

**Financial Intelligence Unit Bill 2015 –
Third Reading approved**

The Speaker: Mr Watterson.

Mr Watterson: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Given the airing that these things had at the Second Reading and through clauses today, and the undertakings that I have given to address certain matters at clauses, I do not intend to make a separate speech at Third Reading, other than to just move it formally, sir.

The Speaker: Mr Thomas.

Mr Thomas: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I beg leave to second, reserving remarks.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Ramsey, the Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister (Mr Bell): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Just very briefly, I would like to thank Members on behalf of the Council of Ministers for giving the Minister your support today. It is greatly appreciated. It is not something which we would want to do on a regular basis but I can only emphasise the words of the mover of this Bill: this is an exceptionally important Bill, which we have to get through and in place before the Moneyval visit in April. And as the Members has quite rightly said, we cannot be sure just how quickly this Bill, once it is passed today, will go through the Ministry of Justice to get Royal Assent, so there is some real urgency behind it. So I would like to thank all Hon. Members for your support and forbearance with this; it is important.

I would also like to congratulate the mover for the speed with which he has been able to get this Bill through.

A Member: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: Do you wish to reply, sir?

Mr Karran: No –

The Speaker: Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: I understand the pressures as far as Moneyval is concerned and the pressures that are on the executive, and that is the reason why I did not object, but I am concerned that the mover needs to realise ... because when he replied to the last one ... All I am concerned about is that we do not end up turning a Financial Crimes Unit that is overstretched, with massive overtime ... is doing the job it should be doing at the present time on the more basic level.

I am just wanting some assurances from the mover, the Minister, that ... He talked about, 'Oh, the CID will take up ...' The point is the Financial Crimes Unit deals on a more expert basis on financial crime. My concern is, with the CID, will they have the experience to be able to actually supersede the present Financial Crimes Unit? Does this mean that the Financial Crimes Unit, as it stands at the moment, is consigned to history? Does it mean that we are going to end up with a situation where it just goes into some generic situation where a general officer of CID will look at the more mundane issues of financial crime? What assurances do I want, like the issues that were raised with me, to make sure that the ordinary small things ...? It is all right saying they will ... The Minister says that the Police will look at anything that is brought to their case, and I am not denying that, but

whether they will take action on those points is a different situation. I know I have raised some issues and, to be fair, I have more likely got more sympathy with the Police than I have with the complainant, but I am concerned that the Financial Crimes Unit has a certain expertise that I am afraid that for the small financial crimes the CID might not have that expertise to do so.

May I also say that I am glad to see the Ard-shirveishagh saying what he has said, because it is better than the way the state media service always provides – that we always object and we are always trying to be awkward, as Liberal Vannin, as far as the media is concerned, where we had a unanimous vote for the suspension of Standing Orders. It is not about a game in here. It is about an important process as far as parliamentary accountability to the executive.

So I am happy to support the suspension and I hope he takes on board the written concerns that were given to me from somebody who is in the industry as far as that is concerned.

The Speaker: Mover to reply.

Mr Watterson: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I thank the Chief Minister for his support. Of course, it is the quality of the Bill going through rather than the speed that the Bill goes through.

I would like to also give the Hon. Member, for the third time – third time lucky – the assurances that I think he seeks. A lot of the low-level crime that will be dealt with by CID is basic detective work. It does not require an awful lot of specialist skills. If specialist skills are required, there is still that ability to pick up the phone to colleagues in the Financial Intelligence Unit for a steer as to how to deal with it. But it is by virtue of the fact that it is low-level crime. If anything, one of the problems that we have had with some areas of crime on the Island is that there just has not been enough of it to give detectives the experience. That is, in a way, reassuring, but in another way we need to make sure that it is dealt with in the training requirements and that when it does happen we are always ready.

I think that covers all the points that were raised during the passage of the Bill and I would just like to thank my seconder for his stoic support during the clauses stage and Third Reading.

With that, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Hon. Members, I put the motion that the Financial Intelligence Unit Bill be read for a third time. Those in favour, please say aye; against, no. The ayes have it. The ayes have it.