

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 6th JULY 2010**

Question

“Will the Chief Minister state what formal consultation, if any, has taken place with representatives of States employees over the potential job losses contained in the proposals put forward by Ministers in the Comprehensive Spending Review and, if none, will he state when he expects consultation to start?”

Will the Chief Minister indicate the timescale over which he envisages any redundancies will take place and the extent to which these will be covered by Voluntary Redundancy (VR) or Voluntary Early Retirement schemes already in place or will there be a need for compulsory redundancies?

Will he further detail for members any proposals he has for changes to the VR scheme to be applied from 2011, and state whether (and when) he expects to consult with employee representatives over any changes, or does he intend to impose it unilaterally as with the pay freeze?

What estimates, if any, does he have for the cost in redundancy or other payments of the 67.6 job losses already proposed?”

Answer

There have been at least two meetings between senior officers of the Chief Minister’s Department and senior staff representatives of all trade unions and staff associations recognised in the public sector to consider the economic and financial circumstances which lie behind the Comprehensive Spending Review and how the consequences of that review will be managed. Further, senior officers have met with the Regional Industrial Organiser of Unite – the largest union in the public sector- and some of his convenors to discuss proposed job losses in more detail. In addition, it has been proposed to Unite that they, and other union representatives, join Management in working through the proposals in yet more detail. This last proposal has yet to be accepted by the staff representatives

The timescales for the job losses which are forecast in terms of the 2% budget saving will be the remainder of 2010 and through into 2011. Job losses connected with the later stages of the Comprehensive Spending Review can be expected to occur from 2011 to 2013. We will be aiming in the first instance to achieve the necessary job losses through natural turnover, redeployment, retraining, voluntary redundancy or voluntary early retirement. Compulsory redundancy will occur only as a last resort if all these other processes have failed

The States Employment Board has not yet considered changes to the voluntary redundancy policy, although it is expected to do so shortly. Voluntary redundancies agreed before 31st December 2010 will be paid in accordance with the current terms. I have recently undertaken to the Deputy in an answer to a written States question, that there will indeed be consultation with employee representatives on any changes proposed and expect that the consultation will commence in September.

It is not possible for me to provide an estimate of the cost of redundancies at this stage. This will depend on how successful we are in managing the proposed job losses through natural turnover, redeployment and retraining, and age and length of service of those who volunteer for redundancy and early retirement.