

**7. Statement by the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the suspension of the Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police.**

**7.1 The Deputy of St. John (The Minister for Home Affairs):**

This Statement gives me no pleasure but I wish to inform the Assembly in accordance with my powers under Article 9 of the Police Force (Jersey) Law 1974, on 12th November 2008 I suspended the Chief Officer of Police from duty pending an inquiry under the Disciplinary Code applicable to the Chief Officer. The terms of that code place on me obligations of confidentiality and there is little that I can say about this matter at this time. I can, however, say that pursuant to that code I have taken steps to put an investigation in hand into matters of concern and that investigation is part of a process that when completed will result in a decision on the part of my successor as to what steps should then be taken. I am sure that Members will entirely understand that it would be most inappropriate to discuss any of the substantive matters that caused me to suspend the Chief Officer and to initiate the procedure under the Disciplinary Code. I cannot comment on them and I would ask the Assembly not to seek to explore them at this time. At some stage at the end of the process, my successor, whoever it will be, will need to make a decision about these substantive matters and he or she should not be influenced in any way by any views expressed by Members of the Assembly. In addition, of course, the Chief Officer cannot comment and has not yet had the full opportunity that the process allows to answer to these matters and to defend himself. Any debate would thus be unfair to him as the full facts are not yet known. I am sure, however, that Members will readily understand that a suspension in these circumstances is a neutral act and implies no finding one way or the other, but is rather an entirely prudent course to preserve the integrity of the investigation. If the Assembly wishes to ask questions I will endeavour to be helpful, but I do not propose to answer any questions that will breach the obligations, confidentiality or that I will disclose the detail of any of the substantive matters under investigation.

**The Bailiff:**

Now Members will be aware, I am sure, that the Police Force (Jersey) Law 1974 requires that any discussion in the States regarding the suspension of the Chief Officer shall take place in camera and I must, therefore, ask the transmitters to close down the transmission and ask those in the public gallery to withdraw so that the period of questioning allowed by Standing Orders may take place.

**[Questioning proceeded in camera]**