

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES  
COMMITTEE**

**BY DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 11th MAY 2010**

**Question**

“Is the Privileges and Procedures Committee supportive of plans to introduce a 4 year term for all States Members and, if so, will it undertake to bring forward plans in time for this to be debated in good time before the next elections so that, if the States agree, this can be in place for November 2011?”

**Answer**

Yesterday the Privileges and Procedures Committee lodged the States of Jersey (Period for Election) (Jersey) Regulations 201- which are designed to implement the decision taken by the States in September 2009 to institute a single election day. This matter has given rise to discussions in respect of the possible 4-year term of office. Minute No. A5 of the Committee’s meeting of 30th March 2010 reads as follows:

*“The Committee discussed whether the introduction of a single election day should be linked to any wider reform, such as a 4-year term of office, a move to a spring election, or a reduction in the number of members. The Committee referred to extracts from the Official Report (‘Hansard’) of 10th September 2009 when the single election day proposal had been agreed by the States, and noted calls from members for the change to be brought forward in isolation. In order to allow the necessary amendments to the States of Jersey Law 2005 to be made in good time before the proposed single election day, it was agreed that the matter should be moved forward as soon as possible. It was therefore agreed that the Committee would pursue the matter of the single election date only at present, and that it would be minded to carry out a separate body of work in respect of any other reform measures, to be brought forward at a later date.”*

The Committee is supportive of the move to a 4-year term of office but it is conscious of the considerable practical difficulties surrounding the Senatorial role. The Committee and its predecessors have concluded on numerous occasions that a 4 year term for Deputies and Connétables is unworkable unless the 3 year election cycle for half of the Senators is also amended. It is generally accepted that an 8-year term for Senators would be far too long and it is considered that reducing the Senatorial period of office to 4 years might devalue the role and there would be considerable difficulties in electing all 12 Senators on one day every 4 years if this reform was introduced. The option of reducing the number of Senators to alleviate the problems that would be caused by a single Senatorial election day is available but this option was rejected when it was brought forward by PPC in January 2008. The view has been expressed by many States members during debates that a move to a single election day may lead to further natural evolution in the make-up of the States Assembly and the position may become clearer after the next election.