

**STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES  
COMMITTEE ON 27th APRIL 2004**

During last week's States meeting the Privileges and Procedures Committee was asked to make recommendations on the way in which the States should approach the significant workload likely to face the Assembly before the end of the session on 20th July 2004. The Committee discussed this matter at its meeting last Friday.

It is clear that there will be a heavy workload for the Assembly in the coming weeks. The forward business list already shows some very significant items listed for May and June and members will be aware that there will be further major items, such as the Strategic Plan and the fiscal strategy, which the States will be asked to debate in the coming months although it will, of course, be a matter for members to decide whether these matters should be considered before the summer recess.

The Privileges and Procedures Committee agreed last Friday that the States will almost certainly need to meet every week throughout May, June and July and would therefore advise members to keep all Tuesdays free of other commitments. A schedule showing the possible additional dates is attached. The Committee nevertheless considers that the existing system, that allows business to be carried over from the scheduled meetings to the following week, should be followed without amendment. This system has the advantage, as pointed out last week, that the extra Tuesday is treated as a continuation meeting and this enables the States to move almost immediately to the consideration of the outstanding items of public business without time being spent on questions. In addition the Committee does not believe it would be helpful to change the present procedures on fixing business particularly as changes to the list already agreed for the next meeting can, of course, still be made during the additional day.

As it is impossible to be sure whether all the additional dates will be required the Committee's overall conclusion was that it was best for the matter to be decided by the States on a week by week basis. The Committee was also conscious that certain dates, for example 1st June (which is the day after a public holiday and during the school half term), may be less convenient than others and the flexibility to decide when to meet should be retained.

The Committee is aware that July is traditionally an extremely busy month for the Assembly with many additional meetings. Last year, for example, the Assembly met for 7 days in July although this was less than the 11 days of meetings in July 2002. It appears almost inevitable that a similar situation will occur this year but the Committee believes that there would be some merit in suggesting that the States should not meet in the week after the scheduled end of the First Session. Many members will have planned holidays in good faith and, if the business of the Assembly cannot be finished on Tuesday 20th July, the Committee believes that, as an exception to the 'next Tuesday' rule, the States should meet on Wednesday 21st and subsequent days as necessary, to complete the business.

Members will have noted that the Privileges and Procedures Committee has today lodged a proposition summarising the initial recommendations of the Working Party on Public Business and the Committee intends to ask for this to be debated on 25th May 2004. If adopted the measures will, of course, go some way towards alleviating the current pressure on States time by limiting the oral question period to a maximum of one hour.

TUESDAYS UNTIL 20th JULY 2004

	<b>States meetings scheduled</b>	<b>Notes</b>
27th April	Continuation of meeting of 20th April	
4th May		Tuesday after public holiday
11th May	States	
18th May		
25th May	States	
1st June		Tuesday after public holiday – half term
8th June	States	
15th June		
22nd June	States	
29th June		
6th July	States	
13th July		
20th July	States (last meeting before recess)	