

RESPONSE TO SO-CALLED 'PARADISE PAPERS' — GUERNSEY FINANCE CEO

08 NOVEMBER 2017

Media coverage following the release of information from files belonging to law firm Appleby has drawn attention to the role of offshore finance centres.

“The release of the stolen documents, dubbed by the media as the ‘Paradise Papers’, is an illegal hack of files and unacceptable. The sensationalist reporting is deliberately designed to undermine the legitimate business acts of offshore centres,” said Guernsey Finance Chief Executive Dominic Wheatley.

“The coverage has attempted to portray that a lack of transparency exists in offshore finance centres, but in the case of Guernsey that is simply not true. Early adoption of global initiatives such as the Common Reporting Standard evidences our long-standing commitment to global standards of transparency and information exchange – standards that have been endorsed by the likes of the OECD, the EU and the IMF.

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“At the same time, it’s important to note Guernsey is one of the few places to regulate trust and corporate services providers and was among the first to do so, in 2000. This strong fiduciary regulation has ensured higher service standards and protection for consumers. It has also provided a mechanism to reinforce our anti-money laundering (AML) regime and ensure that comprehensive information on the source of funds and the identities of ultimate beneficial owners of such structures are always obtained and kept up to date.”

Guernsey’s AML and anti-terror financing regime when assessed by MONEYVAL, a body of the Council of Europe tasked with assessing the measures in place to prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorism, scored the highest standard of any jurisdiction so far assessed when measured against the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations.

“By having the necessary standards in place Guernsey is able to reinforce its position within the mainstream of international finance,” said Mr Wheatley.

“This allows the island to act as a tax-neutral facilitator of global investment into the UK, Europe and global economies which brings about substantial economic and social benefits to those countries. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that Guernsey is a significant part of the broader UK finance industry and the City of London.”

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WE ARE GUERNSEY is the brand under which Guernsey Finance promotes the island's financial services sector internationally. Guernsey Finance - the promotional agency for the island's finance industry internationally - is a joint industry and Government initiative responsible for the promotion of Guernsey. Under the leadership of Chief Executive Dominic Wheatley, the agency ensures that the core values and competencies of the island's finance sector are accepted and respected by the global community and that financial business development flows are enhanced.

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