

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY  
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016**

**Question**

Will the Minister detail the Department's use of agency workers over the period 2009 to 2016, to include the following?

- (a) The number of posts filled by agency workers each year.
- (b) The titles of those posts and a description of the duties of each.
- (c) Whether the posts were full-time or part-time and, if the latter, the hours of work that were required.
- (d) The length of the contracts provided and the length of time each agency worker remained in the Department.
- (e) The number of such agency workers who subsequently transferred to full-time employment with the Department.
- (f) The total cost per post if there were direct employment to the post, broken down by element (salary, Social Security contributions, PECS contributions), compared to the total cost per post of salary and agency fees where an agency worker has been used.

**Answer**

Temporary staff are engaged by the Department to cover short-term fluctuations in workloads, to support initiatives and projects, or where permanent need or funding has not yet been established e.g. piloting new approaches to improve service. Through this approach the Department has been able to improve customer service, pilot new innovations and develop the Back to Work programme. This has proved to be a successful way of working and many of the temporary workers have secured employment in the Department subsequently.

Temporary workers are not employed by the Department – they are employed directly by the Recruitment Agencies. Their contractual arrangements are a matter for the Recruitment Agency and the individual.

At the Social Security Department, temporary staff are not engaged through an agency with the intention that they will remain on an assignment for extended periods of time of a year or more. However, in some cases, the initial temporary assignment may unexpectedly need to be extended. For example, if the post-holder is on sick leave longer than expected, if the duration of a project has to be extended, or if the person is offered a further temporary assignment to deal with a different project within the Department. A rigorous vacancy management process takes place before seeking to engage temporary staff.

Responses have been provided using available data, and where the number of individuals in these groups is so small (less than five) that disclosure could lead to individuals being identified, the totals have been grouped together.

- (a) Between January 2014 and July 2016 the Department engaged 142 different individuals through Temporary Recruitment Agencies.
- (b) The table below provides a breakdown of the 142 individuals engaged as temporary workers between January 2014 and July 2016 by the initial assignment the individual was recruited for only and does

not account for changes in activity, i.e. if an individual moved from a Back to Work project to support an Administration assignment, then this would only be counted as Back to Work.

Administration	25
Back to Work	53
Contributions and benefits	39
Customer Service	13
Projects	12
Total	142

- (c) Most assignments for Temporary Agency workers are for 37 hours per week.
- (d) At the end of July 2016 the Department was engaging 34 staff through Temporary Recruitment Agencies. The periods worked in the Department is provided in the table below and may cover multiple roles.

Temporary Agency workers time in Department	
Less than 12 months	23
12 Months +	11
Total	34

- (e) At the end of July 2016 approximately 1 in 4 of the current permanent or fixed term contract staff working in the Social Security Department had previously been engaged through a Temporary Recruitment Agency.
- (f) Current weekly costs are provided in the table below for comparison based on a grade 7/0 post for 37 hours per week.

Grade 7 - Permanent	Weekly
Basic	£585.13
Employers Pension (New PEP Scheme - 16.0%)	£93.62
Employer Social Security Contributions	£38.03
Total	£716.78

Grade 7 – Fixed Term Contract 6 months or less	Weekly
Basic	£585.13
Employer Social Security Contributions	£38.03
Total	£623.16

Grade 7 – Temporary Agency Worker (costs based on average of three agencies)	Weekly
Total	£676.71