

STATES OF JERSEY



MIGRATION: MONITORING AND REGULATION (P.25/2005) – AMENDMENT (P.25/2005 AMD.)– COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 21st June 2005
by the Policy and Resources Committee**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Following a recommendation of the Shadow Scrutiny Panel chaired by Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier on the draft migration policy (P.25/2005), the Deputy lodged an Amendment to ask the States to agree that political responsibility for the proposed office to administer the policy should not lie with the Economic Development Committee (or in future the Minister for Economic Development).

The rationale for such an Amendment seems to be that because economic policy is so closely linked with migration policy, the 2 responsibilities should be separated. However, it should be borne in mind that one of the underlying principles of the proposed migration policy is to achieve greater alignment between economic policy, housing regulation and migration in order to provide a less bureaucratic, more coordinated and efficient administration of the policy.

It should also be noted that, during the initial phases of establishing the office, the officers formerly operating within the Housing Control and Regulation of Undertakings and Development offices will have to implement the new migration policy within the existing legislative framework, until new legislation could be prepared. Consequently, until then, the Economic Development Committee must continue to have legal responsibility for the Regulation of Undertakings and Development Law (Jersey) 1973, as amended, and the Housing Committee must have legal responsibilities with regard to the Housing (Jersey) Law 1949, as amended.

However, the question of *political* responsibility for the new office has not been addressed in the migration policy; the report is silent in this regard, except that it is recognised that the office would be required to balance the different policy priorities of each of the responsible Committees, as follows –

Meeting social policy objectives

There was a view that the proposals were focused on economic issues, rather than social policy objectives, and that there was insufficient attention to social housing needs.

However, the migration proposals, together with the economic strategy, will address the social policy issues regarding migration in relation to economic development, employment and training opportunities, and the availability of accommodation for the existing residents and migrant population.

The single office would retain close partnerships with other departments, for example the Employment and Social Security Department in relation to ensuring maximum employment opportunities for the existing resident population and promoting training by employers for local school-leavers; with the Housing Department regarding provision of category A housing or first-time-buyer homes; and with the Planning Department regarding residential development within the Island.

The aim of the Departments, working together, will be to ensure that these social policy objectives are effectively balanced against the goals of economic growth, environmental sustainability and population size.

In summary, the roles of the single office would be as follows:

- *Implementing and monitoring population registration*
- *Monitoring migration and population trends*
- *Monitoring the current availability and future supply of residential accommodation*
- *Allocation of licenses to employers, whilst endeavouring to ensure the consequent requirement for accommodation does not exceed the overall availability*
- *Authorising the establishment of new businesses, where appropriate*

- *Working with other departments to balance economic and social policy objectives including employment opportunities, training, and access to accommodation for existing residents.'*

In view of the above, and recognising that it is desirable to positively address the question of political accountability, the Policy and Resources Committee has lodged an alternative Amendment, the merits of which will be considered separately.