

2.8 Deputy D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence of the Chief Minister regarding the current industrial dispute involving ambulance crews:

I believe this question is to be addressed to the Chief Minister. Will the Chief Minister advise the Assembly what progress has been made in resolving the current industrial dispute involving ambulance crews?

Senator F.H. Walker (The Chief Minister):

The answer to the question is that I can advise the Deputy and the House that we, “we” being the States Employment Board, have accepted a request from the Ambulance Staff Association to invite J.A.C.S. (Jersey Advisory and Conciliation Services) to mediate in the dispute. J.A.C.S. has agreed to do so and therefore any threats of industrial action have been withdrawn at this stage.

2.8.1 Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Supplementary, Sir. I understand from media reports that a mistake was made in grading civil servants who answer telephone calls to thereby earn more than paramedics and that this has therefore sparked the current industrial dispute. Will the Chief Minister confirm whether this is indeed the case and, if so, who is accountable?

Senator F.H. Walker:

A mistake was made in terms of a grading. It was identified some time ago and has already been rectified and I do not believe it lies at the heart of any potential dispute with the ambulance association.

2.8.2 Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Further supplementary, Sir. Will the Chief Minister advise whether anyone was held accountable for making the error?

Senator F.H. Walker:

Yes, they were but it was a minor administrative slip which was identified very quickly and rectified immediately and we should not overstate the importance of it in my view.

2.8.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier

How was the matter rectified? Could the Chief Minister, for example, confirm whether these people were demoted?

Senator F.H. Walker:

No, you cannot demote people but a limited number of people were recruited at the wrong grade, the higher grade, but that was stopped and since then all new recruits have been appointed at the lower grade.