

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
BY THE CONNÉTABLE OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 10th JULY 2012**

Question

“Further to the press release dated 27th June 2012, would the Minister supply details of who attended the Red Ensign Conference in the Isle of Man and the total cost of the entire trip and its duration.

Given that one of the key outcomes of the conference was to remind British Consuls overseas of their duties to support the interests of British and not just UK shipping worldwide, does the Minister consider that Jersey has been appropriately represented in relation to Jersey registered Vessels overseas and, if so, give examples?”

Answer

Conference -

1. The delegates from Jersey were as follows:

Economic Development Department: Registrar of Shipping and Assistant Registrar
Chief Minister’s Department: International Relations Officer
Law Officers Department: Legal Adviser

2. Total cost £2,489, including all travel and accommodation. Most food costs were covered by the host Administration in the Isle of Man.
3. Duration 3 days.

British Consuls –

The extent of the support available overseas to British seafarers and British shipping was not an issue that was raised by Jersey. The issue arose from a recent situation where a consulate was unclear as to its responsibilities regarding a seafarer in a ship registered in a UK Overseas Territory. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office brought the matter to the conference. Notwithstanding that position, the Jersey delegation were pleased the matter was discussed as it served as a useful reminder of the potential value of the consulates.

The Jersey Registry provides services to consular officers based in the Island, but there has been no contact with British consular officers based overseas in recent times. That situation would more likely arise where an owner has perhaps had his Certificate of Registry stolen or it has been lost and assistance was needed in providing alternative documentation. There used to be more evidence of consular activity when the stipulations for the qualifications of a witness were less lenient and officers were frequently used for witnessing signatures on a Declaration of Eligibility or other registration documents.

There is a general comfort factor in having access to a consular officer wherever a boat owner may be in the world (indeed that is one of the marketing factors for the Red Ensign flag). So, there is no harm in high-lighting their responsibilities and the need for them to remain accessible and approachable.

A list of some of the services available are to be found in the UK Consular Fees Order 2012 and these include verifying the authenticity of a copy of a document (such as the ship's papers), witnessing signatures, administering an application for the registration of a birth or a death, and administering an application for Emergency Travel Documents or passports.