

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TREASURY AND RESOURCES  
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARY  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 15th MARCH 2011**

**Question**

“Further to the Chief Minister’s answer on 1st February 2011 to written question 6005 regarding the current rules relating to the use of consultants by States Departments, specifically the rules governing bias in overall approach, selection of evidence and arguments, and the writing of reports, can the Minister confirm that the avoidance of bias is an integral part of the Financial Direction (FD 5.1) applying to the use of consultants and, if so, can the Minister tell States members exactly how this requirement is stated in the Direction and, if not, can he explain to members why this requirement is not stated in the Direction?”

**Answer**

I can only echo much of the Chief Minister’s answer to written question 6005, which the Deputy refers to in this question, and which I have not reproduced in detail.

All consultancy engagements require an engagement brief – for contracts over £25,000 a number of detailed contents are mandatory. Below £25,000 it is recommended that the principles of those mandatory requirements are followed.

The brief should then become the basis for the consultant’s terms of reference.

I do not believe it is possible to specify further, in a financial direction, how the avoidance of bias should be achieved. Each accounting officer spending taxpayers’ money has a duty to achieve value for money from all expenditure. Achieving value for money implies a balance between on the one hand giving consultants as much freedom as possible to identify and evaluate relevant evidence, and on the other hand controlling the costs of the work carried out.

If the Deputy has concerns over a specific consultancy engagement I would suggest he contacts the accounting officer concerned for further information.