...

**The Bailiff:**

No, I am afraid you have asked your questions. Deputy Hilton?

**3.9.4 Deputy J.A. Hilton of St. Helier:**

It is obvious that there is very grave concern in the House about the level of pollutants coming out of the chimneys at Bellozanne. The question I wanted to ask the Minister was whether he was able to confirm that ongoing testing of workers at Bellozanne Valley is taking place and whether the testing of residents and, importantly, children who attend the local schools - First Tower School and Haute Vallée School - whether

there has been any offer of testing of those people to check levels of pollutants, possibly, in their blood?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

No, I am not aware of that. Maybe this has taken place. I am happy to research this for the Deputy, but I cannot give an answer to that.

**Deputy J.A. Hilton:**

I would welcome that opportunity, thank you.

**3.9.5 Deputy A.K.F. Green of St. Helier:**

A yes or no answer really from the Minister. Is the Minister aware that the amount of toxins, dioxins and the like that come out of the chimney is dependent upon the operating temperature of the burn? Therefore, is it not totally irresponsible to be burning without knowing the temperature? Would the Minister confirm that we still burn tyres and plastics in that chimney? We are putting our youngsters at risk. We have a school directly above the chimney. Will the Minister do something about it now?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

We are constructing a new plant at La Collette to replace the outdated Bellozanne plant, which I am aware is producing emissions below the E.U. standards. Yes, we are still burning tyres and we are fully aware of the base temperature, the economiser temperatures, at the outlet of the actual burning plant. If any Member, as I repeat, would wish any further information, you are welcome to come down.

**3.9.6 Deputy J.B. Fox of St. Helier:**

All the Deputies are very much involved in the district as you appreciate with the residents. Can I ask that we arrange for all the Deputies and any other States Member who lives in the district to have a meeting so that we can once and for all sort out where we are at again, because things obviously need updating, and what is required?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I would be delighted and I will put arrangements in forthwith.

[12:00]

**3.9.7 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

Would the Minister agree to an independent scrutiny of those records, someone independent of the department? Because I do believe that ... also, secondly, would the Minister not admit, or confirm, that if the temperature is not meeting the requirement to kill off those dioxins people's health is being affected? It is no use for the incinerator to be built, a new one. Will he admit that if the temperature is not being met at the present time that they are endangering the health of the public at the present time?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Yes, I am fully cognisant of that fact.