

### **3.18 The Deputy of St. Martin of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the establishment of an Independent Custody Visitor Scheme for Jersey:**

Will the Minister give an update on the establishment of the independent custody businesses scheme for Jersey?

**Senator B.I. Le Marquand (The Minister for Home Affairs):**

I am grateful to the Deputy of St. Martin for such a friendly question. **[Laughter]** I will of course, as I do on such occasions, give him credit for the fact that this was his idea and he has given a great deal of help to the Home Affairs Department on this. I am pleased to be able to inform this Assembly that we are nearly there, that we have now trained 7 volunteers, they have been provided with information, and a chairperson has been appointed. They will shortly be attending a familiarisation visit at police headquarters and then will be issued with identity cards and then will be able to commence unannounced visits. So we are very nearly there.

#### **3.18.1 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I am delighted to hear this; could I just ask the Minister what has been the delay? Because I know we were hoping to get this off the ground in February, then it went to March, but we are now into July and probably will be September before we get going?

**Senator B.I. Le Marquand:**

Although I hesitate to admit this there was some delay caused by the need for the necessary police checks and there was also issues of logistics associated with bringing the trainer over from the U.K. at a time when we could have 7 out of the 8 people. There was also time taken to organise I.D. (identification) cards. Those have been the 3 major causes of delay.

#### **3.18.2 Deputy M. Tadier:**

In a similar vein, given that the independent custody visitor scheme does allow those on it to visit as and when they want to and have free access, will the Minister consider giving the same access to the Jurats who are currently on the Board of Visitors for the prison so that they can go when they want to?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

That relates very loosely to the subject matter of the question.

**Senator B.I. Le Marquand:**

This is pretty loose, but I am able to inform Deputy Tadier that Jurats are indeed able to go when they want to, it is just that they tend to prefer to go when they can be accompanied by an officer. But they can turn up at any time without giving notice.

#### **3.18.3 Deputy M. Tadier:**

Indeed, I think the question probably should have been phrased in the sense that the review that we carried out showed that the Jurats never make unannounced visits and that they are not minded to otherwise, and would the Minister perhaps advise the Board of Visitors that they should, or reiterate to them, that they do have the opportunity to visit and that they can do so if they want to?

**Senator B.I. Le Marquand:**

If my memory serves me correctly, in their last annual report they indicated that they do sometimes do this now. I am going entirely from memory, of course.