



Parishes and Government Review Panel

Public Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Monday, 10th November 2025

Panel:

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair)

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Vice-Chair)

Connétable R. Honeycombe of St. Ouen

Witnesses:

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier North - The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Mr. C. Beechey - Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence

Mr. C. Jackson - Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing

Ms. K. Briden - Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs

[10:30]

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair):

Good morning, everybody. Thank you very much. Today is Monday, 10th November, and this is a public hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding our scrutiny review panel which is examining the relationship between the parishes and the Government. So this meeting is being recorded and streamed live and the transcript will appear on the States Assembly website at a later date. If I could just check that everybody has their mobile phones and electronic devices switched to public ... switched to silent even, not public. We have approximately an hour and 15 minutes for this hearing. So if we can start with introductions, I am Deputy Helen Miles. I am the Chair of the Parishes and Government Review Panel.

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central:

I am Deputy Catherine Curtis. I am the Vice-Chair of the panel.

Connétable R. Honeycombe of St. Ouen:

Connétable Richard Honeycombe from St. Ouen.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Deputy Mary Le Hegarat, Minister for Justice and Home Affairs.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Chief Inspector Chris Beechey, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Chief Inspector Craig Jackson, Response and Community Policing.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Good morning. Kate Briden, Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you very much. Our questions today are really separated into 2 areas, that being the honorary policing system and also firearms licensing and certification. So I am sure we are going to end up having quite an interesting discussion. So, Minister, the first question from me: before we discuss specific operational and policy matters, we would really like to hear your general views on the honorary policing system.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Well, to be honest my knowledge was fairly limited until I joined S.O.J.P. (States of Jersey Police) and got sort of pretty involved with the Honorary Police, particularly while seconded to what was then the sub police station out at St. Brelade. Of course, you then policed the west of the Island. So my experience has been sort of fairly hands on from the point of view that as a police officer I worked alongside them. They were an exceptional resource for us at that time because you were often on your own. So in relation to road traffic management the ability to be able to utilise them was phenomenal. In the latter part of my career from the point of view of we used to do a tasking and co-ordinating group with the Honorary Police, so the Centeniers used to come and basically we would look at the intelligence and we would share ideas and opportunities. I think the honorary system in Jersey is probably one that a lot of the world would like to have as well, particularly when you look at the opportunities for diversion in relation to the parish hall system, which obviously there are a few little things that we are going to look at in relation to the remaining on ... when they do full

checks on people that might still show up. So obviously that is something that we will look at. But I think as an Island we are very lucky to have this resource.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. You said that you first knew about the Honorary Police when you started your policing career. Can you just tell us when that was?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

1989. I was obviously aware of it before then from the point of view of Centeniers, et cetera. Through the community around me I was aware of it, but the actual role and what they actually did, I think over the period of my time in the States of Jersey Police that has changed dramatically. So I think in the past it had been a fairly low level of input from the Honorary Police, but I think as things have progressed over the last ... well, it is now 35 years. I think it is obvious that their role has increased and they do a lot more and they are trained to a different level than what they were at the very start of it all. So I think the role has progressed significantly.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So what benefits do you believe then the Honorary Police provides public safety and community policing?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think they provide a lot of benefit from the point of view that they have a lot of knowledge and understanding of the community in which they live, because obviously they are living within those communities and there from a day to day basis. I think in relation to events they have taken on quite a lot of the responsibility for those events. If you look at things like the Battle of Flowers, Battle of Britain, previously all of that was actually done by the States of Jersey Police. As time has progressed, those events, a lot of them, have been managed by the Honorary Police, both within the actual ... as an example, with the Battle of Flowers, they are the ones that co-ordinate the movement of all of the floats. They are the ones that sit and monitor everything that is going on. Obviously, alongside the States of Jersey Police because any serious incident would be taken on by the States of Jersey Police. But the honoraries do a lot of work within the community but more importantly, as I said, they know the community in which they live.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you. Do you think the working relationship between the Honorary Police and States of Jersey Police is good?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I believe it is, but I think it is always going to be about different people, different personalities. We have 12 parishes, so we have 12 different Honorary Police units, if you like. So I think it is going to be dependent on personality sometimes. But I do think that the overall working relationship ... and I think there is a huge, significant acknowledgement from those both at the top and all the way through the States of Jersey Police of the work and the commitment of the Honorary Police and what they give to the community as a whole. There is a lot of work that goes on with those individuals and, of course, certainly in the past when the States of Jersey Police were running community awareness days or were running things within the community, that was all worked in with the Honorary Police as well as all of the other agencies. So the one thing that I am really pleased about, and you will be obviously, of course, is the Building a Safer Community because, of course, that is where we start to then get back into actually working more on a team dynamic. So any of the areas where there is concern, whether that be Havre des Pas, St. Brelade's Bay, Les Quennevais or First Tower, wherever those concerns will be, it is an opportunity having it under that umbrella to bring them all in together to work together. So I think it is ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Have you got any formal structures or documents or memoranda of understanding with the Honorary Police?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

There is a memorandum ... Minister, I am sorry, apologies.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, go for it. He is probably ...

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

There is a memorandum of understanding between States of Jersey Police and the Honorary Police. I think it was 2017. It is due for review and part of this year, back end of this year and beginning of next year, is a review of the memorandum of understanding, especially the slight change in operating practices for the States of Jersey Police. But there is technically an underlying M.O.U. (memorandum of understanding).

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you think honorary officers are aware of it?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

I believe so, yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. What about States of Jersey Police officers?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Certainly, within the community team. I would not necessarily say all police officers.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Because you have over 200 officers.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Because I think one of the things that we have heard, certainly from quarters of the Honorary Police, is that quite often some of the States of Jersey Police officers do not really understand the role of Honorary Police and do not really value the role of the Honorary Police. Do you think that is a fair comment?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

I would certainly challenge "value". I think, like the Minister says, the working relationship is extremely strong. I chair an operational meeting on a monthly basis with Chefs Camara and Bougeard and we chat about any issues, good working practices. Even Joao sits on our Quality Assurance Board with regard to our emergency services contact centre, control centre, so that we can feed any issues through the control room as well. I would not necessarily say, again, like the Minister alludes to, personalities, but I think that the actual working practices and the relationship is extremely strong. Even the chief chairs a meeting on a monthly basis with those 2 individuals, Michel Bougeard and Joao Camara as well.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you for that. You talked about training and you talked about the increased role of the Honorary Police from what it was when you started back in the 1980s. What Honorary Police input is there into States of Jersey Police training?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

So the actual input vice versa for Honorary Police into States of Jersey Police, I do not believe there is any established training. It is reciprocated that the learning department in States of Jersey Police do the training for the Honorary Police, but I do not think there is any effective on ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So how do States police officers then get to learn about the role of the Honorary Police, learn what they are for and what the history is, learn about their powers, et cetera?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

So that is through the learning ... their 20-week probationary period. So we know from January we have an in-house training programme. It is now 20 weeks. So that will be effective throughout their journey as a probationary police officer through the 2 years, through the basic foundations training through to their tutorship and then when they become independent, so throughout their whole journey. But effectively we can say, Chair, actually every day I think every police officer learns something new about the Honorary Police system, which is strong in tradition within Jersey.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But do you have an Honorary Police module as part of your training and development?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

I do not believe so, no.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So it is very ad hoc, very informal. They would learn from other officers on the job, as it were?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Nothing formal. Would you support making a mandatory module for Honorary Police training?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

I can certainly take it back as we are actually developing the training. It makes sense to, but I can ask our L. and D. (Learning and Development) to review that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Would you support that, Minister?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I have no issue with that whatsoever. I think there is a value to all new officers understanding the system properly and to be able to know that they have a valuable resource, but also they can

work together. Because quite often there is a need to work together to be able to get the good results that you get.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You have talked about your training for your probationary Constables but we know you have a high level of transferees coming in from other forces in the U.K. (United Kingdom), which might be accustomed to working with special constables. What specific training do you have for those transferees to induct them into the ways of Jersey?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

So they have a 2-week transition from U.K. law to Jersey legislation, which includes the tradition and the use of the Honorary Police. Again, I am not too sure if it is a formalised module but I can certainly take that back to L. and D.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you. I am going to hand you over to the Connétable now.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes. Minister, does the department have any oversight over S.O.J.P. control room procedures in relation to Honorary Police deployment?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think I will ask you, because there are, given the criteria in relation to force control room and the deployment, but I think Craig has probably got more recent knowledge than me.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Thanks, Minister. Connétable, certainly there is a deployment criteria, but as the Minister alludes, we have 12 Honorary Police parishes, so in essence 12 police forces, and each one operates on a slightly different basis. So there is not one formalised memorandum of understanding for deployment criteria as each parish operates differently. However, like I say, within our quality assurance board Joao Camara sits in that and feeds through any issues that we have across the 12 parishes with regards to deployment.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Do you think that the Article 5A, now it has been adopted by the 12 parishes, has that made any difference to you at all?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Yes. I certainly think them operating on a consistent basis will assist. I think it is too early to tell at this moment in time because it has only just been signed, but that will be monitored through the quality assurance board.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Because we have had quite a number of cases, certainly in St. Ouen, where the Honorary Police have not been notified of some serious incidents, one in particular that could have ended up in a fatality. If the Honorary Police had been called before ... well, they were not called, in fact. It would have made a huge difference to the result. I made a comment about that and no one has ever come back to me about it. So it does concern me that when we have a problem, when we have mentioned this to yourselves, we are not getting any feedback. It seems to be ongoing that when I was a Centenier we had a lot of problems with the force control room. They would turn the Honorary Police channel down. I have had to phone in myself to sign on and I know they are still getting problems now with that.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Okay. Well, I am aware of the situation you alluded to, Connétable, and we can talk about that out of this scrutiny panel if you wish to. However, like I said, the Quality Assurance Board is the governance board that deals with any issues and it includes anything that the Honorary Police need. It is fed through, through Michel Bougeard and Joao Camara, so apologies that you have not had any feedback but certainly that case has been discussed and fed through. I was led to believe that the improvement with the radio and Honorary Police being answered to I thought had got better. It certainly has not been fed back that it has deteriorated, so if it has not, please feed back through to the Quality Assurance Board and we can deal with that.

[10:45]

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It just concerns me a little bit where you say that each parish works in a different way. Surely that would not and should not cause a problem as far as the way that the force control room react to a problem. The way the Honorary Police work, they have their own way of working, but surely that would not affect your input or the force control room's input into an incident, for instance.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Well, it may do because if we have called St. Helier, for want of a parish, who would answer the phone and they have officers deployable throughout the day, some parishes will not have officers available during the day. As we know it is a voluntary sector, and if the control room try to call there may be no answer to the phones, could not get through because people are in meetings, et cetera.

As I say, with 12 parishes operating slightly different ... and if I can use road traffic collisions as a really good example where I think we could utilise honoraries more effectively and efficiently, but some parishes want to be called out during the day, some parishes do not want to be, and out of office hours. So it is slightly different within the control room. Within the control room, as you can imagine, it is a very busy place and we just need one operating and one deployment criteria across the Island.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

So do you think having the force control room now utilising fire, ambulance and police, has that been an improvement, do you think, or ...?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

So co-located. So the co-location certainly and operating on the different sides, yes. However, the Quality Assurance Board monitors the performance indicators from the E.S.C.C. (Emergency Services Control Centre) and more importantly looking at the efficiency and effectiveness of that control room. The issues that you have alluded to we are aware of and we deal with within that Quality Assurance Board.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Okay. Thanks. Probably the next question we have already gone through. Are there any written protocols for notifying Honorary Police of incidents in their parish? There is nothing actually written as such, is there?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

No.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

No. Okay. Has the department explored providing access to S.O.J.P. systems to the Honorary Police officers, for Honorary Police officers?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

What systems are you talking about?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Well, for instance, when again I was a Centenier and I know it still carries on that when you have been called to an incident in St. Ouen, and it could be a domestic, all we get is "domestic", or if we have not been called to an R.T.C. (road traffic collision), "R.T.C.", no information about it. Whereas if you look in the ... we have had the community officer up and I have mentioned a certain problem

that has been highlighted to me. He looks at his hand-held computer and it has all the details of what went on, who was involved, not that I get that information obviously because I have no policing powers, but it is just that there seems to be a bit of a gap and it is something I know we have been speaking about for years. I cannot understand why the Honorary Police are excluded from certain information that is available to yourselves.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

I think “excluded” is probably a strong word because obviously with regards to data protection and information-sharing agreements and digital devices, it is not just about the issuing of that device. There is a lot more with the foundations. So we need to make sure that the person or the individual that has access to it has lawful access, so within the parish and they are dealing with it. So it is a need to know, not a nice to know situation. We have a working group working with honorary colleagues with regards to making sure that colleagues have the right access to the right logs and the right information. But as I said, it is not as easy as just issuing the device. It is making sure that when it is lost it can be isolated; the governance around the data protection and the information is water tight as well. So we are aware of it and we are working to look at a lead to actually issue that across the board.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It just seems a shame there seems a huge gap, bearing in mind the vetting that all Honorary Police officers go through now. I can understand what you are saying maybe 5 or 10 years ago, but now everybody is vetted. It takes 8 to 10 weeks to get the vetting through, so it is obviously not something that someone just looks at and says: “Yes, that is okay”. It just seems a shame that there is this gap. I know when I was a Centenier it cropped up all the time where we were unaware of a situation. We could have had a situation where you have been to a domestic and there was a major problem and then we are called out a couple of days later to the same place not being aware of what has gone on a couple of days before.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Agreed, and we are working to minimise that gap as well, Connétable.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Okay. Super. Will the department fund I.T. (information technology) upgrades or hand-held devices to improve operational safety and information sharing between S.O.J.P. and the Honorary Police?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Are you talking about laptops and radios?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Laptops have been provided for Centeniers and we ... no, I am just looking at hand-held devices, which really leads on to what I was saying to Craig before that there is a lot of information that we should be made aware of when we are called to a situation. We do not know what has gone on before, whereas they can just turn up a log on their hand-held and it tells the history of what has gone on there, how many times we have been called out and what the problem was. So what we are looking to do, and it has been going on for a number of years, is for the Honorary Police to be issued with hand-held and have the same information that is available to the S.O.J.P. officer.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I see. Right, there is 2 different questions there. Access to information is what Craig was talking about previously. In relation to the funding for hand-held systems, of course, the States of Jersey Police are not responsible for the funding of equipment for the honoraries because it is not within the budgets of the States of Jersey Police. The Honorary Police sit under the Attorney General. As you will be aware, in relation to the funding of the laptops, that came out of the C.O.C.F. (Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund) We do not have a call on that funding either. It is the Attorney General and the Minister for Treasury and Resources. So, of course, from our perspective we do not have the budget to be able to fund that. So if the question you are asking me is should they be provided with up-to-date equipment, the answer to that is yes, the same as the laptops, but we as a department do not have the funding to do that.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

If it was funded by the Honorary Police, would you support the issue of those or are you still looking at potential of information that is being supplied at the present should not be supplied or cannot be supplied?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

I think like the Minister alludes, Connétable, the information security side we are working on with our information security managers and also the Honorary Police to actually how we can minimise that gap. But again issuing a device as well, it comes with funding but also the infrastructure behind it. So if it is lost or it fails, who is the support mechanism behind that? There is a lot to work out. It is not just the issuing of the devices. Again, it comes with the reoccurring financial funding of those devices when they come out of software or they get lost. Who funds and where is the funding coming from for replacement?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It is the same thing with the radios. All the hand-held radios had to be upgraded or ... I think it has been extended another 2 years, has it, I think now? Then they will be replaced. Again, there is an

ongoing question as to who is going to pay for those. It is just something that keeps being brought up to me all the time about these hand-held systems. I can see, as I say, that potential problems could arise, the fact that we are not having the information that we require, and I think it is something that I would certainly appreciate someone looking into and if we could come to a conclusion on it. Can you let me know your views on the current parish-based funding model for the Honorary Police? Is it equitable and sustainable?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

In relation to funding for what?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

The current funding model for the Honorary Police. Obviously, it is funded by parishes, is it not?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. Well, I think the thing is that that is the question, is it not? The parishes fund the purchase of a vehicle, for example, but I do not think that each parish actually provides the same funding. So I think that is a bit of a ... not an unanswerable question, but some parishes will pay officers for certain things, others do not. Some provide equipment, the uniforms, and the parishes buy the vehicles. The question is: as an Island, if we are going to keep the Honorary Police do we want to fund them in a different way? That would be a decision for the Island to make as to whether they would want to fund it in a different way. Because they sit under the Attorney General. They do not sit under the States of Jersey Police. So if they want to fund them in a different way they would have to all be funded in the same way. So effectively if you were going to have 12 parishes and you decide to fund them in a different way to how they are funded already, you would have to say, whichever parish, each person will get the same. So I do not know what they all get, but if you were going to provide the uniform, as you do with the States of Jersey Police - a police officer has 2 shirts, 2 pairs of trousers, a pair of boots or whatever - then each person joining the Honorary Police would have to have the same given kit. They would each all have to be ... if it was a set of this or a set of that, everybody would have to have the same. If you look across the Island, each parish has different vehicles. Well, if you were going to fund it in a different way and the parishes were not going to fund them, then they are going to have to have an agreement across the board that you will all have the same. Because at the moment obviously S.O.J.P. ... I do not know about now, but in the past the States of Jersey Police would assist the Honorary Police in being able to try and get good deals in relation to vehicles under the umbrella of what was ... and I cannot remember what they were called, but they were basically the central purchasing group here.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

That does not happen now, unfortunately.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, but the whole point is each different parish pays a different amount for their vehicle. So you would have to say, if you decided to go into a different model, where does the funding come from, where does it sit and how are you going to manage that, because you would obviously have to manage it in the same way. So each parish would get the same vehicle, each parish would get the same amount of ... everything would have to be across the board the same.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I do not think it has to be the same. I just think they would need access to funding. So I do not think it would necessarily mean every parish has to have the same car or every parish has to have the same uniform, but it would be access to the funding to support vehicles.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not agree with that at all, I am afraid, because I think if you are going to find a central way to fund things, then you would not be able to have a parish having a car that cost £40,000 and somebody that has one that cost £25,000.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But it would depend on an initial allocation. If there was a central fund that allocated a certain amount of money towards a vehicle, it would then be down to the ratepayers to decide whether they would purchase a van or a better quality of vehicle.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Well, potentially, I suppose, if the ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It is a different model.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Well, if the parishioners wanted to pay, but the parishioners at the moment pay, they decide what is going to be bought and what is not. It goes to the parish assembly, so they decide what they are or are not ... but there is a very different thing across the board as to what is and is not being paid. My view is if you are going to centrally fund them, then they should be centrally funded and they should be given the same allocation of funding. Because I question then, if you are going to go across and say there is an allocation of funding, where does that leave the smaller parishes compared to the bigger parishes? So some parishes may fund their Honorary Police in a larger way than some of the smaller parishes do now, so if you move it away from a parish funding then you then could end

up in a situation which would be not equitable because you would have some of the bigger parishes having more money to spend on a vehicle than some of the smaller ones. At the moment each parish decides. So for me, I have a different view. I think if you are going to fund it in a different way, then that needs to be across the board so that it is fair and equitable for each parish, not at all based on their size and ability to actually up the funding to get something better, in a better class. Because from my perspective, what you would have is you would have a parish that had this and somebody that had that. Then the public would say: "Well, hang on a minute, this is all centrally funded and this is what has happened here." Then to me that would make the system inequitable across the Island.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Why do S.O.J.P. now not supply uniform like they were doing 4 or 5 years ago? Because we are actually now funding from obviously retail companies in the U.K., whereas 4 or 5 years ago we were buying directly from S.O.J.P., which was ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I did not know it was ever bought from the ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can I just explore this issue about funding a little bit further? In the U.K. clearly you have special constables. The town is not expected to provide the cars, the uniform, the radios, the licences and everything else. Clearly, the Honorary Police is a very important part of policing and community safety to the Island. I think the fundamental question is ... we need the Honorary Police to continue.

[11:00]

I do not know if any work has been done to understand what the impact would be on States of Jersey Police numbers and the cost that it would have to increase those numbers in order to provide the service that honorary policing is already providing. So I think the fundamental question is we are not in 1900 anymore when there was very low cost to Honorary Police. Is it acceptable in 2025 that we are expecting the ratepayers to be funding, to the extent that they are, the provision of Jersey's supplementary policing force?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think, as I have said, I have no issue with a central funding system. All I was saying to you is that in my view it has to be fair and impartial across the board.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So are you saying that then you would support more funding ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I have no issue.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

... to go into the Honorary Police?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I have no issue. If the States Assembly decided that they want the Honorary Police to be funded ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But what are your views?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

For me, I think there is a value to the Honorary Police. I think there is an absolute value to the Honorary Police. I cannot tell you, because I do not look at every single rate, how much each parish spends on the Honorary Police. I have no idea about that. So, of course, the thing is as well if they were not funding the Honorary Police what would the ... as a parishioner, as a ratepayer, if the parishes were not providing the funding for the Honorary Police, the uniforms and the cars or whatever they fund, therefore what would the parishes ... would that mean that the rates would go down for the parishioners and, if not, what are they going to spend the money on instead? Because, of course, we are ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I think the issue is for you as Minister if the Honorary Police become more depleted than they are already, do you understand what operational impact that would have on States of Jersey Police?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Of course I do because I have worked with it for 25 years. I understand fully and I am saying to you that I would support central funding, but my idea of central funding is fair and impartial across the board. You would have to look at what was being funded through the parishes because if you are going to put it as a central fund I am asking the question: does that mean that ... because the money would have to be found from somewhere because ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Would you be prepared as Minister for Home Affairs to put it into your budget?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I would not mind if it was in the budget, but the budget has to be provided.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Would you argue that you want that money provided in your budget as Minister for Home Affairs?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I would have no problem with it at all. The only trouble is who is going to manage that budget. Because at the moment ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I think that is getting into the detail.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, but obviously that detail is important.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So in principle you would be happy to put ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Makes no difference to me whatsoever.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

... funding of honorary policing ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Makes no difference.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

... into the Home Affairs budget. Thank you.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

To give you an idea, this year's budget for the Honorary Police is £26,000, plus we have just spent ... bought another car, which was £54,000.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But that is the Parish of St. Ouen.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It is, Parish of St. Ouen. No, I am just giving an idea. Mary was not sure of the money that was being put in. A lot of the parishes pay a lot more. Whereas before when we used to buy a car, it was bought through the States of Jersey Police, but I think the way you fund vehicles now is more on a ...

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Leasing framework.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Lease, yes, which is not a way that the Honorary Police ... I remember bringing it up a couple of years ago, whether it was a way that we could sort of tag on to getting cars through yourselves as we did before.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the thing is that what is fundamentally important is that if the parishes are currently funding them, does this mean that the parishes will be charging less rates to the ratepayers? Because what we will be ask ... no, I think it is important because what we are asking is we are asking as an Island to fund the Honorary Police, which is fine, no problem with that. However, if the parishes are not funding them, what does that mean to the parishes? Does that mean that ratepayers will be paying less? Because I think the thing is from the public's perspective ...

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Potentially, yes.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

That is why I am asking the question because from the public's perception, if they are going to have to pay for the Honorary Police and the States of Jersey Police, where do they see the benefit?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. I am going to move on to Catherine's questions now. Thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, I have some questions about recruitment and retention. But first of all I would just like to quickly come back to something that the Connétable was asking about, which is about the gap in information received by honorary officers about a particular incident compared to States of Jersey Police officers. I just wanted to ask: do you think that that could put those honorary officers in danger potentially if they do not have the information about what they are going into a property for?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the thing is that we need to establish if this is an ongoing occurrence. I think that Craig can probably answer that better than me. I think the point is as well there needs to be proper agreement as to what you would send Honorary Police officers to anyway.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

But do you think it could potentially put them in danger?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

I do not believe it puts them in any increased danger because the information at a time of their being deployed at the time through the control room, they are getting the up to date risks and information about that incident. I think with the Connétable it is the information that you get live time on mobile data. So they are still getting the risks, the warnings through the emergency services control room centre about that incident they are dealing with. So any risks of the nominals within that are addressed as well. So I do not think there is any increased risk. They are getting the same information that a States of Jersey Police officer would have at that time.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so they would not be going into a property where they did not know, for example, that there had been a domestic incident or something?

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

No.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

The only time that can happen is if we are phoned directly or contacted directly and then it is down to the Honorary Police to say: "We have been called to such and such domestic", then they will say: "There is a firearms licence there" or: "That is drug related." So we do have that information, I must admit.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

Yes. If the control room does not know that you are self-deploying, for want of a better phrase, then it could be a risk there, but if the control room know and they are deploying them, then I think the risk is the same.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you. So if I just get back to these questions about recruitment and retention, Minister, do you think that government employees who wish to volunteer as honorary officers are supported consistently across departments?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I would not be able to say if they were consistently. I know that there is a number of people who are actually in the Honorary Police. However, of course, they still have a day job, like most Honorary Police do. So in relation to them being able to be called out from their work, I would imagine that it would be based on the nature of the event that it was. Because you cannot have somebody doing a job within the States of Jersey or in anything else to be called out to deal with a minor road traffic collision, for example, because they do have day jobs. I think the difference with what it was historically to what it is now is that, the same as with the States Assembly, people were in the States Assembly unpaid and they basically had a business. I think the Honorary Police has changed significantly from what it was in the past. So now people have a job, so it is a lot more difficult to be able to deploy Honorary Police officers during the week, unlike what used to happen.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you think that needs looking at a bit more about how government supports its own staff who wish to work in the Honorary Police as well?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it is very difficult, is it not, because I think the support can be there but it depends on the role of actually what the person does. So you might have somebody who works in the hospital. You might have somebody who is working as a controller in the force control room. You might have people working in critical areas that are not going to be able to leave their post to be able to go and deal with something as an Honorary Police officer. So I think it is very difficult to have a collective type of scenario.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Are there plans to provide practical or financial incentives to encourage volunteering?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not think that that has been considered because the point is that if you are going to do that, then that does not mean it is any longer an honorary system. So I think you need to be careful about how you actually do decide how you are going to deal with this moving forward, is my view.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. So sort of leading on from that, does the Minister consider the voluntary model sustainable for the future because now, as you have mentioned, so many more people have jobs, perhaps, rather than in the past running their own flexible business? Is it still sustainable for people to just be volunteers without support?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it is sustainable. I just think that in reality you are not able to deploy the Honorary Police as much as you used to in the past because the dynamics of it has changed. I think as well that the role has changed significantly. I think Craig had mentioned earlier to me that the exact criteria of what they are deployed to needs to be redefined as well. The thing is if you end up paying people, you will end up in what is the same as the U.K., which is your specials, because they are paid.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So you would not be in support of payments for honorary officers?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the thing is that I would not say ... from my perspective, you have to look at what would you be paying and therefore if you are going to be paying a significant amount of money, is that extra necessary or should you actually be increasing the amount of police officers you have in the States of Jersey Police? So you cannot say one thing without looking at the other is what I would suggest. You would have to look at the whole thing and decide. If you are going to invest and start paying the Honorary Police, then what are you going to pay them and how are you going to balance that against whether you should actually be just having more States of Jersey Police officers. I am not saying that that is what I would want because I actually think there is huge value in the Honorary Police.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. So seeing as there are pressures on honorary officers and the recruitment of them, would you have any plans to actually look into that?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think there is no issue with looking at the sustainability of it. I could not actually say how long this has been going on, but I think it is because of the fact that people have jobs and are not able to be deployed as easily as they were in the past. I think we need to accept that that is reality and it may be that we need to adjust our thinking and actually what they are deployed to do.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. So I have a few questions more about the oversight and so on. So how do you view the balance between parish autonomy and government oversight in policing matters?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

What exactly are you asking there?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So it is about policing matters and where does the oversight lie. Is it in the parish or is it more in government?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Well, the deployment of the Honorary Police is overseen, if you like, by the States of Jersey Police because they have deployed them to something. In relation to what they voluntarily do in relation to speed checks and road checks and all of that, the States of Jersey Police and the Honorary Police actually closely liaise with one another to do those pieces of work. So when you are talking about ... the Honorary Police basically tell S.O.J.P. what they are doing. I cannot say at the moment whether they still task and co-ordinate in the same way as they used to, but certainly from the point of view of the oversight, the States of Jersey Police will know what the Honorary Police are doing because the Honorary Police will tell them. But they are not in control of them because they are not managed by them. This is very different to the U.K. because in the U.K. specials are managed by special ranked people, alongside they are deployed under the umbrella of the place where they are. Whereas here the Honorary Police are not managed by the States of Jersey Police.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So you think that works well?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it works ... I have no issues. I do not know whether any of my colleagues have had issues with how they are deployed or how it works.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

I think the operational practice actually works very well, but as the Minister alludes, we are not in control of the governance and the oversight of the Honorary Police system.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Would there be a role for the department to advise parishes on best practice for things like recruitment and training?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the thing is that there is a working relationship between the Honorary Police and the States of Jersey Police in relation to probably not so much the recruitment and selection but certainly from the point of view of when they are recruited and whether they ... and I think Craig is probably going to be able to explain better in relation to the actual facilities that are offered for new recruits.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Do you mind, Chair? Just an observation and on that point, I think I would refer to one of the questions that you posed us in the written submission around how do the States of Jersey Police see the role of the Honorary Police. Everything I have heard today, whether we look at training, equipment, M.O.U., money, strips it right back to a fundamental question in terms of how does the Island wish its Honorary Police service to ... or what function do they wish the honorary service to perform?

[11:15]

Because, of course, it is very, very difficult to develop or enhance a relationship unless we, the Honorary Police and the States of Jersey Police and Government, fundamentally understand exactly ... or not necessarily exactly but the role that the honorary officer or the parish is going to adopt at any given time, because then we can develop or we can enhance a relationship that we already have. I have been now in Jersey for 28 years. I have worked with specials in the U.K. Prior to that I have worked with the Honorary Police service. I see huge value in the honorary service, but one of the questions I always come back to is I think if we put a straw poll and asked the public and the parishes the role of the Honorary Police, I think we would get lots of different answers. I think we could fundamentally enhance everything we do with the honorary service. If we are able to bring the function a little more central in terms of understanding exactly what the parish and the honorary officers do at this moment in time, today, tomorrow, and it goes back as well, does it not, to the recruitment question, how would we recruit an honorary officer tomorrow? What would we say? What would we say we are going to ask them to do? I think if we posed that question we would have a number of different answers. I think to try and answer all of your questions this morning, if we were able to get a more consistent view in terms of what the J.D. (Job Description) would say for an honorary officer tomorrow I think it would vastly improve everything that we do on a daily basis.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Because, of course, each parish does provide a different service, I would suggest.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

But that would maybe suggest something more consistent, yes. That is very interesting.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Some of them, I think they see it completely differently. From certainly the west of the Island they all work together very well. They are always out. We had 2 or 3 units out on Saturday and Sunday this week and they work with St. Peter and St. Brelade. But some of them do not do quite as much, so ...

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

I think they all do a huge amount but it is in terms of then you might, for example, then look at the information sharing. Because, of course, information sharing with one particular function is very different from another function. You have to have a tiered approach. You have to look at why you are sharing information at any given point in time, depending upon the function that is being supplied. But I think if it goes back to the recruitment question, would St. Peter or St. Ouen recruit a different volunteer tomorrow compared to St. John? If they were, then how do we best apply our processes to those different relationships?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, that is quite a challenge, though. There is all these different ways of doing it in each parish, yes.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I think that is why the Article 5(a) is going to be such a bonus. It has taken 10 years' hard work.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

It is stronger together in its consistency and collaborative approach and that is it.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes, I think it is very good.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The question you have to ask is that if you are asking people to volunteer for something, do they have to all have the same criteria? Because different people may want to do something different.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just coming back to the question, I asked about the role of the department to advise parishes on best practice, which we were just discussing on recruitment and so on. We have heard about the States of Jersey Police and what they do. Is there something more that the Home Affairs Department itself could do because of this lack of consistency and so on, bringing things together?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not really know what you are asking me.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I am asking you if there is more that your department could do to assist the States of Jersey Police and the Honorary Police in these difficulties around inconsistencies.

Chief Inspector, Response and Community Policing:

The Learning and Development Department within the States of Jersey Police provide training for Honorary Police officers. It is on a voluntary basis. It is not a pass or fail, it is an upskilling and education. In short, for a States of Jersey Police officer it is over 600 hours contact time over a 2-year period and then after that it is another 112 hours of training, which is scrutinised, and it is a pass or fail. However, for an honorary officer it is 28 hours over a couple of days with development days and development opportunities for scenario days, which is feedback and development driven rather than a pass or fail scenario basis. But if you were recruited as a States of Jersey Police officer it is a pass or fail with consistently being developed and analysed. States of Jersey Police do provide the upskilling and training for honorary officers; however, it is on a voluntary basis.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. The States of Jersey Police have that role. I just was trying to find out if the actual Minister and the department would take some leadership on this issue where there appear to be issues with lack of consistency and recruitment issues.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Do you want me to come in, Minister?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, sure.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is not something we have turned our attention to so far. Obviously, we have regard to the outcome of the panel's review. I think where we are active in this space is through the Building a Safer Community framework. There is good engagement from Cirsty de Gruchy Moseley, the co-

ordinator, with the chefs and increasingly across different parishes, really primarily to build understanding of the framework and also respond to feedback from the Honorary Police through the chefs, that they do not really know what it means yet, which is understandable because it is beginning to make a difference and make an impact. We have seen various pockets of activity, like the engagement in St. Brelade's Bay and also Havre des Pas around antisocial behaviour and littering concerns where the B.A.S.C. (Building a Safer Community) framework provided a vehicle for everyone involved in that to get together and properly understand what the problem is and then agree on solutions. I think the more we do work like that, the more the department can have a role through the Building a Safer Community framework in helping with some of the inconsistency. But that is on that level rather than on an operational policing or training level and certainly not anything to do with resourcing of the Honorary Police. That is not area we have properly considered yet.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Can I just ask you, Craig, you mentioned that training is done voluntarily. In what respect? Because the Honorary Police pay the States of Jersey Police for the training and basically without the first induction they cannot operate as an Honorary Police officer. The problem at the moment is that the training is ... and we have got 5 new officers to be sworn in, we have had vetting back on 3, we have not 2. The next training is in February. Now, if we miss that because it is getting full there is not going to be another training period for months. I think there is another one in about September. That is a problem that we are finding because we would not put anyone out on the street, as it were, without the correct training and correct procedure using radio and things like that. Again, that is something that we are doing ourselves, as I say, but it is a cost to the Honorary Police and it is a shame there is not more of it, really.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the difficulty is that because of the way the Honorary Police work is that literally every other week there is somebody being sworn in in the Royal Court next door from whichever parish. Of course, to be able to provide the training you cannot sporadically do it. There has to be some sort of identification that you are not going to be able to do it every other week.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

No, no, I see that, yes.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It is the same as recruitment of police officers. That is why we ask for 10 because you recruit them all, you do all their training, and then they have a programme over the 2-year period.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Of course, that is the problem because it is February and September but in actual fact there will be people probably every week, but there is, literally, all the time a turnover of Honorary Police.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. I am going to move on to firearms certificates now. I think some of the remaining questions we can either put to you in writing but I think you have answered quite a lot anyway. Minister, firearms certificates. As we know, the number of active licences is 1,096 with the number of firearms and component parts totalling 8,243. As we know that the Connétables are responsible for granting firearms certificates, we are really interested to hear your views on the governance and management of firearms certificates and how effective you think the current system is to ensure public safety, consistency and proper oversight across the Island.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

As you are aware, I asked the Connétable of St. Ouen if he would do a piece of work and, in fact, we have a meeting later today in relation to some of those things in order to alleviate some of the concerns in relation to numbers that are out there. I am going to ask Chris, who leads on the firearms element of it, to run through what his perception of it is.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Thank you, Minister. Yes, we have been working very, very closely for many years with the Constables, whose responsibility is, of course, to license firearms. Of particular note is that in September last year we determined it was right to have a conversation with the Connétables about opportunities to reduce the risk, perhaps is a good way of putting it, that I think all the Constables and ourselves are acutely aware of. Before we did that we did some research with various incidents, albeit not in Jersey because, thankfully, we have been spared such a matter. But if you look back at the history in the U.K., all the way back to Dunblane and since, there have been a number of coronial reviews that have been adopted on the back of such tragedies, all of which come to the very, very similar conclusions, the main one being that firearms licensing is complex, is really complex. It is important that those who are responsible for that ... and this is why we are doing the work with the Connétables, is that there is clear guidance about how to license a firearm. There is clear guidance that was adopted by the Connétables a number of years ago and is regularly updated. That has to be the first point of reference when looking at any form of licensing. Inquiry, administration, good decision-making is fundamental when looking at entrusting anyone with a firearm. Training and accreditation is important and the Constables work very closely with the States of Jersey Police and we regularly discuss particular cases. Then through all of that work it is really

important that we focus on a manner in which or the ways in which risk can be reduced. The work that is currently ongoing between ourselves and the Connétables is looking at a number of different ways to further improve the situation that we currently have.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you for that overview. Do you still think it is acceptable in 2025 that the Connétable of the parish is the one that grants the firearms certificate?

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

I think that is a difficult question for States of Jersey Police to answer. The law states that the Connétables are responsible for issuing the licence. The States of Jersey Police, its function here is to administer the Central Firearms Index. Through that function we have regular conversations or our firearms registry officer has regular conversations with the Constables and the staff within each of the parishes collectively to adopt the best practice that I had previously spoken about and the requirements of the law.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You talk about the best practice guidance, it is not statutory, and clearly, Minister, you have said that the Firearms Law review has been postponed. Given the postponement of that law review, so that we would be changing the Articles in law to do different things, how are you ensuring that the current system remains effective and responsive to emerging safety concerns?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think, first and foremost, you are right in relation to the legislation. That is why I asked the States of Jersey Police and I asked the Comité des Connétables to see if we were able to do something. Because there was not going to be sufficient time to be able to do the whole overhaul of the Firearms Law. The Constables have made some suggestions, along with the States of Jersey Police, to be able to reduce an ability to have large quantities of ammunition and other things. The process is ongoing and, hopefully, will soon be resolved because we are obviously speaking to other parties as well. I think there is always going to be concerns about firearms. In the U.K. it is a different system to what we have here, but they still have significant incidents in relation to firearms. I am not an expert in firearms and so from my perspective, as I said, the other law needs to be updated.

[11:30]

When the law is updated it will need to look at all of these things in the round and make some decisions about whether there are things that we can do to make it better than it already is, having

done some of the work that we have been doing over last 8 months. I do not know if you want to add anything to that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

In relation to risk, at the moment it is volunteers, it is Honorary Police officers that are doing the checks, the physical checks on firearms, firearms licensees. Are you satisfied that those people have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to do those checks and to not be putting themselves at risk while they are doing them?

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Of course, under the law the Constable needs to be satisfied that the officers that are conducting those checks have the necessary skills, experience, know what they are looking for. That information then is fed back to the Constable for their decision-making process with regards to the licence. I think it is important for us all who are involved in firearms licensing. I would take it back to my opening piece around the fact that this is a really difficult and complex piece of work and responsibility, which is why in terms of the overall mitigation that we are trying to further develop with the Constables - and we have already spoken about a possible review of the firearms legislation in the future - it is really important to on every single occasion apply consistent decision-making to the rules and regulations and the guidance with regards to firearms licensing.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you, as States of Jersey Police, then have any role in the compliance with that guidance and how do you know that the person in a certain parish is doing the right thing when ...

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

We do not have a direct day-to-day involvement in those checks. We, of course, helped the Comité develop the guidance in the first place. It is the Constables who then use that document, that good practice guide, as their bible in terms of their decision-making.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Does States of Jersey Police ever ask the Connétables any questions about how they are each following that guidance when it comes to firearms?

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

No, that is not our role. But we have day-to-day conversations with the Constables with regards to perhaps a situation that the Constable wishes to discuss with us. I mentioned before that our firearms registry officer will probably speak to a number of different parishes on a daily basis to help the Constables in their decision-making. But all of that decision-making is anchored on the law and

all of that decision-making is anchored on the good practice guidance. The important thing is that through that day-to-day work that the 12 parishes make similar or the same decision in each given set of scenarios.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, the States of Jersey Police have no role in checking that.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

No, we do not.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, what I would say is that certainly a number of the parishes have, I would suggest, firearms experts within their Honorary Police remit.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is that experts through firearms users or experts through qualification?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

That I do not 100 per cent know. I would have to find out because there is a number. That is not all the case but there are certainly some that have a very good understanding of firearms. Obviously, from the point of view of what is being asked for and the conditions of ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you keep a register as part of the Central Firearms Index of the people who are inspecting premises and their qualifications?

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Not a register, no. If I spoke to my registry officer they would be aware of the individuals within the parishes, but we do not keep a record of that.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

There is one thing in this review that we have been doing that it will be mandatory that they do attend a course with Gerry Kova(?) (11:34:52) and so they would all be singing from the same hymn sheet.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Just for me to finish off this section ... sorry, it has just gone out of my head now. It will come back to me in a second. You go on to the questions.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I think that you probably answered most of this, Chris. Can you elaborate on the primary reasons for introducing new restrictions on firearms in Jersey? What specific concerns or incidents prompted this decision?

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

I think in 2 parts, the first part in terms of general themes I think I have already answered. This is a complex area. It is important that the same decision is made in any given set of circumstances, whether it be in one parish or another. It is all about targeting the risk. One of the key pieces of work that we are currently engaged with at present - and I know that the Constables are challenging, sorry, challenging in terms of promoting is a better word - is that currently 90 per cent of all certificates that are issued by the Connétables, it effectively states on the licence that the firearm can only be used on an approved range. One of the pieces of work that we are really clear on and we think would make a huge amount of difference in terms of the risk is that if the firearm is only to be used on an approved range, the question has to be asked: why does the person require ammunition at their home address? It appears to me, appears to the States of Jersey Police, that the Connétables are fully on board with regard to this particular element. This was introduced in Guernsey 15 years ago. That question is: what is the necessary reason for someone to hold ammunition at home, when 90 per cent of the time they can take their firearm to a range, acquire ammunition at the range, shoot the weapon and then take it home? In terms of reducing the risk, that fundamentally reduces the risk because if there is no ammunition in the home environment, then there is no opportunity for something that happens outside of the club environment. I think that is fundamental to this piece of work that we are working on at the present time.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it is fair to say that some Constables have already been doing exactly that anyway.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Which raises the issue about consistency again, does it not? Because if you look at a shooter, if you live in a particular parish and you are under a certain set of circumstances, but if you live in a different parish you may have another set of circumstances whereby you are able to keep ammunition at home, I think that comes back to the issue about the legislation and the kind of urgency for that. It has just come back to me what I was going to ask. At the moment the resource that you have dedicated to firearms in the States of Jersey Police amounts to one person.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Correct.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What succession planning have you got in place for that person who has been in post for a very long time?

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

We have just employed a new States of Jersey Police Firearms Index employee. We have already mentioned his name. Gerry had determined that he had spent sufficient time doing that particular role and was now moving on. We have a new incumbent by the name of Dan Robinson, who has already started. He is working alongside Gerry and is now fulfilling that role on our behalf. Gerry remains in the building and will be providing advice and guidance as we go forward. But there is a new incumbent, so we have already succession planned for a new officer into that post.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Fabulous, okay. In terms of advice and guidance, I think the public need to be quite clear that that is the only role for States of Jersey Police. The law says you maintain the Firearms Register and the incumbent has been going above and beyond to advise Connétables. One of the things that has come up across the board really is the use of medicinal cannabis. What advice is States of Jersey Police giving to Connétables about people who may be using medicinal cannabis and who are firearms holders?

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

We have not provided any formal advice in that regard. The Connétables, through their licensing process, have the ability to conduct doctor checks, which may very well be to the future question that could be posed through that checking process.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Because currently in the law it refers to mental health conditions, does it not?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, it does, yes.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

I would see that that would be the option to ...

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

If I could just add there that it is again part of the review that it is going to be the responsibility of the certificate holder to provide the information from the doctor, rather than the parish approach the doctor in the first instance. The doctor will have to confirm that the information that has been given

to us or any further information that we require will be given to us by the certificate holder. Also, with that is that we will also be requesting that the certificate holder supplies information from any clubs that they say they belong to and also the frequency that they use the club. Because, again, as we said before, if you do not shoot, why do you want ammunition? That is something that, hopefully, we can put to bed this afternoon.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Catherine.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Considering the lack of legal authority to suspend firearms certificates, because Connétables can revoke or refuse but not suspend them, what measures are in place to address situations where immediate action is required to ensure public safety?

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Should that information be presented to the States of Jersey Police, then we both have the power to enter a premise to deal with a particular situation in conjunction with the Connétables. While that particular element in terms of suspension is not possible, then the States of Jersey Police, working with the parish, would have the opportunity to seize the weapons and then to work with the Constable in terms of the return or not of those weapons in good time. There is opportunity for us to intervene in those particular set of circumstances and then we would work with the Constable in terms of how to best manage the situation thereafter.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so S.o.J.P. can step in and seize weapons if there is a need ...

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Yes, absolutely. Yes, yes, should we feel that is a threat to an individual. Yes, absolutely.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you. Connétable, did you have any further questions?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

No. I think a lot more will come to light once we have agreed the various bits and pieces that we have been looking at. As we said at the start, it will not affect the legitimate shooter but it will affect

the people that are hiding behind the club membership to retain firearms and ammunition. As I said, the Constables are fully briefed on what we need. I think we have done away with wish lists 2 years ago, although I must admit I am still seeing from some of the parishes still the number of firearms on there and something I am going to bring up at the next Comité des Connétables just to make sure that when the certificate comes up you just take it off immediately, when it is for variation we just take any wish list or ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Of course, this was just as an interim because of the fact if we are unable to do a proper new Firearms Law, because we need one.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Sorry, Chair, can I just add - and the Constable makes a very, very good point there - that the fundamental question that the Connétable must ask whenever issuing a licence is: is there good reason to hold a firearm?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

That is one thing that you came up with, it was good reason and reduce risk. That is the basis of our review, basically.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Do you have any further questions? I know we have come to the end of our time and we have one minute left. I think you have been fairly guarded in some of your responses around the provision of firearms certificates. Obviously, we do it very differently here from the U.K. In an ideal world, if we were working on a new Firearms Law, would the role of the parish remain to the same extent or would it be reduced?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Honestly, no. Because I think it should be a central location in order that it can be properly managed and it is fair and across the board. In actual fact, from my perspective, I think that firearms should be managed from a central location.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you very much for your candour. Is there anything else that the panel would like to ask us or tell us that we have not asked already?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not think so, no.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. In that case I shall draw the meeting to a close and we will switch the tape off.

[11:44]