

STATES OF JERSEY



JÈRRIAIS: OPTIONAL USE IN THE STATES CHAMBER (P.4/2018) – AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 25th January 2018
by Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade

STATES GREFFE

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AMENDMENT

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After the words “in English” insert the words “or French”.

DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

to allow members the option of using Jèrriais during proceedings in the States Chamber, provided that the presiding officer may request any member using Jèrriais to provide a translation in English or French.

REPORT

This is a simple and, hopefully, uncontroversial amendment which would mean that a translation of any speech given in Jèrriais would need to be provided in either English or French.

The reason for the amendment is that French is both a working language of the Assembly, as well as one of 2 official languages of the Island, alongside English.

English is the new kid on the block as far as languages are concerned.

It is questionable whether any requirement should be prescribed for a translation to be provided at all, given that Jèrriais is an (the) indigenous language of our Island and, as such, one should not have to apologise for its use in the Assembly. However, this is a separate debate.

When one speaks in French in the Assembly, one does not have to provide an English translation. Similarly, when one speaks in English, one does not have to provide a French translation. Both languages have equal status.

As such, there is a risk by only requiring a translation to be in English that a hierarchy of importance will be established, undermining French as a working language of the Assembly. There is no reason why a French translation should not be as acceptable as an English translation.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no financial or manpower implications for the States arising from the adoption of this amendment.