

2.6 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding whether recent initiatives such as offering free bus travel to dogs fall within an approved Transport Strategy:

In the light of recent initiatives such as offering free bus travel to dogs, would the Minister confirm whether these initiatives fall within an approved transport strategy?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye of St. Helier (he Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

Firstly, can I apologise to you and the States Members if I sound a little husky. **[Laughter]** Deputy Le Hérissier is a nice chappie and of course an old chum of mine from the former Legislation Committee. He is not one to lie down and roll over on matters of public transport, which he really likes to chew over to get at the real meat of the subject. Following a complaint, I investigated fares for dogs on buses and discovered the situation was completely barking. **[Laughter]** For example, guide dogs were allowed to travel free, but dogs that did not know their way around Jersey had to pay 50p. As Members will know, few dogs receive any pocket money. When asked to pay a fare, they were reduced to gazing pleadingly into their best friend's eyes, desperate for financial support. This sort of begging is very demeaning for dogs and their owners can get hot under the collar as well. So there is no question that, over the years, dogs have had it rough. **[Laughter]** Sir, I think I hear howling from the Senators' benches. I am not going to give way. So have their owners, which makes it rough-rough. I am determined to take a lead on this issue and, by extension, I hope dog owners will take advantage of this free offer to extend their dog-walking activities. But I should emphasise that dogs must be bus-trained and will only be carried at the driver's discretion. Additionally, they may not occupy a seat, otherwise I would have to count them as a subsidised fare. This latest initiative, together with the experimental airport express service, falls under Projet 60/1999, Sustainable Island Transport Policy, approved on 29th June 1999 by 30 votes to 5, aimed at improving the overall bus service for all users, including dogs. Sir, if following his supplementary question the Deputy needs any further information, perhaps he could contact me later on the dog-and-bone. **[Laughter]**

2.6.1 Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

Is there any limit on the amount of dogs that could be allowed ... **[Laughter]**

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

Yes. I have drawn a line at 101 Dalmatians, Sir. **[Laughter]**

The Bailiff:

I think we are going to move to the next question.

2.6.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister not agree that the tail is wagging the dog, in the sense that every evening in the *J.E.P.* he is announcing a new transport initiative and we have yet to see the overall strategy?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I am doing my best, Sir, to operate within the existing strategy and I intend to bring a brand new strategy forward as soon as possible.

2.6.3 Deputy F.J. Hill of St. Martin:

Quite an important question. Will the Minister be issuing rover tickets for dogs?
[Laughter]

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

Dogs no longer require ticketing.