

3.9 Deputy M.R. Higgins of the Minister for Economic Development regarding appointments made at Jersey Airport over the last 3 years

Will the Minister advise whether all appointments made by Jersey Airport over the last 3 years have been advertised both internally throughout the civil service and externally in the local and national media; that all appointments have been made in accordance with civil service practice and procedures; and that those appointed have all been subject to competitive interviews and, if not, will he explain which positions were not and why?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean (The Minister for Economic Development):

I can confirm that all appointments at Jersey Airport over the last 3 years have been advertised, either internally, locally or off-Island. Furthermore, all appointments have been made within the Civil Service terms and conditions of service policies and procedures or the relevant A Group terms and conditions. I should add that some posts have become available as a result of internal promotion or as part of an internal restructure. With the full agreement of Central H.R. (Human Resources) these posts did not need to be advertised. Finally, for clarity the post of Strategic Planning Manager was advertised both internally and in the local media. However, no candidates with the correct skills were identified. The eventual appointee was already working at the airport under a secondment agreement from a local private company. His skill and experience was therefore well known and so he did not undergo a formal interview process. The exception to the open recruitment process was approved by the Appointments Commission.

3.9.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Although there are a number of positions I could raise, I will just go back to one of the ones that he has mentioned and one other. In his written answer to the Deputy of St. John he mentions the baggage consultant. Just going back first of all to this particular one of the Strategic Planning Manager, will the Minister just clarify the position, first of all? Although it was advertised for someone for this post in December 2008, Capita were employed as consultants in February 2009 and this particular individual was working for Capita. Therefore, he was not an internal candidate to the airport but an external candidate. If he was then appointed in March 2010, was the job then advertised at that point? That is one point. Secondly ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

The question is getting very long and convoluted. Minister?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

Yes, the Deputy is absolutely right. The candidate was working for Capita Symonds on a secondment basis and from that the role was advertised. No suitable candidates with skills were found and he was appointed in March 2010.

3.9.2 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

In the case of the baggage consultant, the Minister replied in his answer to the Deputy of St. John first of all that there was no one else within the existing airport workforce that had the necessary level of experience required to support the proposed changes. Yet, 2 of the existing employees of the airport were involved with the original baggage facility that was there and therefore did have the expertise. Was that job advertised externally or was it again just simply the fact that the person was made redundant from Aviance and then taken on by the airport staff?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

I really do not know what the Deputy is trying to drive at here. The appointment of this particular individual contractually has met all the necessary standards that are set out clearly. It is a question that I am being asked very shortly by the Deputy of St. John and I think rather than create further duplication, I do not wish to add anything further to it.

3.9.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Who advised the Minister about the strategic planning position that it was necessary to proceed to interview?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

That was a decision that was taken by the management at the airport for all the reasons stated. It was not necessary because the individual in question had been well known to the airport, his skills were well known, he had been working on major projects like the runway refurbishment and the management team were perfectly satisfied with his capability and there were no other candidates.

3.9.4 Deputy T.A. Vallois of St. Saviour:

As the Minister is both a member of the Skills Executive and Minister with responsibility for the airport, does he believe the current training programmes in place are appropriate and, if not, will he undertake to review this?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

Historically, I would accept that I do not think they have been and I think this applies across the States as a whole with regard to succession planning. Indeed, there is a drive at the airport, and has been for some time, in order to try and improve succession planning, particularly in more technical areas like air traffic control assistants which historically have been brought in from the U.K. because the expertise has not existed locally. We can do more from a training perspective there and I believe there are great improvements in that direction.

3.9.5 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

If the Minister is absolutely confident that all posts have been correctly filled using the correct procedures, would he provide Members with a written account of the appointments that have been made over the last 3 years, giving full details of the advertising that took place and the number of people interviewed for those posts?

[10:45]

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

I have no problem supplying information to Members with regard to that. To ensure that the question is fully understood, can I ask the Deputy to put it in writing?