

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER  
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 24th FEBRUARY 2015**

**Question**

Does the Chief Minister accept that any links provided by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists between the activities of HSBC Switzerland and financial activities in Jersey such as the following, which appeared in the Guardian on 13th February 2015, do not reflect well on the reputation of our financial services industry:

*“In Malta, Tancred Tabone, ex-head of the state oil company, was charged in 2013 with alleged corruption dating back to 2005. Two HSBC accounts are named in the allegations.*

*HSBC also set up a Jersey offshore trust into which Tabone deposited \$1m (£650,000). He planned to transfer in more funds, the bank wrote enthusiastically, noting “the potential is evaluated [at] over US\$10m”, noting Tabone was “personally known by ... HSBC Malta”?*

Is the Chief Minister aware of any further links between HSBC Switzerland and Jersey implying lax application of compliance rules, and, if so, what actions will the Minister take to protect the integrity of Jersey’s Financial Services Industry?

**Answer**

Jersey’s Government is fully supportive of international action in the fight against corruption, money laundering, tax evasion and other examples of financial crime. We share in recognising the need for a global approach for these crimes to be tackled effectively. We also recognise that should Jersey have any alleged or proven involvement in such crimes this will be extremely detrimental to the Island’s reputation as a quality international finance centre.

However, no finance centre is able to ensure that such criminal activity can be avoided in its entirety. With this in mind, what is important is that our regulatory standards are high and can limit the risk of this occurring, and that where it is shown to have occurred appropriate action is taken to deal with the situation.

I am not aware of the links between HSBC Switzerland and Jersey because this would involve confidential information that would not be available to me. It would however be available to the regulator and I am confident that in the JFSC we have a regulator that is resourced and provided with appropriate legislative powers to take the necessary action if such links have been established.

Whenever information is provided that suggests a financial institution in the Island has not applied the desired compliance rules the JFSC will always take the necessary action. I have every confidence that this is the case in respect of the recent publicity given to the actions of HSBC in so far as the may involve the bank’s Jersey operations.