

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EDUCATION AND HOME AFFAIRS
SCRUTINY PANEL BY DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 18th FEBRUARY 2014**

Question

In the light of Report SR8/2013 regarding “Customs and Immigration Service: resources for prevention of importation of illegal drugs” presented in May last year, will the Chairman state whether he is now satisfied that the current drugs policy of the Home Affairs department is fit for purpose and advise what areas of concern he still has, if any?

Answer

I have reviewed the scrutiny report SR8/2013 ‘Customs and Immigration Service: Resources for Prevention of Importation of Illegal Drugs’ which was published and presented to the States on 10th May 2013 by the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel, chaired at that time by Deputy J Macon. I was a member of the Panel during the full evidence gathering process. I have also discussed the issues raised in that report with the Minister for Home Affairs.

At the time of publication of the report, the Panel had not found any significant cause for concern that the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service was failing in its responsibility to maintain disruption levels nor that staff shortages were leading to increased availability of illegal drugs in the Island. The evidence given by the various agencies consulted by the Panel did not provide any direct challenge to the policy of containment and disruption as set out by the Minister for Home Affairs in the Scrutiny hearing on 22nd June 2012. Rather than any significant increase in the availability of illegal drugs, there appeared at that time to have been a reduction in the use of Class A drugs. A trend that I am informed by the Minister is continuing at this point in time. I am, therefore satisfied that that the current drugs policy of the Home Affairs department is fit for purpose.

That being said, subsequent to the Scrutiny report, the Minister has made provision for two part time posts to be added during the summer months of 2014 to boost the resources available at the points of entry to the Island.