

STATES OF JERSEY



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MINISTERS: STATEMENT

Presented to the States on 9th February 2007
by the Council of Ministers

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

The Council of Ministers has discussed the tone and nature of the open letter to Mr. Brocken, which was issued by Senator Syvret last week.

The Council had a full and open discussion about the letter and whether it met the requirements of the code of Conduct for Ministers. The Council did not discuss the views on policy which were set out in the letter, because all members of the Council respect each other's right to hold and express their own views on such matters. The issue under discussion was the standard of conduct expected of a Minister of the States of Jersey. The Council has agreed a code of Conduct which was presented to the States in February 2006. In that code Ministers as elected members of the States and elected members of the Council of Ministers are expected to maintain the integrity of the States and in particular have agreed they should at all times –

- conduct themselves in a manner which will tend to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the States of Jersey and shall endeavour, in the course of their public and private conduct, not to act in a manner which would bring to the States, or its Members generally, into disrepute;
- treat other members of the States, officers, and members of the public with respect and courtesy and without malice, notwithstanding the disagreements on issues and policy which are a normal part of the political process.

The Council has agreed that the letter breaches the code in that it does not demonstrate an appropriate standard of respect or courtesy to members of the public and members of the States. The Council is disappointed with and disassociates itself from the tone and language of the letter. All Members of the Council of Ministers wish to assure the public and other States members that they will each individually strive to ensure that there are no similar breaches. They recognise that the role of Minister carries not only significant executive responsibilities, but also the responsibility of acting with courtesy and respect to all members of our Community. Senator Syvret has reaffirmed his commitment to work with the Council and operate to these accepted and agreed standards.

Senator Syvret continues to believe the letter to be legitimate free speech and therefore not a breach of the Ministerial Code. However he accepts that the Council of Ministers does not share this view and he respects the Council's right to hold a different opinion.

Senator Walker commented that he is "pleased Senator Syvret has accepted some of the wording used was inappropriate and could have caused offence".

Senator Syvret confirmed that in accordance with the code he will in future "endeavour in the course of his public and private conduct, not to act in a manner which would bring the States or its Members generally, into disrepute".

The discussion was extremely useful in that it allowed all members of the Council to assure themselves that they share a common commitment to continue to work together as an effective team in order to deliver the policies and initiatives agreed by the States in the Strategic Plan.