

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 22nd MARCH 2016**

Question

Is the outsourcing of public sector jobs requiring redundancies likely to place significant demands on the Minister's departmental budgets for Income Support and Social Security contributory benefit schemes, and if not, why not?

Answer

It is premature to seek to establish an estimate for Income Support costs arising from any potential outsourcing of public sector jobs requiring redundancies. The Income Support system is designed to support any worker who is made redundant and a significant number of claims are opened and closed each year as employers across the island contract and expand their workforces. Any organisation considering the impact of redundancies can receive support for its employees from Social Security advisers. This is standard practice and the Department has significant experience in dealing with workers in this situation over the last few years, for example following the loss of Low Value Consignment Relief. Staff at Department For Infrastructure have already received support in this area and Social Security will also be offering an outplacement service to any States employee made compulsorily redundant, to assist them in finding new employment.

In the event of a compulsory redundancy, the individual will normally be eligible to apply for Income Support but the value of any award will depend on a range of household circumstances, including the salary of any partner. It should be noted that the average Income Support award in 2015 was approximately £215 per week.

In the same way that there is a significant churn in Income Support claims, there is also a constant movement in terms of individual contributors moving in and out of employment and contributing to the Social Security fund. To identify the impact of potential future job losses, it would be necessary to have information regarding the change in each individual's earnings. Any individual who is made compulsorily redundant and satisfies job seeking requirements will receive contribution credits to protect their pension entitlement but the contributory benefit system does not include an unemployment benefit. This support is available through Income Support.