



**RECORD OF THE MEETING
OF THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

**HELD IN STANLEY
ON 26 FEBRUARY 2010**

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HELD IN STANLEY ON FRIDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2010**

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

(Mr Keith Biles, JP, B.Sc., ACIB)

MEMBERS (Ex-Officio)

The Honourable Chief Executive
(Dr Timothy Rupert Thorogood)

The Honourable Director Corporate Resources
(Mr Keith Padgett)

Elected

The Honourable Janet Lynda Cheek
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Emma Jane Edwards
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Roger Anthony Edwards
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Sharon Halford
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable William Robert Luxton
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Glenn Ross
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Gavin Phillip Short
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

PERSONS ENTITLED TO ATTEND

The Attorney General
(David Francis William Pickup)

The Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands
(Commodore Phillip Thicknesse RN)

CLERK: Claudette Prior MBE

PRAYERS: Reverend Richard Hines

APOLOGIES: The Honourable Richard (Dick) Sawle
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

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**The Record of the meeting of Legislative Assembly
held on Friday 26 February 2010**

Prayers

Clerk of the Assembly

Confirmation of the record of the Legislative Assembly Meeting held on Friday 18 December 2009.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, I have before me the record of the meeting of 18 December 2009, I may sign these minutes as a true record.

Agreed.

I would like to draw Members' attention to two subsidiary answers that are contained in that record – the first one to a question by the Honourable Roger Edwards. Are you satisfied with that answer?

The Honourable Roger Edwards

I am Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker

The second one was from the Honourable William Luxton. Are you satisfied with that answer?

The Honourable William Luxton

I am Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker

Thank-you

Clerk of the Assembly

Papers to be Laid on the Table by the Honourable the Chief Executive

Copies of Subsidiary Legislation published in the Falkland Islands Gazette since the last sitting of the Legislative Assembly and Laid on the Table pursuant to section 34(1) of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance 1977.

- Taxes and Duties (Defence Contractors' Employees Exemption) Order 2009
- Road Traffic (Approval of Devices for Breath Testing and Analysis) Order 2009

- Planning and Building General Development Order 1991 (Leading Lights Direction 2009)
- Registration of Charities (Exemption) Order 2009
- Patricia Luxton National Nature Reserve (Chartres) Order 2009
- Patricia Luxton National Nature Reserve (Chartres) Regulation 2009
- Public Accounts Committee (Maximum Fine) Order 2010
- Public Accounts Committee (Registrable Interests) Order 2010
- Public Accounts Committee Ordinance (Correction) Order 2010

Falkland Islands Government Statements and Audit Reports laid on the Table in accordance with the provisions of Section 57 of the Finance and Audit Ordinance for the year ends 30 June 2009.

- Falkland Islands Government Currency Fund
- Insurance Fund
- Pensions (Old Scheme) Fund
- Capital Equalisation Fund

and for the year ended 31 December 2008

- The Retirement Pensions Equalisation Fund

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, I lay on the Table, the papers as listed by the Clerk.

Questions for Oral Answer

Question Number 01 of 2010 by the Honourable Sharon Halford

The Honourable Sharon Halford

Could the Honourable Glenn Ross please advise this House how many farms have received assistance for pasture improvement under the FIP programme and how many of those farms

- are now supplying livestock to FIMCo, and
- have achieved the 3 in 1 return that was anticipated?

The Honourable Glenn Ross

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, I am grateful to the Honourable Member for the question and to the Department of Agriculture for providing the answer, which reads as follows: “A total of 58 farms have used the Farm Improvement Programme (FIP) of which 55 have received assistance for pasture improvement. Of these, 49 supplied livestock to FIMCO in the 2008/2009 season. This represents 89%.

Part ‘B’ of the question – the answer to how many of the farms achieved a 3 to 1 return on investment is rather more complex. By way of explanation to others, this relates to the criteria against which applications for FIP funds have been assessed. Applications have to show that there will be a 3 to 1 return on the investment over a 10 year period.

In terms of assessing applications judgment has to be exercised as to whether the proposals are likely to result in a 3 to 1 return. The 3 to 1 target has been used for FIP assessments for six years, whereas the assessment over whether the target has been achieved is based on 10 years.

In cases where the target has been achieved within the 6 years of the current FIP, it is possible to be clear about that and it is possible to identify the proposals which are unlikely to achieve the target within 10 years.

The issue is further complicated as investment in pasture improvement is not a one-off process. In order to maintain the benefits of pasture improvement further inputs are required during the 10-year FIP period – an example being regular applications of fertiliser.

All FIP projects are monitored. However, monitoring tends to be more general in terms of gauging success or otherwise, rather than evaluating whether a 3 to 1 return has been achieved, which is linked to a longer 10-year period.

The results of monitoring are used to fine tune best practice strategies for pasture improvement and the future evaluation of FIP applications. The complexities of measuring the 3 to 1 return on investment are such that the Agriculture Advisory Committee have yesterday considered proposals to produce alternative methodology for the evaluation of FIP applications. And there will be further consultation with farmers on this.”

The Honourable Sharon Halford

I thank the Honourable Glenn Ross for his response and I am terribly sorry I gave him such a difficult question to answer. I am also very pleased to see the percentage of farmers that are supplying livestock to the abattoir after receiving the pasture improvement assistance.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members are there any supplementaries?

Clerk of the Assembly

Question Number 02 of 2010 by the Honourable Sharon Halford

The Honourable Sharon Halford

Could the Honourable Glenn Ross please advise this House that once farmers start down the road to pasture improvement how many years are they able to claim funding for and to what value, and do the Agricultural Department monitor the success or failure of each project and if so for how many years?

The Honourable Glenn Ross

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, once again I am grateful to the Honourable Member for Camp for the question and to the Department of Agriculture for providing the response, which reads as follows: “There is no limit as to the number of years a

farmer can access FIP funds. The maximum funding that can be accessed by any farm was £7,500.00 in the current financial year.

Each application is assessed on its merits, so each individual application has to satisfy the criteria for the allocation of farm improvement programme funds. The response to question 01/10 covers some of this ground.

The Department of Agriculture does monitor the progress and assess the future of each project. As indicated in the earlier response, it is not straight forward to assess the 3 to 1 return issue and monitoring focuses more on how successful the project has been generally.

Monitoring will continue for a 10-year period set by the FIP unless, of course, it is clear that there's nothing further to be gained by such monitoring. Equally, with approval, farm monitoring will continue for longer, where useful information can be gained and be applied to future projects. So there's no finite cut-off point in terms of monitoring.

The Honourable Sharon Halford

I thank the Honourable Glenn Ross for that reply.

Clerk of Assembly

Question Number 03 of 2010 by the Honourable Sharon Halford

The Honourable Sharon Halford

Could the Honourable William Luxton please advise this House of the current situation regarding the installation of television to camp and indicate when the project is now anticipated to start and finish?

The Honourable William Luxton

Mr Speaker, restoration of BFBS 1 for Camp is due to happen this month. The new transformer has cleared the manufacturer and is with MOD for air shipment. MOD bumped it earlier this week due to other priorities but tell us it will arrive next week. SSVC were on Mount Maria last week doing preparation work for its arrival and checking out the transmitter. When the transformer is in situation on the mount another restoration attempt will be made. Hopefully this time it will work but there is still a risk that it will not. If it does not more investment will be required, which at present is not funded and is not available within the TV budget project.

Regarding TV for Camp – the four channel digital services – satellite dishes are due to arrive by ship on the 26th of March. The first satellite dish installations in Camp will start shortly after this. On installation the householder will receive a decoder and a viewing card. Installations will commence on the West around Port Stephens, working upwards on the west, then across to the East, going south and then north to Stanley. Other islands will be done progressively in that direction. Overall installation west to east will be done between April and June 2010.

I would just like to add that with the early start on the West I think householders are well advised, if they haven't already done so, to get their concrete bases in place as soon as possible.

The Honourable Sharon Halford

I thank the Honourable William Luxton for this response but I think there is a slight anomaly there in the answer. If we are going to start this month and the stuff is not arriving till next week, then I suspect it will be next month they actually start. Could the Honourable William Luxton also tell us if there is going to be any charge for this service. Has this been discussed?

The Honourable William Luxton

The satellite dishes are due to arrive on the 26th of March and installation will be between April and June so there is presumably sufficient time to get those dishes out to Camp for the initial installations.

The question of a charge – media charge – is a matter for debate within this Assembly at the moment so following the budget session I think that will become apparent.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

I thank the Honourable William Luxton for the answer he's given on the television but it's not only television that we are going to be putting into Camp. It is a radio service as well. The current analogue system that is received in some areas of the Camp and other areas is still not being received will be allowed over a period of time to fade out and there will be no analogue broadcasting to the Camp. So my follow-up question to the Honourable William Luxton is: What is going to be put into its place? Are we going to have a digital audio broadcast system so that people can receive and pick up a digital system in all areas of Camp or is it only going to be a digital system available at the end of the pipe where your satellite receiver receives a digital signal? Perhaps he could answer the question on digital radio broadcasts.

The Honourable William Luxton

I think the Honourable Member knows well that at the moment there is no answer to that. The current system is working in some areas and not in others. At the moment there are no plans, to my knowledge, to extend digital broadcasting. I think this is something that has to be addressed in the fairly near future.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, indeed I did know that as an answer but I wished to make the point so that people are aware because I actually perceive television as being entertainment whereas the radio is essential information. And I think people would find it very difficult to live in the remote areas of Camp probably could do quite well without the television but without a radio as well I think would be very difficult. And therefore I hope that we get this problem resolved sooner rather than later.

Mr Speaker

Would the Honourable Member like to ask a supplementary question rather than make a statement?

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Perhaps the Honourable William Luxton would like to bring this to the House sooner rather than later.

The Honourable William Luxton

I thank the Honourable Member for that statement and question and I agree entirely. I think it is essential that we try to ensure that radio reception throughout the whole of the Camp continues. There are some areas without reception at the moment and I think it needs to be brought to the whole of the Camp population. I thank the Honourable Member for drawing attention to this.

Clerk of Assembly

Question Number 04 of 2010 by the Honourable Jan Cheek

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Could the Honourable Sharon Halford advise the House, what has been the annual cost of in-service training, including CPD, for Health Services staff in each of the last two years and how has that amount been split between doctors, nursing staff and other health professionals?

The Honourable Sharon Halford

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Jan Cheek for the question and, obviously, the Medical Department for giving me the answer.

The Health and Education Department is pleased for the opportunity to reply to the question. UK health bodies now have the requirement for their professional staff to demonstrate that they have undertaken continual, professional development during specific time frames in order for them to remain registered. The Falkland Islands Government has supported their staff in this. CPD indicates to the health bodies that the professional is working to continuously improve and develop themselves in line with relevant and up to date practice.

Alongside this the Health Service has developed staff locally using the National Vocational Qualification systems.

The majority of the funding approved over the last two years has been for the CPD requirement to enable all professional qualified clinicians to maintain their registration. Funding has also been approved to allow two members of the nursing staff to go to the UK to work towards gaining their qualifications as a Registered Nurse.

Their entrance qualification was gained through the NVQ system. One of these staff members qualified as a Registered Nurse in 2009.

In house mandatory training days for all employees are also provided. The hidden costs for these training days are the staff time as well as the training resources required. However, the benefit is that staff can work safely within the policies of the health service. The majority of these costs are absorbed through the KEMH budget. In the 2008/9 budgetary year the cost for this training amounted to just under £52,000 and in the current year it's just over £29,000 a considerable cut but perhaps that is down to the budget.

Both these totals are broken down as follows:

- For GPs, for which there is a contractual obligation, in the last financial year it was just under £15,000 and this year it's about £4,500.
- For Nurses, including Registered Nurse Training, last year was just over £22,000 and this year it's been about £19,500.
- For the Dental Department it was just under £2,000 last year and only £60 this year.
- For Allied Health Professionals it was just over £1,500 last year and £600 this year.
- For other staff, it was around £2,500 last year and £1,500 this year.
- For the engineers, £9,000 was spent on training last year and £3,000 this year.

The Honourable Jan Cheek

I thank the Honourable Sharon Halford for her reply.

Clerk of the Assembly

Question Number 05/10 by the Honourable Jan Cheek

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Could the Honourable Glenn Ross advise the House if there is full cost recovery for veterinary services, including inspections to the agricultural industry, meat production, and to the fishing industry? If not what is the annual subsidy cost to each of the above?

The Honourable Glenn Ross

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members I am grateful to the Honourable Jan Cheek for the question and once again to the Department of Agriculture for providing the response. I should warn people that the answer contains a word that I find difficult at times to pronounce – it's veterinary. English is my second language and at times I trip up so if part way through it I refer to the vet's surgery not because the Department of Agriculture became informal but because I have given up trying to pronounce it.

So the response reads as follows: Costs relating to all domestic small animal clinical work at the veterinary surgery in Stanley are based on full cost recovery. The current

schedule of veterinary charges generally result in full cost recovery where services are supplied specifically to the meat production and fishery industries. There is some scope for reviewing charges in relation to export certificates.

Some services are provided on a developmental or trial basis and these are not always charged at full cost recovery rates at the outset. In the case of meat production there is full cost recovery on the provision of the Meat Hygiene Inspector and the official Veterinary Surgeon. In a similar way, the charges apply to fishing vessel inspections and transshipment inspections should result in full cost recovery including travelling time.

Charges applied to the agricultural industry cover costs in relation to drug usage and clinical procedures. In the case of farm visits, the cost of travelling time and travel are not fully recovered. So overall cost recovery in this sector may be around 50% as an estimate.

In terms of the Veterinary Section Budget, the overall budget shows revenue accounting for 40% of the total expenditure.

The nature of the veterinary task is such that not all the time can be charged to individual customers. And that's a very significant overhead charge to be added into the charging structure.

The Veterinary section also spend time working on issues relevant to the Falkland Islands Government including welfare, clothes, legislation in relation to fisheries and the abattoir, import and export protocols, care of the sick, wildlife in conjunction with Falklands Conservation, other more general veterinary issues, which again could not necessarily be charged for any particular sector. There is also a general research component which does not involve cost recovery but which should produce future benefits.

The Honourable Jan Cheek

I thank the Honourable Glenn Ross for his most comprehensive reply.

Clerk of the Assembly

Question Number 06 of 10 by the Honourable Jan Cheek

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Could the Honourable Gavin Short advise the House, what has been the cost to date of ferry terminals including work to improve access roads and what is the estimated cost of completing both terminals and their access?

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Mrs Cheek for her question and I am indebted to the Director of Public Works for the reply he supplied me with.

The Capital Expenditure to date of the ferry terminals and associated works to form and upgrade access roads linking to these is the terminal's permanent and temporary works £2,138,000 Roads – construction, upgrading and capping is £1,190,000.

The projected further cost of capital works is for the ferry terminals is £752,000 and that's for the construction of the permanent terminal at Port Howard.

Moving on to roads, which gives a figure of £1,218,000 and this is for the completion of capping to Newhaven this season and of the remainder of the road from Port Howard to Fox Bay to remove the need to place a 15-tonne weight restriction on those sections of road in the winter and to enable year-round freight container haulage from Stanley to Fox Bay via ferry terminals.

This makes a grand total of £5, 298,000 actual and projected expenditure.

The Honourable Jan Cheek

I thank the Honourable Gavin Short for his reply.

Clerk of the Assembly

ORDER OF THE DAY: BILLS

Public Accounts Committee (Amendment) Bill 2010. This Bill is being presented under a Certificate of Urgency and will require a first reading.

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker I beg the first reading of the Bill and I will be asking my learned friend, the Attorney General to explain the details.

The Attorney General

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill seeks to amend the Public Accounts Committee Ordinance which came into force on the 1st of February 2010 in response to representations made to the Government from the Members of the Public Accounts Committee.

The main purpose of the Bill is to make two changes to the arrangements of the Committee that were set out in the Ordinance. The first was to give the Committee a limited power to enter into contracts in its own name in order to carry out its functions. An example would be a contract with a person, for that person to act as a secretary to the Committee. The Ordinance contains no such power, it being envisaged that all such contracts would be entered into by the Government on behalf of the Committee.

The second is to clarify the extent to which meetings of the Committee should be open to the public. The Ordinance provides that all meetings of the Committee should ordinarily be open to the public. This Bill would amend that so that only hearings in which evidence is to be taken would be subject to that requirement. Valid arguments

exist to justify both the positions set out in the Ordinance and the changes which are proposed to be made by this Bill.

In relation to the power to enter into contracts, there is certainly no absolute requirement for the changes to be made. The system can operate perfectly well under the provisions of the Ordinance. But on the other hand, for the contracts to be entered into in the Committee's own name, emphasises the independence of the Committee from the Government.

It should be noted that the power to enter into contracts provided by this Bill protects the public purse by providing that such contracts can only be entered into by the Committee if the terms and conditions of any contract have been agreed in advance by the Governor advised by Executive Council.

In relation to public hearings there is, of course, some irony in one of the first steps of the Committee being to seek to restrict the right of the public to attend its meetings. But it has to be recognised that obvious difficulties would arise from a meeting of a Committee taking place in advance of a hearing at which evidence will be taken from a particular individual at which how the hearing will be conducted, what areas will be probed and what questions will be asked will be discussed by the Committee Members and all of that having to take place in public, thus giving the individual an enormous advantage when it comes to actually give their evidence.

Similarly, after the evidence has been taken and the Committee is considering its report on a particular investigation, it might well be counter-productive if the process of agreeing what should be in that report had to take place in public.

So what this Bill does is to provide that it should only be at meetings at which the Committee is to take evidence that it should be subject to the requirements that would be ordinarily held in public. That would enable the Committee to hold its other meetings in private should it decide to do so.

The position that only hearings where evidence is to be taken are open to the public is, as I understand it, is the position in relation to the UK Parliament Public Accounts Committee.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the final change made by this Bill is to correct some cross-referencing errors in the Ordinance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I hope the explanation I have provided is helpful and I commend this Bill to the Assembly.

The Honourable Director of Corporate Resources

I second the Motion

Mr Speaker

The Motion is that the Bill be read a first time, is there any objection to the Motion? No objection, the Bill will be read a first time.

Clerk of the Assembly

Public Accounts Committee (Amendment) Bill 2010

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr Speaker

The Motion is that the Bill be read a second time, does any Honourable Member wish to speak to the Motion?

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, in the terms of the present ordinance for the Public Accounts Committee there's already facilities for specific and confidential items to be held in private or in closed session. And as we are often criticised for not being open and above board, surely if anything should be open and above board, it should be the Public Accounts Committee. I therefore move that clauses 6, 7, and 8 of the amendment be deleted from this Bill.

Mr Speaker

We will take that motion when we are in Committee if you don't mind. Then we can do that amendment. Is there any other Honourable Member who wishes to speak to the Motion for the Second Reading? Is there any objection to the Motion? The Bill will be read a second time.

Clerk of the Assembly

Public Accounts Committee (Amendment) Bill 2010

Mr Speaker

The Assembly is now in Committee

Clerk of the Assembly

Clauses 1-9

Mr Speaker

The Motion is that clauses 1 – 9 stand part of the Bill. The Honourable Roger Edwards to move his Motion for amendment to the Bill.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Yes as I moved earlier these items be deleted, we have for many years been criticised by members of the public that they do not have access to various committees and hearings and the like. And surely one that should always be held in public is a Public

Accounts Committee, which I welcome, by the way. I think it is a great step forward. However, at the outset, we mustn't be seen to be giving an opt-out clause for that Committee to hold meetings in private or in closed session. I am sure members of the public will be very critical of that and will come back and say surely there is something going on behind the scenes. And it is for that reason that I wish for clauses 6, 7, and 8 to be deleted I encourage debate among my fellow Members and if there are any queries on that perhaps the Attorney General can actually explain in more detail any points that come up but I would wish that those points be discussed.

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am supporting my colleague the Honourable Roger Edwards in this because I think it needs to be openly debated. We've no wish to strangle the Public Accounts Committee at birth but on the other hand we do need to understand very clearly any reasons for holding sessions in private. I look forward to hearing from the two Members who sit on that Committee and to hearing the opinions of others.

The Honourable William Luxton

Mr Speaker I wonder if the Attorney General could assist in this matter. The Honourable Roger Edwards said there are already provisions in the Bill for the Committee to sit in private in some cases. So if that already exists what's to be gained by introducing these new sections which would allow them to sit in secret? Is there already a provision in the Bill for that?

The Attorney General

There is limited provision in the Ordinance for that. Section 21 of the Public Accounts Committee Ordinance deals with exclusions of the Public and it deals with some circumstances in which the Committee has to exclude the public when it is actually hearing evidence and considering evidence which is what's relevant to the current amendments and they are things like if it relates to exempt information as defined in the Committees Access to Information Ordinance or evidence by a Member of Executive Council where disclosure would contravene the Oath of Secrecy to which the member has sworn. And the Committee has the discretion to exclude the public so it's up to the Committee to do so.

In the following circumstances where the Committee is hearing or considering evidence by a witness who has asked to give it in private and the Committee is satisfied that the evidence is of a secret or of a confidential nature and that it should be heard in private.

So they are the only circumstances currently in which the committee can meet in private. None of those would be applicable to the sort of circumstances which the Committee has raised with Government, which are the preparatory stages to a hearing and the consideration of a report after the hearing where what is at issue is not the nature of the evidence that is taken but the decision-making process of the Public Accounts Committee itself.

So that's the issue which is raised by the current amendments and the Honourable Member's amendment.

The Honourable Sharon Halford

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I guess as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee I must declare an interest.

I think the Attorney General has put our case quite well actually as to why we asked for these amendments. I am pleased to see that the Honourable Jan Cheek doesn't want to strangle us at birth. I thought some of the Government Departments did. But never mind. We seem to be a thorn in the side in some areas. But I do think it's important that we are able to have some meetings which are not in the public domain and certainly from all the discussions we had today it would not be our intention to be away from the public eye very much because we are all aware that it as much as possible does need to be in the public domain. But I, Mr Speaker, would actually like to see these left in.

The Honourable Emma Edwards

I am declaring my interest also in the Public Accounts Committee. I would also like to support that these particular clauses remain within this particular Bill.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker I think I would like to join with my colleagues across the table and say that maybe we should keep this as open as we can. I can certainly see the difficulties raised for these changes but I would favour actually removing these and keeping as close as possible to the original.

May I also ask a question if it is the time or place to do so? Could I have clarification on the contract side that the Committee may enter into a contract, I believe, with the say-so of the Governor with consultation with Executive Council? That's obviously going to have financial implications. Will they only be able to enter into contract where funds exist or could we find a contract being entered into that perhaps Members of Standing Finance Committee have no knowledge of until after the deed is done? If that is the case, then who would be liable?

The Attorney General

I thank the Honourable Member for that question. I think there are two separate issues there. The first is the budgetary issue and we envisage that the funds for the Public Accounts Committee should be dealt with in the budget process in the normal way so that it will be agreed and approved ultimately by Legislative Assembly as part of the budget process. As to how they actually spend their money, that is fundamentally a matter for the Public Accounts Committee. But if they are entering into these sort of agreements that have legal effect then the provision in this amendment Bill is to require the Governor to agree and assent to the terms of the contracts that are being entered into precisely to ensure that they are appropriate given the budgetary constraints that the Committee has to operate under. So that if the Governor advised by Executive Council was satisfied that, for example, a particular

contract would result in the budget being exceeded that would be a good reason for the Governor to refuse to consent to that contract being entered into. So that's how we control it – through the actual entering into a particular contract through Executive Council and through a Treasury input into that.

The Honourable Gavin Short

I just wish to thank the Attorney General for his reply. Its clarified things very nicely for me.

The Honourable Glenn Ross

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it's not a question but a comment. I am possibly the only member of the Legislative Assembly that isn't that delighted by the arrival of the Public Accounts Committee. My concern stems from the funding of it. I think in its first year it will consume £31,000 and it will be money after the fact. After the disaster has already happened and I think we need to keep a very close eye on our future expenditure on this Committee.

Mr Speaker

The Motion before the House is that Clauses 6, 7, and 8 are deleted from the Bill. Those in favour of the Motion say Aye, Those against the amendment say Nay.

Please could we have a division on this.

Those in agreement:

The Honourable Jan Cheek
The Honourable Roger Edwards
The Honourable William Luxton
The Honourable Glenn Ross
The Honourable Gavin Short

Those not in agreement:

The Honourable Emma Edwards
The Honourable Sharon Halford

The amendment is carried.

The Honourable Chief Executive

Accordingly Mr Speaker, I beg to move that clauses 1 to 5 and 9 stand part of the Bill.

Mr Speaker

The Motion is that clauses 1 to 5 and 9 stand part of the Bill, is there any objection? No objection, clauses 1 to 5 and 9 stand part of the Bill.

Clerk of the Assembly

There is no schedule.

Mr Speaker

The Assembly resumes.

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker I beg to move that the Bill be read a third time and passed.

Mr Speaker

The Motion is that the Bill be read a third time and passed, is there any objection to that Motion. There is no objection the Bill will be read a third time and passed.

Clerk of the Assembly

Public Accounts Committee (Amendment) Bill 2010

The Motion for Adjournment.

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, I move that this House stands adjourned *Sine Die*.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members the Motion is that the House stands adjourned *Sine Die*.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, in continuing the theme of trying to start the Motion for Adjournment on happy news rather than sad news or criticism, I would like to bring to the attention of people the actual generosity of the Falkland Islanders and indeed those servicemen and women serving here in the Falklands to the amount of money they actually raise for charitable purposes. I think you only have to get as far as page 3 of Penguin News this morning and you realise that within a week we've raised several thousand pounds with a garden party at Government House, farm visits to Port Louis and the like, walking the MPA Road and it is just staggering the amount of money and the generosity of the people here in the Falkland Islands. I am not aware currently of what the Haiti Appeal stands at but I think it shows that island people recognise the needs of island people can raise money but that was very specific. But overall I do congratulate the honesty, the generosity of the people of the Falklands in raising such huge sums of money for charitable causes around the world.

Last week we saw Penguin News with very large blue and white flags across the front page with yellow suns and the like. It just brings home to people that however clever you think you might be using your computer and sending messages left right and centre you must always be very, very careful because somebody next door is a darn

site cleverer than you and can access your computer. They can alter the facts on your computer, they can distribute the information on your computer to whom and wherever they want. So I would just like to raise a warning for everyone – government and private individuals alike to be jolly careful. What we do here in the Islands presently is under a lot of scrutiny and I am sure the government across the water are very interested in reading everything that we put out over our messages. I have said it before, I won't repeat the swear word, Mr Speaker, but e-mails are a bane and they can be read and if you want to get some confidential or private information across it is far better to have dialogue, look someone in the eye and tell him what you feel rather than going by e-mail. It is a very dangerous pursuit and it was shown this last week then it is easy to be hacked into and alter the information on that website.

A very quick mention about another letter in Penguin News this morning from a member of the public who says this Assembly seems to be operating as a team. And I, too, would like to think that after 100 days, or it's now past a hundred days, there was a lot of criticism earlier about how it would all fall apart after 100 days. I don't see it happening. I think we are now a better, more cohesive and more aligned team than we were on November the 5th. Time will tell, of course, but I think we are doing a reasonable job but certainly as a team we are working very well as a cohesive body.

A couple of items that have made headlines, one is the Queen's Baton which we must surely be very grateful to have received here and to see all the areas to where it's been the top of mountains with the Attorney General, I'm not quite sure how the Attorney General got to the top of the mountain and I won't embarrass him by asking, to Penguin Colonies to our youngsters carrying it along the front road, well I think that's good, honest publicity for the Falkland Islands. And in fact we are going to be sending teams to the commonwealth games in India and I think that's good news.

We had a request from BAS to possibly erect a monument possibly a symbol in commemoration of those who have died in Antarctic exploration and so on. We or through Britain lay claim to a large area of the Antarctic and the Falklands recently has been recognised as a gateway to the Antarctic and I think this would be a superb place to have that memorial to those who lost their lives in the Antarctic. I understand that the Cathedral Committee do not want it placed in front of the Cathedral but I would propose and hope that we can consider that this memorial could be placed perhaps on Arch Green or better still perhaps along Victory Green somewhere so that it is in full public view and can be visited by folks along the way.

And if I may, Mr Speaker, just go back to the question on the radio and television I do urge that we try and resolve the matter of radio broadcasts to the Camp sooner rather than later.

Mr Speaker I beg to support the Motion.

The Honourable William Luxton

Mr Speaker, I'll be quite brief. This session comes at the end of a long and quite intensive week for Assembly business, not to speak of the time spent looking at and listening to the hysterical antics of our neighbours across the water. I can't help thinking it would be much better for all of us if they hadn't abrogated the 1995 oil agreement. There has been lots of nonsense in the world's press as well with

sensational stories about South Atlantic Sheikhs and so on. It seems impossible to get the story over that it will be a long time before we see large amounts of oil money, if ever.

The only oil that I am positive came from our area was a small bottle that sat on a previous Governor's desk at one stage after the last exploration.

Anyway, I wish the companies a trouble free and successful drilling round. We are looking forward to an interesting autumn and an early winter as we wait for any news.

The Honourable Roger Edwards has mentioned Camp Radio and I concur with his views completely. It's good to know that at least this winter Camp people will have TV if all goes well. It's been an appalling story of bungling and delay. It's a year late so I hope this is the final stage.

But I'm not sure about FIRS. Many still don't have the local radio and it's galling for those Campers to know that other people all over the world are listening to FIRS online, especially because it is said to be courtesy of Cable & Wireless. What a shame they couldn't look after their main customers in the same, generous manner. But even if you could get it on your internet connection you couldn't afford it with the miserable package allowances given. It's the same with podcasts from the BBC and such like. One small programme would use up a quarter of your measly monthly Bronze Allowance. I do urge everyone to respond to the Doyle Report if they haven't already done so. Cable & Wireless has to be dragged into the 21st century even if it is kicking and screaming. The reliability of the Internet and the Wi-Max system over the last few days certainly leaves a lot to be desired.

I also want to appeal to all the farmers in my constituency. We face a crossroads over the abattoir. FIMCO in conjunction with some go-ahead farmers, have made projections about the supply of lambs that others and some are around this table have doubts about. It's really essential for every single farmer to do his utmost to supply the abattoir. Look and see what some farmers are doing. If they can, so can you. If the abattoir fails or is closed and the rural development concept will be like a 3-legged stool with one leg blown off.

Lots of young and not so young farmers have put huge effort and resources into changing their systems. If FIMCO closes they will be left high and dry and the Camp will be in danger of becoming a depressing backwater with a future lacking in hope.

I would like to congratulate the Honourable Sharon Halford on establishing her weekly newsletter to Campers. I think it was a great idea and I know it's much appreciated. I am sure that she would add Stanley residents to her list if asked. But I do feel that Gilbert House should have a news and exchange of views blog as well. It shouldn't be too difficult to do. I know the Honourable Roger Edwards is not too keen on the internet and I do hope the Argentines don't hack into his facebook over the next few days. I really hate the idea that people in the community begin to feel out of touch with their elected representatives. On that point, I will be at the West Sports next week not, I'm afraid, attending hastily arranged meetings in Stanley. But I am always happy to be buttonholed by anyone who has a concern they'd like to discuss. And let's hope we get a brief glimpse of summer again during the next week.

My final point is the budget. This new assembly inherited a difficult deficit situation and is under considerable pressure from the Treasury to get nearer to a balanced budget. We could do this with some savage cuts or with increases in taxation. My view is that there is a small percentage charged but the black gold may save the situation.

If it is there, its rubbish to say, we'll have to wait till production starts. If we should have proven reserves there's no doubt we could raise funds by selling our future production forward. I therefore believe that we should not be too afraid of the deficit budget this year but in the certain knowledge that the Ocean Guardian sails off again having found nothing then next year we will be faced with some pretty stark choices.

Mr Speaker I support the Motion.

The Honourable Glenn Ross

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members there are a few matters on which I would like to comment, firstly on oil exploration. This is, of course, an exciting time for our country. There is a chance of a significant oil discovery and secured future wealth – not to put a dampener on things. We have, of course, been on the crest of this wave once before and there was nothing at the end of it. A positive difference for me from the 1998 oil exploration phase is the involvement of local companies in the onshore development. And I think they have worked wonders down at the Canache and in record time. I wish all our oil companies good luck, good fortune and a safe drilling programme.

Mr Speaker, moving to my portfolio responsibilities I am keenly aware that I have not made it to the West for any reasonable length of time and I hope to travel to Fox Bay East very soon. I have, though, taken in a ferry crossing and I am happy with the operation. Our winds are a blessing in one area and a complete curse in many others. We have some really good people at Workboat Services and in time, any wrinkles that remain will be ironed out. The weather, though, will continue to be a significant issue.

Mr Speaker I am really pleased to have the agriculture portfolio at such a challenging time for the industry. We are very much at a crossroads. I thank all those farmers on East Falkland who have welcomed me on their farms and have taken time out to try and educate the new boy.

In my travels I have seen at least three different ways and methods of growing green grass but common to each and at the root of each one is hard work. We have some very progressive farmers here in the Falklands and these are the ones that I am most keen to support. I am a supporter of FIMCO. This has not always been the case. My previous opinion was based on hearsay and not from having been for a look. I can't over-state the importance of FIMCO's role in the future of agriculture. We need a long-term commitment to our meat industry. I would not support a return to the direct subsidies for wool. FIMCO at the moment is an indirect subsidy requiring farmer performance.

That said, my support is not at any price and while we have not all seen a break-down of the operating costs the total cost is known and is, at this time, not supportable by

me. I know the Falkland Islands Development Corporation and the Public Works Department are working through the items and identifying savings. If the next steps for FIMCO are agreed, it will then need Falkland Landholdings, the Department of Agriculture and the progressive farmers to work together as never before.

The FIMCO livestock suppliers' group are showing positive signs that they could be the organisation to co-ordinate and drive through that change.

Mr Speaker, I should not have a favourite department but I do. I very much enjoy the atmosphere and the vision of the people at the Department of Agriculture. I expect one or two radios in the Camp have been cast across the room at this news and it's just as well most can't hear it. I am not a farmer and never likely to be but I am keen and interested in the challenges ahead.

I am especially interested in the recently started fishmeal fertiliser trial. I am grateful to Fortuna Ltd for the supply of fishmeal sourced from a Southern Blue Whiting trawler currently in our zone and to the Falkland Islands Development Corporation for allowing the use of land at Stanley Dairy. Initial results from this locally produced fertiliser are very promising. There are vast amounts of fish discards from which a portion could be transhipped ashore and processed cheaply using excess wind power. Our land is deficient in Nitrogen and Phosphorus. The two principle nutrients in fishmeal are Nitrogen and Phosphorus. Essentially the two elements our land needs most are dumped at sea.

Mr Speaker, I am pleased that Honourable Members have placed succession training high on our priority list. The Power and Electrical Section and the Department of Agriculture have talented young Islanders who are away already or are about to leave. There are, of course, others being trained but perhaps we as a Government are now creating the right atmosphere of confidence in our own people.

Mr Speaker, Executive Council yesterday approved the sale of housing plots at Mink Park at a subsidised rate. This is a start of a housing strategy that should give hope to many first time buyers.

We live in exciting times, promising times for oil, for agriculture and our young professionals. These are pivotal times to our future. In the coming weeks and months as a people we will be tested, we will be provoked and we will need to draw heavily on our reserves of calm and patience.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Mrs Sharon Halford

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to support the Motion I would first like to thank the Honourable William Luxton for his comment about the weekly round-up. For his information I already have quite a number of Stanley people on the list.

Since I was last in this House I visited different areas in the Hospital and FIGAS. And also have been fortunate enough to visit the Abattoir when it was in operation (perhaps not everybody's cup of tea). In all places people were doing their best at their respective jobs. But I really do have to take my hat off to the staff at FIMCO.

Whilst they all worked hard, as does anyone on a production line, the people in the packing area really do have to work very fast. Overall it was a very impressive operation and working like a well oiled machine.

When I did a FIRS interview recently I suddenly wondered why I was bothering. After all how many people will actually be able to hear it, definitely not in the rural community. Sometimes I think our communications are progressing backwards rather than forwards.

For some time now I have been unable to receive the radio and I suspect others will have been in the same situation. But then yesterday radio reception was suddenly back online, amazing! On the other hand, I had no broadband or telephone. Imagine my surprise to actually have the radio and then to receive a message over it telling me how to get the telephone back online. Wonders will never cease. I know I am belabouring a point that's been mentioned already, but I am somewhat concerned about just how we are going to receive the radio in the future or are we? We've been told that we will be able to receive it when we get the TV. But how will that work for those of us who do not opt for the TV and also those who are out and about. This needs to be made crystal clear to folk to enable them to be fully aware of what is actually proposed with the new TV system.

Talking of the Media, we seem to be having a deluge of journalists visiting the Islands at present they appear to be far more excited about the rhetoric from our neighbours than we are. Perhaps it is hard for the press to accept that for us this is normal practice. It happens all the time in varying degrees year after year. But at least now the rest of the world is being made aware of what we have to continually endure and not I hasten to add at the hands of the British. It's a bit like crying wolf all the time. When you keep moaning about the same thing all the people tend to stop listening.

Of course the media are also here because of the oil. And I wish all the oil companies well here in the exploration phase and hope they have calm waters whilst drilling.

When I was elected to Council way back in the 1990s I remember saying that although everyone wanted a road they would not necessarily like the progress that came along the roads. I didn't realise then just how true those words would prove to be. Now that the roads are in place people are being asked to use them for various reasons and because this has changed to how things were done previously it is not always appreciated. However, dare I say, it is the price of progress.

The road gangs are doing a sterling job in trying to keep the road surfaces up to scratch on the main spine roads and also on others when time permits and the weather allows. I'm going to repeat what a predecessor of mine, Eric Goss who always advocated when he was on council, and that was for Tillite to be used wherever possible when capping the roads. Recently another material which Mr Speaker would not allow me to describe in this House, was used on top of the Tillite surface at the Fitzroy Ridge and it is, in my opinion, awful. You definitely need to drive carefully when crossing it. But perhaps my expectations have been too high and I have been spoiled by the materials used for some time now.

This brings me on to how people perceive us and how we perceive ourselves. Frankly, I think we have as a society been very lucky for a long time and have

enjoyed many benefits in one form or another. It is often said that the more you get the more you want and that does seem to be true. But be warned, it does not lead to a very pretty society. We used to be very proud of who we were and were very much a “can do” people. But with progress we seemed to have acquired a growing element of “I want.” Thankfully there are still many “Can do” folks out there and I hope we don’t lose that part of our identity. It is good and healthy as opposed to the other option.

For the farming community it’s been a bit of a tough slog this season as the weather has not been exactly user friendly for farming. Those of you who have managed to get livestock to FIMCO should be congratulated for your efforts as it could not always have been easy to get the animals up to optimum weights at the right time.

The FIGAS review is still ongoing and I hope this has been useful to all those people within the organisation that we have been talking to. There is a good team of people down at FIGAS and they all work well within their given areas. I hope many of you out there have managed to take a few minutes out of a busy work schedule to either write or fill in the form to let us know your comments. Most importantly I hope this exercise will lead to an even better service for all concerned.

We currently have a representative from Keene, our public relations people in the UK down here for a visit. He has been striving to make us more media-wise. But at one point he showed us some of the most used words in relation to the Falklands on GOOGLE during December. And can you believe it? Deforestation popped up. I found this hard to believe until I realised GOOGLE must have been picking up on the crazy amount of repetitive paperwork that we MLAs have been receiving. The trees are still being chopped down as I speak.

As it is time once again to thank the Cancer Support Group for all their hard work in bringing the mammography team down here. But their efforts were not just for this visit. They continue their good work on a daily basis giving help and assistance to people in need of their support. This support is offered on a 24-hour basis and they should, indeed, be thanked for what they do.

Commodore Thicknesse, may I through you thank the RIC for the visit I received yesterday? They were such a nice, polite group of young men who did, indeed, do you proud. However, more importantly was the reason behind their visit and I do believe that this will have been much appreciated by all who have encountered them this week.

We have now started down the budget trail looking at what needs to be done. But of course it is a different ball game when you look at just how you’re going to do it. And quite frankly I think it would be easier to drive to Volunteer Point even in this weather with small tyres on my land rover than to come up with the answers that are required.

And on that note, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there has been a fair amount of talk about radio and I deeply sympathise with the people in Camp who can't receive it. As a radio addict with a cheap transistor in every room in the house, I rely on it for information, for news, for things that provoke thought. It's quite difficult for us as Members sometimes to get information out other than as the Honourable Sharon Halford does on the internet. We have some good opportunities with radio but of course we understand it's not going as far as it should.

The reason for asking questions to which the answers may seem very obvious to everyone around this table is to get that out on the radio and perhaps picked up by Penguin News although I wouldn't bank on it so that people have access to this kind of information. And we really do have to work harder in every area in getting information out to people.

I'm going to do something quite out of character today. I'm going to thank Argentina. I thank them for the opportunity they've given us to get our message out around the world, the opportunity that we've had to tell journalists from places as far apart as Canada, Russia, the Al Jazeera people, China as well. I do not complain about journalists being here. Some of them will sensationalise the story but they are giving us an opportunity to get out a story which I believe has not been understood by the rest of the world and that is the constant niggling annoyance, irritation to us by Argentina's attempt to curb trade to prevent our people from attending conferences and speaking of issues that are not political, issues that are of world importance such as sustainability of fish stocks. It's been good to be able to tell people in level terms that we have tried to work with our neighbours, with Argentina on oil, they renounced the agreement, we have tried to work with them for years on fisheries with joint cruises with quite a lot of our scientific budget devoted to sharing information with them in order that we can take world responsibility for the resources in the South Atlantic – they've withdrawn from that and refuse to co-operate in it.

So not only have I welcomed that opportunity, I would congratulate my colleague the Honourable Emma Edwards who, as leading spokesperson on oil matters has had a baptism of fire in terms of dealing with the media over the last 10 days. And I think the message that she's been putting out is one that hopefully a lot of people will listen to.

We've also had the opportunity to reiterate our basic rights of self determination, our right to the resources that lie in Falklands waters, our right to speak for ourselves as an established people. We did not replace an indigenous population unlike the other South American Nations.

Finally, I want to make my thanks, more heartfelt than usual, to Commander British Forces and all the men and women who work for him. I've been able to tell people in Russia and in many other countries that the Islands are properly defended. It gives everyone confidence to be able to say that. I would also like to say, nice to see you wearing your tie.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Emma Edwards

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, sadly I have been invaded not by our neighbours but something equally as cruel – Earwigs! Last night I was sitting on the loo and my feet were under attack. In a pincer movement six Earwigs came towards me. I leapt to the side to remove the toilet paper and discovered it was the last bit upon which the six of them rushed out in the corridor only to be met by another 20. I went to the kitchen to get my dishcloth and discover yet another one under there. It is an invasion and for the people living at the east end of Stanley it is a real problem – a real problem for people with poly tunnels and a real problem for people in their houses.

Although this is not something we are classing as an environmental problem, it's harmful to my health. I woke up the other morning with them crawling across me. I am not sleeping very well simply because you know those little devils are getting in and out of just about every crevice in your house.

I've been receiving lots and lots of complaints from people around and about Stanley about the number of earwigs which they are getting inside their houses. I have received e-mails and stopped by people in the street. It is an epidemic and it is something which we are going to have to try and find a solution to. I know the boys and the girls in the Agriculture Department have spoken to them about it. They do have things in place and they do have suggestions. But as yet we don't actually have anything to stop this particular invasion.

I'd also like to congratulate my colleague the Honourable Glenn Ross, but not in his capacity as a Member of Legislative Assembly but in his Power Station role. It's great to see the three additional windmills come online the other day. Long may the wind blow and we can generate additional electricity. It would even be better if we could carry on and put this technology to good use elsewhere within the Islands.

The drilling programme is underway. I'd like to thank the girls and boys, Phyl Rendell and the Department of Mineral Resources. They have been working incredibly hard to get the drilling programme started. I would also like to congratulate the guys who are in the various petroleum industries working here in the Falklands on the logistics of actually getting all of their equipment here into the Islands. And I would like to wish them all the best of luck and I would hope we do strike the black gold sometime in the future.

Sadly I do not have the same confidence as my colleague, Mr Ross, when it comes to the abattoir. I have serious doubts about this particular project. I do not believe the figures. I do believe that the only way that the abattoir could work is by completely changing the way of life for people in Camp to go from our ranching style of farming to an intensive style of farming. That is the only solution to make it work. Whether or not we will have enough people willing to put the number of hours into that type of farming I don't know. At the moment I cannot support additional monies going into the abattoir. But I would like to hear from people and get other people's views so please call me. Maybe I am being misguided, maybe I am being blinkered but from what I am seeing I don't like it.

I'm also going to mention the *Beak* and the *Nest*. Once again the internet can be a very useful and good tool and occasionally it can even have a nice little giggle. I was

looking on the *Nest* the other day at the *Lookie/Likie* site. Yes, it was quite funny. My Honourable friend, Mr Gavin Short, is apparently Brad Pitt and amazingly, yes, there was some similarities. However, at the same time there's also other people who I feel are being picked on not necessarily in a nice way. And I would ask people that when they are doing things like this not to make it personal.

Finally, to end on a good note and perhaps to go back to what I started talking about to begin with -loos – we now have signs at the Public Jetty and at the Jetty Centre Tourist Centre to show our tourists where the loos are. I'd like to thank the guys and girls in the Pod Gift Shop who made a fantastic sign very, very professional so hopefully now everybody has a clear way to relieve themselves.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, after such oratory these are going to be a few random jottings, I'm afraid. I will start off by saying, just call me Brad. I think the gentleman in question does cheat, he dyes his whiskers.

Perhaps if I actually launch into these few random jottings, I would like to thank the Honourable Sharon Halford for paying tribute to the boys out there who are trying to keep roads in the Camp up to scratch. They have been faced with evil weather this year and I would like to take my hat off to them. They really have done the best they can in pretty appalling situations.

I did have some notes here because I thought I was going to get a couple of supplementary questions on the Ferry Terminal. It is quite interesting stuff actually and I thought I would share it with you if you don't mind.

Basically one of the notes that I have got here is saying there is an absolute commitment to build the Port Howard Terminal, as if we don't the certainty is MCA will close the terminal down for passenger movement side or even possibly the whole ferry operation. Basically once again the MCA seems to be driving it in directions perhaps we don't want to go.

The sheet piling has started being shipped across the Sound and the steelwork, ties, etc should arrive in March. It is planned that the piling works will start in March and the finger will be formed, bollards and fendering installed but the concrete deckwork may be left until the spring unless the weather is a little kinder than just at the moment.

In an ideal world an earlier start would have been made but the Mink Farm works were planned to finish about now and the Sea Lion works also needed doing before they could really get stuck into the work on the West.

The last few weeks have been interesting to say the least and we seem to have reached this mythical 100 days in office without a by-election or bringing the country to its knees as was predicted in some quarters although it is fair to say that the 100th day arrived not with a whimper but with what turned out to be a mighty wallop.

Mercifully the torrent of information that we were inundated with has slowed down somewhat and at times there doesn't seem to be quite enough hours in the day to do everything that is required.

However, that said I am now starting to have enough free time to start dedicating time to departments that I do hold portfolios for.

I managed just recently to take a closer look at FIPASS. I would like to thank John Barton, Stephen Clifton and Janet Jaffray for putting up with me and giving me a stern tour of the old girl and also for telling me what it's like, as they say. One thing I do like is straight talking and I certainly got it down there where a spade was called a spade. The impression that I went away with is that FIPASS is a tough old bird and will go on quite happily for a good few many years as long as we keep the maintenance up. And I have to say that it is looking quite good, which in itself is a miracle given the appalling weather has made painting, etc all but impossible this year.

Whilst being on the whole structurally sound, there are parts of it that do give cause for concern, which includes the Ro/Ro barge which isn't looking too clever. Also I was appalled to see buckets sitting in offices to catch the rain coming in through the ceiling. The presence of water trickling by electrical cables is not a happy one. We have been told some years before that FIPASS, or at least the office part of it does need replacing and it looks like the time may be closer at hand than we thought this may have to happen.

I don't mind admitting that I had a few sleepless nights worrying about how we could make FIPASS work with the pressures and presence of the oil industry, fishing industries plus tourism. Having spoken with the Director of Fisheries and Port Managers they assure me that it should all fit with a bit of forward planning and the co-operation of those who use FIPASS. There will be some delays of vessels getting alongside and I think these normally do happen during the busy season anyway. But in order to make sure these are kept to an absolute minimum, I would like to take this opportunity to plead with users, especially those in the Fishing Industry to give as much warning as they can of their approximate arrival dates, the requirement for reefer containers, etc. If we all co-operate it should work.

One thing that did worry me more than a bit when I was visiting is what looked like the total disregard for health and safety being shown by some users of the dock, with workers standing underneath lifts of fish as they are being taken off vessels without even as much as a hard hat on. I would ask owners to please make sure that persons working on or around a vessel, whether it be a direct employment or as a stevedore is afforded health and safety protection.

Whilst we may not have the range of legislation which other countries may have we should be adopting best practice procedures. I would also ask the Manager of FIPASS to keep a beady eye on what is happening on the dock and to enforce the practice of safe working.

On the Fishing front the director reports that we have had interest in 41 Illex licences in respect of jiggers from Korea and Taiwan. Some but not all payments arrangements are in place. A handful of jiggers have started fishing in the FI Zones.

Catches have been modest so far but it is early days. The Illex fishery only really gets going in early March in some years. So we will just have to wait and see how this goes.

The Loligo likewise started the 24th of February and there is some hope that it will be a reasonable season again, it's early days.

I have also started having some thoughts on how we can perhaps make better use of FIPASS and I think there are some ways this can be done with perhaps the introduction of a different structure of berthing fees and maybe also requiring catch verification here in Stanley. The later would also help answer the vexed rumour that keeps persisting that some vessels who are licensed to take other fish types purposely top-up on Squid because of their higher market value. However, it's early days and maybe these ideas may be found to be undesirable or unworkable but we shall have to wait and see.

The time when we may have to make some pretty drastic decisions about how we spend what little moneys we have is almost upon us. It isn't going to be easy and I think I shall be a little greyer by the time it's finished. The brutal truth is there isn't the cash to do everything we want. In a way the same was true 18 years ago although obviously in those days it was easier.

During our deliberations we must keep in our minds that we must spend the money in a way that is best for our country and for our people.

The mantra that departments must year on year make 3% savings is really starting to have a nasty affect on the smaller departments within the FIG. It probably has got to the stage where the only way open to some of the smaller departments will be to start shedding labour or to start putting off expenditure in areas that are going to lead to it not being able to function efficiently or safely. I do think this is something we are going to have to take a very close look at.

It's always nice to have a positive story to tell and it's also easy to concentrate on the doom and gloom but one department that I think deserves light being shed upon it is the Water Treatment Department. They are tucked away up in the shadows and they are a bunch of lads who nothing is heard of until something goes wrong. However, as I found a month or so back on my whistle-stop tour of PWD, they have, through sheer persistence managed to make savings.

There was nothing high-brow or scientific in what they did. It was good old directness and common sense that made the difference. Apparently they had for some time been purchasing chemicals through a middleman and the sack quite helpfully had the number of the manufacturer on them. Initial approaches did not solicit a response and rather than giving up and carrying on as normal, which I suspect most people would have done, Craig and his boys started calling the company and eventually wore them down and the rest, as they say, is history.

The savings made are not earth-shattering but every little helps. I would like to thank them and indeed others who are doing the same thing quietly in the background, unrecognised and I suspect in the main un-thanked, chipping away, making savings where they can.

On their own they may not amount to much but add them together and you will get a different story. To you all, I say thank you.

I am now going to do something perhaps that I thought I would never do and that is mention Cable & Wireless. As an employee of the Company I obviously keep out of everything that involves them. However, I think I can manage this without being accused of in any way using my position to further their cause or indeed act against them. It's brilliant to see them starting to fly the flags outside the offices again, especially that rather splendid blue one with the Union Jack in one corner and our coat of arms proudly displayed in the centre.

It has always struck me, it's a bit strange really how us Brits almost seem ashamed of who we are. Go to just about any other country and they proudly have their national flag displayed everywhere. Isn't it really about time we started doing the same? Let's be proud of our country and who we are. Let's get those flags out there and flying proudly.

I would urge all companies and indeed individuals to give some thought to planting a flagpole and hoisting our flag for everyone to see. And to the planners of this world I would urge them to treat every request they receive for the siting of a flagpole with the greatest of sympathy.

Sir, Mr Speaker, I won't go on calling you sir but I am sure you don't mind at all, I would like to finish off with just a couple words on the oil exploration. I sincerely hope it does go well and I think a lot of people are hoping the results are going to be positive.

Our neighbours, of course, had a rather Olympian hissy fit and it's actually a surprise to me it took so long in coming, not that it has. However, we will carry on. We are a free country and we will do as we wish here.

Sir, I wish to thank everyone and support the Motion and sit down.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, the House stands adjourned accordingly.