



SCRUTINY

PRESS RELEASE

23 June 2011

Education and Home Affairs Panel

Review of the Inquiry into the financial probity of the Haut De La Garenne Police Investigation

The Education and Home Affairs Panel has agreed to form a Sub Panel to be led by Deputy Trevor Pitman to investigate issues arising from the BDO Alto review which was commissioned by the Minister for Home Affairs to examine the financial management of Operation Rectangle (the Historic Child Abuse Enquiry).

St Helier based accountancy firm BDO Alto published their report in July 2010, making strong criticisms of financial management and oversight failures during the Historical Child Abuse Enquiry, highlighting the role of Mr. L. Harper, the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO).

Serious concerns have now been brought to the Panel's attention about certain aspects of the way in which BDO Alto carried out their review. These concerns question whether the report is fair, accurate and independent.

The concerns are in summary:

- The fact that the Mr. L. Harper, who was the subject of significant criticism in the report, was not interviewed by BDO Alto nor given the opportunity to respond to the findings in the report;
- The BDO Alto report refers to confidential statements made by Mr. Harper to the Wiltshire enquiry, while Mr. Harper himself has been refused a copy of his own statement;
- An 'interim report by financial auditors' was leaked to the Mail on Sunday in October 2009, eight months before the report was submitted to the Minister and was used in a highly critical report on the conduct of the Haut de la Garenne inquiry. It appears that a Senior Police Officer was responsible for this leak.

Deputy Trevor Pitman, who is leading this review said:

‘The Panel believes that the issues deserve our attention and need to be investigated. We are not trying to reopen the whole debate about the conduct of the Haut de la Garenne Enquiry. The Comptroller and Auditor General has already commented on the substance of the BDO Alto report and its recommendations. We will focus solely on the questions arising from the concerns about how this report was produced and leaked to a national newspaper. We will be requesting explanations in writing from the Minister, BDO Alto, the States of Jersey Police and Mr. Harper and will conduct a public hearing a suitable opportunity next month. We will then report our findings to the States. As always we would be interested to hear from anyone with relevant information to contribute to our review. They can contact the Scrutiny Office.’

The following terms of reference have been agreed

- To examine the instructions under which BDO Alto was engaged to review the financial management of Operation Rectangle and their methods for gathering evidence for this review;
- To clarify the connection between the BDO Alto review and the review on the same matter separately commissioned by the Acting Chief Officer of Police;
- To identify the reasons why the Senior Investigating Officer for Operation Rectangle was not interviewed by BDO Alto and was not given the opportunity to respond to the report’s findings;
- To clarify the liaison between BDO Alto and the Wiltshire Police, in particular the references in the BDO Alto report to the Senior Investigating Officer’s statements to Wiltshire Police;
- To investigate how details of the review into the financial management of Operation Rectangle came to be published in a national newspaper in October 2009; and
- To consider the implications of the Sub Panel’s findings.

Ends

Notes to editors:

The BDO Alto review is available on the States website <http://www.gov.je/Government/Departments/HomeAffairs/Pages/Reports.aspx?ReportYear=2010>

Sub Panel Membership – Deputy T Pitman (Chairman), Deputy R Le Hérissier Deputy M Tadier, and Deputy D. Wimberley

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