

STATES OF JERSEY



STATES MEMBERS' REMUNERATION: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT REVIEW BODY

**Lodged au Greffe on 18th March 2003
by Senator E.P. Vibert**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

- (a) to agree that an independent States Members' Remuneration Review Body, comprising persons who are not Members of the States, should be established and that –
 - (i) the Body shall consist of a non-voting Chairman and 3 other members with a relevant mix of skills and experience, all appointed by the States on the recommendation of the Privileges and Procedures Committee;
 - (ii) the Chairman and members shall be remunerated for their services at an hourly rate to be determined by the States;
 - (iii) the Body shall hold public hearings and receive oral and written submissions from any persons, including Members of the States, who wish to make a submission to it; and
 - (iv) the Body, having made whatever additional enquiries it deems necessary, shall report annually to the States on the appropriate level of remuneration to be paid to elected Members of the States and its recommendations shall be binding;
- (b) to charge the Privileges and Procedures Committee to take the appropriate steps, including the preparation of draft legislation if deemed necessary, to give effect to the proposals.

SENATOR E.P. VIBERT

REPORT

I believe it would be appropriate to establish an independent body to assess the appropriate level of remuneration to be paid to elected Members of the States. By any standards of propriety, the current system where Members debate and decide upon their own remuneration is indefensible.

It is vexatious to the public whom we serve and invites justifiable criticism of the whole integrity of government. Government must be above that if we are to be credible.

This will become even more important as we move into the era of ministerial government where Ministers will expect to receive a greater remuneration than ordinary Members. The place for this to be argued out is not on the floor of the Assembly but in an independent forum.

A typical Body could consist of a retired States Member, a former secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, a retired top level public servant (or former Bailiff) and a current official of a local trade union (such as the Royal College of Nursing). The Chairman could be a Jurat of the Royal Court.

It is essential that hearings are held in public and submissions can be made by anyone, both orally and in writing.

A key element of this body is that its decision will be binding. There is no point in setting up such a body if its decisions are then open to be debated in the States.

Financial/manpower implications

These would be minimal. The body would only meet once a year and should be able to complete its deliberations and programme within a week. A budget of £1,000 would probably suffice.