

STATES OF JERSEY



ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2007 (P.92/2006): TENTH AMENDMENT (P.92/2006 AMD.(10))– COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 11th September 2006
by the Council of Ministers**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Council of Ministers opposes this amendment.

The Council, in conjunction with the Planning and Environment Department, has detailed in the draft Annual Business Plan 2007 a clear process and timetable to address the funding of 3rd Party Planning Appeals and Dangerous Structures.

The Council is committed to bring these proposals to the States and therefore believes that this amendment is unnecessary.

The Council is also aware of the funding pressures within the Home Affairs department and supports the reallocation of any available funds from the discrimination legislation to other priorities within that department.

Although a reduction in the Home Affairs Department's cash limit of less than one percent may appear manageable, given the current funding pressures, there would be significant impact on service levels. These funding pressures arise across the Home Affairs area for the following reasons –

- (a) The Department carried out an operational and financial review of the Prison in February 2006 which revealed a current shortfall in the Prison budget of £350,000. There is also a shortfall in funding for the Defence Contribution (which funds the Jersey Field Squadron) of £65,000 which means that the total projected shortfall in cash limit in 2007 is at least £415,000.
- (b) The Department had an anticipated budgetary shortfall going into 2006, but its budget was augmented at the beginning of the year by a transfer of funds from sums carried forward by other Departments from 2005. The Home Affairs Department cannot rely on having similar access to possible sums carried forward by other Departments at the end of 2006 in order to bolster its cash limit in 2007.
- (c) Awards made by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme, which has a budget of £200,000, currently total £350,000 and could reach £500,000 by the end of the year. The Home Affairs Department has no control over this expenditure, which at best will cancel out any savings that the Department would have made this year.
- (d) The Home Affairs Department has had to keep posts vacant and review its recruiting plans in order to stay within its 2006 cash limit. A contingency plan has been developed to deal with the expected funding deficit next year and in subsequent years. This would seriously affect levels of service to the public. A service prioritisation process has been carried out in order to identify those services which would suffer cuts. These cuts would impact on front-line services unless they can be delayed or minimised. Using the unexpended portion of the funds earmarked for the introduction of the Discrimination Law is the most sensible way of achieving this.
- (e) Pressures also arise due to exceptional commitments and unplanned tasks. World Cup policing, the Jersey Live event and the Bouley Bay Headland fire have, together, created unbudgeted costs in the region of £170,000 in 2006.

It is important for Members to appreciate that meeting the funding shortfall that persists at the Prison would merely maintain service levels as they are currently. There are no funds available to fund the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) which has been developed in response to the report by Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons. A major part of this Plan is the improvement of educational facilities available to prisoners and the States has already signalled its support for this through Senator Perchard's earlier proposition. Discussions on ways to fund the PIP will be held separately.