

YEAR 2000 DATE CHANGE: REPORT

**Presented to the States on 5th January 1999
by the Establishment Committee**

STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

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ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE POSITION REPORT TO THE STATES: DECEMBER 1998

Introduction

1. This report explains the preparations being made by committees and their departments to ensure that services continue to operate after 31st December 1999. The report also assesses progress since the Establishment Committee reported to the States on this subject in June 1998.

The Millennium date change issue

2. The computer systems of the 1970s and 1980s did not have the large amounts of storage space offered by today's technology. The Millennium seemed far away and, with storage space expensive, dates were often stored on computer using only the last two digits of the year. Much of the software dating from that time is still in use today throughout the world. If required to add, subtract or compare dates, computers may give incorrect or unpredictable results after 31st December 1999, and in some cases even sooner. The problem also extends to embedded chips. These exist in all computers but, more importantly, they perform control, protection and monitoring functions in factories, utilities, offices and even in the home.

Responsibilities of administering committees

3. Committees are individually accountable to the States for ensuring their IT systems and other processes operate correctly through Year 2000. The Establishment Committee has strongly recommended to all committees that they ensure they are fully compliant well ahead of the end of 1999, preferably not later than June 1999.

Additional role of the Establishment Committee

4. The Establishment Committee has corporate responsibility to the States for overall information technology planning. With regard to the Year 2000, the Committee has sought to -
 - promote awareness of the issue throughout the public sector;
 - encourage departments to adopt a consistent and systematic approach to planning and testing;
 - maintain an overview of progress throughout the public sector and report progress to the States;
 - promote awareness of the issue throughout the Island, working in partnership with representative private sector organisations and other interested parties.

Position at 31st October 1998

5. The October 1998 position summary (at Annex A) indicates that all committees have -
 - approved a Year 2000 compliance action plan covering their areas of operation;
 - satisfied themselves that they have the personnel and financial resources needed to achieve Year 2000 compliance;
 - determined the latest date by which they expect to achieve full compliance;
 - instituted a regular review of progress towards that goal.
6. The Establishment Committee is aware that extensive failure of any of the following essential services would have an immediate and major impact throughout the Island -
 - Police, Fire, Ambulance;
 - Harbours and Airport;

- Health and Social Services;
- Postal and Telecoms;
- Public Services.

7. The Establishment Committee is liaising with the committees concerned to -

- ensure that the Year 2000 compliance plan for every critical service is subject to independent audit. The Committee sees this as an important additional safeguard against failure of a service critical to Jersey.
- encourage committees to publish their Year 2000 compliance plans, to help reassure Island businesses and the public that essential services should continue to be available.
- determine whether Island-wide contingency plans need to be drawn up, in addition to those that already exist, to be used in the event of a critical service failing as a result of the Millennium date change.

8. The Committee will say more on these matters in its next report to the States.

Establishment Committee concerns

9. The October 1998 position summary (at Annex A) highlights revisions to some of the planned compliance dates, notified to the States in June 1998. In some cases, the revised date is significantly later than that previously notified. Some delays are only to be expected. Amending computer software takes time. Many committees require the services of outside contractors in order to undertake this work. Often those contractors already have heavy order books which means they can be prone to late delivery. Nevertheless, delay to such time critical work is bound to give cause for concern.

10. Committees should consider themselves at risk if they are not sure of being compliant by June 1999 and must take whatever steps are necessary to safeguard themselves and the States and public against further slippage.

Island-wide issues

11. Two bodies co-ordinate Year 2000 preparations at an Island level -

- A Y2J Group, formed at the initiative of its members (who include the Establishment Committee, the Institute of Directors, the Chamber of Commerce and the Jersey Federation of Small Businesses) aims to promote a Jersey-focused Year 2000 awareness campaign so that Jersey businesses and the community at large know what they need to do if they are to achieve Year 2000 compliance.
- A Jersey Millennium Infrastructure Group, under the aegis of the Policy and Resources Committee, identifies Island-wide initiatives which would help to ensure continuity of essential services during the period leading up to and immediately following the millennium date change.

12. The Establishment Committee is currently unable to assess the scale of the risk of one or more essential services failing as a result of the Millennium date change. An assessment of the key areas of risk facing the Island and its essential services, to be prepared in association with the Millennium Infrastructure Group, should be available during the first quarter of 1999. Given a possibility, however remote, of serious disruption, some kind of Island-wide contingency plan is likely to be needed.

Conclusion

13. The arrival of the next Millennium is one deadline none of us in Jersey can afford to miss. For this reason, it is incumbent upon every committee to undertake regular and rigorous appraisal of the progress it is making towards achieving Year 2000 compliance.

14. Committees are asked to review progress during February 1999 and forward a report thereon to the Establishment Committee by 1st March 1999 so that a further position report can be made to the States by end of the first quarter of next year.

Notes for October 1998 Year 2000 Position Summary

1. Driver and Vehicle Standards Requirement for a contingency plan will be determined when current system tests are completed.
2. Airport Two independent audits have been commissioned by a major airline and an international organisation representing the aviation industry. Contingency plans in place and will be reviewed.
3. Office of the Chief Adviser Would expect Computer Services to undertake any audit of the department.
4. Sport, Leisure and Recreation A meeting was held between Computer Services and Sport, Leisure and Recreation on 14th October 1998 to discuss the current Year 2000 status and the way forward.
5. States Greffe No date for expected compliance provided by department. Test procedures for Letterbox system to be arranged by the Computer Services Department. Consider that systems are compliant.