

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TREASURY AND RESOURCES  
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2014**

**Question**

Will the Minister, as the shareholder representative, advise:

- (a) Whether he has investigated any dispute between Gigabit employees and their employer Gigabit Field Force, a wholly owned subsidiary of Jersey Telecom, concerning the accuracy of the recording of hours worked by Gigabit employees, and if not will he do so?
- (b) What steps, if any, he has taken to resolve any dispute, and if none, what steps will he take to bring about resolution?
- (c) Whether he considers the use of zero-hours contracts to be appropriate to the delivery of Gigabit connections and if so, can he offer a justification for this?
- (d) Whether he considers that, when employees work between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. and their place of work may be anywhere on the Island, non-payment for travel time, waiting time (while the owner of a property is contacted) or hours worked when a connection is not completed, constitutes best employment practice?

**Answer**

- (a) The Minister has met with the CEO and senior officers from JT to gain an understanding of the circumstances and facts around this issue, and has emphasised the importance of resolving them fairly, recognising that JT is as interested in ensuring the accurate recording of hours as the workers and the sub-contractor, CH2M Hill. The Minister has made it clear that he expects full and speedy resolution of any issues in line with the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding with JT.
- (b) The Deputy understands that it is for the independent board of directors to run the company, but in the Minister's role as shareholder representative he has emphasised the points made under (a) and highlighted the role of the company in terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between JT and the Minister. The Minister is, however, in no doubt about the seriousness with which JT are treating this matter.
- (c) Zero-hours contracts are just one form of engagement used by the company and the majority of the 104 contractors are on a minimum guaranteed 30 hour per week contracts. The Minister believes that there is a place for zero-hours contracts in the market generally. In the case of delivering Gigabit connections where the work requirements fluctuate and there is no guarantee of work from day-to-day or week-to-week, the Minister believes it an appropriate basis for employment but would restate the importance of clear terms and conditions that are fairly applied.
- (d) Taking the items listed at face value the Minister would agree that it would appear not to constitute best practice. However, the Minister is advised that to get to the truth of these issues, JT and CH2M Hill have been holding helpful surgeries with workers over the last two weeks where concerns (such as those listed) were more clearly laid out and GFF/JT/CH2M requirements were more clearly understood.

