

Environment Department

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Deputy G. Baudains
Glen-Moor
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25 August 2004

Dear Deputy Baudain,

Groundwater from France

You will know that both the British Geological Survey in its advice to the Committee, and the Environmental Management Consultancy in its January 2001 report to you, both believe that a freshwater connection with France is highly unlikely and that the source of both shallow and deep groundwater on the Island is local rainfall.

On reading through the transcripts of the Scrutiny Panel hearings and the related documents that have been submitted I noticed that no evidence has been provided to support the contention of a freshwater link with France, although there are references to an experiment conducted many years ago which, it is said, demonstrated a connection between freshwater on the mainland of France and freshwater in Jersey.

I am interested in the nature of these experiments but can find nothing on record beyond anecdotal recollections. There is nothing for instance in the scientific literature, which is unusual as results would have been of great interest scientifically. I would be grateful if you would supply me with any information on this matter that you might have access to, and in particular the following:

- a. When was the work carried out?
- b. What institutions / authority organised the work and the names of any persons involved (and if known, their present contact details)?
- c. The experimental design i.e.
 - what substance was used as a tracer?
 - how much was introduced and over what period?
 - where and how was it introduced?
 - how was it monitored in Jersey, what analytical methods were used and who did this monitoring and analysis?
 - where in Jersey was monitoring done?
 - what was the time interval between the introduction of tracer in France and it being found in Jersey?
 - for what period was the tracer detected?

As the matter of a connection with off-island water resources has assumed some significance in both the scrutiny process and in the public domain I am sure you will agree that it will be of common interest to establish the facts of this matter.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS NEWTON
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT



States of Jersey

FROM:

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26-8-'04

C. Newton,
Director of Environment,
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Dear Sir,

Thank you for your enquiry of August 25th.

With reference to the possibility of water flows from France to Jersey, an offer was made about ten years ago by the water diviners and engineers to drill a borehole on the Ecrehous in order to further scientific knowledge.

Permissions were obtained from various people but the request for assistance with transport was not fulfilled and therefore drilling did not take place.

Whether or not the offer is still open I do not know.

I think you will find the experiment to which you refer arose in a dialogue between the well drillers and members of BGS when the latter first started looking at our water. If so, as far as I'm aware it relates to water flow from the Pyrenees to the U.K. and clearly the best people to put your question to would be the original BGS team. However, I'm not sure that would advance us much, merely proving that fresh water does flow under the sea, of which there are other examples anyway. I'm not aware of any similar exercise regarding Jersey.

It does therefore seem a shame that transport was never arranged for the Ecrehous exercise, as that clearly would have added enormously to our evidence.

Yours sincerely,