

2018.11.20

18 Deputy J.M. Maçon of the Chairman of the States Employment Board regarding the provision of succession-planning conditions in contracts issued to senior staff: [OQ.186/2018]

Will the chairman advise whether the States Employment Board has a policy that all senior contracts issued, including those of the new director general class, and other States appointments include succession-planning conditions; and if not, will she explain why not?

The Connétable of St. Ouen (Vice-Chairman, States Employment Board - rapporteur):

I thank the Deputy for his question. There is no standard clause in any permanent contract within the States of Jersey that provides for succession planning conditions. From time to time, for specific interims and short-term contracts, there have been occasions in the past where a contract might have such conditions in the light of the specialist nature of those duties. However I would like to add something to that answer. Succession planning is something that the States have not been very good at and also normally you would not expect to see in a contract of employment any succession planning requirement, you would expect to see a performance agreement. As Members will know, performance agreements are pretty few and far between in the States. However, as part of the rollout of the new target model performance, agreements will include things like succession planning, improvement of working conditions, talent management, and also providing training to employees so they can improve their skills and hopefully move into more senior roles. I do accept the Deputy's point that it has not been very good up until now.

3.18.1 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Just for those listening, succession planning is just about widening the pool of people that can apply for it, it does not necessarily mean that individual would then get the role, but it is about widening the pool to allow people to apply. I thank the vice-chairman for the answer. Perhaps then will the vice-chairman be able to advise the Assembly whether, if not through contracts, through wider policy of the States Employment Board that succession planning should be something that is expected of all senior officers?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I thank the Deputy for his question. The answer to that is simply yes, and I would take issue with his earlier remark, or I disagree with his earlier remark; "take issue" is a bit strong perhaps. Talent management is a very important part of any organisation and not only giving people the opportunity to join a pool for a recruitment process, but also ensuring that they have the right skills to apply for those roles is a very important part of how we see our role going forward.

3.18.2 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I wonder perhaps, given that ethos, can the vice-chairman please advise the Assembly therefore, in order to gain those skills and that talent, whether the States Employment Board does have a pool of money, for example, to allow for secondment? So after the Care Inquiry we know, for example, in that report it said that things like social workers should be given the ability to be seconded to other authorities in order to develop their abilities. Does the States Employment Board have a policy and funding in order to support secondments?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes, I thank the Deputy for his question and he has alighted on an area that I do not have the answer for. But the answer is, no, we do not have that at the moment, but I will take it back and it will be an issue that we will discuss and come back to him at some stage in the future.