

OPTOMETRISTS (OPHTHALMIC OPTICIANS): ISSUE OF WRITTEN PRESCRIPTIONS

**Lodged au Greffe on 14th May 2002
by the Industries Committee**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

150

2002

P.80

Price code: A

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion -

- (a) to agree, in principle, that optometrists (ophthalmic opticians) and medical practitioners registered in accordance with the provisions of the Opticians (Registration) (Jersey) Law 1962 to conduct eye tests shall under normal circumstances be required to give persons whose sight has been tested, immediately following the test, a signed, written prescription for an optical appliance; and
- (b) to request the Health and Social Services Committee, after consultation with the Jersey Optical Association, to bring forward for approval by the States the necessary legislative amendments to give effect to the proposals.

INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

Report

The Industries Committee is supportive of the recent proposition of Deputy Breckon of St. Saviour (P.55/2002 lodged "au Greffe" on 23rd April 2002) to allow more competition in the sale of ready-readers.

However, if the market for all optical appliances is to work well in the interests of all consumers of optical appliances, there is a need to have the issuance of written details of prescriptions normal practice. Currently, not all opticians automatically issue prescriptions following eye tests.

The Industries Committee acknowledges that no cases have been reported where a request for a written prescription has been declined; however by requiring written prescriptions to be issued, consumers have the potential for greater freedom to purchase not only ready readers (in the case of those persons who are long-sighted) but other optical appliances including contact lenses, wherever they wish.

The Industries Committee recognises that, in some limited cases, a written prescription may not be required, for example, in cases where an eye-test is carried out for medical purposes. The Committee suggests that the Health and Social Services Committee consults with the Jersey Optical Association and agrees to include an exemption clause in the amendment allowable by Order for these purposes. It is suggested that where an eye-test has been performed and there is no need to wear or use an optical appliance a signed and written statement also be issued. Following consultation, there may also be scope to include the results from standard tests performed to be included on the written statement or prescription.

This proposition presented by the Industries Committee seeks to give greater transparency and maximum consumer choice for the procurement of the complete range of optical appliances, rather than just ready readers.

The Committee is hopeful that, if adopted, it will enable the Health and Social Services Committee to include the amendments to legislation in the changes arising from the proposition of Deputy Breckon.

There are no significant financial or manpower implications for the States arising out of this proposition.