

2.1 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of St. Helier of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding the introduction of legislation for the compulsory use of booster seats for children under the age of 12:

Just as a passing aside, Sir, I do have a child who is under 12 but he is currently in a booster seat, which does not cover these Regulations that I am referring to. I would like to ask the Transport and Technical Services Minister what timetable will Jersey follow when introducing legislation in respect of the compulsory use of booster seats for children aged under 12 years as recently enacted in the U.K., if at all?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye of St. Helier (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

The Road Safety Training Officer and Driving Vehicle Standards have been reviewing our seatbelt legislation and are preparing a report for me with recommendations on any changes that are considered necessary. Included in that review is whether the Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seatbelts by Children) (Jersey) Order 1998 should be amended to make the use of appropriate child restraints compulsory for children over 3 years old and under 12. At present the driver of a vehicle must ensure that a child over 3 and under 12 years old wears either a properly designed child restraint or a normal seat belt. Children under 3 years old must wear an approved child restraint. Any prospective changes need to be discussed with the law draftsman to determine whether a bid will need to be made for law drafting time, therefore, I regret I am not in a position at this time to give a timetable for changes, if any, to be made. I would add though that while using properly designed restraints for children over 3 years old is not compulsory in the Island, Driver and Vehicle Standards through the department's website and the Road Safety Training Officer advise and encourage the use of proper restraints at all times.

2.1.1 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

I do not normally press supplementary questions when I receive a comprehensive answer as I have just received, but I must ask the Minister if he shares any of my concerns in regard to the lack of a timetable from his department. The way that this has now been introduced in the United Kingdom, leaves Jersey quite well behind in these areas, and there has been conclusive evidence provided to U.K. authorities that the actual safeguarding of children while in the back of vehicles also safeguards the drivers of the vehicles themselves and, thereby, safeguards those people being transported in that vehicle and the people in the other vehicles who are in the vicinity around them. Does he not share my apprehension in the fact that Jersey does not seem to be anywhere near introducing this type of legislation that is to safeguard the lives of those children in the vehicle and those other people around the vehicle?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I share some of Deputy Le Claire's concerns but not all of them. I am perfectly content that the Road Safety Training Officer and the Driver Vehicle Standards Department are following a sensible course of action in preparing a report with recommendations to me. That may well be a report I would wish to confer with Scrutiny or perhaps even bring recommendations before the House. I think we are approaching this in a sensible and considered way and while I support some aspects of U.K. legislation, I have only recently been on record as saying that in general I do not

think we should follow the U.K. legislation patterns in a slavish manner but we are giving appropriate attention to this particular matter.

2.1.2 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

One final supplementary if I may, Sir. Would the Minister be so good as to circulate the report to myself and any other Members that may wish to be apprised of the current recommendations, and also would he, together with suggesting that Scrutiny might want to look at this, consider whether or not the Minister for Health and his department might have a view?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

As soon as the report is completed, and I have initially considered it, I will be very happy to share its content with any Members.