



# Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny

## Panel

### Quarterly Meeting

## Witness: The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Thursday, 27th February 2025

**Panel:**

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair)

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade

**Witnesses:**

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier North, The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Connétable R.P. Vibert of St. Peter, Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Ms. K. Briden, Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs

Mr. S. Hall, Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police

Mr. N. Fox, Head of Policy, Justice Policy, Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance

Ms. R. Small, Head of Service, Customs and Immigration

Mr. W. Horsfall, Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration.

[12:30]

**Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair):**

Welcome to this meeting of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. Today is 27th February. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following. This hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. If we begin with introductions, I am Deputy Catherine Curtis, the chair of the panel.

**Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade:**

I am Deputy Helen Miles, panel member.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Deputy Mary Le Hegarat, District North St. Helier, Minister for Justice and Home Affairs.

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Kate Briden, Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs.

**Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:**

Rhiannon Small, Head of Service for Customs and Immigration.

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

Warrick Horsfall, Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration.

**Head of Policy, Justice Policy, Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance:**

Nathan Fox, Head of Justice Policy, Strategic Policy.

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

Scott Hall, Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Thank you everybody. Our panel members Connétable Labey and Deputy Porée could not be here today, so it is just us. If I start with the questions, our first questions are around freedom of speech and human rights. Minister, there have been concerns that legislation such as terrorism laws might be used in ways that could impact freedom of speech or peaceful protest. How do you ensure the right balance between national security, public order and individuals' human rights?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Obviously the Human Rights (Jersey) Law 2000 gives effect to the rights and freedoms guaranteed under the E.C.H.R. (European Convention on Human Rights). This includes Article 10 of the E.C.H.R. which enshrines the right to freedom of expression. This includes the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers. As outlined in Article 12, the Island of Jersey both recognises and protects the right to freedom of expression. Each individual on the Island of Jersey has the right to freedom of expression as enshrined in that law. It is not, however, an absolute right and public authorities can impose restrictions or penalties when they are required by law and are necessary

in a democratic society. Obviously one of those, the Terrorism (Jersey) Law 2002, does not interfere with the right to freedom of expression save for narrow and prescribed circumstances.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Thank you for that. Minister, could you explain whether any guidance or safeguards are in place to ensure the terrorism law is applied proportionately when charges are brought for allegedly inviting support for a prescribed organisation? What oversight exists to prevent undue restrictions on free expression? I know from what you have just said, it is a balance there. What safeguards are there to ensure it is applied proportionately?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Obviously I will refer in a minute to the Deputy Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police. I think it is important to remember that with any offence the matter is investigated and the legislation examined as to what offences may or may not have occurred. In relation to certain offences, those matters will potentially be referred to legal advice to make those decisions and that advice might be fairly broad. So I think it is important to remember that when we have potentially this type of offence that there needs to be a good examination of the facts and then a decision has to be made as to whether an offence has been committed or not.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

So that is the process?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, that is the process and I think the thing is it is like with everything, any case that is brought before the court will have been examined at various opportunities. For example, if it is a police officer who is dealing with the matter, then that matter will be brought to another individual within the police to look at the facts and decide whether or not they think that there is actually a case to answer. As I said, depending on the nature of the offence and the seriousness of the offences, those matters may be brought to the request of the Law Officers' Department to decide whether or not that matter should be brought before a court and also decide whether or not offences have been committed or whether what offences have been committed. It is almost a dual role. It is not purely based on the States of Jersey Police's interpretation. The interpretation and the examination of those facts will be looked at potentially by other organisations and ultimately the matter ... a decision to charge that individual would be made and then those matters would be brought before a court and ultimately it would be the court that would decide whether or not they agree with the facts that have been brought before them. That would be for any case and any legislation.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

So there is lots of steps that are taken along the way.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I would say there is lots of checks and balances, there is lots of steps.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

But is there like an official guidance or is it just the practice that happens?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I will ask the Deputy Chief if there is any sort of guidance outside of what I have said.

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

There is no guidance per se. The guidance is what is enshrined in law in terms of what the definition of any offence is or may be. Then obviously the Minister has outlined how there is judicial oversight in terms of whether or not there is any offence. It is the requisite level for which somebody should be prosecuted and that would be based on the evidence following investigation.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Thank you. Just one more question around this area. Minister, could you advise the panel if there are any plans to create or enhance a transparent reporting mechanism that records instances where laws with broad powers such as terrorism or public order legislation are used?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

From my perspective, no, there is not. I think the laws ... certainly from my perspective there is not anything moving forward. We base it, as I said, on the legislation as it is and we look at it. I think you are asking if there is going to be further looks at these things. Not as far as I am aware, no.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Thank you. I shall move on to some questions now about the culture within the ambulance service. Several front-line staff have raised the issue of increased violence, aggression and stress in their roles. What specific measures beyond the Work Without Fear campaign are being put in place to protect ambulance personnel's mental health and ensure issues are swiftly escalated and resolved?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

As you have already alluded to, there has been a campaign in relation to ... staff have raised concerns in relation to their safety and that will obviously be ongoing. All States employees have obviously got access to wellbeing and the facilities that are with that. Certainly in relation to conflicts management, those matters are addressed with the ambulance staff and certainly from my

knowledge and understanding, those things have been dealt with but I will ask the head of the service to fill that out a little bit.

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, sure, thank you. You have mentioned, of course, as has the Minister, the Work Without Fear campaign, which is a really key piece of public engagement on this topic. There is also joint working with the States of Jersey Police, of course, and that has been a joint workstream for about a year, ensuring that we get the balance right in terms of what can be dealt with appropriately when ambulance personnel are faced with instances of violence and aggression and where they do need support from the States of Jersey Police, ensuring that is proportionate and balanced according to risk on both sides. That has been a good joint piece of work, which will continue. Of course it is important to recognise that instances of violence and aggression against ambulance staff might not meet any threshold for a crime and, therefore, we publish various sets of statistics where instances in the ambulance service are higher than the number of active investigations for States of Jersey Police, because there are different thresholds. It is really important to us that there is good confidence in the service that staff are heard when they are registering that they have encountered an instance of violence or aggression in the workplace. One of the things that staff have been particularly concerned about is that where they have used Datex, which is the logging system - it does a number of things; it is a risk management system as well - that those concerns are properly registered, understood and actioned. The States of Jersey Ambulance Service has a fairly new post in a governance and compliance manager, who has been in post about a year, who has really taken that on board and shaped it and made very significant improvements in that space so that Datexes are being dealt with, addressed and closed. The compliance with that is really important. There is also a programme of further training, which I would have to come back to you on the dates because we do not have them written down, for ambulance staff on how to deal with violence and aggression through a licensed provider in the U.K. (United Kingdom). We can provide you with further details on that. There is quite a lot under way and obviously it is of primary importance to us that we get that right.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Yes, it sounds like quite a lot. Will staff be questioned at some point to see what their thoughts are about the effectiveness of all this?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

We will probably do that through the results of a facilitated programme of work we have done over the past couple of months with a company called TCM who were contracted by us. They are an experienced facilitation company in the U.K. and the reason we went with them is because they have got experience in the healthcare space of working with teams on their leadership, their

management and their culture. There is an action plan arising from that, which is just being shared with staff and is perhaps something we might discuss with you at more length in a future hearing. We could certainly obviously suggest that the Chief Ambulance Officer can come to that one too. That is really focused on some really key actions around communication within the service, a newly formed and well engaged wellbeing plan and that there is much better 2-way communication within the service. That came through very strongly in the facilitation sessions and that is part of the action plan going forward.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Great, okay. Have any additional resources or training, for instance mental health first aid or de-escalation tactics, been introduced or planned to help paramedics safely manage challenging situations?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

The planned training is primarily about de-escalation and dealing with those instances that they encounter. Some of the investment in the TCM process and the facilitation and the actions from it is also an investment in this broad space within the space.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Minister, could you advise the panel whether there is expected to be any restructuring of the ambulance service in the next year?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I do not think that that is likely. Obviously there was a fairly recent restructuring and that is why there was identified certain roles that needed to be made but as far as I am concerned, there is no further restructuring at this stage.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

No restructuring in the service but what about restructuring in the position of where it sits in government?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Sorry, I beg your pardon. Yes, sorry, I did not quite fully understand what you had said. There has been an agreement between myself as the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs and the Minister for Health and Social Services that we are looking at the arrangements to move the ambulance back to Health and Social Services where it was moved from in recent years.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Do you know when that might happen?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

It is expected to take place on 1st July. We have had the interim discussions about it and we are all in agreement that it sits better under Health where it was before and it is no secret that I opposed it going under Justice and Home Affairs because even though it is a blue light service, it clearly is a health service and cares for the community in that vein. They clearly work very closely with ... police, fire and ambulance all work very closely together and that relationship will remain but the actual oversight and where they sit clearly is better under Health. There has been no one at all that has said they disagree with that fact is a truth. As I said, I will make no bones about it, I was opposed. It does not fit under Home Affairs because it has a blue light.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Before we continue, I will just say Connétable Richard Vibert has come in to join us.

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Apologies I was late.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

That is okay. I think Helen is going to ask some questions.

[12:45]

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

I have picked up these questions from Connétable Labey. We are a bit thin on the ground today, so we divvied them around. My questions are about drunk driving and road safety, which I know the Connétable is particularly keen on improving. Minister, the panel understands that the collision and casualty reduction plan 2025-2034 has just been published, which aims to reduce the number of people being seriously injured or killed by 50 per cent. In the report it noted that there were 188 reported collisions across the parishes in 2023 with a total of 214 casualties. Can you tell the panel what the role is that you and your department have in this plan?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Well, obviously, it is an interesting one, is it not, because the person who has responsibility for roads is the Minister for Infrastructure but obviously a lot of work that involves what happens on the roads falls within Justice and Home Affairs. I think the role from the point of view of Infrastructure - and bear with me because I would like to explain it in a certain way - is the fact that they can certainly look at how the roads are structured and deal with any matters to do with the speed limits, to do with

safety in relation to outside of schools, et cetera, where they have additional not road furniture but the roads are structured and how they are best structured to prevent those things. From a Home Affairs and policing matter, the States of Jersey Police always on a day-to-day basis when time is available officers will be deployed in relation to dealing with traffic matters, so that will be speeding, mobile phones, seatbelts, campaigns in relation to drink driving, construction and use offences to ensure that all vehicles on the roads are safe and they are not going to be contributing to any road traffic collisions. Also on the back of that, obviously, the States of Jersey Police will be dealing with any incidents that do occur, so that that is ensuring that there are sufficient resources to be able to fully investigate serious road traffic collisions alongside having the necessary trained people as crash investigators, scene managers and all of the elements of having the scenes examined. From the point of view of the police, there is obviously discussions in relation to infrastructure, having the data to identify where the hotspots are, which feeds back into the infrastructure. It is a lot of things but there is a lot of responsibility in relation to the States of Jersey Police. I do not know if my colleague to my left has anything he wants to add to that.

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

Thank you, Minister. I think you have summarised the plan really well. From a policing perspective, road safety is one of our stated priorities in the policing plan for 2025, so that is how seriously we take it within S.O.J.P. (States of Jersey Police). That will look like us working with Infrastructure, certainly around the data aspect. Our officers now all upload a system called Data 19, which essentially means that wherever we go to a report of a collision, that data is downloaded and made available into government around the plan so we can identify where collisions are occurring and potentially identify why are they occurring. Is it something to do with the layout of the road or the infrastructure? Is it something to do with perhaps the speed limit in that area? We can then look to take some infrastructure steps in terms of designing out any issue that may be a contributing factor to accidents. Then over and above that in terms of the States of Jersey Police and what we we will be undertaking is identifying those high risk locations in terms of driving behaviour and targeting our patrols in that area or undertaking specific operations which might be targeting repeat offenders who demonstrate antisocial driving behaviour and bring risk to other road users and also looking at the use of vehicles themselves: how safe are they, are there any issues with the way they are being maintained which has led to an accident. There is lots of work for us to do in that field. Speed enforcement is an obvious one and that is one that we undertake. Drink and drug driving enforcement again is another priority of ours. As I mentioned, combatting those high risk driver behaviours and certainly drivers who do not wear seatbelts and the like, for their safety as well. Then targeted interventions around vulnerable road users like pedestrians and cyclists and so forth. There is a holistic piece of work and that is where our focus will be mainly in the States of Jersey Police but we will share that data so the wider infrastructure can be made more safe through changes.



**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Can you explain what specific initiatives you have got within Justice and Home Affairs to deal with victim support for the casualties of an accident?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

In relation to the victims of such accidents, I think there is definitely some I think probably further work that may be needed in relation to this sphere. From the point of view that we do have some facilities in relation to victim support but I do question whether or not there should be a broader spectrum. As an example, we have specific people to deal with people who are subject to other offences, like rape, sexual offences, that type of thing. I think what is identified, and I would acknowledge this, is that when it comes to both serious and fatal road traffic collisions, that has serious impact on not only the victim of that incident but the wider family, as we have seen on many occasions. So I think from my perspective I would identify that that is probably something that we do need to look at, the support that people get when they have a member of their family in that kind of incident. I do think that there are other things that we could do to assist with that.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

On the subject of driver behaviour reinforcement, you talked about some of the targeted interventions, robust legal frameworks for deterring dangerous driving. Can you outline to the panel any coming legislative changes that you might be making as part of this casualty and collision reduction plan?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I think there has been regular updates over the years to have changed different offences. There are probably some things that looking at some of the legislation that you could make some minor tweaks to assist, maybe for some of the things that have occurred in recent times. I do not want to be too specific because I am aligned to some of the cases that are probably still ongoing, but I do think that there are some things that you could look at the legislation and make some minor tweaks to be able to make it more compelling in relation to where people do not abide by certain rules.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

In terms of strengthening some of the deterrents, there has been talk about seizing vehicles and turning them into biscuit tins. Is that something that you have actively considered particularly for the dangerous driving cases?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

That specific thing? Not actually, no, I have not but of course in other countries if you get caught drink driving they confiscate your vehicle. Potentially I suppose there is no reason why we should not look at those sorts of things in the future to be able to deter people but I do think that there are things that could be done. It does not necessarily mean, I would suggest, big overhaul legislative changes but I think there is probably some tweaks to some of the legislation that would be of assistance in certain cases.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

I think one of the things that is worrying is that we have seen a 54 per cent rise in drink driving and that had been kept quite low for a number of years. What are you thinking about to address those levels to try and bring that down?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

In relation to drink driving, we are doing the campaign, so it is a regular sort of thing, but I do think that there is probably other things that we may need to consider. It may be at the moment your first offence of drink driving is a year. Maybe those are things that we could increase. That is a possibility and second offence I think is generally considered to be 3 years and above. There may certainly be things that you could alter to make it something less likely that people will do. The only other concern, of course, that always come with some of these things is that you have to look at the unforeseen consequences that if somebody instead of losing it for a year, loses it for 3 potentially, will they drive illegally, which means they are not insured and other things. So I think there is a balance about all of these things to be able to try and make sure that it is going to work well for you but not having the unintended consequences.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you. Moving on to fireworks, recently I know Deputy Andrews has called for stricter fireworks regulations and I think you have previously said that although it remains on the legislative agenda, it has been paused to prioritise fire precautions. We have seen calls for stricter control of fireworks predominantly around animal welfare and public disturbance. Can you confirm whether or not it is on your legislative programme at this time?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Unfortunately it is not on my legislative programme. It is on my legislative programme but not one that is likely to come to fruition prior to this term. You are quite correct, I have had meetings with a number of individuals on both sides of the spectrum in relation to fireworks. I have also met with the Comité des Connétables because it is something that I think is important that we do not lose sight of. I have asked the Comité to look at if there is anything that they think that could help assist in some of the changes. It is something that we are working on but the legislative changes is not

something that the policy team has an opportunity to work on. We are working with others to try and see what we can do.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

How are you addressing the concerns from the pet owners who have fireworks that are causing distress outside of 5th November?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I think the thing is this is where we need to look at when we have fireworks, how people are notified that fireworks are going to happen, whether there should be any obligations on people who are having fireworks, whether there are any possibilities in relation to any lowering of some of the noise levels in relation to fireworks. There is quite a lot of things that need to be looked at which without having the policy back-up I don't think it needs voice is quite difficult, but that is why I have had a meeting with the Comité des Connétables because from my own perspective I would like to be able to see this. Even though we might not be able to change the legislation before 2026 because as we all know, any legislative changes will have to be lodged probably by the end of 2025 or at least be in that drafting chain, if you like, there are certain things that we could do that. We are not doing nothing, if that makes sense.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Okay. So what are you doing?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

As I said, with the Comité des Connétables I have asked them to give me some ideas of what they think would help. I have got some of my own thoughts and processes in relation to what I think would help. So we are going to come back together. They are going to feed back to me what is happening in relation to it and it may be that they will come back and say as a result ... I want to try to identify exactly what the level of concern is among the community as a whole because, of course, there are people that would like to have fireworks every single day, there are others that do not, but for a person who comes from a background of having had animals as a child in the sphere of agriculture ... so I think it is important that we look at addressing those concerns.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

One of the moves that has happened in Guernsey is that they have got rules restricting the use of fireworks around 5th November. Is that something that you are prepared to consider?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I am prepared to consider all sorts of different things. I think it is important. I think it is important that you consider whether fireworks need to all be as loud as they are, whether we can reduce that, but we need to come up with some sensible options that we can pass legislation that will be able to address both sides of the fence. Of course, what has happened here is you have gone from 5th November to other major events, weddings, all sorts of other things. We need to balance the decisions that we make against the fact that we would not then want to fall into a field where we might start getting importation of illegal fireworks. Do you know what I mean? I do not want to be in a position where if somebody cannot have a firework display they might then get them illegally and then have them anyway, and that will be then an enforcement in another way. So what I would like to be able to try and do is get somewhere in the middle that is reasonable, taking everybody's realistic concerns, because it is not only animals, it is people as well as animals, all various types of things, alongside people being able to have and enjoy fireworks. There is a lot of work to be done and I would like to fall somewhere in the middle if I can.

[13:00]

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Are we likely to have any kind of guidance or rules in time for this 5th November?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

It depends how quickly I can get together with the ... as I said, we are talking of 6, 8 months. Hopefully the Comité des Connétables and I will be able to do something but I would not be able to promise and say that we will definitely have anything, rules and guidance prior to that.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

I have some questions about violence against women and girls. Minister, you recently wrote to the panel with an update on the taskforce recommendations. Could you give a concise overview of significant progress points, especially regarding legislative drafting of non-fatal strangulation, stalking and revenge porn?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Okay. I am going to ask, if it is okay with you, the policy officer from the point of view ... he will have a better idea of where the legislation is. Obviously this legislation needs to be, as I said, within law drafting before the end of the year but Nathan has got a better view of resourcing of those matters.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Okay.

**Head of Policy, Justice Policy, Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance:**

Thank you, Minister. In relation to the 3 specific points, the intimate image abuse offence material, which includes the revenge porn piece but is wider than that, has been with the drafter since the beginning of the year. We are hoping for a first draft before the end of next week and that will give us an outline of exactly how, in terms of structuring the law, we are pretty clear on what we want from that. There are some wrinkles to handle like the domestic side and we are interested to see what the drafter is going to do with it. The stalking drafting instructions are probably 95 per cent complete. The questions we have at the moment are about the interplay and the drafter has had an advance copy of that with a few question marks in it. The questions at the moment are things like the use in other jurisdictions of things like stalking protection orders pre-conviction, so injunctive civil actions, and how you structure those and how they work, where they flow and how they are used, timewise. The drafter has seen the last copy and that is pretty close to completion. The non-fatal strangulation offence is a strange one. It is inherently simple. We know what non-fatal strangulation is and we know it should be an offence. The problem is in a jurisdiction like Jersey where you do not have an assault law, describing a particular type of assault is conceptually very easy, it is legislatively tricky. It is probably one of the things that is going to be scheduled later in the process but should go through extremely quickly when it is done.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Just to recap, the stalking one the instructions are almost complete. The revenge porn one you expect a first draft in the next week or so and there is those difficulties around non-fatal strangulation, but you expect it to be quite simple when it goes ahead.

**Head of Policy, Justice Policy, Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance:**

We have to schedule stuff in order. Non-fatal strangulation is extremely serious but it is just one of the pieces that we are getting to in due course.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Okay, great. So the V.A.W.G. (Violence Against Women and Girls) Taskforce report recommended an external review of how the police, the Law Officers' Department and the courts handle cases. Can you detail the scope and status of that independent review, including its terms of reference and timeline?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

The team is now about to start to ... the person has been identified and that individual is going to soon be sending out some documentation in relation to potential people to help assist with that matter. I have seen them in the last couple of days. I could not give you the whole terms of reference in relation to that but in a nutshell they are going to be speaking to people with lived experience. They will then be selecting and looking at cases, how they have been dealt with, how they sort of flow through the system from the investigative point of view through to the L.O.D. (Law Officers' Department). As I said, they will be looking at people's lived experiences of those cases. From a timeline point of view, I am trying to think off the top of my head. I have got September in my head.

**Head of Policy, Justice Policy, Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance:**

Interestingly, the reviewer is in Jersey this week. It came forward a few weeks ago into the process and the reviewer is here now. The hope is that we will have something for approximately mid-year but we have been slightly reluctant to put a hard timeline on it. We have agreed to complete the review by the end of the year. That was the commitment that we made. In practice, that looks more like mid-year at the moment but it is just scheduling around all the different moving parts to allow the interviewer to ... to allow the reviewer to talk to all the necessary people, how to make putting a final date on it. It is a little bit tricky so we are just going to say before the end of year is our expectation but there is a very real chance it might come forward.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Okay. That is good and maybe we could have some more of that detail in writing then after this?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, of course. The terms of reference because you have just ... I will commit to the ... because the part of the police was going to be coming under ... I have forgotten the full title of H.M.I.C.F.R.S. (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services).

**Head of Policy, Justice Policy, Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance:**

Yes, H.M.I.C.F.R.S.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

That had been pushed back but you have just suddenly made me think about as to where that now sits, so I will chase that up for you as well. It is only when you have asked that question I have suddenly thought about that particular element of it.

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

Minister, perhaps I can help a little bit on that in that we are attempting to engage with the H.M.I.C.F.R.S. to come across and do the police side of that exercise. There are some difficulties

in the H.M.I.C.F.R.S. making themselves available to come across, so we are looking at alternatives including the equivalent of H.M.I.C.F.R.S. in Scotland, but in any event we are having colleagues from the U.K. coming across to look at how we and what we do at S.O.J.P. around the implementation of the national operating model with regard to rape investigation and rape and serious sexual offences. We will get some good information from that, which I hope will contribute to the wider exercise that is ongoing.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Good, okay. The 2024 Criminal Injuries Compensation Board report highlights the need for faster claim resolution. Minister, how will your department monitor and publicly report on the timeframes from submission to final compensation? What steps, legislative or procedural, are being considered to reduce delays, for example securing police and court information so that victims are compensated more swiftly?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

That the administrative support to the board is better than it the report will reflect the fact that claims are now being settled much more quickly anyway and that is partly because the board has spent time ensuring that the process is more effective and efficient and that the administrative support to the board than it ever has been but they do flag in the report because, exactly as you said, Deputy, there can be delays in obtaining evidence and reports. There are still some points where cases effectively have to stop and then be resumed once the relevant information is available. That will necessarily happen sometimes in cases anyway where victims of crime have lodged their claim for criminal injuries compensation so as to be within time of the scheme rules, which is broadly it has to be within 3 years of the injury, but that the effect of that injury on them is still perhaps being diagnosed and understood. There will be pauses but I think what the board is also flagging is that there is work to be done with the S.O.J.P. and with Victim Support Services to make sure that we are not creating pauses that could otherwise be avoided. We are planning to approach that with a roundtable meeting approach in the next couple of months with members of the board, with Victim Support Services, Jersey Domestic Abuse Service, the Sexual Assault Referral Centre and the States of Jersey Police to make sure that we are working out if there are blockages we are creating in the system between us and we can alleviate them. Also to make sure that we have got a good understanding, a good properly shared mutual understanding of the boundaries of the scheme where there is discretion and where there are hard edges in it, which is inevitable when you have a scheme like that. Hopefully that helps. I meet with the chair of the board quarterly and we discuss these sorts of issues. I have to say that is not done on a dashboard of cases basis. It is done on a more general basis and perhaps that is something we should consider for the future but the annual report gives us the high level summary of what the board has done and their recommendations for the future, which we welcome.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Okay, so we could follow up in one of our next hearings to see how that roundtable meeting goes as well. On the subject of the C.I.C.B. (Criminal Injuries Compensation Board) is the current budget and operational framework sufficient, do you think, to ensure that victims receive their compensation promptly?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Any delay will not be caused by budget or framework issues. It will be caused by the sorts of pauses I have discussed. There is not a budget as such for criminal injuries compensation. There is an allocation in my financial cash limit for it but that is not a constraint, so the awards are made purely on the basis of the injury, its impact on the individual and against a ... they use the Judicial Studies Board or the Judicial College Guidance for Personal Injury as a standard in that professional legal area. The awards will be determined by the board members against those guidelines, that framework, with no budgetary constraint. The C.I.C.B. awards what it needs to in the year in the cases that are put in front of it.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

That is allocated according to need?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

But are there thresholds for particular things that happen?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, there are. I do not know of any detail. We can share the guidelines with you. It is quite detailed provisions around the type of injury and the impact it is going to have on that person. There is a cap, though, of £100,000 of maximum award and that is why you see in the report that there is variable amounts and then quite a lot that are around ...

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

No plans to review those thresholds?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**



It is something the Minister and I discuss because that top-level cap has not been reviewed for a number of years. The Judicial College guidelines will have been reviewed periodically but our Jersey top-level cap has not been reviewed for some time and it is something we are minded to look at.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Thank you. I think this is my last question on it. What plans does your department have to improve public awareness of the C.I.C.B. scheme particularly among victims who may be deterred by complexity or lack of knowledge? How will the board and the department ensure that victims unfamiliar with legal or digital procedures are supported from their initial application through to final award?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

The mainstay of the support for that comes from Jersey Victims First, which is run and sponsored by the police. We will pick up on that when we do the roundtable meeting and make sure that we are doing everything we can to make sure that victims of crime are aware of the scheme. We are also in the final stages of the production of a simplified leaflet, which will be available for anyone, including things the Citizens Advice Bureau, that might come into contact with a victim of crime who would be able to apply under the scheme. We have to be quite careful because the scheme rules are the scheme rules and we have to be careful that in any summary we keep it accurate and do not raise expectations about things that could not be compensated, but that will help with wider awareness for victims. It is not something we would be planning to do a full public awareness campaign on because it only becomes relevant to you when it has become relevant to you, but we do need to make sure that if it is relevant you absolutely know what you can do under the scheme.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I would make a point, unless I am wrong and I will ask for back-up from the person to my left, from my memory all victims subject of ... witnesses or victims of a crime will have provided a witness statement and from my recollection there is something on the back of each witness statement that does advise that person of the facility. Also for that individual there is a facility within that initial statement as to whether they do or do not want support. One would ensure that hopefully those processes are still updated and made on a regular basis so that somebody knows who they can go to to be able to support them. I think it is not Victim Support now, it is Jersey Victims First. Obviously they are made aware of that but we must also remember when somebody is subject to some serious offences they may not be in the right ... might not remember all of those facts, so I think it is important that we ensure that those follow-ups try and facilitate them.

[13:15]

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Thank you. Helen?

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

I have now got Deputy Porée's questions about the work permit policy, so that end of the table. Minister, you have recently published a revised work permit policy. Can you just tell us about the key updates that you highlight regarding salary thresholds, switching employers and further protections for immigrant workers?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, I will kick off and then I will get Warrick to just keep going. Yes, it was important that we updated the policy and of course that it is updated on a regular basis. We have made some different reductions in the absence periods for those on the 12-month temporary work permit routes, we have given employees the opportunity to switch employers after the 6-month period, updated occupations and salary thresholds for long-term skilled work permits. What was quite clear - and this was identified through the team at Immigration, and I will get them to give you a bit more information about it - we were seeing that where people were able to come into the Island and bring spouses and dependants with them, some of the salaries were really not capable of them being able to live, essentially, and be able to afford everything. The department looked at what was realistic and it is now aligned with what would be considered a sufficient amount of money under the Social Security Law, I believe. Maybe, Warrick, you can just provide that little bit more detail.

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

Yes, so as a whole the changes that we made to the work permit policy are in direct response from the Welfare Scrutiny Panel's report, along with some other feedback that we have received from sectors, and we have tried to incorporate that within the policy. One of the key elements within that was the lack of information for employers and employees, particularly about salary thresholds. We have gone away and tried to obtain more realistic salary thresholds to go into the work permit policy as opposed to having a blanket £30,000 minimum, which is not realistic for some finance and legal-type roles in the Island. We tried to be more realistic within that so that employers know what they should be paying their employees, as well as employees understanding what money they will be receiving once they arrive in the Island. The U.K. took a stance last year, particularly with the care sector, in putting minimum salary thresholds for care workers who were able to bring their dependants into the U.K.; it was a set flat figure, I think it was around £38,000. When we looked at that we felt it was not really workable within the Jersey environment and putting a blanket figure was not really appropriate because everyone's circumstances are slightly different. We wanted to have a slightly more flexible approach, which is the approach that we have taken historically with all our immigration routes when we are looking at dependants, and we have never adopted those U.K.

minimum salary thresholds. We have used data that we have obtained through control of housing and work-type legislation on income support figures, so what a family would expect to receive in income support to be able to maintain and accommodate themselves in the Island. We have used those figures to try and work out - and we have articulated it within the work permit policy - what salaries we would expect a work permit holder and an adult partner to be able to survive on. What we are looking for is for them to have sufficient disposable income after rent that is either equal to or above what someone would have on income support in the Island. These workers are not eligible to have recourse to public funds and we have got to put them on a level playing field with anyone else who is coming to the Island or anyone already in the Island living and working here. That scale increases as the amount of money that they require to have as savings or income above rents, depending on the number of dependants that they have, so for each child that will increase.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

This is for the skilled visas?

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

This is for skilled work permit holders who are eligible to bring their dependants to the Island. We felt that by making it public - as opposed to being a calculation that we have always done in the background when we receive visa applications for dependants - means that people can make those informed decisions. They are not applying for visas and putting themselves under financial strife just to have those rejected.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Okay, thank you. How is the department working with Caritas and Salvation Army and other interested organisations to help new arrivals settle in well to Jersey?

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

We have not done any work directly with them. We have put additional information into the work permit policy. Government of Jersey produced a leaflet that goes out with all our work permit applications providing essential information relating to the support that is available in the Island, as you have said, through Caritas, Friends of Africa, Salvation Army, as well as being able to go to J.A.C.S. (Jersey Advisory and Conciliatory Service) explaining the roles; therefore, any kind of disputes with the employer. We try to provide as much information as we can but we have not gone out and spoken to those groups. We have engaged with them as and when there are issues that have arisen and we have tried to reflect some of the comments that they have made over the last couple of years into that work permit policy.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you. The revised policy allows permit holders to switch after 6 months. How is that policy working out?

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

We have only had it in place since the beginning of December and I am not aware of there being any issues that have arisen as a result of that change. It is about trying to be fair to those individuals. It is something that we will keep under review and if we feel it is necessary at some point in the future, we may look to try and have that reduced even further.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Of course, one of the issues is about a wage spiral, is it not?

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

Yes, it is getting the balance right between the employer who may have invested significant time and finances into recruiting someone from abroad, then arriving in Jersey and jumping ship for what would be a relatively small increase in wages, therefore artificially increasing wages across that sector, which is something that concerns us.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Sorry, I would just like to add in there, part of the reason why we wanted to make it a little less stringent was the fact that we are minded that we also wanted to be in a position that, having done modern-day slavery and things like that, we just wanted to ensure that both the employee and the employer were in a position that they did not feel they were necessarily tied in an unpalatable situation, so we are trying to balance both of those things, really.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Okay, thank you. In terms of the engagement from outside organisations into the work permit policy - Hospitality Association, other employers' groups, Chamber of Commerce, et cetera - is there anything that they particularly wanted that you did not put in the work permit policy?

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

No. Previous engagement had been around shorter absence periods for those people on temporary work permits. It was something that we were not particularly comfortable with historically in granting. The statistics that we were provided did not really show that there is a need for shorter absence periods but through consultation with Chamber of Commerce and Jersey Hospitality, it was clear

that those long absence periods would not work for them in the long term. Therefore, we took the decision with the Minister to reduce those to a more palatable absence period that follows a pattern on the existing 9/3 routes, so it is effectively a third of the time that that person spends in the Island, they will have to spend that away, and that is about breaking continuous residency and managing the expectations of those employees. They do have the ability to switch on to skilled work permit employment if they meet the requirements for that role and the English language requirements as well.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Have we seen industry step up to provide a level of training and development to those employees so that they can come off the work permit and go on to the skilled visa?

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

We are starting to see more workers moving across from the temporary routes on to skilled. I do not know what industries are doing as far as training but there does seem to be a move towards trying to attain staff that they feel have the capabilities of adding benefit to their businesses longer term.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Just one thing that is interesting is that your work has highlighted that a skilled care worker with dependants would not be able to afford to live here without income support.

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

I might not have explained it. It is not about the income support; it is about using that as a measure to assess.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

That is good. I can see it is a good thing to do so people are clear on what to expect.

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

Yes, and I have used the care sector as an example.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

It is so expensive to live here, that is what it is, is it not?

**Senior Manager, Customs and Immigration:**

Yes. But it is not just the care sector, it is across all sectors. I use the care as an example but it is across ...

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Yes, it is more working full time and, yes, it is quite sad, really.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

TETRA radios and emergency communications. There has been mention of an improved TETRA for many years. This is radio technology for emergency responders. Can you provide us with a status update on what is happening and how effectively our communication systems are working at the moment, particularly in areas with poor reception?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Well, I am going to ask my Assistant Minister because obviously he is more on the TETRA than me.

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, I have covered TETRA from the Honorary Police perspective. There is a planned major upgrade of the existing platform between March and April 2025 and that is being done by Digital Services and the supplier. Some work was done in 2025 to improve on the black spots around the Island, which I am certainly aware of some of them, and that is in order to reduce risk. What we also have is that of course the existing supplier is no longer going to support the current models that are used - the current radios that are used and some of that infrastructure - so there has to be a complete renewal of what we were doing. Hopefully within that, or almost certainly within that, there will be improvements in the service itself across the Island. I think that there have been negotiations with the supplier to try and extend that but I do not know how successful that has been. Do you know?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, it is accepted in principle. Originally the replacement was due in 2025 from Motorola, the supplier. It is now not necessarily needed until 2030 and so we have got time. The contract with them does need to be formally extended this year and that will take into account some sort of tactical changes essentially, as the Assistant Minister has said, to ensure that the system continues to work until 2030. It is under Digital Services now instead of under Justice and Home Affairs but we are obviously the majority - not the only but the majority - users or the senior user, so we work very closely with Digital Services on it.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Is that working well?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

So far, yes. Yes, absolutely.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Have there been any additional developments to make sure that police, fire, ambulance and customs have fully integrated communications to respond seamlessly to major incidents?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

I do not think there has but I do not think we are necessarily noticing any gaps as a result.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

So individual departments are not using their own radio systems?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

No, it is all TETRA.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

It is all TETRA now?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Including the fire service and the rescue part?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes.

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Within TETRA you can choose to have it in individual departments.

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, there are different channels.

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

But there are other channels that span the whole lot, so when you have a major incident ...

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

We have had incidents where departments have been using completely different systems in order to be able to talk to each other but then have not been able to talk to other emergency services.

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes. No, it is all TETRA.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

So that is all TETRA now?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, including new versions of the handsets that are appropriate for fire and rescue to wear with breathing apparatus.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you. Minister, how is your department ensuring that the planned introduction of artificial intelligence and other innovations highlighted in the policing plan stick to the robust ethical and governance frameworks?

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

Well as part of the work that S.O.J.P. are doing in terms of exploring opportunities that A.I. (artificial intelligence) might bring, we are developing internally in line with national best practice in the U.K. the ethical guidelines around how and where it should be deployed and the safeguards that go around that. We have taken some steps into that space in terms of some areas of A.I. around a transcription service which is currently being tested in S.O.J.P. which so far is working ...

[13:30]

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Transcription of interviews?

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

Yes, which is working really well and has had some significant dividends in terms of timescales, which you would appreciate.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Can it cope with accents?



**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

It can. It learns, so it can be educated with a glossary, if you like, of terms. But accents ... whether it could cope with my accent might be another matter entirely. But, yes, we absolutely recognise the importance of that ethical and governance framework that sits over the top of that and we are aligning it with best practice in the U.K.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you. The policing plan also mentions a dedicated focus on organised crime groups. Can you just tell us something about the specific partnerships or cross-border arrangements that we have got in place to tackle financial and organised crime?

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

If I can take that one, Minister. We work closely with the south-west region around that organised crime capability but obviously in-Island we work with the other agencies involved in that space. The first step around that is understanding the intelligence and mapping of those organised crime groups as we understand them, and those groups that are causing the most harm to Islanders. We have had some success in the last year around disrupting some organised crime groups who have been involved in drug supply. We have close relationships with the National Crime Agency in terms of intelligence sharing, which works really well. The feedback that we get from some of the partner agencies in the U.K. is our ability and our dexterity to respond much more readily than what some U.K. forces can do, so we are equipped to kind of spin the wheel around.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

What work are you doing with the French in that area?

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

I am outside of any conversations with the French authorities, if I am honest with you.

**Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:**

Do you want me to give that answer?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes.

**Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:**

Customs and Immigration as a service, we have got a strong relationship with our French counterparts. We do meet regularly through different working groups in different fora but we will

regularly, if we get any intelligence on cross-jurisdictional movements or drug trafficking, share that with the French and likewise.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you. My last question in this section, Minister, given the emphasis on delivering value for money within a very constrained budget, can you provide some detail about how the States of Jersey Police will balance their headcount with operational demand, particularly in the areas of digital forensics and specialist investigations without compromising the quality of the service?

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

Part of the work that we have done in preparation of the policing plan is to look at our budget award for this year and then devise a plan in which we can deliver all the services that are expected of us within that budgetary head. We have made a plan around resources in areas that do inform part of our priorities to allow us to put the resources where our priorities sit, so we are confident that we have balanced that out in terms of being able to maintain our D.F.U. (Digital Forensic Unit) footprint and the capabilities of the D.F.U. We are very confident that we will be able to maintain business-as-usual services in the right place, doing the right things.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Where you have had to compromise, is that going to have an effect on other services outside of States of Jersey Police?

**Deputy Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:**

It will affect the capacity, there is no doubt about that, but what we will do, and what we are doing, is we will prioritise it in the work that comes into the unit so we are doing the most significant work irrespective as to where it sits in line with where the threats are and risk sits.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

I just have a few questions about the prison service. Minister, please can you provide the panel with an update about the leadership at H.M.P. (His Majesty's Prison) La Moye and confirm whether a permanent governor is being recruited?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

The prison is currently being led very capably by an acting prison governor who is acting up from deputy prison governor and is doing a very good job with his team, including having led the prison

through a recent inspection. I suspect that might be your next question, so I will not elaborate on that yet. I have had a number of conversations with him about the future. We agreed that the right thing to do is to recruit externally for a prison governor at this stage but that will be on a 3-year fixed-term contract. The benefit of that locally is that it will give a chance for the current acting governor, the deputy, to be further developed for that role in the future. He does not currently meet all of the essential criteria for the role but I am very confident that he will be able to, with support and development and the appropriate qualification, but we just need a bit more time for him to do that, so hence the tool of the 3-year fixed term. I am very clear with the recruitment agency who are going to be assisting us with that that we need to look for the right candidate who can bring their broader experience in a prison service elsewhere and really have a very clear set of objectives to support and develop the leadership of La Moye Prison, to obviously leave it in a better state than they found it, but to continue to evolve it in its journey. Of course, they will have a set of objectives around the inspection outcomes as well. We have not launched that recruitment yet. We are due to do so in the next few weeks, and I would therefore expect to have someone in post towards the end of the year, taking into account the recruitment process and notice periods. I am very keen when we do that that we have a proper familiarisation process for candidates so they come to the Island for a day before we interview them. They meet with me, essentially with the Minister, with the management team, with the acting governor himself, see the prison, and properly get a feel for the challenge that they will be taking on. Then we will put them through a normal Jersey Appointment Commission-overseen interview process.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Was there any particular reason for the delay in that process having started?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

To be honest, I have not rushed it; it has just taken some time. I was keen for Artur and the team to re-establish themselves and be clear that their first task was to do the inspection, and then it has just taken a bit of time in the new year to get the approvals and things lined up, which I am comfortable with because - as I think is the Minister - as I say, Artur and the team are doing a good job in the short term and there is not a rush, but I do think what I have described is the right thing to do strategically for the slightly longer term.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Now I will move on to the report and there were a couple of priority concerns. One was around the use of data and improvements needed in that, and another one was about purposeful activity, which I think was around work training and education and so on. What actions will be taken to address these 2 priority concerns?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

In relation to obviously the educational part of it, discussions will happen with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning. What we obviously need to do is ensure that while people are in the prison that they have structured activity and education. Therefore, we need to be able to offer them a broad breadth of training because obviously we need to look at the fact that at some stage they will be coming out of the prison and we need to try and help them and assist them to be able to find work when they are released, so from that aspect there is work ongoing in relation to looking at different programmes. They have put together for 2025 another programme, like an education programme, but I think it also needs to be identified that facilities at the prison ... there will need to be continued work and investment in the actual prison estate itself, because obviously we need to have new facilities to be able to deliver some of this training, so there are a number of things that are ongoing. As I said, one of the biggest things is that they need to have access, alongside with Highlands College. I think there are lots of things that we need to be doing that have not happened for quite a period of time. So, there is a new plan for 2025 but I think we need to try and, as I said, get in with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to try and broaden that out a bit more. I do not know if there is any more that you want to ask about.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Yes, the other one was about the use of data that could be worked out what were the best priorities for driving improvements, and so on.

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

We now have a J.H.A. (Justice and Home Affairs) data analyst, which we have been wanting for a long time, who is making great strides supporting the prison - and the other services, of course - on making sure that their service performance measures and their service delivery measures are sound and fit for purpose, that we are publishing the right ones, and that we are using the right thing as management information essentially. She has done a very good piece of work with the prison in relation to that. She has now got a new focus of that because we have got the prison inspection report and she will be working with the prison S.M.T. (senior management team) on how to make sure they are getting the data they need to use as management information essentially. There is also a stream of that, as the Minister alluded to, on properly understanding the needs of prisoners. It is what we would know as a training needs analysis in a more work-related environment to really understand what input we can give prisoners that will really benefit them for the future. It has been done on a fairly ad hoc and informal basis but the inspectorate report is clear that we need to get much better at data and how we are using it to best support our prisoners. So that will be a really strong theme for the future, it will be a theme for the current team, but it will also be a theme when testing, when I am recruiting for the new governor, to see what their experience and ideas are in this space.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Having highlighted those concerns, I did notice in the report the feedback about the staff is so good.

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

It is, yes.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

That was really nice. It must be a quite hard job as well but there was very good feedback there, was there not?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

The report also highlighted that the prison had not received funding from government for a body scanner. Can you confirm how much funding would be required for that equipment?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I would have to come back to you. I do not know.

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

I would need to check; we will come back to you. I think it is on our list of things to do but let me check that and come back to you. Yes, I had noticed.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

I was going to ask as well whether funding had been previously requested or rejected but it is something that you are aware of.

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

It is in the pipeline but let me check how much and where.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Okay. Could you tell us about the collapse of the previous agreement with H.M. Prison and Probation Services to move U.K. residents to prison on the mainland? I believe about 10 per cent of the prison population are not Jersey residents?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I would not say it was a collapse. I think, as you can appreciate, the U.K. prisons are full. What has happened is that where ordinarily a prisoner would request being able to move back to the U.K., or somewhere else, that would be facilitated. Due to the fact that the prisons in the U.K. are full, that is why that has not happened. So it is not from our perspective or that anything has collapsed, it is just basically there has been no facility. I am right in thinking that in the last couple of months it is starting up again, but obviously we have got a number of prisoners who would like to return back to the U.K. to be closer to the families, et cetera, and to other jurisdictions as well, and that will be facilitated as and when they are able to accept them. It does not only affect us, it affects other Crown Dependencies as well. We will try and facilitate those as quickly as we can because obviously that is a benefit to the prisoner themselves and to their wider families obviously for them to be rehabilitated back into society, wherever that happens to be. As I said, it is now started again so hopefully that will be able to be facilitated, and it started recently.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Presumably, it has been more expensive to keep them here in Jersey as well?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

There is a minimum viable cost to run the prison and numbers fluctuate. We have not identified it is a significant cost. It creates some operational pressure and it obviously creates concern for the prisoners and their families that they are not where they would ideally like to be but, as the Minister says, that arrangement has restarted. It is a good piece of joint working between the Crown Dependencies where our acting prisoner governor worked with his colleagues in Guernsey and the Isle of Man to make a joint approach to the Ministry of Justice to say: "If we work together so that we are carefully controlling the flow back to you, can we get the door open again?" and that was successful. I would not necessarily say it has caused a significant extra cost pressure for us there.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Thank you. I have got questions now about the Family Justice Council. We asked questions about this before to the Minister for Children and Families and what we heard is that any government funding for a specialist court for addiction-affected families would be more likely to come from Justice and Home Affairs' budget. Please could you advise what input Justice and Home Affairs has with that group?

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs sits on the same group. It was interesting that that was directed to me because I ...

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

The hearing of 29th January, it was.

[13:45]

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

No, what I mean is the question was directed to me at the Family Justice Council because it is very unlikely that Children's Services would fund the cost of setting up a court. If that is going to be set up, then that has to come from the judiciary somewhere, from the court service. I do not think it is even Justice and Home Affairs that would be necessarily responsible if that service is set up. I am sure it can be very helpful but a lot of work would have to be done to show what the benefits would be of setting up another court.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, I think the Assistant Minister is correct inasmuch as that this would be a court service, so it would not be under the remit in relation to myself for setting up of a court. I think it would obviously be a matter for the judiciary from the point of view that they already have significant courts, and they quite often are having difficulties in managing the courts that they have already ongoing. I think it is obviously something that will continue to be discussed at the Family Justice Council and we are both on that group, as is the head of Home Affairs. It will not be either of us that would make that decision or set up that court; it would be the court service that would do that.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

I understand that but, of course, as Minister for Justice and Home Affairs and Minister for Children and Families, I am sure you will be concerned about how this progresses and is adequately funded.

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Well I think more work needs to be done. It is a very good idea to set it up but at the moment all we have is, it has been put forward: should we have one of these courts but we have not seen any facts surrounding that.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Was it a V.A.W.G. recommendation?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

No, it was not. I think from ...

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Initially it came out of a conversation somewhere else and then it was brought up here.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Well it has been brought up within the Jersey Family Council I think because it has been obviously identified that quite a number of individuals that come into the court process have dependency. I think there was talk about whether or not there should be a specific court to be able to deal with that. Where it is clear that a lot of us might say that is a good thing, it is not something that would be funded by either of those 2 Ministers. The courts or the judiciary sit outside of having a Minister - it is non-Ministerial, so they do not have a Minister - so quite often they will look to both the Minister for Children and Families and myself and say ...

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

"You do it."

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Thank you, Deputy Miles, that is exactly my point. I think what needs to be identified here, and it is the same as with other items in relation that were discussed around that table to do with money and funding, and people say: "Well you are the Minister, so should this not be you?" Well, no, it cannot be me because I am not funded for it. If somebody wants money that is not currently in my budget, then somebody is going to have to give me that money. Sometimes it is very difficult because, of course there will be also charitable organisations that will come to both the Minister for Children and Families, and myself and say: "Can you help us fund something?" But I only have funding for the remit to which I have which is police, fire, ambulance, et cetera, et cetera. I am not opposed to anything but somebody is going to have to say where the money is going to come from. If it is going to come from Home Affairs, well that is fine, because the Government will have to give me the money to be able to fund it. So if they give me the money, then I will fund it; if they do not give me the money, I do not fund it. Do you know what I mean?

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

I get what you mean. Putting aside the funding point for a moment, would Justice and Home Affairs support the creation of a specialist court for addiction for families?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I think from my perspective, the same as the Minister for Children and Families, we really need to know exactly what they are talking about before we can do that because I think the thing is, it is very easy - let us be clear - quite often people say: "Well we need this." We are a very small Island of



103,000 population and, as somebody has highlighted recently about how many regulations we have, I think we need to be very careful sometimes that we do not create something that creates more work for us and then we cannot manage it. So, yes, if we have an extra court, how are we going to manage that? Who is going to sit in that court from a staffing perspective? I think before we do anything or say that it is a good idea, I would want to know exactly what they are talking about. For a start, how many cases are we talking about? How many people fall into this category? We need to have full facts and everything else because I think sometimes we do try to look and say: "Well we have these kind of facilities in the U.K. or France or Germany" or wherever, but Jersey is a very small Island and we need to be very careful that we do not create too many things that we then cannot manage.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

So while waiting for these facts and figures to come out, who is going to produce them? Where do you think that is going to come from?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Whoever suggested it. I must apologise, off the top of my head, I cannot remember where this comes from, Deputy Curtis.

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

No, I cannot, but I do remember ...

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

But I think what is important to say is that if somebody is suggesting that there is a need for this type of court, then whoever is suggesting it needs to bring the facts and data as to why they suggest that is the case. Then they need to consider: what are the budgetary implications of that particular court and who is going to manage it and how and what sort of money is it going to cost? If we are going to have that court, is there one that then therefore does not need to be there, because I do not think there is not extra, if that makes sense. The answer to the question is that far more work needs to be done before we make any decisions. Certainly, I would not make any judgment on whether we require something or not because I think quite often we end up with things that we then cannot manage and cannot fund.

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Clearly, this is managed at the moment through our existing courts and we would need to see how successful that is and whether it needs to be replaced, but what happened is we jumped straight into the question of who is going to pay, and I think I was placed in quite a difficult position there.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Well we look into it more in Scrutiny but also expect you will both be following up.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, absolutely. I will say, like with everything, provide us with the facts and figures and how this will be managed and costed and everything else, and then we can make an informed proper decision on it.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Now I have another question which is to do with funding of a service. This was about Jersey's only Child Contact Centre and the panel understands that funding has been secured for the next 2 years. Could you advise if this funding has come from Justice and Home Affairs or not?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

No.

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I have been involved in that because I got my Assistant Minister to do the work. That was after we had tried to see if we could get funding from other third parties, including from 2(1)(e)s and a number of other charitable organisations and we met with no success at all. In order to provide some breathing space, we asked for funding from the Chief Minister, directly from his fund, which he has agreed to do for 2 years. The organisation involved, it has been made quite clear to them that during that 2 years alternative funding must be sourced. I do go back to, I think what I said last time is, we had a judge at the Family Justice Council who was online who completely backed our stance on it and saying that no council in the U.K. provides funding to a private law contact centre, which is what this is.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Yes, I think, from the Scrutiny Panel's point of view, it was to try and ensure that an essential service for the wellbeing of children was going to continue, but it is continuing at the moment?

**Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

It is continuing for 2 years, yes.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Minister, are there any further updates or areas not already covered today that you wish to highlight, particularly in relation to cross-departmental collaboration or upcoming legislative changes?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

I do not think so.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

No? We have still got a few minutes, I think, so I think that is you then, Helen, is it not?

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you. We have got more questions than time, so we will be putting some of these into writing. Is that okay?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

That is fine, absolutely, yes.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

So the last area is going to be just about your role as competent authority for gas. Could you just outline your responsibilities regarding the safety of Jersey Gas's network under the Island's resilience and emergency planning frameworks? Can you just clarify how you are mainly informed about potential risks or issues?

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

Obviously, as you rightly highlight, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs is the competent authority for, among other things, gas, pursuant to Article 7 of the Emergency Powers Law. This provides, in respect of gas, the Minister with the power to consultation with the gas company that if the supply of gas is for any reason threatened, I may take such steps as I think necessary or desirable to secure or maintain the supply. For this purpose, I may by order make provision for, for example, the preservation of public safety and maintaining or making the best use of supplies of gas available. Obviously, we meet regularly in relation to the emergency planning and also in relation to the gas. The Chief Minister has recently announced, following the discussions at the Emergency Council, that we would be bringing forward further legislation to provide additional information-gathering powers in respect of gas by amendment to the Gas Law, which goes back to 1989. This is so that we can ensure a timely flow of information from the gas company to Government and to provide us with additional information on which I - well whoever is sitting in this role - can make decisions as competent authority. The draft amendment to the law should be lodged shortly so that it can be dated in April. Am I right in thinking there is a briefing to yourself next week on that?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

Yes, next Wednesday.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

So what progress has been made in noting the lessons from the gas outage last year?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

There are a number of different workstreams under the gas work within government which is co-owned across a number of the chief officers. We meet monthly on that. The Chief Minister has just formed a Gas Ministerial Group as well and the aim of that is to have more regular meetings with the relevant Ministers so it is better co-ordinated and we are not having to convene the Emergencies Council each time we need those Ministers in the same place to discuss it. I think that will take us a significant step forward in ensuring regular oversight of this matter. In terms of the implementation of the lessons learnt from the gas outage, which was in October 2023, as you would expect, we had the debrief process, we have got a number of recommendations from that. Many of them have now been implemented and the mainstay of that is a gas emergency measures response plan which has now been produced and finalised to the extent that these things are ever finalised because they always evolve. That has now been approved by the Jersey Resilience Forum and has also been presented in high level to the Emergencies Council and will be refreshed with the Gas Ministerial Group next time it meets. That is there should we need it, and we are regularly taking opportunity to refresh it as we learn from gas incidents.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

So how do you collaborate specifically with Island Energy about ensuring that the maintenance, the upgrade, investigations into the gas pipelines are carried out safely and promptly?

**Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:**

As you will be aware, there is a new chief executive at I.E.G. (Island Energy Group) now, who we have met with a number of times. He met with the Chief Minister before Christmas - in fact, before he was in post - and the Chief Officer for Infrastructure and Environment and I met with him 2 weeks ago. He is the I.E.G. chief executive for the 3 Islands and then his local managing director, who is based in Guernsey but is now covering both Islands, has been actively involved with the Emergency Planning Team from Rescue Service, as you would expect. I am confident we have got much better engagement with I.E.G. now than we have had in recent years, both at Ministerial level, chief officer level, but also operational level, and we will be putting various further structures around to make sure that that engagement is continuing. There are a number of needs for exchange of information between us and I.E.G. which I.E.G. have committed that they will do. They understand the need for us to legislate, as the Minister has just described, and we can talk about that a bit more when we provide you with a private briefing next week. It was a good co-operation but everyone understands that we need to have a more formal governance structure around it, which is what the legislation will

give us. I think I would just stress that at an operational level, engagement with I.E.G. is much better than it has been.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

Well I think it has just come up to 2.00 p.m. We have got quite a lot more questions, so we will have to send that to you, if that is okay.

**The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:**

That is fine.

**Deputy C.D. Curtis:**

All right. So, thank you, very much, everyone, for your time and answers. That is great, thank you.

[14:00]