

2025.04.01

3.3 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Chair of the Comité des Connétables regarding fitness to drive medical assessments (OQ.78/2025):

Will the chair advise how many G.P.s (general practitioners), if any, are contracted or retained by an agreement with the Parishes to undertake medical assessments for fitness to drive?

Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade (Chair, Comité des Connétables):

I am grateful to the Deputy for his question. The simple answer is none, but notwithstanding that answer I am happy to respond to any supplementaries he may have.

3.3.1 Deputy K.F. Morel:

Would the chair be able to advise the Assembly as to where responsibility for the fitness to drive process, for want of a better phrase, lies? Is it with the Comité des Connétables or is it elsewhere?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

The responsibility lies with the Constable of the respective Parishes. I have to say at this point it is an area which exercises Constables quite regularly. It is a difficult decision we have to make. The last thing we wish to do is to remove people's driving licences but we have to be cognisant of safety on the roads, and we take professional advice from medical practitioners to guide us in making that decision.

3.3.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I did not know about this, so thank you to the Minister for raising this. My question to the Connétable is how do the Connétables know that they need to assess somebody? Is it for the person themselves to volunteer themselves to be assessed? Or how does this happen? Because if they are not willing to come forward ...

[10:00]

The Bailiff:

I am sorry, Deputy. I cannot let this question expand into a general review of how people's licences may or may not be removed by Connétable. The specific question was whether there were any general practitioners retained for that purpose. I think that question goes too widely.

3.3.3 Deputy J. Renouf:

Could the chair of the committee confirm that although there are no G.P.s contracted to work for the Parishes, do the Parish Constables, as a matter of course, consult with G.P.s or other relevant medical professionals when assessing fitness to drive?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Yes, we do. Clearly, we have to consult an independent medical professional. It will be inappropriate for us to consult the individual's medical adviser, so we do take professional advice from a professional who works with the States of Jersey Police and provides us with, we like to think, a good balanced review of the circumstances which, as the Deputy will appreciate, are all different.

3.3.4 Deputy J. Renouf:

Just to confirm, the professional advice that is sought is from one particular individual employed by the police, not from G.P.s or other medical professionals?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

No, that is not quite the case. We use a private medical professional who is also used by the States of Jersey Police. He is an independent medical practitioner, well experienced in this sphere.

The Bailiff:

Connétable of St. Mary, I had you noted down as asking a question. That cannot be right of the Comité des Connétable of which you are de facto a member.

Connétable R.D. Johnson of St. Mary:

Yes, I appreciate that. I withdraw the ...

3.3.5 Deputy M.R. Scott of St. Brelade:

Would the Constable please expand on the communication channel between perhaps a concerned member of a family who has a concern about her ...

The Bailiff:

No, I am sorry Deputy. That again goes into the general process and not the retaining of medical practitioners, which is what the question was about.

3.3.6 Deputy K.F. Morel:

While the comité may not retain any general practitioners, the Connétable has said that one is used by Parishes. Is the comité happy or content that this is a sufficient number to ensure a swift process for those people who are referred to the G.P. for testing with regard to driving licences?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I would say we are perfectly happy with the present arrangement. In terms of the response from the medical practitioner to whom we are referring, it is likely that the response will be within a week. Clearly, there are different circumstances with every individual who might be referred to the Parishes. We are not doctors, so we rely 100 per cent on the advice coming from medical practitioners. But in my personal experience, there are lots of variations on the reasons, and there will be outside influences which will contribute to that particular doctor's report coming back to us. He, in turn, may well request further information from other medical practitioners or specialists. In my experience and experience of others that the time spent on referrals coming back is not great and quite acceptable.