

2020.09.08

9 Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour of the Chief Minister regarding the cost of the Island's Covid testing: (OQ.215/2020)

What has been the cost to the Government of the COVID-19 testing since the border restrictions were lifted, including any costs of transporting tests to laboratories in the U.K.?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (The Chief Minister):

I am advised the direct expenditure totalling £2.558 million has been recorded in the financial system from 1st July to 31st August. This includes costs associated with on-Island testing, as well as people arriving in the Island and incorporates clinical staff costs, costs for test processing, including transport costs. In addition, test processing costs for August, which will be recorded in the financial system when the invoice has been received, so they are not in the system at the moment, are anticipated to be around £2.274 million. Due to the way in which it is being recorded it is rather difficult to split out the costs between testing for arriving passengers and for testing Islanders. I hope that answers the question.

4.9.1 Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Thank you, Chief Minister, for that answer. May I take this opportunity to thank the hardworking men and women of the testing borders at the harbour and the airport? Can I push the Minister just slightly more, can he be specific in the testing because there are 2 laboratories, is that correct, for the testing to be transported to and what is the greater cost of the 2 laboratories? Could he answer that?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I do not have that information to hand. I do not know how it is split up. By the 2 laboratories, does he mean on the United Kingdom or is he looking at the on-Island testing?

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

No, definitely would be over in the United Kingdom; the 2 laboratories that we are using to turn around the tests.

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

We do keep some of these pieces of information commercially confidential because depending on the arrangements and depending which laboratory we are talking about, particularly when we are looking at the on-Island one because some of them are early, sometimes one gets more commercial rates, shall we say, as people who are helping, essentially, develop the concept. But I am happy to try and identify the information to see if there is a way either privately I can brief the Deputy or/and all States Members but recognising it is commercially sensitive usually. But also seeing if we can split that information down in an easy format. The numbers I have given obviously in the total are in the round.