

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER BY DEPUTY T.A. VALLOIS OF ST. SAVIOUR
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 30th JUNE 2009**

Question

Could the Chief Minister advise the number of recommendations from **all** scrutiny reports that have been adopted by Ministers since the introduction of ministerial government and how many recommendations have been put forward to departments?

How does the Council of Ministers consider the scrutiny process is working effectively with Ministers and their departments?

Answer

Although I am Chief Minister, I am not in possession of this information and therefore cannot answer the question. This question should be redirected to the relevant Scrutiny Panel chairmen or the Chairman's Committee, which has a central record of all Scrutiny reports issued and consequential responses from Ministers.

Scrutiny reports are sent by each Scrutiny Panel directly to the appropriate Minister. Scrutiny reports are not copied to the Chief Minister as a matter of course (unless they fall within his domain). Nor do Ministers copy the Chief Minister in on their responses as a matter of course. [Note: Guidelines setting out how Ministers should respond formally to Scrutiny reports is set out in the protocol agreed with Scrutiny in October 2007]

Of course, where a scrutiny report makes a recommendation on a major policy issue, this may be discussed either with the Chief Minister, or with the Council of Ministers. However, the response to the recommendation is in every case made directly to the Scrutiny Panel by the appropriate Minister.

The Scrutiny process has been in place for just over three years. Clearly such a new concept for Jersey will take time to embed itself. However, the Council considers that in general, the Scrutiny process has made great improvements – particularly over the past two years – in performing its role of holding the Executive to account. Panels have produced some excellent reports and contributed to policy formulation. Most Panels have developed good relationships with their Minister and departments, leading to more open and frank discussions. These relationships could be developed further without compromising the role of either the Minister or the Panel.

The Council believes that a strong and fair Scrutiny process is vital to good, orderly and open government and hopes that the process will improve further over time.