

**5.10 Deputy M. Tadier of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the provision of information relating to qualified and non-qualified employees in the fulfilment sector.**

Will the Minister reconsider his refusal to provide a breakdown of information relating to qualified and non-qualified employees in the fulfilment sector and if so, would he advise what percentage of Play.com's staff are non-qualified?

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

I have never refused to give a breakdown of staffing across the fulfilment sector. In fact, following specific requests from Deputy Tadier, I arranged for this information to be supplied to the Deputy on 28th June this year. For the record, I advised the Deputy that of the 890 staff in the industry as at 31st December 2010, 200 or 22 per cent were non-locally qualified under Regulation of Undertakings. As to providing details on specific licences of individual companies in Jersey, that has always remained confidential information between the regulator and individual companies.

**5.10.1 Deputy M. Tadier:**

There seems to be a semantic dissonance here because what the Minister has quite rightly provided, in fact it was the Statistics Department I had to get the information from in the end ... provided information. What I am asking for now and I have asked for in the past is the breakdown of that information per company and if the Minister is going to say that it is commercially sensitive then will he at least give an undertaking to provide anonymised data, firm A, firm B, firm C, et cetera, to show how many in each company are employed without 5 years' residency?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I cannot understand the thrust of the question. If the Deputy wants to come and talk to me about it I am happy to discuss the matter with him, but based on what he has said to date the position of the department is consistent. We do not provide information on individual companies but we are happy to give sectoral data, which I provided for the Deputy.

**5.10.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Can the Minister confirm that most of these employees are employed on zero hours contracts, which quite frankly are not worth the paper they are printed on?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

No, I cannot confirm that. In fact, I was talking to one company only yesterday and I was told of their complement of staff there were only 2 on zero hours contracts, which represented only a few per cent of the total complement.

**5.10.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Will the Minister then have a conversation with the Minister for Social Security and discover what proportion of workers in this particular industry are employed on zero hours contracts?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I continually have conversations with fellow Ministers. If the Deputy has a specific request, if I could ask him to put it in writing I will consider it and respond to him accordingly.

**5.10.4 The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, I just wanted to get the Minister's assurance that he recognises the importance of this question, and when he says that he cannot give data on specific companies can he assure the House that he is concerned about access of different categories of workers to this kind of job?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

Sorry, I did not get the last part of that question.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, I just want the Minister to confirm that he is concerned about the access of different housing categories of worker to this kind of job because that is what the question is really about.

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

The fulfilment industry provides valuable employment to a large number of local people, the majority within this Island, and I think that is important. It is something we should work continually very hard to support.

**5.10.5 Senator T.J. Le Main:**

Can the Minister confirm that any local, unemployed, willing person applying to one of these companies will always be able to get a job and always taken on as top priority?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I can certainly confirm that should the company have a vacancy I cannot see a circumstance where an appropriately qualified local person would not be given the opportunity. That is certainly a point that we continually push, and we can see from statistics that the majority of people employed in most sectors in the Island are indeed locally qualified. We have got a lot of work to do to improve the employment position, particularly for young people, and we continue to strive to do that and encourage local companies accordingly.

**5.10.6 Deputy M. Tadier:**

Let me put the question in context. There is a difference between Jersey Post and, let us say, Indigo Lighthouse. There is a difference between what was Flying Flowers and Indigo Starfish. The information I am seeking and I have sought in the past is very simple, and I do not know why the Minister appears to be being obtuse in withholding the information. What I am seeking quite simply is the breakdown per company, which can be anonymised, of how many unqualified, that is less than 5 year, residents are employed because I have reason to believe that certain companies operating in the Island have a majority of their staff, which are less than 5 years' resident, and the underlying reason I ask the question is because I am concerned about exploitative employment practices, which are being performed by certain, perhaps less scrupulous, companies, all within the boundaries of the law, and this is why I am seeking that information. This information should be available to any States Member, indeed to the public, and I will not accept excuses of commercial confidentiality where they are not relevant.

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I think the Deputy is dealing with unfounded rumour, I am afraid, because across all sectors the Regulation of Undertakings Department consider all applications from businesses for employment purposes between local and non-local, and there is a consistency across the sector to ensure the percentages between different companies are broadly similar. That is the fair way to deal with the matter, and certainly I am confident that that is the case. I would add the Deputy also asked me for specific details in relation to Jersey Post. I directed the Deputy to the head of H.R. (Human Resources) at Jersey Post to get that information. I did speak to the lady in question today and so far he has not been in contact, but I would suggest if he has specific requirements of individual companies, including Jersey Post, he contacts the companies in question themselves.