

#### **4.10 Deputy D.J. De Sousa of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the sale of States vehicles:**

Why are the States vehicles sent for auction, who decides when vehicles are sold and what criteria is in place for this? How many have been disposed of in this way over the past 5 years and how much money has been collected from the sale of these vehicles?

##### **Senator P.F.C. Ozouf (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):**

Most States vehicles are purchased, operated and sold by the Jersey Fleet Management trading operation within the States. We call it J.F.M. (Jersey Fleet Management) which is part of T.T.S. Before a vehicle is purchased, J.F.M. and the relevant user decide the expected economic life of the vehicle, given its planned use. This is usually between 6 and 10 years but there are very good reasons sometimes to vary this period. After that time, the vehicle is disposed either by way of means of a trade-in against a replacement vehicle or by public sale either by sealed tender or by inclusion in an open public auction. In recent years, the auction method has been found to be financially beneficial to the States with good returns being received. It is also efficient in terms of staff time. During the 3-year period that current I.T. (Information Technology) systems have been operating, J.F.M. has sent 94 vehicles to auction and have collected just over £280,000 from sales. Some other departments such as Home Affairs and Health operate specialist vehicles such as fire engines. Both Home Affairs and Health use auctions to dispose of vehicles as they too have found this to be cost-effective and efficient. In the last 5 years, Health have sold 39 vehicles for a total of £145,000 and the Fire Service, 6 vehicles for a total of £9,500.

##### **4.10.1 Deputy D.J. De Sousa:**

How old does a vehicle have to be deemed or is it the mileage that they have done before they are disposed of or what other reason?

##### **Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

I am not a car salesman expert [**Laughter**] but I understand that it will obviously vary, to be perfectly frank to the Deputy, in terms of some vehicles are obviously under very heavy use in terms of some departments. So I think I do know where this question might have arisen and I have hurried out, as the Deputy would imagine, a detailed investigation into the matter in which I think that she is referring to. In terms of this vehicle that I think that she is referring to, I have its age, I have its mileage and I also have been told that it was not going to be replaced, hence it was sold and the price achieved was a good price with reference to the market value.

##### **4.10.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Would the Minister accept, as publicised today in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)*, that a vehicle bought in 1998 and which only had 73 hours use was indeed a good reflection on the vehicle buying policy of the States?

##### **Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

The Deputy has an advantage over me. He obviously has more time. I have not even seen the *J.E.P.* yet and I am not sure that the *J.E.P.* is necessarily - while a good and valued local publication - the policy bible of the States. I do not know the answer to the question he raised because I do not know the question he is raising, but everything that I have seen and I have examined and asked to be examined in detail following the

Deputy's question on the disposal methods and the purchasing arrangements in the States, I am satisfied with what I found. Nothing I have seen has given me any cause for concern and, frankly, if vehicles are surplus to requirement, then the C.S.R. is working. Departments are becoming more efficient and they are disposing of surplus vehicles and surplus assets to the benefit of the public of the Island.

**4.10.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Can I have a supplementary, Sir? This is apparently an all terrain vehicle which was run by the Planning Department. Would he accept that there are serious questions to be asked?

**Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

No, I would not. I have answered, I have investigated, and I have had pages and pages of notes in relation to this issue in the middle of a budget debate, but I am concerned about any issue of value for money and I have to say that I am completely satisfied with the way that the fleet management issue works - and in fact this is an issue of T.T.S. and maybe I should not have been answering the question - but everything I have seen has been pukka and I am satisfied with value for money.

**4.10.4 The Deputy of St. John:**

The Minister mentioned an income of £9,500 on the sale of 6 vehicles from the Fire Service. I sincerely hope - and the Minister, I am sure, can confirm - that vehicles we have been selling off cheap ... given some years ago, I put a question in this House after having witnessed a brand new fire engine being purchased at great cost to the Island and was written-off. I question why we sold off the previous fire engines for a peppercorn price - and I was told it was because of their age and we could not get the necessary parts - yet, after this new fire engine had been written-off, we bought a second-hand fire engine at a peppercorn price because the President of the day considered that it would not be prudent to bring back the cost of a new fire engine to the States. I sincerely hope the Minister can confirm that the fleets from the Ambulance and from the Fire Service and other vehicles, if they have only got very limited mileage on them, can be re-engineered. We have an excellent Engineering Department.

**The Bailiff:**

This is coming to a close, is it?

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Yes, Sir. We have an excellent Engineering Department within T.T.S. with some of the top engineers on the Island and top equipment.

**The Bailiff:**

Right, I think you have asked the question now.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Will the Minister ensure ...

**Connétable K.P. Vibert of St. Ouen:**

Sir, before the Minister replies ...

**The Deputy of St. John:**

I am not giving way, Sir.

**The Connétable of St. Ouen:**

Could I just ask the Deputy whether that was the one we sold to Sark?

**The Deputy of St. John:**

No, it definitely was not sold to Sark. Will the Minister confirm that none of our vehicles with very low mileage on could not be re-engineered?

**Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

I confess that I am not an expert in drains, plumbing, hoses and fire engines but what I do have is a detailed note from the department and maybe this should be the Minister for Home Affairs answering this. I am told that Fire Service vehicles, with the exception of fire engines, are kept for a minimum of 7 years but they are assessed and their life may be extended subject to condition, usage and available finances to purchase a replacement. This is based on the need to have a reliable vehicle, they are all equipped with blue lights and to obtain a reasonable resale value. Advice is always sought by T.T.S. on Home Affairs purchases before any decision is made and the Fire Service has sold 6 vehicles with the figure that I have made. I think there are robust procedures in place for all Fire Service vehicles including fire engines. Maybe that was not the time or place when the Deputy was on the Home Affairs Committee but certainly there are strengthened procedures in place that are working.

**4.10.5 Deputy M. Tadier:**

It is Christmastime and the Minister will be aware of the very good Christmas appeal. Would the Minister consider perhaps auctioning off some Members of the Council of Ministers to see what they would fetch up at Glencoe and donating the money to that very worth appeal? **[Laughter]**

**The Bailiff:**

I am going to strike out that question being amusing but not a serious question.

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

Can I get a supplementary?

**The Bailiff:**

No, you do not. You choose to ask questions like that, you do not get a supplementary. Very well, the Constable of St. John next.

**4.10.6 Connétable G.F. Butcher of St. John:**

Is the Minister aware that when the recent snowfall came down, all of the police vehicles were called back to the station and the Inspector asked where the Discovery was only to find out it had been sold? **[Laughter]**

**Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

No.

**4.10.7 Deputy T.M. Pitman:**

Hopefully, I can get this one by you. Being as Deputy Fox is not in the Chamber, I thought it only right that someone should ask were our police bikes sold and were they in full working order when they were sold and did we get a good price for them?

**Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

I used to have problems with fish in this Assembly when I used to try and do fishing legislation, so I am regretting even attempting to answer a question in relation to fleet management. It is a long time ago and I do not know the answer to the question.

**The Bailiff:**

Very well. Deputy De Sousa, do you wish to ask a final question?

**4.10.8 Deputy D.J. De Sousa:**

Just, firstly, the Minister, when answering my question, spoke so fast I could not get all the notes down. Would he please - because he definitely has some interesting information there - pass that information on; and does this money go to individual departments where the vehicles are sold from?

**Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

I will circulate the information to the Deputy but perhaps she would email me when she has got a concern upon these issues and perhaps correspondence in the *J.E.P.* are not always right in terms of answering their questions and, certainly, they might not always have a point. In terms of the money returned to departments, I think the answer to the question is that the money goes back to the departments because it is their asset, but I will circulate the Deputy with the detailed notes that I have got.

[16:15]