

STATES OF JERSEY



ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2007 (P.92/2006): FIFTH AMENDMENT

**Lodged au Greffe on 29th August 2006
by Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of St. Saviour**

STATES GREFFE

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In paragraph (a)(i) after the words “pages 8 to 10 of the Annex” insert the words –

– “except that in Objective 7, on page 10 of the Annex, after the existing performance/success criteria, insert the following new item –

- *Investigation and report upon the feasibility of work permits as a way of regulating the local labour market as an alternative to the proposed Migration Policy approved by the States in 2005.”*

DEPUTY R.G. LE HÉRISSIER OF ST. SAVIOUR

REPORT

As is well known, the control of population has been one of the Achilles heels of policy in the post-war period.

When the whole history of attempts to control the situation are written up, it is highly likely that attention will be drawn to the impossibility of controlling population in an open immigration area. Does that inevitably mean that the free market must reign and that all attempts at intervention are doomed to failure?

A large society can better accept and absorb the ebbs and flows of an open market but the problem becomes more difficult in a much smaller market. This has been vividly illustrated by the impact, recently reported, upon the construction industry of large scale immigration. It is quite possible that this phenomena could spread to other sectors of the economy.

Do we seek to protect the local labour force? Do we become even more aggressive in terms of training up local people to occupy positions or do we simply let the market come to a solution?

The Minister of Economic Development has decided to write to local employers, in construction, imploring them to employ local people. What is happening is simply the working out of policies which he has fervently pursued.

He cannot have it both ways – a market that is, in some respects, open and one that protects local people.

In my view, this whole issue has to be revisited. Population policy has been an ongoing saga of trying to shut the stable door after the horse has bolted. There has been an almost ideological resistance to Work Permits.

Financial and manpower statement

As this amendment only seeks to ask the Chief Minister to investigate this issue and report back there are no additional resource implications other than the work involved in preparing the necessary report.