

STATES OF JERSEY



ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2007 (P.92/2006): AMENDMENT (P.92/2006 AMD.)– 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 of Ministers does not consider that the method proposed by the Privileges and Procedures Committee for the funding of an additional scrutiny panel is appropriate in the current circumstances.

In this connection it is worth noting that the 4 scrutiny panels have a budget of £360,000 for the payment of specialist advisers, the transcription of evidence from hearings and the commissioning of research. As at 30th June 2006, only £40,000 of this budget had been spent across the 4 panels. Clearly it is important that the scrutiny panels should have sufficient funds with which to carry out their work, but based on current projections it appears that a significant underspend of the £360,000 budget allocation may occur. The Council of Ministers therefore believes it is reasonable to propose that any unspent budget should be used to pay for a fifth scrutiny panel in 2007. Such an approach would be consistent with the budgetary process adopted in respect of the executive departments, as Ministers are required to work within their budgets to provide the current range of services, and to take account of additional demands that may arise during the year.

It is accepted that the work programmes of the scrutiny panels are still under development, and it is possible that they will need to have recourse to all those funds which currently remain unspent in the 2006 budget. In such circumstances, the Council of Ministers is committed to underwrite the budget for a fifth scrutiny panel in 2007 up to a maximum sum of £188,000.