

2.3 Connétable P.J. Rondel of St. John of the Chief Minister regarding the Island's Emergency Planning policy:

Would the Chief Minister provide Members with details of the Island's Emergency Planning Policy, including how many days or weeks or months worth of emergency food and supplies are held on-Island at any one time.

Senator I.J. Gorst (The Chief Minister):

Emergency planning procedures in Jersey are undertaken in accordance with the Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990 and as Members no doubt will expect, this is a detailed and complex set of procedures required to ensure that the Island is prepared in cases of emergency. The Island does not hold any emergency stocks of food or supplies but it is my understanding that there are estimated to be 2 to 3 weeks of food stocks on the Island at any given time.

2.3.1 The Connétable of St. John:

Given historically we had up to 3 months supply of food stocks on-Island, will the Minister be looking at increasing the volume of stock held on Island, given that I noted in the media some weeks ago a comment from I believe - and I do stand to be corrected - the Emergency Planning Department that households should keep additional stocks within their larders? That being the case, is the Minister happy that having all our stocks in warehouses on the mainland - the bulk of our stocks - is he happy that this can continue, given that I am aware that back in the ... when we had a crises some years ago when we had one of our car ferries commandeered from the U.K., because of the time... I think it was the Gulf War or the war just prior to that, one of the wars, and we were left with one ferry. Given we have gone down the road of warehousing all our food off-Island or the bulk of our food off-Island, will the Minister be looking at this again, please?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Are you happy, Chief Minister?

Senator I.J. Gorst:

Not often, Sir, not often. So the Connétable makes a very good point. Up until the 1960's it is my understanding that the Jersey Government did take the view that stock piling of around 3 months worth of food was the appropriate course of action. However, that has not been the case for many, many years now. It was not up until around 1995 that there were what we might call buffer stocks of margarine, sugar, biscuits, flour and yeast held but, again, that has not been the case since 1995. The Connétable is right that retailers or food retailers on the Island generally or mostly have a "just in time" policy and their stocks are held outside of our Island.

[10:00]

This is a policy which is, as one would expect with emergency planning, continually under review and I have spoken again to my Emergency Planning Officer to consider whether it remains the appropriate policy for us as a government.