

## **5.7 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains of St. Clement of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding works undertaken at Snow Hill car park:**

With regard to the closing off of a section of Snow Hill car park, would the Minister advise whether, despite the area being fenced off for the whole of July, only approximately 2 days' work was undertaken in that time. If so, given the expense of plant machinery, such as a crane, spent considerable idle time on site, would the Minister confirm the tender was competitively priced?

### **Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):**

A section of Snow Hill car park has been closed off as part of the St. Helier flood alleviation scheme currently being undertaken on the old Ann Court housing site. Once completed, this scheme will see a significant improvement in the prevention of surface water flooding at times of high rainfall in the area of St. Helier. The scheme requires extensions to the existing deep drainage tunnels which run below St. Helier and enter the cavern at Snow Hill. In order to complete the new tunnels a T.B.M. (Tunnel Boring Machine) will commence tunnelling at Ann Court and will break through and connect in the existing tunnels below Phillips Street. The tunnel boring machine will then traverse along the existing tunnels and will exit at Snow Hill. Records show that the Snow Hill compound was utilised for work activities for 9 days during May. For the remainder of May, plans were being formalised for the safe entrance to shaft 2 and tunnel network. This was achieved at the end of July following a slight delay due to heavy rainfall. The compound is now being fully utilised on a daily basis. The overall project was competitively tendered and awarded to J. Murphy and Sons Limited, a specialist tunnel contractor in June 2012. The contract was awarded on a lump sum fixed basis and accordingly any inactivity in any elements of the project is the responsibility of the contractor. Thank you.

### **5.7.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

An interesting waffling introduction that did not answer the question. Would the Minister not agree that excessive contingency and slack was obviously built into the tender to allow for expensive plant to be lying idle for so long? Also would the Minister advise what processes his officers used to employ that the tender that they accepted was not unreasonably padded out?

### **Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

As stated, there was a lot of preliminary work going on. The shaft is 100 feet deep so it has to be secure. Any plant lying around, as the Deputy has put it, is the responsibility of the tenderer. There is also a lot of ventilation of the shaft needed operationally before anyone can go down there. It was competitively tendered.

### **5.7.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Thank you. Is the apparent and alleged inactivity at Snow Hill linked to the considerable time it is taking for the Ann Court end of the project to be completed? The Minister has alluded to problems that almost match those found in the construction of the Euro tunnel. I wonder if he could elaborate on what is happening at Ann Court?

### **The Bailiff:**

No, he could not. That is well outside the question.

### **Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Its impact upon Snow Hill.

### **The Bailiff:**

It is still too far removed, Deputy.

### **5.7.3 Connétable P.J. Rondel of St. John:**

Will the Minister agree that the way that the contract is being run is as per the contract? Also that with the weather conditions we had at the end of June, early July, it is inevitable there would be delays because of the water table and everything else, and the run-off into the old system?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Absolutely. The contract is running slightly behind but the contractor is confident that this time can be made up. I would reiterate, even though there is not a lot happening on the surface, there is a lot happening below in the tunnels. Men are working down there at a rate of knots.

**5.7.4 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

The Minister keeps giving us a detailed description of the job, which I am not interested in because I am fully aware that what I am asking about is efficiency. If a tenderer can allow this amount of contingency in a job it does seem to me that we should not have accepted the tender in the first place. If I was running that job I would not have a crane sitting there for a month. I would send it away. Would the Minister agree that this tender is obviously padded out?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Not at all. Initially the crane is there. The shaft itself is 100 feet deep. For any activity below, the men have to be hoisted down in a special cradle and any equipment has to be lowered likewise so the crane is on standby.

**Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

The crane sat there without doing anything for almost a month. That is not efficient.

**The Bailiff:**

Is that a question, Deputy?

**Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

Yes, Sir. The Minister seems to be ...

**The Bailiff:**

Pose a question as opposed to make a statement.

**Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

Yes. The Minister is telling us again, the details of the job. He is not explaining why this inefficiency is allowed; if this inefficiency can be tolerated then clearly the tender was padded out.

**The Bailiff:**

I am sorry, that is another statement.