WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND TECHNICAL SERVICES
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ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 4th FEBRUARY 2014

Question

With regard to the scrap metal facility at Bellozanne, would the Minister –

(a) confirm that one of the reasons for putting the work out to tender was to achieve a more environmentally conscious process;
(b) advise whether vehicles are now squashed complete (together with all interior fittings and furnishings) whereas before upholstery and other items were removed before fragmentation and, if so, would the Minister explain how crushing complete vehicles is more environmentally friendly than fragmentation and how materials are better recycled as a result;
(c) advise whether the previous operator was requested by the Transport and Technical Services Department to move from crushing vehicles (albeit after removal of upholstery and the like) to a fragmentation process; and,
(d) confirm that as a result of moving to a system whereby complete vehicles are crushed that second-hand spare parts for vehicles are no longer available and, if so, would he explain how such a situation ties in with recycling policies?

Answer

(a) I can confirm that one of the reasons for putting the Scrap Metal Contract out to tender was to modernise the operation to meet latest environmental standards, along with the following reasons:

- to comply with the States Financial Directions in relation to tendering of contracts;
- to maximise the economic value of the scrap generated on the Island, benefit both the scrap producers and the States of Jersey.
- to provide a safe environment for both staff and suppliers of scrap.

(b) Vehicles are squashed and subsequently shredded complete with upholstery and interior trimmings- this is the standard process across the whole of Europe for recycling cars. Vehicles are first depolluted to remove hazardous items (for example fuel and oils which are sent for recovery and recycling), they are then squashed complete with upholstery and interior trimmings to maximise the efficiency of the onward transportation to a shredder in Portsmouth. It would be very unusual for cars to have interiors removed, and even if they were removed there are little or no markets for the recycling of foam and fabric removed from cars.

Historically cars were stripped of interiors to allow the car shells to be pressed and supplied to steelworks without any further processing and separation. However, this practice died out from the mid 1960's onwards following the development of large scale car shredders such as the one at Portsmouth. These allowed cars to be processed much more efficiently and produced a cleaner, easier to handle and higher quality steel product for the steelworks (steel accounts for around 70% of the vehicle by weight). It also made possible the more efficient recovery of non-ferrous metals such as copper and aluminium (much of this was lost prior to the development of car shredders). Recycled steel saves 1 tonne of CO2 for every tonne processed. Non-ferrous metals save up to 10 tonnes of CO2 for every tonne processed. The residual non-metallic elements of a vehicle (25%) have traditionally been land filled or incinerated. In recent years technological advancements have made it possible to recycle some of these residual elements. Through their partners, material processed by HJL has access to the most advanced and resource efficient vehicle recycling systems.

In particular plastic is recovered and recycled into high quality, high value single polymer plastics such as polypropylene and polyethylene capable of going back into the same applications from whence they came in a purpose plant which is one of the worlds most advanced plastic recycling facilities, located in Worksop UK. Each tonne of plastic recycled in this way saves between 1.5 and 3 tonnes of CO2. In addition a dedicated thermal processing plant using state of the art pyrolysis technology (the world's first) has been built to turn the residual rubber foam and fabric into electricity. It has been necessary to build a dedicated plant to carry out this process because conventional Energy from Waste plants cannot effectively control emissions and pollutants associated with the combustion of auto shredder residues. All told, when the energy plant commences operation in the first half of 2014 well over 95% of the weight of the car will have been reused, recycled or turned into energy which will be a world leading standard.

(c) In the mid 1990's the price of scrap metal was very volatile and made the existing operation unviable financially. The Public Services Department, working with the scrap yard operator, commissioned a report to ascertain what the best solution would be to maintain a financially viable scrap yard in Jersey. Within this report it was suggested that the utilisation of a fragmentiser would produce the best financial return for the operator (i.e. to continue with the existing process).

Following the publication of the waste strategy in 2005 TTS have been in regular correspondence with the previous operator to provide suitable depollution infrastructure and cease the production of scrap yard residue. This residue was a key contamination source for the Bellozanne incinerator and subsequently the new incinerator at La Collette. Burning scrap yard residue prevents any opportunity for TTS to recycle ash.

Minimising on island scrap yard residue was a key requirement for the scrap yard tender. The tender process was undertaken in accordance with States Procurement procedures, providing fairness to all parties. There were no separate contract negotiations with the previous company as to how they processed scrap metal in terms of equipment, other than like any other waste operator there was an expectation that they adapt the process and procedures to comply with all relevant legislation, including for example Ground Water, Waste, Health and Safety, and good environmental practices.

(d) Second hand spares are still available locally from HJL. They are removed to order when a request is received rather than 'on spec' as was previously the case. Across the auto salvage industry this is an increasing trend due to the high cost of removing and storing parts which may or may not sell. It is also a prudent approach as often bulk demand for spare parts comes from areas of the world where it can be difficult to verify the identity of the customer and carry out the necessary due diligence to verify the source of funds and comply with other money laundering regulation requirements.