

**2.6 Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the Port of St. Helier stevedoring contract:**

Would the Minister explain the reasons for putting the port of St. Helier stevedoring contract out to tender, and outline the ramifications to the infrastructure of the port should the contract be awarded to a different operator?

**Senator P.F.C. Ozouf (The Minister for Economic Development):**

May I once again pass the baton to my Assistant Minister?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Yes.

**Deputy A.J.H. Maclean (Assistant Minister for Economic Development - rapporteur):**

In order to comply with the Competition Law, the J.C.R.A. (Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority) advised Jersey Harbours that the current stevedoring contract for the Port of St. Helier, which expires on 30th September 2007, should be put out to competitive tender. Jersey Harbours have, therefore, advertised both locally and nationally for expressions of interest for stevedoring services for the port and will be following a tender process concluding with a new licence which will take effect on 1st October 2007. The deadline for expressions of interest is this Friday, 18th May 2007. The current licence for stevedoring services, although not exclusive, has in practice been solely operated by George Troy & Sons who have served the Island with great commitment for many years. I, therefore, both expect and look forward to them submitting a competitive tender for the new licence. The tender award process will ensure the smooth transfer of service should a new operator successfully tender. This will ensure that the needs of the port's customers will be protected and will not result in any negative ramifications for the infrastructure of the port. The new licence will be awarded on commercial terms and in accordance with best port working practices.

**2.6.1 The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Would the Minister agree, Sir, that should there be any change in usage of the existing labour force, early negotiations are paramount so that we avoid the messy fire-fighting type of confrontation that we had a fortnight ago with the harbour maintenance engineers?

**Deputy A.J.H. Maclean:**

Yes, I would thoroughly agree with the Constable and I have to say that we have, from a very early stage, been fully engaging with George Troy & Sons in order to ensure a very transparent and clear process throughout. I should also add that the occasion that occurred recently with the industrial action did not involve in any shape or form any staff from George Troy & Sons. They were not involved at all.

**2.6.2 Deputy J.A. Martin:**

The Minister has said that it has gone out nationally and in the Island for expressions of interest. He also said that the date for these expressions to end was this Friday. Could he inform the House, Sir, how many people have shown expressions of interest? How many are local and how many are from outside the Island? Obviously I do not want the names; just the numbers.

**Deputy A.J.H. Maclean:**

The Deputy will understand, Sir, that the expressions of interest at this stage are highly confidential. What I can say is there have been a number of expressions, although because the closing date has not been reached yet, they have not been opened so I cannot, I am afraid, give any further details. But we have had a number of expressions of interest.

**2.6.3 Senator J.L. Perchard:**

The Assistant Minister informed the Assembly a moment ago that the current relationship with the stevedores is not exclusive, implying that an alternative provider could work in the current regime. Is it his intention to allocate an exclusive contract to a new provider?

**Deputy A.J.H. Maclean:**

That, Sir, will be part of the tendering process negotiations, but it is highly likely that an exclusive arrangement will be offered for the key areas of the port, for example, the New North Quay and the Elizabeth Harbour area. But, as I say, it is really part of the commercial negotiations that will be undertaken as part of the tender process.