

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 21st JANUARY 2014**

Question

Notwithstanding the commitment of the Minister for Social Security to investigate the extent of use and abuse of zero-hours contracts by the island's employers and to report back to the States by the end of 2014, will the Chief Minister update the figures given to members in his response to question 6833 of May 2012 which showed some 1157 States employees on zero-hours contracts compared with 283 on fixed-term temporary contracts?

Can he confirm that the recently modernised and harmonised States employment policies resulting from extensive consultation do not apply to those on zero-hours contracts?

Will he further state for each category of employee given in answers to questions 6901 and 6902 by the Education, Sport and Culture and Health and Social Services Departments respectively, what number of these contracts actually applied to employees who worked regular full-time or part-time hours and/or were long-term employees for whom permanent, or fixed-term or minimum-hours contracts would be more appropriate?

In particular will he update members with progress on the promised review of the Highlands College lecturer contracts and explain the use of zero-hours contracts for classroom assistants and in catering for overtime for nurses and auxiliaries in the hospital?

Answer

1 - Updated figures as at 31/12/2013 on those originally given to members in response to question 6833 are given below:-

Fixed Term Contracts

At the end of December 2013 there was a total of 361 employees holding one or more fixed term contracts of employment within the States of Jersey. This represents an increase of 78 fixed term contract employees since March 2012.

Departments	31.03.2012	31.12.2013
Chief Minister's Department	18	27
Department of the Environment	1	9
Economic Development	1	1
Education, Sport & Culture	120	117
Health & Social Services	98	138
Home Affairs	7	8
Housing	3	0
Jersey Airport	4	4
Jersey Car Parks	2	1
Jersey Fleet Management	0	4
Jersey Harbours	3	3

Non Ministerial States Funded	12	8
Social Security	2	5
States Assembly	0	1
Transport and Technical Services	5	26
Treasury and Resources	7	9
Total	283	361

Zero Hour Agreements

At the end of December 2013 a total of 1452 employees held zero hour agreements to work on an ad-hoc basis in a range of roles. (This does not include those employees who also held permanent or fixed term contracts). In March 2012 the Education Sport and Culture Department employed 582 zero hour workers and the Health and Social Services Department employed 545 zero hour workers.

The number of zero hour agreements in these departments has increased. However it should be noted that the nature of this work means that some zero hour workers work infrequently or very few hours, making comparisons between different periods difficult.

Departments	31.12.13
Chief Minister's Department-	2
Department of the Environment	2
Economic Development	1
Education, Sport & Culture	788
Health & Social Services	590
Home Affairs	32
Jersey Airport	24
Non Ministerial States Funded	9
Social Security	1
Transport and Technical Service	3
Total	1452

2 - The applicability of new public sector employment policies to zero hour workers varies dependant on the policy. For example, the revised Grievance Policy shortly to be implemented applies to zero hours workers. In contrast, as zero hours workers are paid for the hours actually worked, the Managing Attendance policy and the Special Leave Policy do not apply to these workers as they work the hours of their choice.

3 - Current States systems do not allow for easy analysis of individual zero hours agreements and can only provide the following additional information to that previously provided in response to questions 6901 and 6902:

Departments	
Department of the Environment	1
Education, Sport & Culture	533
Health & Social Services	733
Home Affairs	33
Jersey Airport	8
Non Ministerial States Funded	4
Transport and Technical Services	1
Treasury and Resources	1
Total	1314

Consistent with the answers given to questions 6901 and 6902, the table above sets out those individuals that were on both zero hours agreements and on regular full time or part time contracts of employment with the States.

Bank shifts are the standard and normal methodology for Nurses choosing to work additional hours in every NHS hospital and have been acknowledged by JACS as a normal and acceptable practice for the predominantly ex NHS nursing workforce in Jersey. Nurse Banks are crucial to the safe and effective provision of clinical services to patients.

Similarly, Supply Teaching roles are the standard and normal methodology to meet service needs within the Education service.

Appointments to States of Jersey roles are made using the appropriate contract.

4 - The review of Highlands College Lecturers was completed in December 2013. One of the outcomes resulted in an increase in the number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees and head count of 10.5 and 13 respectively as a specific number of worked hours were, after careful analysis, made permanent.

Consistent with the response given to question 6901, suitable and appropriately skilled Classroom Assistants on zero hours agreements are used to cover short term absences of regular staff and help provide continuity and the delivery of education in the classroom on a day to day basis. The zero hours arrangement allows for flexibility across educational requirements throughout the service.

Consistent with the response given to question 6902, the use of zero hours agreements for nursing and auxiliaries in the hospital helps to maintain the continuity of service, including cover for ad-hoc short term absence, and to meet other unforeseen demands.

Finally – as part of the review of terms and conditions of employment that is currently underway, a policy for the use of zero hours contracts is being developed.