

21.06.08

12 Senator S.C. Ferguson of the Assistant Minister for Home Affairs regarding the process for importing goods from outside the United Kingdom to Jersey. (OQ.130/2021):

Will the Minister advise what action, if any, is being taken by the Customs and Immigration Service to improve the process of importing goods imported from outside the U.K. to ensure that it is not unduly complicated and expensive?

Deputy G.C. Guida of St. Lawrence (Assistant Minister for Home Affairs - rapporteur):

Under the terms of the Jersey U.K. customs arrangement signed in 2018, which established a Customs Union between the Crown Dependencies and the U.K., it was agreed that all parties would apply the U.K. global tariff to trade with territories not included in the Customs Union. Therefore, customs duties may apply on goods imported from international suppliers on arrival in Jersey. Importers are legally obliged to pay the customs duty and to submit a customs declaration. There is no cost involved with the latter, unless the importer employs the service of a customs agent to complete the border formalities on their behalf. This option is recommended but obviously the service provided would incur a fee. The need for a customs declaration for goods imported from outside the union is a legal requirement and includes a need to provide a commodity code associated with the good, using the U.K. global tariffs online look-up tool. Classification must be done by the importer to enable the correct duties to be calculated. As a result, the submission for customs declaration can be a complicated process. Jersey Customs and Immigration Service has produced a number of how-to guides to assist individuals that up to ...

The Bailiff:

Deputy Guida, I am afraid you are now significantly past the 90 seconds normally allowed for an answer. Are you able to conclude your answer, please?

Deputy G.C. Guida:

Within half a paragraph, Sir.

The Bailiff:

It depends on how big the paragraph is, does it not, Deputy? If you could please close it within the next 10 seconds.

Deputy G.C. Guida:

J.C.I.S. (Jersey Customs and Immigration Service) has produced a number of how-to guides to assist individuals, the main one is third-country pre-arrival declaration guide, which can be found on the Government website.

3.12.1 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

It is not clear whether customs are totally au fait with the changes and the explanations are not always consistent. But the overall effect is a total charge of 18 per cent or so on goods being imported from outside the E.U. (European Union). At the moment it seems that the intention is to increase import costs to be virtually equivalent to V.A.T. at 20 per cent. What is the department doing to sort this out and simplify it for traders in the Island?

Deputy G.C. Guida:

The department does not charge anything on imports but there are trade tariffs and I would like to remind the Senator that trade tariffs are a protectionist buyer to imports from outside the Customs Union. They are meant to be annoying, they are meant to be difficult and they are meant to be expensive. They will vary, depending on the provenance of the goods and depending on the nature of the goods, so there is no set fee but they can vary from 5 per cent to 20 per cent, depending on the provenance and the nature.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Deputy. We move to the next question. Deputy Higgins, I do not think you are available to ask it and you have asked for it to be put to the bottom of the list. Yes. Then the next question is 14 the Connétable of St. Helier will ask of the Minister for Treasury and Resources. Connétable.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Can I raise a point of order, I think, about this question first, Sir?

The Bailiff:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

It was originally submitted to the Minister for the Environment and it has been substantially changed in being redirected to the Minister for Treasury and Resources. For example, in my original question I referred to the profits from the development of the Esplanade Quarter by the States being in the region of £50 million to £70 million. That important detail has been left out of the redirected question to the Minister for Treasury and Resources.

The Bailiff:

Connétable, I am informed that extraneous information and facts are generally removed from questions and that of course it was redirected because the Minister for Treasury and Resources is the responsible supervising shareholder. You have made the point but I am not sure that there is anything to be done. If you wish to withdraw the question you are of course at liberty to do so or you can ask it in this form; it is a matter for you.

[11:45]

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Would I be permitted to introduce the sum of money? I would suggest that it is not extraneous to introduce the sum of money involved. Could I introduce that after the word profits in the current question?

The Bailiff:

You cannot, I am afraid, amend the question of record that is on the Order Paper. Of course you have raised the information in the point of order that you have just raised and you have supplementary questions that you can deploy that information to presage the question. But I am afraid I cannot allow the question on the record to be amended.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes, thank you, Sir. The other point I wanted to make, Sir, if I may, is that the original question was directed at the current Minister for Planning because the promise to the Assembly was made by a

previous Minister for Planning and I wanted to hear what the current Minister thought of that promise and whether he felt in any way responsible to deliver on the promise.

The Bailiff:

I understand that, Connétable, the reason that it was redirected was because the person with responsibility is the Minister for Treasury and Resources. Again, it is not a matter that can be changed *sur la chance*, it is a matter that I think we must deal with. It is up to you whether you ask the question in this form but I cannot change the question now.