

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARY
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 5th JULY 2011**

Question

Can the Minister inform members how many firms in the energy efficiency, energy management and renewable energy sectors have received help from Jersey Enterprise or Jersey Business Venture in the last 5 years?

Can the Minister inform members of how many such firms there are in total and how many people they employ?

Does the Minister know what the availability of skills in renewable energy installation, maintenance and repair, energy efficiency advice and installation, and energy systems management, in Jersey is, and if not why not? Will he be taking steps to increase the level of these skills?

Can the Minister inform members of what the actual and potential economic value is of this sector?

Answer

The ECO-ACTIVE Energy Efficiency Service (EES) supported by the States of Jersey and Jersey Electricity plc provides energy efficiency services to the socio-economically vulnerable in our community. Currently this initiative concentrates on demand side measures such as home insulation and does not implement renewable energy installations, although over 1,000 applications for assistance have now been received.

The EES's second initiative, the Community Buildings Programme, was launched in May 2010 and delivers improvements to charities and not-for-profit organisations which provide a service to socio-economically vulnerable islanders. Applications from 21 diverse organisations have been received by the Community Buildings Programme. These organisations represent over 400 individuals through the provision of residential and day centre facilities.

It is fair to say that the Energy Efficiency Grants scheme has meant that a number of local building companies have invested and geared up to deliver energy efficiency services on Island. The surety of the investment from grant allocations has meant that in addition to the carbon, financial and comfort savings from the scheme, we believe that a number of local jobs have either been secured or created. Regrettably however, precise numbers and bench marks of skill sets are not available.

The ECO-ACTIVE Energy Efficiency Service has a long term aim to expand its activities into the "able to pay sector".

If it achieves this, there will be a significantly increased amount of work for this sector, with the need to ensure standardized training and up-skilling is made available, possibly requiring a future skills audit.

In terms of other elements of the Deputy's question, I would like to firstly confirm that over the last five years, Jersey Enterprise and Jersey Business Venture (JBV), between them, having supported 12 local companies operating in the energy efficiency sector.

I am not in a position to provide the precise figures that the Deputy seeks regarding companies operating in the stated areas, or the employment generated therein. Many of these services are provided as extensions to more traditional services provided by heating engineers, plumbers and electricians based in the island.

There is evidence however that a growing number of local courses are now being organised for local suppliers in the area of renewable technologies, (especially heat-pump applications - where planning requirements have just been eased by the Environment Minister). It could therefore be argued that the private sector is already preparing itself for an increase in demand in the renewable energy sector without any need for States intervention or support.

Given the high costs of investment in renewable technologies in Jersey and the lack of incentives such as 'feed-in-tariffs', commercial and private investment in renewable energy installation remains at relatively low levels. Demand-side awareness remains relatively low, thus the market is still evolving and not yet mature, meaning that economic value is difficult to isolate.