

20.09.22

**2 Deputy R.J. Ward of the Chair of the States Employment Board regarding racial abuse in the workplace (OQ. 240/2020):**

What data, if any, is collected regarding cases of racial abuse in the workplace across the States of Jersey; and how is any such data used to develop policy regarding how racism is dealt with in the workplace?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (Chair, States Employment Board):**

The Connétable of St. Ouen is taking this one.

**Connétable R.A. Buchanan of St. Ouen (Vice-Chair, States Employment Board - rapporteur):**

The Government of Jersey does collect data about alleged racial discrimination cases and this data is used to inform our H.R. (human resources) policy and practice. Indeed, it is picked out in 3 policies at the moment: our bullying and harassment policy has a specific section relating to it, we have a code of practice through quality and diversity, and a statement of practice. Over the last 12 months there have been 2 cases of alleged racial discrimination raised and due to the very low number and in order to protect confidentiality, there is only certain information I can share. But I can say that complaint one was investigated and allegations of racial discrimination were not upheld. The second complaint is in very early stages and is still being investigated.

**4.2.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

Was there consultation with groups that represent minorities and those who face direct racism on the Island in all the developing policy so perhaps a truer picture can be gained of the extent of problems that may exist in the work force?

**The Connétable of St. Ouen:**

I am not able to provide him with an instant answer to that question. I am aware that we have some external consultation but I am able to get back to him with an answer within the next week or so.

**4.2.2 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour:**

I understand the question is about racial abuse, which is perhaps quite an extreme occurrence in the workplace. Is there anything that is done to collect information on perhaps smaller microaggressions - I think is the term - and there might be behaviours that are due to unconscious bias that people are not doing intentionally? Is there any work being done to perhaps hold focus groups or consult with people who are members of an ethnic minority just to find out what their experiences are in the workplace?

**The Connétable of St. Ouen:**

There are no specific groupings set up to look into that but we do have a helpline where people can call in anonymously with complaints, and they are quite diverse in nature. I take the Deputy's point and I will try and get back to her with some more information on that.

**The Bailiff:**

I am unable to indicate on my screen when I have acknowledged that someone has asked a question, the icons are just blank and I cannot do the usual thing of indicating that I have noted. That is why they are not appearing at the moment.

#### **4.2.3 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:**

Does the Assistant Minister support the idea of an equalities commission for Jersey that could oversee the development and implementation of discrimination and human rights legislation in the Island?

#### **The Connétable of St. Ouen:**

I am not entirely sure whether that question is directed at me personally or as Deputy Chair of the S.E.B. (States Employment Board)? Perhaps the Deputy could clarify that.

#### **The Bailiff:**

It can only be directed to you as Deputy Chair of the S.E.B.

#### **The Connétable of St. Ouen:**

The S.E.B. would support any process or committee in the Island that would help highlight racial discrimination. We take it very seriously. Clearly there are racial discrimination laws, as the Deputy well knows, and we have developed our own policies from that. But anything that happens that improves the position in terms of racial discrimination is to be applauded by the S.E.B.

#### **4.2.4 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

Thank you to Deputy Doublet for raising a very key point, and she is right. Would the Assistant Minister take on board the fact that dealing with issues before a complaint needs to be made are one of the key factors to cultural change in our workplace? Has Team Jersey, which has a role in cultural change in the workplace, is part of their remit to address issues of racism, whatever, before they have to be dealt with, with complaints? If not, why not?

#### **The Connétable of St. Ouen:**

The Deputy is entirely correct. Racism in the workplace is completely unacceptable and is a core part of Team Jersey's ethos and it will become part of the States culture, as and when that is developed by Team Jersey.