

2.11 The Deputy of St. John of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the English/French Harbour near St. Helier Yacht Club:

Would the Minister advise when the replacement of mooring chains, buoys and pontoons in the English/French Harbour near St. Helier Yacht Club was due to be completed; explain the reason for the delays; where the boats that usually occupy these moorings are being held; the cost of these works; and which company is the contractor?

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

The original project to replace ground chains at South Pier was due to take place in April 2011. Indeed the majority of this phase of the work was completed 8 days ahead of schedule. However, with the support of the St. Helier Boat Owners Association and St. Helier Yacht Club, it was decided to carry out some extra work to reposition and replace pontoons at the same time to avoid potential keel damage to some boats. This was ultimately a more cost-effective option, which makes better use of the available space, enhances the look of the area and provides larger fairways for safer manoeuvrability. This phase of the works has taken longer than expected as the pontoons were not available off the shelf and have had to be specifically manufactured. The boats affected by the works have been located at various locations, including La Collette yacht basin, the Elizabeth and St. Helier mariners. The original budget to replace the ground chains and risers was £95,000. An additional budget of £50,000 has been agreed to include the pontoons. The main contractor is Trant and the whole project should be completed by early July.

2.11.1 Deputy of St. John:

Given that the Minister has told us that these drying craft are being held in La Collette, St. Helier and Elizabeth marinas and I presume they are being given holding pontoons rent-free. That being the case, what impact is that having on the revenue of harbours for this coming season, given X number of months a loss of berths that can be let out to visitors and the like? Could he give us the figure of the loss of revenue, please?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

No, I cannot off the top of my head. But we have to realise that this work was essential work, it had to be carried out and it was agreed in full and proper consultation with the yacht clubs and Boat Owners Association. So the revenue loss, if any and it will be relatively minor, is something I am happy to provide to the Deputy at a separate point.

2.11.2 The Deputy of St. John:

Supplementary, Sir, if I may? Given that the Minister is telling us that the work was to be done in April in the spring, why was it not done as has happened historically, by the Harbours Department themselves, where I have even seen the Assistant Harbourmaster in the mud supervising laying of chains in the past, with staff from the Harbours Department and without any hiccups? Will he also confirm that some of the large mooring chains were incorrectly laid and the deadmen had to be readjusted? That being the case, what redress is there on the contractor to recover some of these monies?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

I am not sure if the Deputy heard clearly my original answer, but I pointed out that in consultation with the yacht clubs and with the Boat Owners Association, additional work was undertaken in order to ensure that boats were not damaged. To answer the question about who carried out the work, why was it Trant; well, they were the ones as part of the tender process who had the specialist knowledge in order to carry out this work. Why did it take longer than from April? Quite simply the pontoons had to be specially manufactured. They were not possible to be purchased off the shelf and consequently there has been a delay, which is regrettable.

2.11.3 The Deputy of St. John:

Supplementary, if I may? Given that pontoons, et cetera, had to be manufactured specifically for this particular contract would it not have been advantageous to the Minister to have that work carried out over next winter instead of losing revenue by occupying moorings in St. Helier marina, La Collette and Elizabeth marinas?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

I think the best thing I can do to help here is to quote from the Deputy's own Boat Owners Association newsletter which says: "I must congratulate everyone on the speed and effort that they have put into this particular project. Trant, the contractors, have been very easy to communicate with. I am pleased to be able to say that this has been a real consultation exercise, our ideas being taken fully on board." So, I hope that the Deputy's own Boat Owner Association magazine represents the facts and clearly everyone, apart from the Deputy himself, satisfied.

[16:00]

The Deputy of St. John:

On a point of clarification. The committee do not necessarily speak for the members of the Association. **[Laughter]**