

**MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT: PROPOSED DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE AND TRANSITIONAL
ARRANGEMENTS (P.70/2002): AMENDMENT (P.70/2002 Amd.) -COMMENTS**

**Presented to the States on 9th July 2002
by the Policy and Resources Committee**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

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Comments

1. Deputy G.C.L. Baudains has lodged an Amendment to the report and proposition on the “Machinery of Government: Proposed Departmental Structure and Transitional Arrangements” (P.70/2002) which proposes that the Planning and Environment and Public Services Committees should not be amalgamated during the transitional period but should remain as two separate committees.
2. The case in favour of amalgamation during the transitional period is set out in paragraphs 6.5 and 6.6 of the report of the Policy and Resources Committee accompanying P.70/2002. It is stated here that a single committee would be given a very clear remit to “*identify and separate out the functions of the two departments in a different form.... so that when the move to a ministerial system is made, two distinct departments can be created*”. It is also stated that maintaining the two committees in the transitional arrangements “*would be likely to perpetuate the existing problems*”.
3. Having given careful consideration to Deputy Baudains’ amendment, the Committee remains of the view that the Public Services and Planning and Environment Committees should be combined during the transitional period. There are many areas of change that will need to be examined, and a single committee will be in the best possible position to consider and take decisions on these matters. One of the main tasks for the new committee will be to consider the means by which areas of operational activity, environmental policy and regulation that are currently within the remit of the Planning and Environment, Public Services, Harbours and Airport, Health and Social Services and Agriculture and Fisheries Committees will be handled under the new government structures, having regard to the principles of separation set out in paragraph 2.4 of the Policy and Resources Committee’s report . The major part of this work relates to the current division of responsibilities between the Planning and Environment and Public Services Departments, and a single Environment and Public Services Committee will be able to receive direct input and advice from the officers working in these departments. It will also be able to liaise with other relevant committees and departments in determining the future allocation of responsibilities, thereby avoiding the duplication of work that could arise if there were two separate committees. It is important that the future arrangements for environmental regulation are resolved as speedily as possible in order to provide an appropriate separation of regulatory and operational functions.
4. In the report accompanying his amendment Deputy Baudains expresses concern that amalgamation of the two committees will “*create a huge organisation that would be difficult to properly manage*”. The Committee does not share this view, and would like to emphasise that it is not proposing that the two departments should be combined during the transitional period. Both the Planning and Public Services Departments would remain during this period, as indeed they will (in revised form) in the ministerial system. The proposed arrangement is not unlike that which currently exists in relation to the Harbours and Airport Committee, where there are two separate departments, both with their own chief officers, and both reporting to a single committee. At a political level, it should be perfectly feasible to delegate some of the new committee’s work to one or more sub-committees, as currently happens with the Planning Applications Sub-Committee.
5. The Committee believes that a single committee will be in the best possible position to develop and implement the changes that will be required during the transitional period leading up to the introduction of the new departmental structure. It accordingly maintains the proposal set out in P.70/2002 that there should be a single Environment and Public Services Committee during this transition.