

2.1 Deputy S.C. Ferguson of St. Brelade of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the availability of the inspection report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary:

I would ask the Minister for Home Affairs when is the inspection report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) due to be received by the Minister, and will it be circulated to Members of this Assembly?

Senator W. Kinnard (The Minister for Home Affairs):

The report is expected some time in August and will be circulated to Members.

2.1.1 Deputy S.C. Ferguson:

In view of the appalling management record and practice, as evidenced in the number of recent disciplinary cases over the last 4 years, will the HMIC report be paying special attention to human resource matters, particularly as these have cost - with yesterday's revelations - about £1 million in direct costs and an unquantified amount in other costs?

Senator W. Kinnard:

I completely disagree with the statement of the Deputy in respect of appalling practice. Until I receive the new HMIC report in August, I am happy to rely on the previous one, Sir, which found that the States of Jersey Police were both efficient and effective in all areas. HMIC is indeed drawing attention to matters to do with leadership and matters to do with discipline and so on, and I suggest that we await the outcome of that report, but all indications are at the present time that there is not the concern to be addressed that has been raised by the Deputy. I do sometimes feel that there are some Members of this House who seem to feel that it is quite acceptable for corruption to go unchallenged and unnoticed, and I am afraid to say, Sir, that is not the Jersey way. I am Jersey-born: this is not the Jersey way. It is to be dealt with appropriately, and I suggest that the Deputy, before she makes such inflammatory comments, awaits the outcome of the report in August.

2.1.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of St. Saviour:

I wonder, Sir, if the Minister could tell us despite the very fine situation that apparently prevails there, could she tell us from her own point of view what are the management issues that give her particular concern and what action is she taking?

Senator W. Kinnard:

I do not have particular concerns about management issues. I have reported in answer to previous questions in this House that I have absolute confidence in the senior management team of the States of Jersey Police. Indeed, some people have referred I think in some organs of the press to some golden age of the past, and I will remind Members that indeed recorded crime has fallen by 25 per cent in the last 10 years;

that, as far as I am concerned, is a very important aspect of my responsibility as Minister for Home Affairs. I am responsible for ensuring that the police force is accountable in terms of its efficiency and effectiveness, and I think that is a very good example of it. Indeed, longer serving Members of this House will also recall that although we have had an excellent inspection report in recent times since I have been both Vice-President and President, and hopefully again as Minister, this has not always been the case, and certainly in the early and mid-1990s there was some very critical HMIC findings. So, I am very happy to be associated, Sir, with the independently verified substantial improvements in both performance and public confidence in the force.

2.1.3 Deputy S.C. Ferguson:

The Minister is no doubt aware that under the 1974 Law, the Police Chief is accountable to her for administration, discipline, training and organisation. Now, under the HMIC thematic report - which she kindly brought to my attention - one of the underlying themes was the fact that management procedures and processes in the area of professional standards in the police force are woefully out of date and need to be brought up to date with modern management procedures. Will the Minister not confirm that this is going to be done or looked at, preferably by an outside body?

Senator W. Kinnard:

That report to which the Deputy refers I indeed referred her to it. It is an HMIC thematic report about professional standards across the forces throughout the country, and indeed some of that report does draw attention to inadequacies in other forces. I am happy to say, Sir, that I do not believe that the HMIC will find such criticisms to be made of the Jersey force.

2.1.4 Deputy J.B. Fox of St. Helier:

Yes, the Minister referred just a short session ago on corruption issues. I have not heard anything to indicate that we have any corruption issues. I see it being discussed in the media, but that is not necessarily so. Can the Minister confirm yes or no whether she believes that there are corruption issues, and if so, is the police force dealing with it through the Crown Officers or are there any criminal issues that are outstanding at this moment in time? Thank you, Sir.

Senator W. Kinnard:

Most of that information, I believe - if the Deputy wishes to refer to the answer I have given to the written question of Deputy Ferguson - there is quite a full briefing there, Sir, as to which cases are being dealt with by words of advice, which cases are being dealt with by discipline matters, and indeed it does refer, I believe, to one outstanding case which is with the Crown Officers. So, there remain a range of issues that are the subject of complaints, both by the public and also internally, and I am happy to say, Sir, that the level of public complaints against the force has fallen over recent years. I

do believe that some of the internal complaints that we are getting now are because staff are confident that such matters will be dealt with effectively and will not be swept under the carpet, as perhaps on some occasion in the past, Sir, they may have been.

2.1.5 Deputy S.C. Ferguson:

Most of the offences, which the Minister refers to in her answer, have in fact been disciplinary offences not corruption in the normally accepted meaning of the word. Surely, the Minister realises that this is a lack of proper management procedures and human resource management, and not a matter to be headlined across the papers as corruption.

Senator W. Kinnard:

I would agree that I think many of these matters should not be headlined across the papers, but that is not a matter for me. However, Sir, I do believe that any complaint has to be taken with the utmost seriousness, must be investigated absolutely fully, and the public must have confidence that these matters are dealt with appropriately. There are a range of complaints that are made from time to time, some of which may involve criminal aspects, many of which do not, but I do believe, Sir, that it is not sufficient just to deal with criminal matters through the courts. It is important that disciplinary matters are dealt with and that the public has every confidence that their police force, who is involved in administering the law, is abiding by the law, and abiding by the appropriate and indeed rigorous standards of professional conduct that we expect in the modern day police force in this Island.

2.1.6 Deputy F.J. Hill of St. Martin:

We all share the concerns of the Minister on the levels of corruption, however I think one of the concerns many people have is the amount of time it takes to investigate the allegations. Again we can only speak from what we read in yesterday's *Evening Post*, but it looks like 18 months to investigate a particular case. Is the Minister concerned about the levels of time it is taking - bearing in mind that justice delayed is justice denied - and what steps will be taken to ensure that we do not get these lengthy levels of investigation, which are also time-consuming and also has an effect on the individuals, particularly if they are found to be not guilty?

Senator W. Kinnard:

First of all I would say when we are dealing, of course, with corruption matters we are talking about a small number of people where allegations may be made, and for the vast majority of our police force, Sir, I am very confident in saying that they are excellent, well-trained and a credit frankly to both the Minister of this House and the Island. However, having said that there are on occasions a few bad apples which have to be dealt with. In terms of the time that it may take to deal with disciplinary matters and perhaps criminal matters, I regret that it takes often a lengthy time. These matters

are sensitive, they are often complicated, and I have given answers on this matter many times to this House before and I really do not know how many more times I have to give them. Frankly, the important point is that wherever an investigation takes place it is in everyone's interest that it takes place as quickly and as swiftly as possible. Indeed I have asked her Majesty's Inspectorate to address this as one of the points that he would be looking at in compiling his report. Indeed I have met with the force management team and they are as concerned as anyone that these matters must be dealt with swiftly. But, Sir, justice must take its due process, and that, in my view, is more important than anything else. But clearly whatever can be done to speed-up the process we are looking in fact to do that. So, I can honestly say to the House that I will be looking for some improvements in terms of the swiftness with which these matters are dealt. But having said that, Sir, the important thing is that justice is not only done, but is seen to be done.