

2.1 Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour of the Chief Minister regarding senior civil servant salaries:

Given the recent media coverage regarding the salary of a senior civil servant, which has provoked an angry response from the public, does the States Employment Board recognise the public disapproval of such high salaries and what actions, if any, will the board be implementing to address this issue?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur (The Chief Minister):

The States Employment Board does indeed recognise and understand the public concern over the issue in question. However, I must point out that the person in question in this case is not a civil servant and is not an employee of the States Employment Board. He does not have a contract for employment as such, but rather a contract for services. Salaries for senior civil servants employed by the board are determined by a combination of job evaluation and comparable market salaries in both Jersey and the United Kingdom. The board is currently reviewing the situation as a matter of urgency, as is the Comptroller and Auditor General, and we await with interest the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General before finalising our view.

2.1.1 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

In which case will the Chief Minister also comment, in his role as Chief Minister, what he will do regarding contract staff?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

The same rules will apply to staff employed under a contract but that is where they have a contract of employment as opposed to a contract for services.

2.1.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of St. Saviour:

Will the Chief Minister identify who passed this particular position even though it did not fall within the States Employment Board? Who passed it as meeting the criteria which he outlined?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I am responding in respect of the States Employment Board. A decision to issue his contract of services was done by the Minister for Health and Social Services as part of her responsibility for that department. That is a straightforward matter of contract for services.

2.1.3 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier:

Is it the norm in Jersey to pay salaries or to issue contracts worth almost twice the applicant's previous salary?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

Firstly, this is not a norm. In any case, the Deputy is comparing unlike issues. One is comparing a salary and the second is comparing with a contract for services, which is not the same thing, so clearly one cannot compare like with unlike.

2.1.4 Deputy A.E. Jeune of St. Brelade:

Would the Chief Minister be good enough to issue Members at a later date with the number of people who are employed under contract status of more than 6 months and at what bands of contract price they are able to achieve?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I am happy to try to assist the Deputy and Members in this but I do remind them that there is a clear distinction to be drawn between a contract of employment, for which the States Employment Board could have responsibility, and a contract for services, which covers a whole variety of things, which is not within my remit and to collate that information will take some time.

2.1.5 Deputy A.E. Jeune:

If I may, a supplementary. Does it mean that these contracts are given out in an uncoordinated way?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

No, I think Members seem to be under a misunderstanding here. There are 2 sorts of contract. There is a contract for employment, and there is a contract for services. A contract of employment is an arrangement whereby a person can be employed on whatever length of time; a contract for services is not the same thing. A contract for services does not incur other costs such as pension costs or sickness costs. A contract for services means that a service will be provided irrespective of who provides that service and in what capacity under certain standards.

2.1.6 Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier:

Although the Chief Minister is obviously explaining the difference between the 2, fundamentally in terms of the work that the individual does they are the same. The person is being employed to do a job, there must be a set of criteria laid down to do that job and I think the public would certainly be even more concerned if they believe the States are trying to get around their pay policy by using contracts of service. Would the Chief Minister give an assurance that he will publish details of all contracts of service so we can see how many there are and what value they are costing the taxpayer.

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I understand the Deputy's point but in many cases the work being done is the same but, as I say, there are no additional on-cost services when you have a contract for services, so it may well be that the price being paid for the overall contract is comparable with what would be paid for a salary and the time and the other on-costs which would otherwise be incurred. Clearly there is an issue here which is why, as I say, I am awaiting the outcome of the review from the Comptroller and Auditor General before changing or addressing policies that we would have.

The Deputy Bailiff:

I think the question, Chief Minister, is whether you would publish the contract for services.

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I have already indicated, Sir, that I will do my best to do that but contracts for services are quite difficult to collate and will take some time.

2.1.7 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

The other part of the question was asking the Chief Minister to give an assurance that contracts of service would not be used as a device to get around normal contracts of employment used by the States to try and hide it from the public.

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I would ensure that contracts for service are used to provide value for money for the taxpayer in a way which is in keeping with the principles that the Deputy is clearly wanting us to do, and which I agree with him are desirable principles.