



Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

People and Culture Follow-Up Review

Witness: States Employment Board

Monday, 20th November 2023

Panel:

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier South (Chair)

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North (Vice-Chair)

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central (co-opted member)

Witnesses:

Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, Chair, States Employment Board

Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John, Vice-Chair, States Employment Board

Deputy E. Millar of St John, St. Lawrence and trinity, Member, States Employment Board (1)

Deputy B. Ward of St. Clement, Member, States Employment Board (2)

Mr. M. Grimley, Chief People and Transformation Officer

[9:00]

Deputy S.Y. Mézec: (Chair):

Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel public hearing for our People and Culture Follow-Up review, this time with members of the States Employment Board. For the benefit of the tape, we will just go around the table introducing ourselves as usual. I am Deputy Sam Mézec, the chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central:

I am Deputy Lindsay Feltham, and I have been co-opted to this panel for the purposes of this review.

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North (Vice-Chair):

I am Deputy Max Andrews and I am the vice-chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

Chair, States Employment Board:

Deputy Kristina Moore, Chief Minister.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Andy Jehan, vice-chair, States Employment Board.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

Deputy Elaine Millar, member of the States Employment Board.

Member, States Employment Board (2):

Deputy Barbara Ward for St. Clement, and a member of the States Employment Board.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you, and we have one officer present who if he could introduce himself if he is asked to come up to answer a question of detail. Just as we did at the previous hearing, just for the record, Chief Minister, this is a follow-up review to a review that you conducted when you were in my seat. Just so that is clear. Also, Deputy Feltham had contributed to that review in her capacity in a previous role. Two of us on this side of the table are members of Unite the Union, and Unite has made a submission, so we just make that clear for transparency purposes. Any other declarations at this point? Happy to say no. Good, okay. In which case, we will go into the first question. Chief Minister, these questions opening relate to the stakeholder feedback that we have received, which has been thankfully quite substantial. In a written submission that was shared with this panel, the Royal College of Midwives reported what they said was limited progress in recruiting new staff, while Professor Hugo Mascie-Taylor described a protracted recruitment process in Health and Community Services that often leads to candidate withdrawals. Could you discuss the Government's plans to streamline and expedite the recruitment process across those sectors?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

What we have seen is, firstly, in education and, secondly, in health is the process that we inherited was quite a complex one as described, where multiple people could be talking to the manager, and multiple people - not necessarily the same people - could be talking to the candidates. The Delivery Unit put in place a process where the hiring manager talks to one person and the candidates talk to one person, so it is much easier for both the hiring manager and for the prospective candidates. Another big change is where we identify what we determine as silver medallists, so people that were suitable for the job but unsuccessful, we will then see if we have other jobs of a similar nature available for them and offer that post, if they are suitable, to the silver medallist rather than them going back in the queue and starting all over again. We have seen significant change there. When

it comes to the midwives, there have been some changes in leadership there. The States Employment Board will also support some changes to personnel at the top of that part of the organisation, and I think we are now starting to see some progress.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you. Prospect identified that uncompetitive employment packages in H.C.S. (Health and Community Services) have led to a reliance on interim staff, which affects the morale of permanent staff. What steps have been taken to reassess employment packages and reduce the morale impact on permanent employees?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think the volume of both interim agency workers and bank staff has a negative impact, and I think we are looking at a number of areas there. We are encouraging H.C.S. to go out to employ permanent members of staff, where possible. Interim staff are costly and if you are working alongside somebody in that area who may be getting paid significantly more than you, it is not great for morale. Therefore we, as the States Employment Board, are very keen to see permanent appointments. We are also keen to explore either annualised hours or term-time hours for some members of staff who are currently on a zero-hours contract. This would give them surety, would give us surety, enable them to join pension schemes, et cetera, so we are very keen to explore that. Only last week we were talking to 2 of the unions about that and their experience in other jurisdictions with those kind of contracts.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What kind of feedback did you get?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Very positive feedback indeed. I think the frustration for everyone involved is the time that it has taken to do, but we hopefully can see that progressing in the first quarter of next year.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Anything on these?

Chair, States Employment Board:

We have also put in some considerable work to provide additional units for key worker accommodation. Over 100 new units have been put in for that very reason of improving the offer and helping people to set down their roots and start their work well, with an emphasis on people staying for a long time.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What is the balance like in the use of those new key worker housing units for people who are intending to take up permanent contracts who need landing accommodation versus those who are arriving here knowing it is only for a short period of time?

Chair, States Employment Board:

That is a very technical question.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think what we found is, historically, we have not managed that very well at all. We have had some people whose contracts will say it is a temporary solution, who have been there for multiple years, and we do not believe that that is fair. One of the things we are trying to do is to be fair across and consistent across the H.R. (human resources) elements. A lot of work has been undertaken there to try and make that a fairer system. If people are coming into that type of accommodation, it needs to be very clear from the outset the length of time that they are there for that period and how much people pay for that as well.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

You mentioned earlier around the unfairness or perceived unfairness around staff, if we have interim or short-term staff getting paid more than the permanent staff. How does that play as well if there have been, say, payments made to encourage staff to come and join the States of Jersey? Have there been any discrepancies around that or any additional payments?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

For example, if I use the role of accountants, certainly we are in a very competitive market for some professions and, therefore, we will have to pay additional monies. Anybody that receives additional monies when they are recruited, that is due to be reviewed after a set period of time - I think that is 2 years - to see what the marketplace is doing at that time.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Then when it comes to health, where do we sit within the marketplace?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We sit very well actually. Compared to central London, the wages that we are paying and offering are competitive. I do not know if Mark has the details, but we have done a lot of work in terms of comparing not only the income but also the expenditure. Where we may be different is council tax; for example, the rates are much cheaper. Transport and travel is much cheaper on-Island. Clearly, accommodation is going to be on a par with central London or more expensive, and the actual salary

and the tax are beneficial in Jersey. But we are doing that as part of our offer to try and show the difference between what we offer here and what is on offer in other jurisdictions.

Chair, States Employment Board:

That information is available on the microsite.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The Royal College of Midwives reported that staff concerns were often met with advice “to be more resilient” while the N.E.U. (National Education Union) noted insufficient support for teachers facing verbal or physical abuse. Could you elaborate on the steps being taken to improve management’s responsiveness and support towards employee concerns and well-being?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think if we start with the midwives. I have already stated that there is new leadership within that part of the department. I think since we have brought the turnaround team in, not only the chief officer but also the H.R. lead, I think we are seeing improvements there. We do not change a culture overnight. Sadly, it takes a longer time. In terms of the teaching, we have listened to teachers’ concerns. It was raised with us about terms and conditions should have been reviewed in 2019 at one of our quarterly meetings so we set that as a priority of ours to review terms and conditions. We have increased significantly the amount of assistants, teaching assistants, learning support, et cetera, because some schools, in particular, are very challenged when it comes to English as a second language. We have put resource there. We still plan to put more resource in that area. I think there are 2 examples of what has happened.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Prospect has reported instances of bullying and harassment within H.C.S. contributing to a toxic culture, and the N.E.U. highlighted similar issues for teachers. Could you just discuss what strategies you are looking to put in place to address that?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

If we start with health, then you will be familiar with the speak up guardian that has been there. I think they’ve seen 46 cases, brought to them. I think 9 of those have been resolved; 36 are in process. I think the confidence is growing with the speak up guardian. I am really pleased that the speak up guardian has tapped into the national network of speak up guardians, so using similar frameworks to that used in other health environs, and we hope to make that post permanent in the very near future.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

In their submission, Unite the Union cited the speak up guardian as a positive development that ought to be monitored a bit more and empowered, and that kind of thing. Is there any particular learning that you have taken from that that you are looking to expand upon soon? If Deputy Ward wants to say anything?

Member, States Employment Board (2):

About whistleblowing, which all the professionals, certainly in health, it is their right to raise concerns. So whistleblowing, where before staff were reluctant to put their head above the parapet, should I say, but that is actively encouraged, whether it is via our speak up guardian or individually. Because it is about standards and about care for our community. So that is encouraged.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Across the Government, the key is about investing in leadership. We have put a lot of emphasis on objectives and appraisals. That is an opportunity for staff to share any concerns during the one to one with their line manager. We have seen progress in that area, but we would like to see a lot more progress. The new Connect system helps with that. It is quite an intuitive system. I think even I could use it. We are on a journey with that, but I am pleased with the progress. Training needs to be done to make sure that the quality of those appraisals are at a good standard, and we need to increase the volume as well.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I was interested that Deputy Ward had mentioned whistleblowing, and it brought to mind a letter I think that a number of States Members received last year. I know as a result of that the C.E.O. (chief executive officer) did a review at Health and Community Services. Can you give us assurances that the issues that were raised within that letter have now been dealt with?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

If they have not been dealt with, they are still being dealt with. I think we have made good progress but, as I said earlier, I think some of those things may take slightly longer. But I think we have made good progress in that area. We are getting traction and moving forwards now.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Just for absolute clarity, the issues that were described in that letter, and then were subject to that review, they are still live?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Without seeing the letter in front of me, I would not like to confirm 100 per cent that they are all dealt with. That is what I am saying.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The Royal College of Midwives highlighted to us staff being refused time owed and being told in response, “swings and roundabouts”. How is the Government addressing these concerns to make sure there is decent regard for work-life balance for employees? We also heard from Prospect reports about staff being overworked and stressed. Is that something you are conscious of and what is being done there?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Absolutely. Go back to the need to be fair and consistent. People need to be treated fairly and consistently. I do not know if you would like to talk about well-being.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

Yes, there has been a lot of work done across the whole organisation on well-being. I absolutely agree with Constable Jehan that people should not be denied time off that is due to them. I am not sure what circumstances that is happening, but there have been lots of things happening in terms of the whole well-being piece. There is the magazine that comes out monthly, I think, on well-being issues with interviews with staff. I do not know if you have seen when you go on the internet, I think if you go on to the internet every other article just about is about a well-being matter with various well-being events, mindfulness. There have been various ... I certainly went to a couple of them or certainly some of the online ones.

[9:15]

We have done quite a lot with things like the diversity and inclusion group. I think it is called Reach, which was the A.&E. network is now being called Reach. We have got I WILL, which I will put in that although it is not directly well-being, which is about promoting women in the workplace. A lot of work happens with menopause. I know from my own experiences that there is a very high emphasis put on supporting staff, either through illness, if someone is sent off through illness. Also if there is a grievance procedure, the person who is the subject of the grievance has to be supported. We do all that. We have been doing some more work on occupational health where we get regular reports from AXA, in terms of the amount of referrals to AXA and how it compares. It is benchmarked and I think generally we are ... I cannot remember the details, but generally we compare reasonably well in most of the sectors with the benchmark. Flu jabs, we have a facility where all employees can go and have flu jabs. Then we have things like the volunteering scheme where staff can have 3 days off, a year. They have 3 paid days a year to go and do volunteering within a local organisation. I would say there is a very big focus, certainly organisation level for well-being really across the organisation, and that will certainly apply in health as well.

Chair, States Employment Board:

You will see in the submission that the results of the Be Heard survey show a significant improvement on the 2020 results, which is a good thing and clearly a response to all of the initiatives that are now well underway. But I think Deputy Ward wanted ...

Member, States Employment Board (2):

Getting back to your original question was about the 13-hour shifts. We are talking about night duty. I think we should see the evidence and how often it is happening and really dig deep to find out because people do have a contractual right to have some time off, even on night duty, and there are facilities where they can have that break. Someone who has worked 12-hour shifts for many, many years, we always ensured whether you are working in the elderly area or wherever it is, is that you do have a break. It is important that the staff on the team do have that break, but there are exceptional circumstances where sometimes you have to work through. Say one of the member of staff has to go take a patient down to the General, it leaves you very thin on the ground. But those are usually exceptional circumstances, but we take on board very seriously if people are consistently working a 13-hour shift without a break. That is something we need to dig down and really look at the evidence and see what we can do, whether it is not enough nursing staff or, sorry, midwives on duty that night shift? We have to look at that.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think that is one of the reasons why we are keen to meet with the trade unions. When we meet with the trade unions, we have H.R. representatives there from Broad Street but we do not have managers there so they can talk openly to us. We met the nurses last week and that was not raised as a concern. They have every opportunity to raise whatever they want with us at those quarterly meetings.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, thank you. Unite, in their submission, referred to harsh dismissals fostering a culture of fear among employees. Are there plans to review the dismissal procedures to ensure fairness and try to rebuild that trust?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Yes, absolutely. One area that we found when we arrived was the whole disciplinary process was a concern to us. The length of the time it took for a case from inception to the conclusion was just not acceptable. So we look every month when we meet ... we have a dashboard, we do not know the cases but we know the length of time. We know the area that there is. We have put additional resource into that part of the organisation to ensure that we get good quality and timely interventions.

I am pleased to say that the number of suspensions, for example, has reduced. Suspension should be a last resort. It is a neutral act and it seemed to me on arrival that it was being used far too frequently as an easy option, and we had people who were suspended for far too long. There are times when a lengthy suspension cannot be helped because of other authorities' involvement in a case. But we have seen significant improvement in that area and the disciplinary ... all of the codes of practice were reviewed when we started, and those went out to consultation with all of the trade unions and other representative bodies.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Prospect noted also about the duration for cases being resolved and the impact that has on the mental health of people going through that. They believed there was a variation in the quality and accuracy of investigations conducted. They cited that rapid 5-day fact-finding exercises may undermine the seriousness of allegations. How are you taking that into account to determine how cases get handled?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We brought somebody in actually, a very senior person, for 6 months to help us oversee the case management. I think as a result of that person's work - they finished last month - but as a result of that person's work I think we have seen improvements. We have still got work to do in terms of training more people to do investigations so we are not waiting for someone to come back off leave, et cetera. I do think that we have made good progress in that area.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

Sorry, Chair, can I just say? It did not dawn on me before. I have sat on disciplinary ... chaired disciplinary panels. One did result in a dismissal but that was 2021. There have been others which have not ... so, I should just say that. I do not know if it is a ... I should just let you know that they are historic.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

That is helpful, thank you very much. Last question from me before moving on, on this. Professor Hugo Mascie-Taylor, in his submission, identified a complex disciplinary process, particularly for higher-level positions. He noted a lack of H.R. professionals with relevant experience in H.C.S. Could you tell us how the Government plans to simplify those processes and bolster the expertise that you have, particularly for H.C.S.?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think it was last week, we were recruiting for a senior H.R. person to work within H.C.S. We recognise that is a challenge for us as an organisation. I am going to look over my shoulder to get confirmation. Was it last week?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Last week we were interviewing for somebody senior to work directly in H.C.S., from a H.R. perspective.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, thank you. Any supplementaries in this section? No. In which case, over to Deputy Feltham for the next section.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Since the people and culture review in 2021, what specific changes have been made to the Government's grievance disciplinary and appeals procedures?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I do not know the specifics but what I can say is that all of the policies were reviewed. All of the policies went out to consultation. Perhaps we will ask Mark to come and describe the specifics because, once I have read all of those policies, I could not tell you the differences.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I am Mark Grimley, chief people and transformation officer. Following the publication of the new codes of practice, all the major policies were reviewed. We simplified them. Very often multiple policies and procedures were used, which complicated and truncated the process. At the very start, we have introduced the 5-day fact find, which I know some of the trade unions welcomed and others have said that they have some concerns about it. In the main, what that has done is allow us to look at whether or not it is appropriate to use resources for a formal investigation or whether there are other ways of dealing with that. I think that has been beneficial. What we have also done is introduce single procedures. Rather than having different ways to investigate or different ways to undertake hearings, we have got a standard procedure now for those. We are also very clear about how employees are represented, how they can present themselves and how they can appeal. So it is a much simpler process now than it was.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Have you seen any tangible impact? Can you describe because obviously the process has changed. It sounds good. What have been the tangible outcomes of that?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

The general feedback is that the 5-day fact finds are welcome because it means that we are not taking people through longer processes unnecessarily. We have also introduced, particularly where there are concerns about conduct or behaviour, a mediated approach. So using a specific technique that allows people to try and resolve their differences rather than go through an investigation; that can sometimes be counterintuitive to try to resolve issues. Everything we have done is to try to move it towards the positive so there is a resolution. There will always be times where people have behaved inappropriately or not done what they should and there will be sanctions for those. But we think that we are treating people much fairer now. The feedback generally is that it has been welcomed.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you. When it comes to the members of the States Employment Board, what metrics and methods do you have that are presented to you to assess the effectiveness and the fairness of the policies and procedures?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We have a monthly dashboard which reports on things like suspensions, tribunal cases, capability matters, absence, bullying claims, any serious concerns. We see that every month and, therefore, we are able to track if there are any rises. We get that by department so we can see if there is a problem with a department. We get quite good visibility on that.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

That sounds quite quantitative. How do you assess the quality of what is happening?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We do not get involved in individual cases. There is that fine line for us. Because we get a report on a monthly basis we are able to see each month whether there is a trend going up or down or if there is anything that is concerning to us. As I said, one of the things we found was the volume of suspensions originally and the length of suspensions was a real concern. After discussion, we brought in a senior person to put some focus on that very area, and we also employed additional people within the P.C.S. (People and Corporate Services) team to focus on that, support the departments. We have seen a decline in the amount of suspensions, and certainly the length of suspensions, as an example.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

How are you given confidence that the processes and procedures are applied consistently across all of the different departments?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Again, that is one of the benefits of talking to the trade unions because if they have got a concern, they are able to raise that concern with the States Employment Board without the managers being present. The director of People and Corporate Services is not present at those union meetings either. It is very much a straight across the table discussion and we are trying to build confidence there. We have asked on occasion for unions to give us examples of policies they use in other jurisdictions, for example, and that has been fed back to the department and was involved in some of the policy development.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. You mentioned the officer that was not there at those meetings. Who does attend those meetings?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

The people that are in place for the employee relations .. I forget the ...

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Head of Employee Relations.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Head of Employee Relations.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you. Then all members of the S.E.B. (States Employment Board)?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Yes, and we generally get good attendance. Clearly, people's diaries are busy but we generally get good attendance at those meetings.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Can you tell us a bit more about what checks and balances are in place to prevent any potential misuse of power in disciplinary procedures?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

That is operational. What I can say is we have not had any feedback to suggest that has happened. We do have an appeals process and we do, ultimately, have a tribunal process, which is independent of us. I am pleased to say that the amount of tribunals that we are involved with, while it is still higher than you would want, for an organisation of our size it is not unreasonable. But one is too many and we have seen a decline in the amount of tribunals that we are involved with.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. I think Deputy Millar earlier mentioned how important it was to look after the well-being of people that were going through disciplinary cases. How do you handle cases involving the varying levels of severity? What efforts are made to ensure that the case resolutions are timely? You have mentioned the 5-day fact find, but how do you get assurance that everything has been timely and that the mental health of the parties involved is not being adversely impacted?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

One thing that we learned about the suspensions was that we were not doing as well as we should have in terms of keeping in touch with the employee. So by putting additional resource into that area we have seen an improvement in that. But we do not get, as I said earlier, involved in the operational detail with each line manager or with each department.

[9:30]

We do have trust that the team that oversee that, they come and speak to us. We get an update each month from somebody from the area who will give us an oversight, an overview, and we place our trust in them. But, again, the check and balances, the dialogue we have with the trade union.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Taking all that into consideration, do you have any other ways that you collect and incorporate feedback from the employees involved? You have mentioned some of those other stakeholders but are there any other stakeholders that you involve when collecting information back on the disciplinary and grievance process?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Not as a States Employment Board. I do not know if the department ...

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

It is all in the process.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Deputy Ward, for example, used whistleblowing as an example. If an employee came to you with a case that they were concerned about in a sense of a whistleblowing, is that something that the States Employment Board would look at?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We would point them in the direction of the whistleblowing policy. Again, we do not get involved in the cases. That is not our role so we would be directing them to the chief executive.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

Could I just add, from experience of having and, again, it is about a year-and-a-half old now, 2 years old, of having staff who are subject to a disciplinary procedure. I am aware that counselling can be available if somebody is finding it particularly stressful, but counselling has been made available to that individual ... if the whole situation is such that it is affecting mental health then counselling has been made available. Also sometimes where you have not quite a grievance, but in the early stages, I have had the union involved. A couple times the union has come in and has come to a meeting with the member of staff to help deal with issues. Where there is a workplace issue that is not quite a grievance but is a bone of contention, the employee can bring a union representative with them to have a meeting with the manager. I find that to be very helpful.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I know that myself and Deputy Ward would have been very involved in those types of instances. Given the importance of the unions, and you have mentioned the unions quite a lot in these answers, what steps do the States Employment Board take to promote union membership to new staff coming on board?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We discussed that with one of the trade unions who were not involved in the induction process. They are now part of the induction process. My background, I have worked both sides of the table, I have worked partnership work, and it is something that I am very passionate about. Sharing challenges with trade unions at an early time can help because often the staff have got the answers. We are really keen to promote partnership working in its truest sense. I think membership of a trade union is down to the individual, but it is something I always recommend. I was a trade union member for over 30 years, including when I was a junior manager. I think where it has been identified to us that the union has not had access to new starters we now do that. If you read the Infrastructure submission, you will see that the trade unions are now invited to the inductions.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

It sounds like a number of staff potentially missed out when they started knowing. Are you confident now that all staff know that they can join a union and what unions they can choose? But it is a choice, you are quite right.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

With respect, I think that is down to the trade unions to sell themselves to their prospective members. We do not go out promoting trade union A or trade union B. You will be aware that in some areas there is more than one trade union representing the same profession. It would be wrong of us to go promoting trade union A against trade union B, for example.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I was not suggesting that for one moment.

Member, States Employment Board (2):

It was just a point that you raised earlier: how do we get involved with individual cases? But we would be conflicted so if somebody does contact we certainly say: "Well, I am conflicted but you need to go back to your trade union who can be very helpful in supporting you at this time." That is why you pay your union dues. You would always try and get them to do that and to do it in a good way and a very supportive way, which will help. It is awful when you feel that you are on your own. But if you have your union representative, it speaks volumes. It really is helpful for that individual.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

The other thing is about the importance of inductions as a whole, and we were shocked and horrified that one area of the organisation had stopped inductions. That has been rectified because we think inductions are a vital part of the process of an employee's time with an organisation. If you take them on and do that thoroughly and properly, there is more chance of that person staying with you for a longer period of time, so we rectified that pretty quickly.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

One of the unions, Prospect, emphasised the importance of appointing a chief executive officer committed to a reasonable tenure and focused on strong, supportive relationships with employees. What criteria are being considered in the permanent C.E.O. selection process to ensure this kind of commitment and focus from the next incumbent?

Chair, States Employment Board:

I think we touched on this on Friday, in the last hearing, but culture is an important part of leadership and leading the public service. Therefore, we will be looking for candidates who can demonstrate that experience and ability.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

To Deputy Andrews now for the next round of questions. These are about employee well-being and culture, which I know we have touched upon in previous questions, but there are some more to ask as well.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Thank you very much, Chair. I would just like to ask firstly the States Employment a question about the Maternity Unit. I know it has been acknowledged that there has been a change in senior management. However, how is the implementation phase, in terms of the changes that we are going to see, going to be reported to the States Employment Board to ensure that employees' well-being is absolutely prioritised?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

While the Health turnaround team have got a lot to do, the Maternity Unit, if it is not at the top of their list it is very close to being top of their list. There is an awful lot of work going on there, not only from the chief officer but the lead clinician and the lead people person. There are a lot of good things happening there. Again, as I said earlier, changing a culture takes time, but I am hopeful that we are now moving in the right direction in that part of the organisation.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

I know it was identified with some of the submissions to the panel, especially from the unions, about the difficulties that some employees face in raising the concerns that they have. What do you feel potentially could be implemented to maybe provide a broader array of opportunities to raise those concerns, and it may potentially be through another individual such as a manager, for instance?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

What we can do is check with the management - the deputy chief executive who the speak up person reports to - that they are spending enough time in that area. We just make sure that they are visible to that team.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

I know as well, you touched on earlier, that the States Employment Board on a monthly basis will have view of all the statistics in relation to tribunals and suspensions. What do you make of the data that you have appraised to date since the States Assembly reconstituted?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I would say that the data is getting better. I think it is fair to say that when we started we challenged some of the data. I think the Connect I.T. (information technology) system is going to help us in that area. I have always taken the view that what gets measured gets done. Data is not just about producing numbers, it is about what you do with that information. As I said earlier, when we saw the data, we analysed that, we were concerned about it and so we put in extra resource to put focus on one area. We would do that again without a shadow of a doubt.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

When we are speaking about all the different government departments that we have in place, are there any particular departments that stand out for being rather problematic, and what strategies do you have in place to then address those problems?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I like to think about the positives but you cannot ignore the challenges that we have. H.C.S. has certainly been a challenge but I think we should give credit to the people that work in that area, particularly the leadership in that area who are taking things on and making progress. Clearly, we still have a challenge with our teaching colleagues around pay but we are making super progress when it comes to the terms and conditions discussions, for example. I mentioned at the outset about the additional resource we have employed to helping schools and that work continues, and that is direct feedback from employees. Often the public service is talked down and we have some fantastic people doing fantastic work each and every day, and we should be proud of those people. We should be promoting that. The strapline that is used for the public service careers is “extraordinary every day”. We need to get behind that.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Absolutely. I just also wanted to touch on staff burnout because I know that can be obviously a very difficult problem to encounter. I was wondering how predominant that has been across the organisation. If it is predominant, what measures have been taken to support those employees?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We have seen huge efforts over 4 major incidents in the last 12 months. One thing that we are very conscious of is ensuring the well-being of the people that have been involved, be that their physical well-being and/or their mental health well-being. There is an awful lot of work done by the teams in that area. The Chief Minister might want to talk about that because she is closer to it than I am. But as someone that used to work 80, 90 hours a week, I vowed never to do that again and I do not expect other people to do that. We saw only 2 weeks ago with the storm, fantastic effort by people. You cannot be out with a chainsaw for multiple hours without putting yourself at risk and other people at risk. We are very conscious, and that is just one example, but the Chief Minister can talk to you

about some of the work that is going on in terms of supporting those people who have been involved in other incidents.

Chair, States Employment Board:

I think we talked about this, again, last week when I was before you on the same subject. I just agree with the comments of the Constable in terms of the incredible efforts that we have seen and the way the public services stepped up and shown the community how well trained and committed they are. The Recovery Co-ordination Group that has been working since the terrible events of December and then February, of last year, have been focused on the impact upon colleagues, particularly those who are in first responder roles who were very early on the scenes at Haut du Mont. We have made a considerable investment in providing additional support to help those people after what was a really harrowing experience.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Thank you very much, Chief Minister. I just also wanted to look at the way how Government potentially will restructure some areas, and that can be a very strenuous task in itself, especially for those who have to be responsible for that transition. What have you, as a States Employment Board, seen from any restructuring within Government? Also, how is the well-being of those senior officers monitored?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

The one change that we have been instrumental in is moving the People Hub from Customer and Local Services to People and Corporate Services because we wanted to ensure that the whole of the people element from start to finish was under one umbrella. I think that is probably the biggest change that we have done. The Cabinet Office has been introduced. But in general terms, the majority of those people are doing the same jobs but under a different name. The Delivery Unit is a change. It is using existing headcount and we have seen some real progress. I mentioned earlier about the recruitment. We also saw some great work done around the accommodation, which are 2 areas that the States Employment Board are responsible for.

[9:45]

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Are you of the view, when we look at some of the departments, at the moment there are obviously quite a considerable number of vacancies. But is that also placing a considerable amount of stress on some employees who are then having to undertake more work than they would ordinarily as well?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We are really focused on not only recruitment but retention. For us retention, it is no good bringing people in if someone is going out the back door as the first person arrives in the front door. Retention is really key, and I think there is a lot of work done to ensure that we get retention. What concerns me most is the demographic of our workforce. The demographic of the Island is a concern, but the demographic of the States' employees is really concerning. So there is a huge amount of work being done around encouraging younger people and encouraging Islanders, as a whole, to join the public service. We have seen an increase in the amount of interns. We had almost 100 applicants this year. We offered around 80, and we placed 67. That compares with 34 in 2021 and 41 in 2022. We had a 194 students take part in Project Trident last year. The vast majority of those were placements in schools. We have to encourage the government departments across the board to take young people in, particularly Health. If we want our youngsters to get involved in health, then we need to find ways of getting youngsters into the health service to see what it is like and experience it. We have a lot of work to do there and to encourage our young people that are returning to Jersey or staying in Jersey and taking a career with us is a good thing, and that is why we need to get behind it.

Chair, States Employment Board:

One of the specific initiatives that is underway in Health at the moment is introducing the nurse associate programme, which enables people to train on the job as nurses rather than having to go elsewhere to pursue a degree qualification. But I can point you again to the submission. I think the Recruitment and Retention section, page 14, and again, the turnover, particularly the tables on page 48, I think show some of the progress that has been made, particularly in difficult areas, where turnover is starting to drop among doctors and consultants, nurses and midwives, and in teaching roles as well.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Thank you very much.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

One last one.

Member, States Employment Board (2):

Sorry, I was just going to say, certainly information that has come from our interim chief nurse is that we have 25 people going to be commencing their nurse training, and some of that will be mental health. That is only to be applauded, to be well into double figures. As a Jersey-trained nurse, I am absolutely delighted to see those numbers coming up and that we are going to home grow our nursing staff.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you. Again, final question about culture from me here. But in terms of employee-led networks, would you look at those groups and evaluate their success in any way and make sure they are meeting their purposes? How do you engage with those?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

How do I engage with those? I spoke at one of the conferences earlier this year. We have quite a number ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sorry, which one was that?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

The Courage to Be Yourself. That was a terrific event. We had an event 2 weeks ago, which unfortunately I think the States Employment Board were meeting, so we were unable to go there. I think the key for us is that they work together, these groups, because there are a lot of similarities. There are similar challenges. I know that the teams do work together. What is encouraging is the volume of people, our employees. I think there are around 1,400 people that are involved in the various groups, but we could ask Mark to give us more detail if that would help you.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I think so.

Chair, States Employment Board:

The very number of people who are joining these networks and attending them, I think, is a real statement of their purpose and benefit.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

The whole purpose of the employee-led networks was to provide voice to different groups within the organisation. It is about engagement. It is about recognition. It is also about education. One of the areas that the groups are encouraged to do, as the Constable has said, is about intersectionality; making sure that people hear stories about real lives as opposed to just one perspective or another. Part of their success is in their membership, but other parts of their success are around their ability to educate, to inform, to be part of policy making, and to ensure that as an organisation we are welcoming and inclusive. The employee networks are intentionally-led by employees as opposed to, very often, organisations who have run them themselves. That is because we took a policy decision that they should be challenging the employer as opposed to just there as a means of consultation. They are a very active network. They have been very successful and very visible.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think the other thing I would like to add is allyship. It is not just the people who are in the network. It is about encouraging our employees to support these people and support these initiatives. We introduced for the first time an allyship award in the Our Stars awards. The groups are not just limited to the people that are involved in the group. It is really important that we recognise the support that people around the organisation give these people and these groups.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is there anything particularly tangible that you would point to as a success that you would attribute to the work of those groups?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

There is quite a bit. I think the first thing is in developing our policies, the groups have been able to be involved in workshops to make sure that we consider different perspectives as we look at making changes across the organisation, that they inform how we can do that better without excluding people. Networks have also informed, for example, the development of the connector system to make sure that it is accessible, and also in terms of supporting policy development. There are very practical things that they do. The main purpose of the networks, though, was to raise visibility and ensure that voices were heard, and I think that is happening.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, thank you. Over to Deputy Feltham for the next round of questions.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

We are going to talk a bit about employee surveys and feedback now. In our submissions, Unite has scepticism about the Be Heard survey results not aligning with feedback that they themselves have had from staff. What steps have been taken to ensure the credibility and representativeness of those surveys?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

The Be Heard survey, we had 1,000 more respondents this year, so that is encouraging. The survey is just the start of the journey, as far as I am concerned, whether it is a staff survey or customer survey, it is what you do with those results. We have seen encouraging results but we have a long way to go, I think, and we need to make sure that we maintain our position, if not improve our position. In some areas, we really have to improve our position. They are independently run, the survey, so they are anonymous. I am not sure what we can do to help the union's concern. I suppose the one thing we would encourage the industry to do is encourage more people to

participate. If they think that the results are different to what they expected we would encourage them to ... and we did encourage them actually, and a number of the unions did encourage their members to participate. Because the more people that do take part in our surveys, the better it is. We have introduced paper surveys. We have introduced translated versions of those surveys. But also we are encouraging departments to do pulse surveys, so do not wait until the next major survey. If you are working on an area let us see how we are getting on. Is it making a difference or is it not making a difference? I suppose another thing we could encourage the trade unions to do is to ask for those pulse surveys to take place in areas where they have concerns.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

You mentioned that there were 1,000 more respondents this year. What was the total number, just to give us a context?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I would have to look at my numbers, I am sorry.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. I think it is helpful just to have the context to know what percentage of staff.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

I do not think I would say, from having done them, there is no incentive for somebody not to do a survey, not to be honest in the way they fill it in, because it is completely anonymous. If the unions are expecting a bleaker view, that may be because they are dealing with a smaller number of people. Maybe the mass of people are not unhappy or do not have issues that the people that the union are talking to have; if you follow that. I do not understand why it would be vastly different because if someone is saying to the union: "I am not happy with this, that and the other" they can put that into the survey. It may just then be that the bulk of responses do not agree with that person's perspective, perhaps.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We had a response rate of 40 per cent, I will have to come back with you with the exact figure.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, thank you. It was good to get your perspective there, Deputy Millar. Obviously, there may well be some teams where there are issues or trouble spots or hot spots.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

Absolutely.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

The way that the results are delivered within teams and to teams, particularly in smaller teams, do you think that could have an effect on whether or not people are participating in the survey and being as honest as perhaps they might like to be? I think undoubtedly that could be the case if you have a very small team. But I do think the surveys are probably broad enough not to go into a small office team. They are broad enough in terms of the department. So you want them to be wide enough so you do not identify individuals, but small enough so that you can identify areas. It is a tricky balance. Mark can tell us more about the science of the survey if we want that. But we want the people to have confidence to speak up, to take part in these surveys. I think 40 per cent is a reasonable response rate. As I said earlier, it is significantly more than the previous Be Heard survey, but I would like to see that double, really.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

That is 40 per cent across the organisation?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Is that because some areas of the organisation are high performing in terms of filling them out and others are lower performing?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Undoubtedly so. For example, some of our colleagues do not have ready access to a computer and that is why we wanted paper surveys to be made available, we wanted surveys in different languages to be made available because we want to hear from all staff.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

My experience - again this is going back to the previous one - was that there was a lot of ... pressure is the wrong word, but encouragement from the organisation to managers and department heads to say: "This is the response rate so far, can we encourage people?" There was a constant encouraging of people to complete the survey either by direct emails or by encouraging managers to talk to the teams and encourage them. But some people just do not do surveys.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I was surprised that the last survey, a small department had more champions than one of our larger departments. I think we have that balance much better this time around where we have really gone out to get more champions to encourage people to complete the survey.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Given that we have heard that there are areas with fewer people, how do you assess the impact of those varying participation rates on the reliability on those general kind of outputs from the survey?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

There will be department results, which get cascaded down to the department. That process has started but I do not believe that it is finished. I think it is important that people get the time to analyse the results and identify where we are going to work on, what do we need to improve in that department? Because some areas may be doing great in one area but not as well in another area, and it may be the complete opposite in a different department. We really need to get down to those individual teams and areas so that we can focus on what are going to be the priorities. We have seen the progress that has been made, but some areas have got further to go than others. The Law Officers' Department are now recognised, and we have 2 other areas which are nearly there. But that means we have a number of areas that still have further to go. But I think the key is that we are consistent, that we do these surveys and we repeat them and we repeat them. But between the surveys we take actions to change the results.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So each team will get their results, they will be able to assess the results and then are you seeing the results at a team level?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We have not seen the results at a team level to date.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

But you will?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We will.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

I think as well, from the previous one, I know that some people, in terms of not completing it, and I think that something has been picked up, is that sometimes people find it confusing in terms of it talks about "your team", "your manager", "organisation", "leadership". I think some people in

previous situations have found it very confusing as to what they are being asked to comment on, because they want to talk about their department and their leadership and then think about leadership of the organisation.

[10:00]

They have no contact with the organisation; they feel they have no contact with the organisation as whole, if you like. So some of that can be quite confusing for staff, so I think that is just something we need to be always aware of, making sure that all staff will be able to complete the survey, not just get halfway through and think: "Oh, I am confused. I am not going to bother doing this bit" and the whole thing goes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. So we talked about departmental participation rates. Will there be transparency or greater transparency about which areas or which departments had better completion rates than others?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

There will be, but I think we need to go through the process of feeding back to those departments before we go to a wider audience. I think it is important that the people who took time to complete the questionnaire get to hear the results before we go publishing them to a wider audience.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, and then given that there will be, say, a team breakdown, and as Deputy Millar said, you know, one of the questions is: "How do you rate your manager?" effectively, how do you deal with the confidentiality of that kind of detail of information?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, I think we will have to ask Mark to explain to us the technicalities of how low it goes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Briefly.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Sorry.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So, as a principle, we have a number of 10 people in each team, so if it goes below that we do not publish their numbers. It may be identifiable. My team also do a quick spot check to make sure that

there are no identifiable features within those surveys and each line manager, if they have got a certain number of direct reports within their team, participate in what we call the M.C.Q. (multiple choice questions) assessment, which is direct feedback to the line manager, and we use that as part of our management development. It is always used for improving and better feedback. It is not used to identify problems.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, thank you. You may want to stay for the next question. We talked about encouraging more participation. One thing that may affect that is the timing and the scheduling of the survey itself, so what consideration was given to the timing? Also the other consideration - we have touched on it briefly - is around those members of staff who may or may not have regular access to a P.C. (personal computer) or a laptop, so the utilisation of paper surveys. What consideration and how did that work in practice?

Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, it did not work as well as we had hoped, using paper-based surveys, unfortunately, so I think the general view is that a different method ... we will try something different again next year, because we recognise that many colleagues do not have access to P.C.s or do not use them in their work life in the same way as many others will, and so we need to seek a different way of engaging with them.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

The first survey that was done in 2019 was administered from the centre and pushed out into the organisation. We take a different approach now, which is we work with line managers and service areas to find out what works best for them. In terms of the timing, you are absolutely right. This year the results were coming out just before the summer break, which meant that there was very little time for analysis. We had to get the poll surveys out straight ... or, sorry, the snapshot survey out straightaway. We are trying to pull it forward so that we get that sweet spot, because particularly with education and their term times, trying to do something in a summer term when there are exams is particularly difficult, but doing it just before Christmas in the first part of a term means that you do not have a good part of a year where you have had turnover in the school. So we are trying to get it to around about the March/April time.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, thank you. We are going to talk about service performance measures now, which is a different thing altogether. Can the States Employment Board provide detailed insights into your direct involvement and influence over any people and culture-related service performance measures?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

In terms of the measures, I think, as I said earlier, we ask for specific information at different times. We have our dashboard. I think one area we have put a lot of focus is health and safety. Health and safety features in the top 3 agenda items at every meeting. We will not let it go lower than number 3 because it is an area that we really, really have to work hard upon, and I think we are seeing good progress in that. Again, I attended a small workshop, which was the first time it had been organised for health and safety practitioners from around the Government, where they spent the day together. They had 3 excellent speakers - and myself, but they had 3 really good ones - and that is the start of a journey for that team. We want health and safety to get embedded right across the organisation, front line employees reporting not only accidents but near misses. It is really important that we can take near misses seriously because if we can avoid a situation, that is much better than having a situation. So I think that is probably the area where we have influenced, as much as in any area.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, and then when it comes to the quarterly service performance measures that come into the Ministerial delivery plans, how do you ensure that they are the correct ones from the S.E.B. perspective and what methodology have you used to ensure that the correct things are being measured on that quarterly basis?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, for us, we are evolving. We are 18 months in. I think things like turnover are key to us. We will probably look to change our dashboard as we go forward. That includes some things rather than others. We have put a huge amount of focus on the objectives and appraisals. A lot of time and energy has been spent there. We have invested heavily in the system. We have also invested heavily in training and development so that managers can give appraisals and objectives in a fashioned way. I think the other challenge we have is around the quality and the consistency of those, and that will be the next steps for us, is to look at the quality and consistency.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Who is responsible for defining what the measures should be?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, the results are the results. I think we have to be realistic with the nature of our organisation. We are never going to get to 100 per cent, but where we have got areas where we have got real concerns, then the chief officer and the chief executive is leading from the front with the E.L.T. (executive leadership team) to ensure that we get better take-up and also, as I mentioned, the quality.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, thank you.

Member, States Employment Board (2):

I was going to say, I do not know whether it is relevant specifically, but we cannot leave today without saying about Our Stars awards. I mean, if you are looking at about measurement, we had over 1,000 teams across our organisation and I think that is showing a lot of pride and a lot of growth, and that is something that needs to be applauded and not dismissed. We want to grow on that. It is also about when we have long service awards, where they had fallen by the wayside. It is about giving that feedback for the longevity of employment and it is an opportunity for all of the members of the States Employment Board to meet, sit down, have a chat and to say thank you, which is something that we do not say often enough. Certainly the feedback from that in particular is that it has been very positive. So if you are looking at about measurements and about investing, I think those are 2 elements which we cannot dismiss, because we are doing it for our employees, for our colleagues.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think when it comes to Our Stars, in 2021 there were 400 nominations, in 2022 there were 1,400 and last year there were 1,700 nominations. I think rather than the numbers, the quality of those nominations was fantastic and I am just pleased that I was not a judge. There were some terrific, terrific nominations from right across the organisation and what it demonstrates is the diversity we have in the disciplines that we have. It was absolutely fantastic to see that.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, thank you.

Member, States Employment Board (2):

Did that help? It was sort of an expansion of that.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you. So the final round of questions are going to refer to recommendations from the previous report, and we have obviously had a very comprehensive submission from the S.E.B. on that. I think before getting to specific recommendations on that though, the submission that we had from the S.E.B. did not refer to Hugo Mascie-Taylor's report into clinical governance arrangements within

H.C.S., so could I just ask what efforts the board is involved in to consider that report and how it is featuring into your work programme?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, I think the turnaround team is a massive investment from a government perspective. I have mentioned already the fact that we have got a chief officer that has come in with that, but also somebody from the people side. So we have worked hard to try and help in that area. I note from the Minister's submission about the P.59 process. We have seen dramatic improvements in the P.59 applications that we receive as a board. I do not agree with the fact that it is stated that it is a laborious process. It should be a fairly straightforward process, but we have seen massive improvements in that area.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The first recommendation in the previous people and culture review was around the minutes for S.E.B. meetings being provided on a confidential basis to this Scrutiny Panel. In your submission in September this year it was confirmed that that is something that is possible and happy to do, but as of yet it has not happened and we have not received any, despite numerous requests.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, I apologise for that. We are happy to share that. What we would like to do is an update, not the minutes, but an update on a quarterly basis as to what the States Employment Board have been discussing, not only for this panel, but for our employees.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. On those minutes specifically, have you got an up-to-date record of minutes and they are being approved at every meeting; there is not a delay in approving them? Is that ...

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Very much so. One of the first things we did was entered into a service level agreement with the Greffe, and so from January of this year we have seen a much quicker turnaround of those minutes, so I believe that we are up to date, or if we are not up to date we are one meeting behind, I think. No, up to date, yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Well, yes, expect another follow-up after this hearing so we can see those as soon as possible then because we have followed up a few times and not had any as of yet.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, I apologise for that. I am ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay.

Chair, States Employment Board:

Perhaps it is something to do with the redaction process. I am not aware of any request that I recall.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. You referred a few times to the regular meetings between the S.E.B. and trade unions and the implementation of a union framework, outlining consultation, negotiation and dispute resolution procedures. How do you think all of that has affected the relationship between the States Employment Board and those union representatives?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I would like to say positively. Clearly we are very conscious of the challenges we still have with the teaching unions. It is frustrating that we offered binding arbitration way back in June because we felt that was the best way, where somebody independent could listen to both sides of the argument. We are disappointed that they have not taken up that opportunity. We have further talks planned for this week with both of those trade unions, but in general terms I think we are building good relationships. I am really keen that we build trust, because with trust people feel confident that they can share concerns and ideas because a lot of the representatives, the national representatives, have seen challenges - similar challenges - that we face in other jurisdictions and we should be able to be confident that we can learn from those. As I have said earlier, I am a great believer in partnership working in the true sense of the word.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is there anything that you would cite as a specific issue that you have been able to address as a result of the work that goes on at these meetings?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, certainly terms and conditions for teachers, which did not feature in the pay talks. That should have been done in 2019. As soon as that was brought to our attention we said: "Let us do it" and we instructed officers to commit to completing that work as quickly as possible with that union. I think that is probably one of the biggest. We have concerns raised about the disciplinaries and, in particular, the suspensions. Again, we are seeing progress there, so there are a number of areas where we are making improvements. I think later today we are meeting with the civil servants and one area where we have been challenged is the representatives' involvement in the new States

building, for example. They were not involved. They raised that with us, they are now involved, and the same with the nursing unions, they will also be involved in the health facilities discussions as representative bodies rather than as individuals.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Are those meetings minuted?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We do get notes from those meetings.

[10:15]

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What is the process for approving those notes if they are not technically minutes?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We do not approve them. We share them. Those meetings, we ask the representatives for agenda items and we will put agenda items on from time to time, generally updates on things that we discussed previously.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Would it be appropriate for us to ask for those notes on a confidential basis as well?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I would want to talk to the trade unions first. I think we would need to get their consent to share them. I think that would be ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, fair enough. We will follow that up. The S.E.B.'s submission in reference to the response to recommendation 6, we are aware of recent enhancements to the people dashboard, which now includes trends and some historical data for monitoring H.R. management. How effective are you finding that tool in providing the S.E.B. with the insights it needs to inform strategies?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think, as I have said earlier in the hearing, the data is improving, the quality of the data is improving. We have had data collected in a number of ways in different departments and by us moving to the Connect system, I think we are going to see significant improvements there.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, but the S.E.B. submission to this review and the S.E.B. response to the original people and culture review highlighted historically poor data as a concern and grounds for not publishing data and the original response cited 2023 as a target in “achieving our vision”. However, the recent submission cites 2026 for this, so can the board confirm which trends and what historical data have been identified to date within that people dashboard?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think overall I would like to think that next year we will have the first full year of the Connect system, and I think 2025 will be the first time - perhaps not 2026, but 2025 - we should be looking to report that. I think if I give you an example around capability, so we get a report on capability, but people go through an informal process which we do not get reported and so we challenge how that is. We need to make sure that we are capturing the data from right across the organisation, and as I said earlier, it is an incredibly diverse organisation and we have different maturity in different parts of the organisation. The Connect system should bring it all together and I am confident that in the next 6 months we should see that getting better. I would like to think by the end of next year we will be in a much better place when it comes to data.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Responses that we have on this: “Provide completion dates that coincide with the end of the Government term.” How does the S.E.B. prep itself for the end of a term and the commencement of a new one, where there could be some change in membership and everything you will have done to induct yourself as members of S.E.B. and potentially new people taking over without disrupting some of the stuff that electoral cycles should not be disrupting? How do you approach that?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think as we have not got to the end yet, so I can only talk about the start for us. I think I will give you an example of the values. Clearly a lot of time and effort was put into developing the values, including workshops with staff and representative bodies, and we took the view that we should adopt the values as they were, rather than change them. I know we had a debate about that in the States, but I felt quite strongly. The only change we made is in the order of them, so that they now read A, B, C, D so they are easier to remember. So I think when a new board comes in, then they will look at the work of the previous board, look at the annual reports and make a decision. You will see from the recommendations of the last C.S.S.P. (Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel) the previous board rejected a number of them and a number of those we have looked at and said: “Well, that seems pretty reasonable to us. Why would we not do that?” So we have taken a different view.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Any supplementaries from you guys? No. In light of the original recommendation to publish a policy agenda focusing on good performance, how has the decision to continue with the current people strategy until 2024-2025, while planning for a refreshed evidence-based approach, aligned with the goal of ensuring that managers and employees understand their expected behaviours?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, I think it is key that you do not keep changing the goalposts, so I think we have got a great team in our organisational development part of the organisation, who are working incredibly hard with the business partners and the different areas. We should place on record the fact that the H.R. team are tomorrow up for a national award for H.R. team of the year, and I think that is a terrific endorsement to the work that they are doing. They fully recognise the further work that they have got to do in the future, but it is terrific that they have been shortlisted for that award. Strategic workforce planning is a big piece of work that is underway, looking at the demographics, as I mentioned earlier, of the workforce, looking where we need to train and develop. We are really keen to look at the talent that we have got, embrace that talent and help them to progress within the organisation, whether that is by staying in the department they are in or moving to another department, we see as critical for the success of the States employees.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Could you explain to us how the continuation of future refreshment will incorporate and communicate clear performance expectations and desired behaviours?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think it all comes down to leadership, and so we have to invest more in our leaders - there is no doubt about that, in my opinion - and that starts at the top. We spoke earlier about surveys and feedback. We are looking at the potential to do 360-degree feedback for our senior leaders. That is something that is normal in most organisations and I think that is really important. On a personal note, I have learnt a lot from 360-degree feedback, not all stuff I wanted to hear, but important stuff, and unless we are told we cannot change our behaviours. So the leadership is going to be the key to that, us to be able to deliver it.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. With this refreshment, there was the phrase "evidence-based approach" was used, but we have also just discovered concerns about the robustness of historical employee data and that not being reconciled now until 2026, so how do you have confidence in the evidence that you are collecting to inform that refreshment?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, I think what you do get with experience is you will have confidence in areas and other areas where you have concerns with and that will be the same with the robustness of the data, so I think that will come down to how we collate that information, where the information is coming from. The team are working really hard with the departments to ensure that we get consistent information back. In terms of performance, we have got people who do work that goes unseen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and their role is vital in keeping the business running, but also we change things and we implement new policy and procedures and that work is equally important.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

How does the involvement of the Comptroller and Auditor General from time to time in policy review contribute to the effectiveness and transparency of these processes?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Welcome it very much. So we are currently doing a review, which we are looking forward to seeing the output of, yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Has the S.E.B. met the Comptroller and Auditor General?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

We have not in the last 18 months, no.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. How is feedback collected through the gov.je platform utilised to refine and enhance policy implementation and review processes?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think when we started, one of the first things we did was looked at the policies. We were very keen that that went through the traditional consultation route, but also some of the groups that Mark spoke about from the D.E.I. (diversity, equity and inclusion) sector and so we need to embed those policies that we have just reviewed and take a view on feedback, whether we need to change them.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Any supplementaries on any of this? No, okay. The last question area to look at is about exit interviews and the S.E.B.'s submission referred to this in response to recommendation 16 from the previous review. Given that those interviews include questions about pride in working for the government and recommendations to others, how does the S.E.B. evaluate the depth and relevance

of these questions in capturing genuine employee experiences and particularly regarding treatment and workplace culture?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, on my to-do list I have exit interviews at the top of it. We need to do more face-to-face exit interviews, in my opinion. In fact, the Chief Minister and I sanctioned some work several months ago to be done in Health on exit interviews, which we were disappointed to find out had not been carried out. It is one thing to have a system where the employee who is leaving the organisation can opt in to complete that form, but my personal belief is we need more face-to-face interviews and that is not necessarily undertaken by the manager, who may be the reason why the individual is leaving the organisation, but unless we know why people are leaving, we will not be able to change that. But I think I will reiterate the point that the Chief Minister made about the low attrition rate that we do have in a number of areas, and that rate has slowed in recent times.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I appreciate getting the balance on this kind of thing can be difficult, but how do you put a process in place to make sure that a person who receives their exit interview is ... I mean, if it is to be face to face, to make sure that they are talking to somebody who they genuinely feel like they can be as frank and honest with? You mentioned some people might choose to leave because they do not get on with particular people that they work with, and if their exit interview involves those people, that might affect the tone of that interview. How do you get the balance right to make sure you are getting the most honest response as possible from those people?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Well, certainly within H.C.S. we have asked for an independent to do those exit interviews so that we can try to get the very best out of them, and we want a good sample size so we can identify trends.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Who is that independent, like what is their role more broadly?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

It will be a local company that we will bring in to do that.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

So we have had challenges around data protection, which I now believe are overcome.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

We have referred to the Health Department specifically there. What about other departments?

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Yes. I personally believe that we should do far more exit interviews and more detailed exit interviews. Some people leave for a variety of reasons. We had a colleague who left us recently who we all hope will come back and join us in the future and we fully understood their reasons for leaving; it was around career development. People leaving an organisation is not always a bad thing. We need new ideas, we need new blood in organisations, but equally, as Deputy Ward said, we respect those people who have worked for us for a long time. I think Deputy Ward worked for the States for over 40 years and I worked for over 37 years for one employer, so we recognise the benefits of long-term employees.

Member, States Employment Board (2):

Just to say that certainly ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sure. Deputy Ward and then Deputy Millar, sorry.

Member, States Employment Board (2):

Sorry, my apologies. Yes, certainly with my ex-union hat on, there was always a steady ... there were about 100 nurses a year, there was always that turnover because of retirement, starting a family and not wishing to come back at that time, leaving the Island or using Jersey as a stepping stone to go worldwide, because it was seen as a good safe place to leave home to come to. It was always around about 100 nursing staff on average, but what we had then is that we had nurses coming through and wanting to come to Jersey and there was more choice and a plethora of nurses worldwide. Things are very different now, where you have the turnover, but we do not have the permanent staff because it is a worldwide issue. But yes, there are a variety of reasons.

Member, States Employment Board (1):

I was just going to say, I think face-to-face interviews are always good, but certainly employees I think are able to do an online exit form and I have certainly seen some of those forms be very, very open and honest about the issues, to the extent that you have H.R. knock on the door, saying: "You have a problem down there. What are you going to do about it? We will do this if you do not." So they do ... even the online form can generate where they are picked up by H.R. and brought to the

manager above the manager who is being ... someone is exiting and saying: "I have got a real issue with what is happening in this team."

[10:30]

It comes further up, it can be escalated with a: "You have to go and do something here."

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is there the option to do that online form anonymously?

Member, States Employment Board (1):

I think it has to be not anonymous because they have to know who the person is and what department he is/she is leaving to understand ... to identify where the problem is.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

I think it is an area that we just need to put more emphasis on and respect those people who do not want to do it face to face, but equally give them the opportunity to do that and, you know, that is something we are focusing on.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sure, okay. Thank you very much. We have reached the end of our time and the end of our planned questions, so can I thank you all very much for your time this morning answering those questions, and of course thank you to your officer as well for his input too. Thank you to our officers for supporting us and all of the people who tuned in first thing on a Monday morning online to watch this. On that note, I call the hearing to a close. Thank you very much.

Vice-Chair, States Employment Board:

Thank you.

[10:31]