

2.3 Connétable P.J. Rondel of St. John of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the maintenance of communications in the event of power cuts at the Hospital:

Further to the power cut on 25th and 26th September, would the Minister advise what backup, if any, was in place over the 4-hour period to maintain communications at the hospital and how long did it take to get all the equipment back on stream?

Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

The main power to the hospital failed just before midnight on Tuesday, 25th September. At this point, our standby generators, which are tested weekly, automatically kicked in, providing power for all essential services. All our critical equipment, whether in the hospital or other Health and Social Services sites, is fitted with a U.P.S., an uninterruptible power supply, which ensures a seamless transfer from mains to standby power and is also protected from the effect of electrical spikes. The hospital has a well-rehearsed business continuity plan which includes the issuing of walkie-talkies to key staff and the use of standby analogue telephone systems connecting key areas. These systems worked and no patients were at risk. Following reinstatement of the mains power, the hospital plants, systems and equipment were reset, checked and tested. This process was completed by approximately 5.00 a.m., less than 2 and a half hours after the main power had been reinstated.

2.3.1 The Connétable of St. John:

Yes, I note the Minister said that there was a seamless transfer on all the equipment. Would that include the seamless transfer to the bleeper system and also the computers within the hospital, given that my sources tell me that these pieces of equipment were down? Would the Minister please like to comment on that?

The Deputy of Trinity:

On the previous power cuts, there had been some problems with bleeps on the standby radios but these had been replaced prior to this power cut and there were no problems with the replacement radios.

2.3.2 The Connétable of St. John:

A clarification, please. We are not talking about the previous cut. We are talking about this power cut. Were the medical staff's bleppers working over the period of the power cut? That is basically the question.

The Deputy of Trinity:

Yes, there have been no reports with this power cut so there have been no reports of problems with the standby radios. As with any power cut, afterwards there is a debrief to check what happened and if there were any problems and to look at our business continuity plan to make sure that is always kept up to date.

2.3.3 The Connétable of St. John:

Yet again, the question has not been answered. I asked about the bleppers, not standby radios. Were the bleppers working or were they not? It is a yes or no answer.

The Deputy of Trinity:

As far as I understand, yes.