

2.13 The Deputy of St. John of the Minister for Economic Development regarding an incident involving the States tug 'Duke of Normandy':

Would the Minister describe the events on 2nd September 2011 when the States tug, the 'Duke of Normandy', struck an underwater object and advise what qualifications the Ship Master holds, how long the Master has been in post giving details of his background in local waters, if any, and give details of damage and cost of this and state how many passengers and crew were on board at the time?

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

There are about 7 questions there so I hope Members will bear with me as I deal with this. It is more like a written question, in effect, but nevertheless I will do my very best. At 16.20 p.m. on 2nd September, the 'Duke of Normandy' struck the Cannon Reef when returning from St. Aubin where she has been acting as a start boat for the Brewin Dolphin Regatta. There were 4 crew members on board and 8 race committee members. The Master and engineer noticed that she was taking water but returned safely to her usual berth. T.T.S. divers were mobilised to carry out an underwater inspection and made temporary repairs. The agency Master is highly qualified with a foreign-going Cargo Master unlimited certificate. He has a well proven history becoming captain of tug vessels in 1997 since when he has worked extensively in the U.K. and Mediterranean. The Master has been in post since the beginning of July. The Master completed 2 weeks training with the Master he was relieving when he joined at the beginning of July. At the time of the incident he was accompanied by 3 local crew members with over 18 years' experience with Jersey harbours. The full report of the damage is expected this week. Full costs are also not known at this stage but I am informed that all costs should be covered by insurance. There were 4 crew members and 8 race committee members on board.

2.13.1 The Deputy of St. John:

Do the Captain and First Officer of the States tug hold a pilot's licence for Jersey waters and if so give us the dates of the certificates being issued?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

As far as I am aware the necessary crew are qualified appropriately to undertake the tasks in which they were asked to undertake. As far as particular qualifications, I am happy to revert back to the Deputy with full details.

2.13.2 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Can the Minister confirm that every member of crew who should have been on board for the safe handling of that vessel was on board at the time the accident took place?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

I am getting into a slightly uncomfortable area here because I have ordered an independent investigation into this particular incident and as such I do not really want to go into particular details at this stage. What I will undertake to Members is that the result of that investigation, being undertaken by MECAL, will be published so I hope that all answers to queries and questions that Members may have with regard to this matter will come out in due course. I am expecting the report to be ready by October.

2.13.3 The Deputy of St. John:

I am a little uneasy with that response given the Minister has answered the first question. Can the Minister confirm - and I hope you allow supplementaries on this - the reasons of the tug being at sea. We are told it was there for the regatta. If so, the vessel; was it on charter or on loan and if on charter what is the charge-out rate per hour? If on loan, who was paying the crew's wages, the club, the taxpayer or through the harbour, which once again would be the taxpayer?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

The arrangement was quite simple. The States tug was supporting the Brewin Dolphin Regatta and as such this was a sponsorship arrangement. The Jersey Harbours were paying for, effectively, the vessel, but as I say it was a sponsorship arrangement which had a value of approximately £2,500.

2.13.4 The Deputy of St. John:

Can I put a supplementary on that? That £2,500 value, as the Minister has just stated, would that cover the cost of the fuel and the staff wages over that period of time please?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

Yes, I am told that in fact the actual cost of the vessel for this particular event, it ran over 3 days incidentally, was less than £2,500 that included, of course, sponsorship in brochures and so on. The actual running costs, fuel and staff time was around about £1,500, I believe, but I can get a more accurate figure if the Deputy would like, in due course.