

**GIBRALTAR**

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**



**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**11<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER, 1998  
(Vol. I)**

**NO. 279 TO NO. 425**

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### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

11<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> September 1998 (Vol. I)

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ORAL

NO. 279 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS**

Can Government state how many vocational cadets have terminated their employment with the ETB for the month of April?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287 and 288 of 1988.

ORAL

NO. 280 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS**

Can Government state how many vocational cadets have terminated their employment with the ETB for the month of May?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 279, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287 and 288 of 1988.

NO. 281 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS**

Can Government state how many vocational cadets have terminated their employment with the ETB for the month of June?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 279, 280, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287 and 288 of 1988.

ORAL

NO. 282 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS

Can Government state how many vocational cadets have terminated their employment with the ETB for the month of July?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 279, 280, 281, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287 and 288 of 1988.

ORAL

NO. 283 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS

Can Government state how many vocational cadets have terminated their employment with the ETB for the month of August?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 279, 280, 281, 282, 284, 285, 286, 287 and 288 of 1988.



ORAL

NO. 284 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS**

Can Government state what was the total value of payments to vocational cadets for the month of April?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 285, 286, 287 and 288 of 1988.

ORAL

NO. 285 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS

Can Government state what was the total value of payments to vocational cadets for the month of May?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 286, 287 and 288 of 1988.

ORAL

NO. 286 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS**

Can Government state what was the total value of payments to vocational cadets for the month of June?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 287 and 288 of 1988.

ORAL

NO. 287 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS**

Can Government state what was the total value of payments to vocational cadets for the month of July?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286 and 288 of 1988.

NO. 288 OF 1998THE HON J L BALDACHINO

## ETB - VOCATIONAL CADETS

Can Government state what was the total value of payments to vocational cadets for the month of August?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

The information is as follows:

Vocational Cadets terminated:-

April	-	26
May	-	28
June	-	20

Value of Payments are:-

April:- £65,938 of which £32,397 correspond to Vocational Cadets proper and £33,540 to longer- term Ministry of Education Cadets.

May:- £61,708 of which £28,091 correspond to Vocational Cadets and £33,616 to Ministry of Education and Training.

June:- £61,712 of which £31,615 correspond to Vocational Cadets and £30,097 to Ministry of Education and Training.

With regard to Vocational Cadets terminated in July and August and Value of Payments in those months, the information will be provided at the end of the third quarter as stated Government policy.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287  
AND 288 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

This is a new Government policy is it?

HON J J NETTO:

This is a Government stated policy which I have repeated in the past and I am not going to be drawn into.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The Minister may not want to answer any questions at all but he has not stated it in the past. In the past what he has stated was that he could not give us the figure for the unemployed on a month to month basis because that created blitz which distorted the picture. He has always given the figure for the vocational cadets on a monthly basis until now, this is the first time he has refused to do it so it is a new policy. What is the explanation, why does he not want to do it? Is it that he does not have the information?

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Is it not correct.....

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister has not answered so I can hardly allow you to ask another supplementary. But anyhow ask.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Is it not the case that the Chief Minister said in this House that the Government would answer any question that was put to them in the House?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will rise to that bait. The hon Member does not entirely correctly describe the Government's policy in answering questions which is that the Government want to answer as many of the Opposition's questions as possible, believe that we already do so in quite wholesome and generous terms compared to anything in Gibraltar's recent history in this House but that the Government are entitled to the policy as they have in the United Kingdom, for example, that statistics – whether they be statistics on waiting lists or statistics on unemployment or statistics on the cadet scheme or any other statistics – are published for either political or administrative reasons on a weekly, monthly or quarterly or annual basis, as is the case, for example, with the Tourism Survey. What the Government cannot commit ourselves to do is to give statistical information every time that the hon Members wish to ask the same question at Question Time. If Opposition Members feel that the decisions that the Government take as to the frequency with which we choose to publish statistics in any area should or could be reviewed, perhaps because the hon Members take the view that it would not be administratively burdensome to do so, the Government may take the hon Members views into account but might still, for political reasons, decide that certain types of information should be published in a structured way at certain regular intervals and that is a legitimate poise for the Government to take in Gibraltar as it is for Governments to take all over Europe. The only illegitimate decision for the Government to take is not to publish information at all or not to publish information except in such infrequent intervals that it becomes historical and really quite meaningless and we are much less further from that situation now than we have been in recent years.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Chief Minister explain why it is that in this House they suddenly find that they are not willing or able to give information that they have been giving until now without any problem? It is information they have readily available presumably, it is not that the Minister is not able to tell us. He is able to tell us that 20 vocational cadets left in June but he is not able to tell us how many left in July. He does not want to tell us how many left in July although until now he has had no problem in doing it so what is the problem now?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I think it follows that the Minister has taken the view that this information also, which he has given broken down by month in respect of April, May and June and the information in respect of July, August and September will be provided on a quarterly basis at the end of that quarter which is at the end of this month which will be at the next meeting of the House, that is implicit in the answer that he has had from the Minister.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Yes, but when previously the decision was announced way back in October 1997 for the introduction of that policy and we asked why there was a need for it, we were given an explanation which reflected a rationale which was that fluctuations in the numbers of unemployed could be misinterpreted if not by us by others outside as indicating a trend in unemployment and that that was why they wanted to do it every quarter. They said that the rest to which this explanation did not apply would continue to be provided monthly. They are now going back on the commitment they gave us, why?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, I think the hon Member cannot say that we are going back on any commitment. If commitment is the right word, it could only have been used in relation to the statistics then under discussion which were levels of unemployment, nothing to do with vocational cadets.

HON J J BOSSANO:

No, this is the whole point. When we asked about the statistics other than the levels of unemployment the answer that was given recorded in Hansard in October 1997 was that the argument did not apply to those other statistics and that those other statistics would continue to be answered in the House if we put the question in the House and therefore what we do is we give notice and we put the questions. The information, I am sure, is something that he has there in front of him and he just refuses to give it.

MR SPEAKER:

If he does not give it, he does not give it. It is his prerogative. Next question.

ORAL

NO. 289 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

ETB - WORK PERMITS

Can Government state how many work permits were issued for the month of May and how many of these were to new entrants broken down by nationalities and trade?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 290, 291, 292, 293 and 302 of 1998.



ORAL

NO. 290 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - WORK PERMITS**

Can Government state how many work permits were issued for the month of June and how many of these were to new entrants broken down by nationalities and trade?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 289, 291, 292, 293 and 302 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 291 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

ETB - WORK PERMITS

Can Government state how many work permits were issued for the month of July and how many of these were to new entrants broken down by nationalities and trade?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 289, 290, 292, 293 and 302 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 292 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - WORK PERMITS**

Can Government state how many work permits were issued for the month of August and how many of these were to new entrants broken down by nationalities and trade?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 289, 290, 291, 293 and 302 of 1998.

NO. 293 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - WORK PERMITS**

Can Government state out of the 33 work permits given in March how many were to new entrants broken down by nationalities and trade?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 289, 290, 291, 292 and 302 of 1998.

NO. 294 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VACANCIES**

Can Government state how many of the 205 vacancies filled in March by Gibraltarians were for jobs at:-

- (a) Cammell Laird
- (b) in the Bottling Plant

and in each case how many were taken up by persons then registered at the ETB as unemployed?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question No. 295 of 1998.

NO. 295 OF 1998THE HON J L BALDACHINO**ETB - VACANCIES AT CAMELL LAIRD**

Can Government state how many of the 10 vacancies opened by Cammell Laird on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1998, were filled by Gibraltarians and how many by others giving nationalities and trade?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

The Government do not think that it is appropriate or fair to habitually discuss across the floor of the House, and therefore publish, the commercial affairs of individual private sector employers in Gibraltar. However, given the importance of the ship repairing operations to the economy, I am willing to give this information to the hon Member privately and in confidence.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 294 AND 295 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Does that also mean Question No. 294 because No. 294 I have raised because the Minister invited me to put a question in the House so that he could answer?

HON J J NETTO:

I am sorry, I do not understand the point the Opposition Member is trying to make.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

I shall put the question again. Does the answer he has just given me that he is prepared to give it to me privately also apply to Question No. 294? That question has been put by me because in a previous House in a supplementary the Minister said that he would be willing to answer that question if I were to give him notice.

HON J J NETTO:

Yes, I am prepared to give the information to Question No. 294 with the caveat or qualification that if it does not mean a disproportionate amount of effort by my staff at the ETB. Provided that that is not the case he will get the information.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The point that we are making is that when we raised a question previously in the course of supplementaries my hon Colleague asked this question and the response from the Minister was that he needed notice in order to be able to provide the answer. That happened six months ago, we have now given him notice so he has had the notice he wanted. Has he not got the information now, is that what he is telling us?

HON J J NETTO:

No, what I am saying is that I will provide the information privately and confidentially.

HON J J BOSSANO:

But the last time he did not say that, the last time he said if we gave him notice he would provide it in the House. The Minister chose to quote these two companies in a Government press release dated the 17<sup>th</sup> April in which he said that the fall in trend is a result of new business coming into Gibraltar, namely, Cammell Laird and the Bottling Plant and the fall in trend was the fact that there was shown in the published statement, at the time, that there was in the month of March, 205 Gibraltarians employed. What we are doing is asking a supplementary because he made it public in a Government press release.

MR SPEAKER:

What the Minister is telling you is that he will give it to you privately.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

The Minister has just told me he is prepared to give it to me privately and confidentially so it is something I will not be able to use, so what I want to clarify from the Minister is how many persons were registered in the ETB as unemployed, is that also going to be classified as confidential?

HON J J NETTO:

I have to say to the Opposition Members that under Standing Orders section 15 says, "Any question addressed to the Chief Minister, a Minister or an ex officio Member shall relate to the public affairs with which he is officially connected or to a matter of administration for which the Government is responsible". The truth of the matter is that I am not officially connected to Cammell Laird or responsible for the operation or expansion of Cammell Laird other than the bilateral meetings that both my colleagues in the ETB and I have in terms of maximising employment opportunities and business opportunities in Cammell Laird for their success and for the success of the economy of Gibraltar. So in relation to that, I think that the question put to me is improper and illegitimate.

MR SPEAKER:

It is within Standing Rules and it is also within Standing Rules that he does not reply and says he will give it in confidence, you have got to accept that.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is not that the Government do not want the Opposition Members to have the information, they have been offered it privately and I know that the information has been given in the past but, of course, if questions about particular employers are going to be asked repeatedly at repeated meetings of the House we will find ourselves debating, let us put it in the context of some other company, if the hon Members were to start questioning the Government about the employment policies of C Caruana Ltd across the street, it would become a debate about the affairs of a particular listed

company. Government understand that the economic importance to Gibraltar of the Cammell Laird operation is significant and therefore it is legitimate for Opposition Members to seek to wish to keep that situation monitored and controlled and to enable the hon Members to do that the Government are willing to give them the information. The Government believe that it would not be right to debate the affairs of particular employers across the floor in a focused way, hon Members may not agree with it but at least let them understand what the Government's position is.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Does the Chief Minister not realise that in fact the distinction that he has made is totally inapplicable in this case? Is it that he missed out when I gave the original explanation for the question of the supplementary? We asked this question before following a Government press release and if the Government say in a press release, "The following trend of unemployment is due to Cammell Laird and the Bottling Plant" we are entitled, I would have thought, to check the accuracy of that statement. If there have been 205 people employed in March and the Government issued a statement in April saying, "The drop of unemployment in March is because of Cammell Laird and the Bottling Plant" we would like to know how many of the 205 were employed there. That is simply following on an invitation from the Government to seek further information because they chose to include it in their statement. When we put the question in the House originally, nobody told us, "We are not answering because it is confidential" nor did the Minister then tell us last April that it was illegitimate to put the question, what he told us was that we had to give him notice. We have given him notice five months later, he has had five months to prepare the answer because we have put the question before. It seems to us that to tell us five months after he promised to answer it that he has now come to the conclusion that it is illegitimate or that it is commercial in confidence, well then I suggest that if the Government consider that identifying employers is commercial in confidence, they should not be putting it in Government press releases. We are only seeking it in response to a statement from the Government that the change in the employment level in the first quarter of 1998 which only happened in March, there was a change of one person between January and February from 599 to 598 and the figure dropped in March and if the indications from the department that the Minister had presumably when this press release was prepared was that the explanation for the change was the Bottling Plant and Cammell Laird, it seems to us a legitimate question to try and find out to what degree those two employers affected the figures.

MR SPEAKER:

Just one second. It is a legitimate question, similarly it is legitimate for the Minister to say, "I will give you the information in confidence".

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, I think it is entirely legitimate and proper that the hon Members should ask the Government for information to enable them to assess the extent to which public statements made by the Government are accurate. But, of course, for that purpose the information does not have to be given publicly across the floor of the House. If we offer to give the hon Members the information to them privately, I agree that the in confidence part may be an unnecessary stricture but if we give the information to the hon Members privately it just as well allows them to use it for the purposes of assessing the accuracy of previous Government statements. The Government's position in relation to this matter is based on not wishing to bandy about names of particular



employers in questions and answers across the floor of the House. It is implicit in the Government's answer, the Minister has said that he is willing to give the hon Members the information privately and in confidence, the in confidence is not intended to suggest that if when they get it they find that it confirms that the Government's statement is inaccurate they cannot do anything about it, I would be very happy to clarify that for the hon Member here now. It is really a question of the root for the provision of information rather than whether or not the information is provided or the use that hon Members can make of it when they get it.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I welcome that further clarification but, of course, the Minister must realise that we have given notice because that is what we were invited to do the last time we asked.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

I have been given the same answer before in this House that I will be provided with the information and I have never had any information coming from the Minister. Will he guarantee this time that he will provide the information that I have asked in these questions?

HON J J NETTO:

The hon Member knows that, as he usually phones up the staff of the ETB to provide the information, he can definitely phone me and tell me that I have not given him a particular answer to a question that he desired, it is as simple as that.

ORAL

NO. 296 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**I&D FUND - HEAD 101, SUBHEAD 1**

Can Government state how much has been spent from the Improvement and Development Fund, Head 101, subhead 1 – Major Remedial Works and Repairs to Housing Stock for the month of April 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 297, 298, 299 and 300 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 297 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**I&D FUND - HEAD 101, SUBHEAD 1**

Can Government state how much has been spent from the Improvement and Development Fund, Head 101, subhead 1 – Major Remedial Works and Repairs to Housing Stock for the month of May 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 296, 298, 299 and 300 of 1998.

NO. 298 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**I&D FUND - HEAD 101, SUBHEAD 1**

Can Government state how much has been spent from the Improvement and Development Fund, Head 101, subhead 1 – Major Remedial Works and Repairs to Housing Stock for the month of June 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 296, 297, 299 and 300 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 299 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**I&D FUND - HEAD 101, SUBHEAD 1**

Can Government state how much has been spent from the Improvement and Development Fund, Head 101, subhead 1 – Major Remedial Works and Repairs to Housing Stock for the month of July 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 296, 297, 298 and 300 of 1998.

NO. 300 OF 1998THE HON J L BALDACHINO**I&D FUND - HEAD 101, SUBHEAD 1**

Can Government state how much has been spent from the Improvement and Development Fund, Head 101, subhead 1 – Major Remedial Works and Repairs to Housing Stock for the month of August 1998?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

The information is as follows:-

April	-	Nil expenditure
May	-	£19,899 (Replacement of windows)
June	-	£ 9,147 (Replacement of windows)
July	-	£25,452 (Replacement of windows)
August	-	£ 9,261 (Replacement of windows)

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 296, 297, 298, 299 AND 300 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

The money that he has just told us he has spent for the different months, does it only involve materials used for those projects or does it involve something else?

HON J J NETTO:

Well, to the extent that I am aware it is for materials but it could well be, and I could find out for the hon Member, because it is not just providing the window or the frame itself but actually placing them in the particular flat. That may also have to be borne in mind but I am not quite sure, I can definitely find out for the hon Member.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

I do not know if he has the information but is it that this money has only been spent by Buildings and Works or is it that some of this money has also been given to private firms?

HON J J NETTO:

I understand, subject to finding out, that all the money is contracted out to a particular manufacturer that provides for the replacement of windows. I believe that to be the case.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Could the Minister provide me with the information at a later date if he has not got it here?

HON J J NETTO:

Yes.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is the implication of the answer, in fact, that from this subhead, major remedial works, nothing is being done other than replacement of windows by a contractor? That is the only thing that is being charged to this head?

HON J J NETTO:

No, the one thing that Opposition Members have to bear in mind is that indeed the money allocated under Head 101, subhead 1, is not only for the replacement of windows, there are many other projects. This financial year has different people within Buildings and Works, the Design Support Services have actually been preparing various tender documents and some of them we hope will commence very soon. I am referring to things like the project in Calpe Road, in MacFarlane, Willis's and Anderson House. There are indeed some other tender documents which have already been published in the Chronicle and which the Central and Procurement Unit will award shortly and work will commence and obviously the money allocated under that particular allocation will come from there.

HON J J BOSSANO:

In the first five months of the financial year there has been no money spent on remedial works other than replacing windows, is that correct?

HON J J NETTO:

That is correct, from that particular subhead.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Would it then be reasonable, even if the Minister considers it to be a hypothetical question, that the £1.3 million is not going to be spent in the remaining seven months?

HON J J NETTO:

Well, yes, it could be hypothetical but I do believe that either we will spend it or we will come very close to spending it.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Whether it will have been spent in the sense of actually paid out, it will certainly have been committed, I cannot say whether the work will have progressed. For example, the projects at the Calpe area, Anderson, Willis's and MacFarlane blocks, that work has already gone out to tender and it is about to be allocated and we expect the works to commence soon and then payment will be rapidly thereafter. Whether it will all be finished in time for the end of this financial year I could not say.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

I suppose that the Minister has spent money on repairs on maintenance from the other vote which he was referring to which is under the Buildings and Works vote, can I ask him from subhead 1, I suppose that expenditure like the hire of scaffolding and things like that will also come out from there. Can I ask him also if any payment of bonuses or anything will be coming out from that money or will that money be only for materials or the hiring or the contracting out of whatever works the department intend to do?

HON J J NETTO:

I think it depends. If one brings an issue such as scaffolding I would assume that under the tender document for that particular project it would come under that allocation amongst many other items that would need to be carried out in that project. But, of course, just the same as there will be payment for scaffolding under Head 101, subhead 1, for the project at Calpe Road, does not necessarily mean that scaffolding to finish Alameda Estate will come from the vote that the hon Member was referring to before.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is it that none of the work that it is intended to do under this subhead will be done by direct labour? Is it all intended to be done by contractors, under Head 101, subhead 1?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is the intention.



ORAL

NO. 301 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - HOTEL WORKERS - WAGES**

Can Government state whether there is a statutory wage for hotel workers other than the national minimum wage?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

There is no statutory wage for hotel workers other than the standard minimum wage.

NO. 302 OF 1998THE HON J L BALDACHINO**ETB - WORK PERMITS**

Can Government state how many work permits were issued for the month of April and how many of these were to new entrants broken down by nationalities and trade?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

It is Government policy to provide information for the previous quarter therefore, Question Nos. 291 and 292 will be answered after the end of September 1998.

March 1998: There were 33 work permits issued of which seven were new. Breakdown by nationality and trades are as follows:

Swiss	2	-	1 manager & 1 administrator
Pakistani	1	-	medical
South African	1	-	medical
Malaysian	3	-	professional

April 1998: There were 27 work permits issued 11 of which were new. Breakdown by nationality and trades are as follows:

Malaysian	3	-	1 administration & 2 professionals
American (USA)	1	-	professional
Canadian	1	-	professional
Indian	4	-	1 manager & 3 directors
Norwegian	1	-	director
Chinese	1	-	professional

May 1998: There were 40 work permits issued of which 16 were new. Breakdown by nationality and trades are as follows:

Indian	8	-	4 directors, 2 managers, 1 accountant and 1 domestic
Brazilian	1	-	domestic
Malaysian	2	-	professional
Dominican Republic	1	-	manager
American (USA)	1	-	manager
Chinese	1	-	professional
British (Overseas)	2	-	professional

June 1998: There were 19 work permits issued three of which were new. Breakdown by nationality and trades are as follows:

Swiss	1	-	manager
Polish	1	-	professional
American (USA)	1	-	professional

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 289, 290, 291, 292, 293 AND 302 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can I ask, the directors that have been given work permits, are these treated as self-employed permits or are they work permits as employees?

HON J J NETTO:

I could not give him an answer right now but I can definitely find out if he wishes to know and provide him with the information.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I cannot give the answer either but they should be treated as employees because that is the status of a director in legal terms. I do not know how it is actually being done administratively, they ought to be as employees.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can we obtain confirmation?

HON J J NETTO:

Yes.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

What I find surprising is that in one of the cases, one of the Indians given a work permit was for domestic employment, is that correct?

HON J J NETTO:

That is the information provided to me, yes.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

I can understand that for directors and obviously for administrative officers work permits are given because obviously the company requires those persons as employees of those companies to do business in Gibraltar. Is it the policy of the Government also to issue work permits to domestics when that employment could be available to someone locally?

HON J J NETTO:

The answer is that it would not be the policy of the Government except, of course, if there is some extenuating circumstances which I will need to find out if that is what the hon Member so wishes me to look into.

NO. 303 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VACANCIES - HOTEL INDUSTRY**

Can Government state how many vacancies have been opened with the ETB for employment by the hotel industry in October 1997 giving a breakdown by job title of each vacancy?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 304 and 305 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 304 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VACANCIES**

Can Government state how many vacancies were opened at the ETB in the month of July 1998 with a breakdown by trade and how many vacancies were filled showing the trade and nationality of the persons employed?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 303 and 305 of 1998.

NO. 305 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**ETB - VACANCIES**

Can Government state how many vacancies were opened at the ETB in the month of August 1998 with a breakdown by trade and how many vacancies were filled showing the trade and nationality of the persons employed?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

It is Government policy to provide information for the previous quarter, therefore, Question Nos. 304 and 305 will be answered after the end of September 1998.

The reply to Question No. 303 is as follows:-

There were four vacancies opened in the hotel industry, three of which were filled by Gibraltarians and one by a Spaniard in October 1997.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 303, 304 AND 305 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

He has not given us the job title, has he got the information?

HON J J NETTO:

Yes, the hon Member is correct, he did ask for the job title and the information is not provided, so I will have to provide it.

ORAL

NO. 306 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**VARYL BEGG ESTATE - GARAGES**

Can Government state what will be the cost of the garages that are being constructed at Varyl Begg Estate?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 307 and 308 of 1998.

NO. 307 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**VARYL BEGG ESTATE - GARAGES**

Can Government state when they expect the garages at Varyl Begg Estate to be completed and when they will be ready to be handed over to purchasers?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 306 and 308 of 1998.



NO. 308 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**VARYL BEGG ESTATE - GARAGES**

Have all the garages being constructed at Varyl Begg Estate been sold to tenants of the Estate?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

The information is as follows:

The construction cost of the garages is £94,243. The garages have been completed, final snagging will be carried out in the next few weeks, and handed over soon.

All the garages at the Varyl Begg Estate have been sold to tenants of the Estate, in consultation with the Varyl Begg Estate Tenants Association.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 306, 307 AND 308 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

I know that they have been sold in consultation but have they all been sold to tenants of Varyl Begg Estate? Can the Minister tell me why it is that he can give me the breakdown of the cost of the garages today and he could not give it to me in writing according to a letter that he had when I asked him, at the last meeting of the House, to give me a breakdown between the cost of the garages and the cost of other remedial works in the Estate and he said, in the House, he could provide it in private and then he wrote to me and he said he could not provide it. What is it that has miraculously changed the Minister's position?

HON J J NETTO:

I cannot give him an answer because I cannot recall the background to that. But to the other part of his supplementary question, yes my understanding is that all the garages have been sold to tenants of the Estate in very much close consultation with the Varyl Begg Tenants Association. I believe, and I do not know whether this question has been triggered by the fact that it appears that in one of the garages sold to a tenant of the Estate it is being used by his son-in-law who is not a resident of the Estate. That is the background information that has been provided by the department.

HON J C PEREZ:

Now that the garages are completed, will the Minister now look at the other issue arising from this which is the use of the car park where the tenants have continuously been making the point that the car park should be for the exclusive use of the tenants of the Estate and not for the use of other Estates where parking is already being provided and would the Minister say what progress is being made towards this?

HON J J NETTO:

This is a question which the hon Member has asked in the past. I know that parking spaces have been marked throughout the Estate, I know that there is a consultation process between the department and the Varyl Begg Tenants Association, I know that flip posts for the open car park area which the hon Member is alluding to are being purchased, I know that there will be a period in which they will start installing them and he is right in his assertion that it would be for the use of the tenants of the Estate.

HON J C PEREZ:

Coming back to the lock-up garages. Can the Minister state whether once the purchase is complete owners can then resell those garages to people outside the Estate or is there a mechanism that if they move house or they no longer have a car, for example, they sell the garage back to the Government for an agreed price and the Government resell it to a tenant in the Estate?

HON J J NETTO:

I am afraid that I cannot give an answer to that hypothetical question, he would definitely have to give me notice but I would have to say that the role of Buildings and Works Department is to provide the work to be carried out, either in-house or contracted out, and once that is done it is not a matter for Buildings and Works, it is a matter for housing as being the landlords to pursue with Land Property Services but, of course, in terms of the information if he wants I can try and find the information from them.

HON J C PEREZ:

Yes, I would like the information if the Minister could provide it.

ORAL

NO. 309 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING - PRE-WAR FLATS**

How many pre-war housing units allocated have been given to successful housing applicants on the "do it yourself basis" broken down for each month since the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1998 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question No. 312 of 1998.

NO. 310 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING - POST-WAR FLATS**

How many post-war housing units allocated have been given to successful housing applicants on the "do it yourself basis" broken down for each month since the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1998 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question No. 311 of 1998.

NO. 311 OF 1998THE HON J L BALDACHINO**HOUSING - POST-WAR FLATS**

Can Government state how many post-war housing units have been allocated since 24<sup>th</sup> April 1998 broken down for each month up to the end of August 1998?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Twenty-four post-war flats have been allocated since 24<sup>th</sup> April 1998 to the end of August 1998.

The monthly allocation of flats is as follows:

May	9
June	1
July	4
August	10

This total of 24 flats allocated includes 19 that have been allocated on a "do it yourself" basis. The monthly breakdown of flats allocated on a "do it yourself" basis is as follows:

May	8
June	1
July	3
August	7

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 310 AND 311 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

On the "do it yourself" basis I suppose that these are people who have been allocated according to the housing waiting list and if any of them have refused it would not have been given to the second one down, is that the policy of the Government?

HON H CORBY:

The people who have been offered these flats were eager to get the flat and were prepared to do it themselves, they were allocated on the list and they took advantage of doing it themselves in order not to wait for Buildings and Works to do it.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Is it the policy of the Government that if somebody is offered a flat and he says that he is prepared to wait it is not offered to somebody else in the waiting list, who might be lower than he is, on a "do it yourself" basis, is that the policy of the Government?

HON H CORBY:

No, the policy of the Government is if the person is allocated the flat and he is prepared to wait the time lapse that Buildings and Works take to refurbish it will not be given to somebody else down on the list. If he is willing to wait and it takes six months, well it takes six months and he is then given the flat.

NO. 312 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING - PRE-WAR FLATS**

Can Government state how many pre-war flats have been allocated since 24<sup>th</sup> April 1998 broken down for each month up to the end of August 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Five pre-war flats have been allocated since 24<sup>th</sup> April 1998 to the end of August 1998. The monthly allocation of flats is as follows:

May - 2; June - 1; July - 2

This total of five flats allocated includes two that have been allocated on a "do it yourself" basis. The monthly breakdown of flats allocated on a "do it yourself" basis is as follows:

May - 1; June - 1

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 309 AND 312 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Are these the flats that have been offered or have there been more flats offered and the only thing is they have not been allocated because they have been refused?

HON H CORBY:

No, these flats were available in a fit state. As the hon Member knows the Government have now contracted out pre-war flats and I am told by Buildings and Works that the refurbishment of 10 pre-war flats, there is a programme for it and they will be refurbished by the end of the year. Once they have finished this the contracting out will offer the possibility of another five being offered.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

I am grateful for that information but I think the Minister has misunderstood what I asked. The Minister has given me a breakdown of the allocated flats for May, June and July. Could he say if there have been other flats offered which housing applicants have refused?

HON H CORBY:

No applicants have refused any, those were given and accepted. There were no other flats offered and rejected.

ORAL

NO. 313 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING - POST-WAR FLATS**

Can Government state how many post-war flats are at present vacant and in which areas?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

There are 36 post-war flats vacant. Of these, 16 are in the north district, 19 in the town area and four in the south district.



NO. 314 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

HOUSING -- APPLICATIONS

Can Government state how many housing applicants there are in the housing pre-list broken down by room requirements?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

There are presently 210 applicants on the housing pre-list. This can be broken down into room requirements as follows:

1 RKB	107
2 RKB	29
3 RKB	42
4 RKB	30
5 RKB	2
6 RKB	Nil

NO. 315 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING - APPLICATIONS**

Can Government state how many housing applicants are medically recommended broken down by rooms requirement and their medical category recommendations?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

There are 23 housing applicants that are medically recommended. This can be broken down by medical category and room requirement as follows:

Medical Category A

1 RKB	1
4 RKB	3
5 RKB	1

Medical Category B

1 RKB	3
2 RKB	1
3 RKB	2
4 RKB	4

Medical Category C

2 RKB	3
3 RKB	2
4 RKB	1
5 RKB	1
6 RKB	1

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 315 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Apart from the question am I also correct that the Housing Medical Advisory Board may also recommend points to people?

HON H CORBY:

That is correct.

NO. 316 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING - PENSIONERS**

Can Government state how many applicants are in the housing pensioner exchange list?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

There are 334 applicants on the pensioner exchange list.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 316 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Are the 334 all pensioners who live in Government accommodation?

HON H CORBY:

No, there are some who do not live in Government accommodation, very few of them are in private accommodation, but at times when they moved in they were young and nothing has been done by the landlords and then we have got to take into consideration those aspects of pensioners who want an exchange and due to the character of the building we take that into account as well.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Therefore, even though those in Government accommodation might be returning to Government bigger accommodation in some cases, in others it might be that they are moving from area to area, I suppose one can say that once an allocation is given under the pensioners scheme it does not necessarily mean that the Government will be getting a flat back, is that correct?

HON H CORBY:

In some cases we do not get a flat back. I have got some who want to go down to Edinburgh House who are housed in private accommodation. The purpose of that is that most of the people being housed in that housing area will release big flats because they are in high rise flats in other parts of town like Calpe and due to their age they cannot come frequently to town for groceries, et cetera. At times we do put people into Government accommodation from reports from Buildings and Works and we do not get a flat back.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Can the Minister confirm that to be considered on the pensioners exchange list, the person must be 60 or over?

HON H CORBY:

Usually a pensioner is 60 and over and most of them request flats in lower areas.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Am I also correct then that the age, in a husband and wife, if one is 60 or over then they could be considered as pensioner even though the other spouse might be 20 or 25, is that correct?

HON H CORBY:

It is considered on the pensioner and his requirements.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is it not the case that if there is no release of accommodation back to the Government it is not really an exchange, it is allocation? If in fact in the cases of the private landlord the property is not available to the Government it is really an allocation and not an exchange, does that not require some amendment to the rules on Housing Allocation to take account of that?

HON H CORBY:

No, because usually when a person lives in a dilapidated flat we can decant as such from one place to another. If the private flats are in such a bad state that we receive reports that we must reallocate these persons, they are done on the decanting system which the Minister has the power to do.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

In any case, is it not also correct that in most cases many of them are medically recommended?

HON H CORBY:

Yes, that is correct.

NO. 317 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING - APPLICATIONS**

Can Government state how many housing applicants are socially recommended and how many of these are classified as homeless?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

There are 77 applicants who have received a social categorisation. Presently there is no applicant who is classified as homeless.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 317 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Out of the 77, are there any who are at the moment allocated in the Devil's Tower Hostel?

HON H CORBY:

I have not got that information with me. In cases that we have received of people being homeless which we have investigated, there were none homeless, they were trying to jump the waiting list so we investigated those cases and we found out that they were living either with a common-law wife or with parents or with friends, there was even one renting an apartment in Both Worlds.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

That is why I am asking, I understand the problems that the Minister has given and I understand them quite well. I am asking because at one time, mostly men who were single and in most cases out of work, and I suppose the Minister actually carried on with the policy in putting them in the Devil's Tower Hostel and those up to a certain point, even though they were not homeless by the mere fact that we had to put them in the Hostel they were considered to be homeless for all intents and purposes, is that the case? How many of those persons who fall under that category are in the Hostel?

HON H CORBY:

I would have to give that information to him as soon as I get it.

ORAL

NO. 318 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Can Government state on how many occasions each month did the Housing Advisory Committee meet from 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to the end of December 1996?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 319 and 320 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 319 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Can Government state on how many occasions each month did the Housing Advisory Committee meet from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 to the end of December 1997?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 318 and 320 of 1998.

NO. 320 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Can Government state since 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998, on how many occasions each month has the Housing Advisory Committee met to date?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The Housing Advisory Committee has met a total of 23 times for the period 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to date.

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1996, it met once a month for the months of June, September, October, November and December.

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1997, it met once a month for the months of January, February, March, April, May, July and December. It also met twice during the months of September and October.

For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, it met once a month for the months of January to July.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 318, 319 AND 320 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

This is an Advisory Committee, do they not advise the Housing Allocation Committee which is the Committee under the Housing (Special Powers) Ordinance, am I correct?

HON H CORBY:

Yes, that is correct.



ORAL

NO. 321 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING ALLOCATION COMMITTEE**

Can Government state on how many occasions each month did the Housing Allocation Committee meet from 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to the end of December 1996?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 322 and 323 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 322 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING ALLOCATION COMMITTEE**

Can Government state on how many occasions each month did the Housing Allocation Committee meet from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 to the end of December 1997?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 321 and 323 of 1998.

NO. 323 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING ALLOCATION COMMITTEE**

Can Government state since 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998 on how many occasions each month has the Housing Allocation Committee met to date?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The Housing Allocation Committee has met a total of 28 times for the period 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to date.

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1996 it met once in June and twice a month for the months of October, November and December.

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1997 it met once a month for the months of January, February, April, May, June, July, September, November and December. It also met twice during the month of March.

For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 it met twice a month during the months of January, March and June. It met once a month during the months of February, April, May and August.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 321, 322 AND 323 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Is there any correlation between the Housing Advisory Committee meetings and the Housing Allocation Committee meetings? If one is the adviser of the other and seeing that one is an advisory committee on social cases and the other one is the one that makes the decision, how is it that they both work together?

HON H CORBY:

As the hon Member knows the Committees are independent bodies, they are not employed by the Housing Agency. Members have their own job responsibilities but endeavour to meet usually on a monthly basis. There are times that for reasons that are evident, people are on leave, work commitments, which dictates when they meet; it is the availability of the people who are in the committee but we normally encourage them to meet once a month like the other committees.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Under the Housing (Special Powers) Ordinance "the Committee" is the Housing Allocation Committee and under its umbrella it has two advisory committees. I am not disputing the times that they meet, what I am asking the Minister is if there is any connection because even though they both meet once a month and the other one meets twice a month, if the time is not correct for procedures to go from the Housing

Advisory Committee to the Housing Allocation Committee, is there any procedure which will expedite any problems that somebody might have socially which is recommended by the Social Committee and goes to the Housing Allocation Committee? Do they work together or does it not make any difference because once a month could be that one meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> January, for example, and the other one meets on the 31<sup>st</sup> December. If the Housing Allocation Committee meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> January and the other one on the 31<sup>st</sup> December, there is no specific date when they meet. Once a month could be any day of that month, is that correct?

HON H CORBY:

I take the hon Member's point and they do work in conjunction one with the other because one is social and the other is medical and they have to take the recommendations on board. I would tell the hon Member that whenever there is a very serious case or an urgent case they do meet more than once a month and I make it a point that they are all together and there are extraordinary meetings if the case warrants it.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

But is it not also correct that it is the Government's responsibility as the appointees of the committee that if the committee is not functioning they can very well replace those members by somebody else?

HON H CORBY:

That is the case but at the moment there is no indication of that. The Minister is quite capable of assessing the committees and if they are not working well he can actually appoint somebody else.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

What I am saying is that up to that point the Government still have the responsibility that the committee must function, not to interfere in the allocation but it is a Government responsibility

HON H CORBY:

Yes, it is.

ORAL

NO. 324 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD**

Can Government state on how many occasions each month did the Housing Medical Advisory Board meet from 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to the end of December 1996?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 325 and 326 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 325 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD**

Can Government state on how many occasions each month did the Housing Medical Advisory Board meet from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 to the end of December 1997?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 324 and 326 of 1998.

NO. 326 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD**

Can Government state since 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998 on how many occasions each month has the Housing Medical Advisory Board met to date?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The Medical Advisory Committee has met a total of 19 times for the period 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to date.

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1996 it met once a month during the months of June, September, November and December.

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1997 it met once a month for the months of January to July and October to December.

For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 it met once a month for the months of January to May.

NO. 327 OF 1998

THE HON J L BALDACHINO

**HOUSING - WAITING LIST**

Can Government state at what intervals the publication of the housing waiting list takes place?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The housing waiting lists are published on a quarterly basis.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 327 OF 1998

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Are those the lists for that quarter that the Housing Allocation Committee consider when it is allocating housing for applicants?

HON H CORBY:

The Housing Committees have up-to-date computerised lists when they are assessing requirements. The posting of the waiting lists have been done in accordance with what was the practice for years now, even when the private company was there we have had no complaints that it is on a quarterly basis. The members that sit on the Allocation Committee have the up-to-date list and not the lists that are posted.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Then it is correct that the lists that are published might be outdated the next day because there is fluctation as the Minister has said?

HON H CORBY:

Of course they will and they will be outdated a week after that and another week after that but then we would have to post lists on a daily basis.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

No, I only wanted this cleared because I have explained things to people who have come to see me exactly the same as the Minister has said but that having the list it appears that somebody says, "Somebody has jumped me" and it does not necessarily follow because the Housing Allocation Committee, quite rightly, in my opinion, go by the updated lists at that particular time of allocation and is that the procedure that is being followed?

HON H CORBY:

That is correct.



NO. 328 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females not previously in employment as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) Non-Gibraltarians?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 329, 330, 331 and 332 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 329 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females not previously in employment as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) Non-Gibraltarians?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 328, 330, 331 and 332 of 1998.

NO. 330 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females not previously in employment as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) Non-Gibraltarians?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 328, 329, 331 and 332 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 331 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females not previously in employment as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) Non-Gibraltarians?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 328, 329, 330 and 332 of 1998.

NO. 332 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females not previously in employment as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) Non-Gibraltarians?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The information requested is not available. However, I can provide details of the total number of social insurance cards issued to males and females not previously in employment from April to August 1998. These figures are as follows:

	<u>Gibraltar</u>		<u>Others</u>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
April	18	16	49	9	92
May	11	15	29	15	70
June	46	40	17	7	110
July	71	51	31	20	173
August	35	32	22	9	98

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 328, 329, 330, 331 AND 332 OF 1998

HON R MOR:

Can the Minister clarify whether these are persons who were not previously in employment?

HON H CORBY:

That is correct. When the hon Member asks for insurance cards in issue we take the total of all the persons but there are no monthly statistics for that. I can give him the new ones but not the total. For example, I join Barclays Bank and then from Barclays Bank I have a mastercard in issue so if I left Barclays Bank and joined Saccone and Speed it is just reported in the mastercard and in order to give that information we would have to go through all the mastercards. If we want somebody who is 18 then I have to do the same operation. It is only at the end of the year those things are collated for statistics and planning forward. But previously the hon Member has asked "issued" and he now says "in issue", in issue encumbers the whole of Gibraltar insofar as social security is concerned. That is why I have not got the information because it would be as cumbersome to give him that and time wasting and the hon Member might have a purpose for it but it would entail a lot of work and we cannot do that.

HON J J BOSSANO:

We just want to be sure that we have understood the answer correctly. These are newly issued cards for each month?

HON H CORBY:

That is correct.

NO. 333 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state how many social insurance cards were in issue to males and females as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Other EU nationals
- (f) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 334, 335, 336 and 337 of 1998.

NO. 334 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state how many social insurance cards were in issue to males and females as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Other EU nationals
- (f) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 333, 335, 336 and 337 of 1998.



NO. 335 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state how many social insurance cards were in issue to males and females as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Other EU nationals
- (f) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 333, 334, 336 and 337 of 1998.

NO. 336 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state how many social insurance cards were in issue to males and females as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Other EU nationals
- (f) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 333, 334, 335 and 337 of 1998.

NO. 337 OF 1998THE HON R MOR**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state how many social insurance cards were in issue to males and females as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Other EU nationals
- (f) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The information requested is not available. However, I can provide the hon Member with the last figures available of the insured population. I can confirm that as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1997 there were 12,410 insurance cards and it is broken down as follows:

		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Gibraltar and UK nationals	-	6269	4264
Others	-	1428	449

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 333, 334, 335, 336 AND 337 OF 1998

HON R MOR:

The only information which the Minister can provide is just a global figure and not broken down?

HON H CORBY:

That is the figure as at the end of 1997 when the department collates all the figures. I have the figures here as at the end of 1997 and if the hon Member wants a copy he can have it and we will do the same in 1998.

HON R MOR:

I would be grateful if that information could be made available.

NO. 338 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**ETB - UNEMPLOYED GIBRALTARIANS**

Can Government give a breakdown of male and female unemployed Gibraltarians aged 18 years and over at the end of April 1998, receiving:

- (a) Unemployment benefit
- (b) Social assistance
- (c) No payments?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 339, 340, 341 and 342 of 1998.

NO. 339 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**ETB - UNEMPLOYED GIBRALTARIANS**

Can Government give a breakdown of male and female unemployed Gibraltarians aged 18 years and over at the end of May 1998, receiving:

- (a) Unemployment benefit
- (b) Social assistance
- (c) No payments?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 338, 340, 341 and 342 of 1998.

NO. 340 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**ETB - UNEMPLOYED GIBRALTARIANS**

Can Government give a breakdown of male and female unemployed Gibraltarians aged 18 years and over at the end of June 1998, receiving:

- (a) Unemployment benefit
- (b) Social assistance
- (c) No payments?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 338, 339, 341 and 342 of 1998.

NO. 341 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**ETB - UNEMPLOYED GIBRALTARIANS**

Can Government give a breakdown of male and female unemployed Gibraltarians aged 18 years and over at the end of July 1998, receiving:

- (a) Unemployment benefit
- (b) Social assistance
- (c) No payments?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Answered together with Question Nos. 338, 339, 340 and 342 of 1998.

NO. 342 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**ETB - UNEMPLOYED GIBRALTARIANS**

Can Government give a breakdown of male and female unemployed Gibraltarians aged 18 years and over at the end of August 1998, receiving:

- (a) Unemployment benefit
- (b) Social assistance
- (c) No payments?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDINGS AND WORKS

The information is as follows:

April 1998:

There were 29 males and 18 females receiving Unemployment Benefit, 111 males and 64 females receiving Social Assistance and 99 males and 113 females receiving no payment.

May 1998:

There were 17 males and 24 females receiving Unemployment Benefit, 104 males and 53 females receiving Social Assistance and 88 males and 102 females receiving no payment.

June 1998:

There were 23 males and 14 females receiving Unemployment Benefit, 106 males and 42 females receiving Social Assistance and 107 males and 122 females receiving no payment.

Information as regards July and August 1998 will be provided at the end of the third quarter as per Government's policy.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 338, 339, 340, 341 AND 342 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister explain why he feels there is a need to apply the same policy in respect of benefits which on the last occasion was not covered by the same policy?

HON J J NETTO:

This, I believe, has been answered before in previous questions.



HON J J BOSSANO:

No, he has not answered because I have not asked the question before. I am asking why he feels there is a need to extend it to this which was not previously extended. The last occasion he treated this information differently and said he was willing to continue to give it on a monthly basis. I have not asked him why he is doing on a quarterly basis because he did not tell us before until now. Why does he feel he needs to do it for this as well having been willing to treat this different previously?

HON J J NETTO:

I feel I have answered the question.

HON J J BOSSANO:

What is the answer? What is the answer why he feels now he has to extend it to this and before he was happy not to extend it to it?

MR SPEAKER:

There is no need for him to answer if he does not want.

HON J J BOSSANO:

If he does not want to answer he does not have to answer but what he cannot do is not answer and say he has.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The answer is that the Government are now publishing information and are going to publish increasing amounts of information on a structured basis to get away from a situation where information is only put in the public domain when and if the Opposition ask questions. The Government are structuring the publication of information on a structured periodical basis. There are some people who might like the information issued weekly or monthly or quarterly and indeed judging by people who visit the Opposition Spokesman for Housing to which he helpfully gives what I think is a responsible answer, they think that the housing waiting list should be published daily. I said before, if Opposition Members want to make a case for Government's automatic publication of information to be more regular than what the Government have decided, the Government are willing to consider but what the Government cannot do is having geared up the administrative machinery to produce information at whatever interval, whether in some issues monthly, in other issues quarterly, in other issues it is yearly, then on top of that get the administrative system to produce the information as at every week or every month that the Opposition Members decide because then the Government machinery would not have a structured publication of information. That is the answer to the hon Member's question as to why the regime is now extended to these two new areas. It forms part of the structuring of the publication of information which historically has never been automatically published. From now on it will be automatically published as happens in the United Kingdom and information of this sort will be published as a matter of routine by the Ministry concerned.

HON J J BOSSANO:

But surely the Chief Minister understands that it is a matter for the Government to decide what they publish as a matter of routine but the effect of what they intend to publish as a matter of routine seems to be that they are now refusing to provide what they have provided for the last two years in this House and when the policy was introduced we were given two explanations. One explanation was that the purpose of producing quarterly averages was not to produce distortion when these things are not going to be averages, it is not that we are going to be given..... *[Interruption]* No, but if the Chief Minister cares to go back and look at the matter when it was raised and he gave an explanation in the House and I raised the question of the benefits, his reply was, "The question of the benefits has nothing to do with the unemployment statistics and therefore different considerations apply. We are not refusing to provide the information provided the Opposition give notice they will get the information". Surely, it is difficult for us to understand why it is that people in the department would need to wait till October to count the people receiving benefits in July, they must know already. The Minister has that information already, it is just that he wants to make us wait until October because he wants to publish in October rather than provide it in the House. We cannot prevent that but, in fact, it is not what we were promised previously, they are going back on the commitment that the Minister gave previously but as far as his policy was concerned they wanted to give us answers to the questions if we gave them sufficient notice as required by the rules and that is what we have been doing. I could understand if we were asking them to produce the information in a way which they were not already doing and asking them to introduce a new system his argument would apply but surely he must accept that if the information is going to be published in October all that can happen in October is that what they already know at the end of July and they already know at the end of August and they already know at the end of September, will be published in one piece of paper. We are not asking them to take on any extra administrative burden. What is there to prevent the answer being given now? He has got the information.

MR SPEAKER:

If he does not want to give it. Next question.

NO. 343 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females under 18 years of age as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 344, 345, 346 and 347 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 344 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females under 18 years of age as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 343, 345, 346 and 347 of 1998.

NO. 345 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females under 18 years of age as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 343, 344, 346 and 347 of 1998.

NO. 346 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females under 18 years of age as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 343, 344, 345 and 347 of 1998.

NO. 347 OF 1998THE HON R MOR**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to males and females under 18 years of age as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

As stated before this is not available, however, I can provide the hon Member with the latest figures available which have been extracted from our annual statistics of the original population. I can confirm that as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1997, there were 213 persons under 18 years of age insured in Gibraltar broken down as follows:

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Gibraltar and UK nationals	146	62
Others	4	1

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 343, 344, 345, 346 AND 347 OF 1998

HON R MOR:

Can the Minister provide the information as to the others, what specific nationalities they are?

HON H CORBY:

I have not got that with me but I will provide the hon Member with the information that he has requested.

HON R MOR:

I would be grateful.

ORAL

NO. 348 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998, to males and females who work under 15 hours per week broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 349, 350, 351 and 352 of 1998.



NO. 349 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998, to males and females who work under 15 hours per week broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 348, 350, 351 and 352 of 1998.

NO. 350 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998, to males and females who work under 15 hours per week broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 348, 349, 351 and 352 of 1998.

NO. 351 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998, to males and females who work under 15 hours per week broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 348, 349, 350 and 352 of 1998.

NO. 352 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, to males and females who work under 15 hours per week broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Moroccan nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The information requested is not available and I cannot give the hon Member any more information.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 348, 349, 350, 351 AND 352 OF 1998

HON R MOR:

What the Minister is indicating is that the information cannot be made available.

HON H CORBY:

Not readily available because I would have to go through all the records again. He is asking "in issue" again on the number of people who work 15 hours, I would have to look at every record to see who works 15 hours or less.

HON R MOR:

On whatever registration is done, is it not true that the contribution rate would be different?

HON H CORBY:

No, I am afraid the hon Member is mistaken. In order to give him that information I have to go through mastercards because we are talking again 'in issue' and that is the whole of the population of Gibraltar and I have to go through every one in order to give the information requested by the hon Member.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister say of the grand total for December 1997, which he has provided of 11,962 in answer to the previous question, can he say whether in fact persons who do not pay the full social insurance because they work under 15 hours would be included as part of that 11,962?

HON H CORBY:

I have not got that information with me but I will certainly pass it on to the hon Member if that is the case. I am sure it is not but I want to give an accurate answer to the hon Member and I will get it and give him the information.

NO. 353 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SELF-EMPLOYED INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers classified as self-employed as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 354, 355, 356 and 357 of 1998.

NO. 354 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SELF-EMPLOYED INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers classified as self-employed as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 353, 355, 356 and 357 of 1998.

NO. 355 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SELF-EMPLOYED INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers classified as self-employed as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 353, 354, 356 and 357 of 1998.



NO. 356 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - SELF-EMPLOYED INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers classified as self-employed as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 353, 354, 355 and 357 of 1998.

NO. 357 OF 1998THE HON R MOR**SOCIAL SECURITY - SELF-EMPLOYED INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers classified as self-employed as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Non-EU nationals?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers classified as self-employed is broken down as follows:-

	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>
(a) Gibraltarians	1	1	1	1	2
(b) UK nationals	24	24	24	24	24
(c) Spanish nationals	16	17	17	17	17
(d) Other EU nationals	1	1	1	1	1
(e) Non EU nationals	1	1	1	1	1

NO. 358 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - INSURANCE CARDS - FRONTIER WORKERS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 359, 360, 361 and 362 of 1998.

NO. 359 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - INSURANCE CARDS - FRONTIER WORKERS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 358, 360, 361 and 362 of 1998.

NO. 360 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - INSURANCE CARDS - FRONTIER WORKERS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 358, 359, 361 and 362 of 1998.

NO. 361 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - INSURANCE CARDS - FRONTIER WORKERS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 358, 359, 360 and 362 of 1998.

NO. 362 OF 1998THE HON R MOR**SOCIAL SECURITY - INSURANCE CARDS - FRONTIER WORKERS**

Can Government state what was the total number of social insurance cards in issue to male and female frontier workers as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, broken down as follows:-

- (a) Gibraltarians
- (b) UK nationals
- (c) Spanish nationals
- (d) Other EU nationals
- (e) Others?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The information requested in respect of the months of April to July 1998 is not available as records are not kept on a monthly basis.

However, the details available as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 are as follows:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
(a) & (b) Gibraltarian & UK nationals	237	156
(c) Spanish nationals	687	247
(d) Other EU nationals	24	17
(e) Others	1	1

NO. 363 OF 1998THE HON R MOR**SOCIAL SECURITY - SOCIAL INSURANCE CARDS**

Can Government state what was the number of social insurance cards in issue on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1997, which have been renewed as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, in respect of:

- (a) Gibraltarians (males and females)
- (b) Non-Gibraltarians (males and females)?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

There were 12,410 social insurance cards in issue as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 1997, of these 448 have not yet been renewed. They are as follows:-

	Male	Female	Total
Gibraltarian/British nationals	188	167	355
Other nationalities	44	49	<u>93</u>
			<u>448</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 363 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

The figure of 12,410 which the Minister said are the cards in issue in December 1997 or should that be December 1996?

HON H CORBY:

1997.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Then the table he has provided us says that the cards in issue at the end of December 1997 was 11,962 which is, in fact, the figure arrived by deducting the 448 from the 12,410. There seems to be a contradiction between the two. If it is 1996 the Minister can confirm it and then we know how to interpret the information. Perhaps the Minister can check whether, in fact, what this implies is that during the course of 1997 there were cards issued and the numbers in issue at the end of December are the ones that have been returned since January presumably and that is where the 11,962 come in.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That sounds right but we would just like to check.



NO. 364 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - OPEN/CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what transfers have been made from the Open Long-Term Benefits Fund to the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund giving the amounts and the month of each transfer?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The transfers made from the Open Long-Term Benefits Fund to the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund by month is as follows:

December 1997	£425,000
January 1998	£600,000
February 1998	£750,000
March 1998	£1,000,000
April 1998	£350,000
May 1998	£800,000
June 1998	£800,000
July 1998	£800,000
August 1998	<u>£800,000</u>
	<u>£6,325,000</u>

ORAL

NO. 365 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state in which month this year the balance in the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund was reduced to zero?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The local pensions element of the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund had a nil balance during December 1997.

NO. 366 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the number of pensioners being paid or with entitlement to payment on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998, from the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund giving a breakdown of pre-1969 Spanish pensions and locally funded pensions showing the number of Gibraltarians/UK nationals, Moroccans and other nationalities?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 367, 368, 369 and 370 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 367 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the number of pensioners being paid or with entitlement to payment on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998, from the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund giving a breakdown of pre-1969 Spanish pensions and locally funded pensions showing the number of Gibraltarians/UK nationals, Moroccans and other nationalities?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 366, 368, 369 and 370 of 1998.

NO. 368 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the number of pensioners being paid or with entitlement to payment on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998, from the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund giving a breakdown of pre-1969 Spanish pensions and locally funded pensions showing the number of Gibraltarians/UK nationals, Moroccans and other nationalities?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 366, 367, 369 and 370 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 369 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the number of pensioners being paid or with entitlement to payment on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998, from the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund giving a breakdown of pre-1969 Spanish pensions and locally funded pensions showing the number of Gibraltarians/UK nationals, Moroccans and other nationalities?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 366, 367, 368 and 370 of 1998.

NO. 370 OF 1998THE HON R MOR**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the number of pensioners being paid or with entitlement to payment on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, from the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund giving a breakdown of pre-1969 Spanish pensions and locally funded pensions showing the number of Gibraltarians/UK nationals, Moroccans and other nationalities?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The following pensioners were in receipt of payments from the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund from April to August 1998:-

	<u>APRIL</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUNE</u>	<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUGUST</u>
Pre-1969 Spanish pensioners	8809	8796	8797	8796	8881
British pensioners (Gib & UK Nationals)	4683	4691	4704	4720	4713
Moroccan Pensioners	889	895	910	922	919
Other nationalities	<u>248</u>	<u>248</u>	<u>249</u>	<u>253</u>	<u>256</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>14629</u></b>	<b><u>14630</u></b>	<b><u>14660</u></b>	<b><u>14691</u></b>	<b><u>14769</u></b>

ORAL

NO. 371 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the balance of the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998, showing the amount from UK and local funds and the expenditure to former Spanish workers and to pensioners from local funds?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 372, 373, 374 and 375 of 1998.



NO. 372 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the balance of the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998, showing the amount from UK and local funds and the expenditure to former Spanish workers and to pensioners from local funds?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 371, 373, 374 and 375 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 373 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the balance of the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998, showing the amount from UK and local funds and the expenditure to former Spanish workers and to pensioners from local funds?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 371, 372, 374 and 375 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 374 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the balance of the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998, showing the amount from UK and local funds and the expenditure to former Spanish workers and to pensioners from local funds?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 371, 372, 373 and 375 of 1998.

NO. 375 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR**SOCIAL SECURITY - CLOSED LONG-TERM BENEFITS FUND**

Can Government state what was the balance of the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998, showing the amount from UK and local funds and the expenditure to former Spanish workers and to pensioners from local funds?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The balance of the Closed Long-Term Benefits Fund as at 30 April 1998, 31 May 1998, 30 June 1998, 31 July 1998 and 31 August 1998, showing the amount from UK and local funds and the expenditure to former Spanish workers and to pensioners from local funds is as follows:

	<u>30 April 98</u>	<u>31 May 98</u>	<u>30 Jun 98</u>	<u>31 Jul 98</u>	<u>31 Aug 98</u>	<u>Total</u>
Opening Balance	£550,327	£358,628	£515,720	£525,941	£282,464	
Receipts from O.D.A	£880,000	£550,000	£610,000	£800,000	£330,000	£3,170,000
Other Receipts	£3,700	£3,179	£8,477	£14,733	£6,405	£36,494
Spanish Pensions	£559,157	£408,882	£622,164	£1,059,776	£475,587	£3,125,566
Local Pensions	£866,242	£787,205	£786,092	£798,434	£774,734	£4,012,707
Transfers from the Open Long-Term Benefits Fund	£350,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£800,000	£3,550,000
Closing Balance	£358,628	£515,720	£525,941	£282,464	£168,548	

ORAL

NO. 376 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**PRISON - NUMBER OF INMATES**

Can Government state what was the number of Gibraltarians and other different nationalities held in prison on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 377, 378, 379 and 380 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 377 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**PRISON - NUMBER OF INMATES**

Can Government state what was the number of Gibraltarians and other different nationalities held in prison on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 376, 378, 379 and 380 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 378 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**PRISON - NUMBER OF INMATES**

Can Government state what was the number of Gibraltarians and other different nationalities held in prison on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 376, 377, 379 and 380 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 379 OF 1998

THE HON R MOR

**PRISON - NUMBER OF INMATES**

Can Government state what was the number of Gibraltarians and other different nationalities held in prison on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Answered together with Question Nos. 376, 377, 378 and 380 of 1998.



NO. 380 OF 1998THE HON R MOR**PRISON - NUMBER OF INMATES**

Can Government state what was the number of Gibraltarians and other different nationalities held in prison on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The number of inmates currently in custody by nationality is as follows:-

	<u>30.04.98</u>	<u>31.05.98</u>	<u>30.06.98</u>	<u>31.07.98</u>	<u>31.08.98</u>
British (local)	16	18	15	14	14
British (UK)	2	2	2	3	1
Spanish	12	8	8	8	7
Moroccan	6	5	5	11	10
French	1	1	1	1	1
Italian	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>35</b>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 376, 377, 378, 379 AND 380 OF 1998

HON R MOR:

Is there any specific reason for having such a high number of Moroccans in July?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The specific reason is that the courts have sentenced them to custodial.....

HON R MOR:

My interest was perhaps whether they might have been illegal immigrants?

HON H CORBY:

No, they are not illegal immigrants; most of the Moroccan inmates in prison are drug related.

NO. 381 OF 1998

THE HON J J GABAY

**SCHOOL OF TOURISM**

Will Government state how many applicants there have been for the 20 places available at the School of Tourism?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

There have been 36 applicants to fill the 20 positions available in the first intake.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 381 OF 1998

HON J J GABAY:

Needless to say, without detracting from what is really a laudable policy on the part of Government to wish to attract youngsters into the hotel industry, I would ask the Minister whether he is actually happy with the response taking into consideration that these are meant to be initial steps on a much longer span of training to be provided at Bleak House?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Obviously one is never satisfied with the results that one achieves in any initiative but, in principle, I would say that I am happy with the 36 applications considering that after the closing date for applications another 12 applications came through which have not been considered in this particular intake. But as a second intake takes place in 18 weeks time these may be considered subsequently. So I think with time the interest expressed by young Gibraltarians to be able to consider a one year training in the hotel industry is something that is moving in the right direction.

HON J J GABAY:

I rather disagree with the Minister in respect of that interpretation. Since we are institutionalising training and this is the important point, perhaps the Government should have researched fully not only the actual demand but the prospective demand because it comes to mind, of course, that – and this will be part of another question later on but related in a way to this one – as to whether it might not have been advisable to arrange for such a limited number to have their education in the hotel industry abroad instead of having it locally unless he is really quite convinced that the demand is going to be there. I also appreciate the fact that the Minister has actually advertised and campaigned on this field and, again, I think this is very acceptable and commendable but I have certain doubts as to whether we should have taken such an important expensive step, I presume, when only 36 candidates have applied for the 20 places available.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can I ask, can the Minister give us the breakdown of the 36 applicants male and female and can he say whether they are all in fact school leavers? There is an age limit, is there, in the applications?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Yes, initially we were targetting the age group of 18 to 25. The split up, to be honest, I could not give exact figures but I have been told that there are slightly more males than there are females but it is very near the 60:40 ratio.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Are they school leavers?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Some of them are school leavers, some of them have been unemployed for two or three years, some of them are finishing their studies at school and have opted out to go into training in the hotel industry but some of them are school leavers, yes.

HON A J ISOLA:

What system is going to be put in place to select the 20 from the 36?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The initial interviews took place earlier this week. There was a selection board composed of a representative of Julie Sibley and Associates, the Product Manager of the Gibraltar Tourist Board, a representative from the Hotel Association and two members from the Education Department, one from Bayside and one from Westside in order to have a good background as to the sort of candidates that had applied especially those who are school leavers. Interviews have now taken place and we are waiting to see what the outcome of those interviews have been.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Following from what the Minister has said, I suppose that the interviewers will be looking at the character of the person because if I remember correctly, and he can correct me if I am wrong, he said that no academic qualification was required. What is it that the interviewer will be looking from the people that they are going to interview?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct, there would not be any minimum academic qualification to be considered for a post at the School of Tourism but the interviewing board were basically looking for the attitude of the applicant and the enthusiasm of wanting to move into this particular industry.

NO. 382 OF 1998

THE HON J J GABAY

### **HOTEL TRAINING COURSES**

Will Government specify what qualification will be obtained by trainees on the successful completion of the hotel training courses?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

There will be two types of qualifications: those which are internationally recognised and internal certificates. We analysed the international qualifications before. These will be basically in three disciplines - Waiting, Housekeeping and Chef.

The original intention was to offer these three qualifications to NVQ Levels 1 and 2. An alternative international qualification, the City and Guilds International Certificate, is now available and an evaluation is presently being conducted of which of the two international qualifications should be offered by the School.

In addition to these international qualifications, there will also be internal certificates which will be based on –

Basic Certificate from the Wine and Spirit Education Trust; Basic Food Hygiene Certificate; the Julia Sibley and Associates Customer Care Certificate; the Julia Sibley and Associates Selling Skills Certificate; and the Diploma from the Gibraltar School of Tourism.

### SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 382 OF 1998

HON J J GABAY:

Again moving into the direction of questions later on as to the expenses incurred upon the taxpayer in institutionalising these courses locally, was it not possible in a way for the Government to enter into some sort of contractual arrangement with the hotels so that at least some percentage of these youngsters who enrol in the courses might have some guarantee of a job at the end of it all otherwise we might be adding a further element of disgruntled youngsters onto the unemployment market or perhaps educating for export. So I think it is not an unreasonable suggestion to make that perhaps some sort of positive understanding might have been reached with the hotels. I think some of the comments made by the Hotel Association casts some doubt as to the availability of jobs for them since they related it to a growth in tourism, which we would all like to see but, of course, which is not a certainty.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I have to say that I do not think it is an unreasonable suggestion as the hon Member puts. The fact of the matter is that one cannot directly link training with job creation, it is true that one should seek to train people to prepare them for the jobs that one judges that the economy is going to throw up for them possibly in the future but the idea that

one does not train people unless and until one is sure that one has guaranteed employment for them is not a viable way to proceed. Here is an industry in which Gibraltarians have traditionally been under-represented, we believe precisely because, amongst other reasons, they have not had the necessary skills and therefore the hon Member is right when he says that this is an investment by the Government. It is indeed an investment by the Government, it is an investment in training for the people of Gibraltar who are interested in taking this training opportunity, others may be more interested in taking other training opportunities. The Government invest in training opportunities, as we do, in scholarships to send people to university. We do not say to people before we give them a scholarship to go to university, "Well, I am not going to send you off to study marine biology until I find an employer who is guaranteed to employ you when you come back." The view that the Government take, training and relearning is a right that people have and that Government should do what we can, which is not due to lack of resources as other larger countries with more resources might be able to do, but that we do what we can within the resources that we have, to give people the opportunity to acquire additional skills, preferably with qualifications attached, that makes them better able to sell their services when the opportunity arises. As it happens, we think because we are confident in the prospects for success of our tourism potential and the likely success of the Government's tourism policy, although it is not guaranteed, but we believe that given the confidence that we have in Gibraltar's future in tourism, it is not an unwise investment to make in offering training opportunities to people in that amongst other sectors. The Government are working in partnership with the private sector, as the hon Member says, but not to extract from them cast iron guarantees of employment but rather as part of the delivery of the training course. The vast majority of the training course involves placement with hotels and the Government much hope and indeed have an expectation that when those placements come to an end employers will be interested in retaining the services of people in whose training they have had an input. But if the hon Member demands the criteria of guarantee of a permanent employment at the end, certainly this scheme does not deliver it and I really do not think training schemes deliver that guarantee anywhere in Western Europe.

HON J J GABAY:

I share naturally, and I think we all do, some of the views expressed by the Chief Minister, and I realise as well that the Hotel Association would be obviously very reluctant to enter into some sort of contractual arrangement which is global in respect of all the future graduates of the school. But as an encouragement, I think, to future applicants I do not feel that it is an unnecessary or a difficult imposition of the Hotel Association to guarantee at least a small number, otherwise we may find that at the end of the course, if they have not got new jobs for them, it is certainly not going to be an encouragement for others to apply and at the same time we will be landed with a whole expensive structure which might well collapse. I do not want to be a prophet of doom because I would like to see its success, of course.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, obviously the Government will not miss every opportunity to encourage – he may interpret the word "encourage" as he likes – but we will certainly be encouraging hotels, especially hotels that have been the recipients of assistance from the Government in other respects, to take these people on as many of them as possible but, of course, there is a difference between encouraging and obliging them to do so. As to the permanence of the Tourism School, of course it may well be that this is not a Tourism

School, these are tourism courses operated at an institution, this is a general training institution and of course we will not continue to provide tourism courses year in year out once the natural market has been satisfied but we are a long way away from that and given the relatively low incidence of Gibraltarians involved in management of hotels and at all levels of the industry, I think that there is scope for the Tourism School concept to run for several years before that could be saturated and we shall have to monitor the caution that the hon Member has mentioned. We shall have to ensure that there is indeed a reasonable level of take-up of the products and output in this institution to justify it continuing in future years. Obviously the Government intend to do that as well as encourage hotels to prefer locals. In the past when we have tried to encourage them to prefer locals they have always come back with the answer that the locals have not got enough expertise, that they are not trained and this is an answer to that. Now we are going to do that, let us see what answer they come up with then.

HON J J GABAY:

As an extension really of what we have been saying on that, I was wondering whether the Minister has had an opportunity to cost the per capita expense per trainee for a year's course in this hotel industry study and whether he has had the opportunity to compare that per capita cost with the possible cost of having similar training abroad? That would be an interesting indication as to the wisdom of the way we are spending our money in this field.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is not the view that the Government have taken. The fact of the matter is that having the training abroad automatically excludes from access to it, individuals who due to family circumstances cannot just relocate themselves away from Gibraltar and therefore there are people who would wish to do this if they can do it in Gibraltar but would not wish to uproot themselves to go to England to do the course. Secondly, it is very much on-the-job training, in other words, there is movement in and out between hotel placement and the actual academic – whatever the technical jargon is – the classroom part of the course and that would become much harder to co-ordinate, if not impossible to co-ordinate. Thirdly, the Government will insist on keeping a close supervisory control of this to make sure that there is genuine training being delivered and that this does not just become some sort of cheap labour option for the hotels and, of course, the Government could not supervise this from abroad. On the whole and given what the cost structure is, (a) we do not think there would be a terrible great saving in sending all these people abroad as opposed to what we envisage this will cost, (b) there is almost other reasons why we think these training opportunities should be offered locally and, (c) many of the costs will be shared with other courses that will be run from that same building, sort of a central administrative sense and that would spread out the cost over many other courses that the Government will hope to offer, this one just being the first as tourism-related one. So on balance, although we do access the UK as the hon Member knows for many aspects of our educational products, I think that in training no one has said to the Government, "Well, why is the Construction Training Centre located in Gibraltar? Would it not be cheaper to send the 20 youngsters who are in the Construction Training Centre which costs several hundred thousand pounds a year to run, would it not be cheaper to put them all in an aeroplane and pack them off to Hartlepool?" That is not the view that I think Governments take,

either this one or indeed the previous one, about vocational training of this sort and I think on balance and I hope that on reflection the hon Member will agree that whatever merit there might be to his view, on balance the better view is that we should, where possible, provide these facilities within Gibraltar for all the reasons that I have explained.

HON J J GABAY:

No doubt time will tell and, as I say, I do not want to forecast any doom but time will tell how viable the scheme will turn out to be. I would not share, of course, the comparison between the hotel industry and construction. I think we are all aware that the fact that there are certain international standards with regard to the hotel industry which are extremely important and needless to say, trainees from Gibraltar getting experience, also direct experience in foreign hotels could be very much part of an excellent training in this field which is obviously something that they will miss. With regard to placement I think we have a specific question on it.

HON J L BADLACHINO:

The Minister for Tourism, if I heard him correctly said that at this stage they did not know whether they were going for NVQ qualification or they might go for City and Guilds, is that correct?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Originally we were going to go for NVQ Levels 1 and 2 but in subsequent discussions last month we were given an alternative of being able to go for the City and Guilds International Certificate and this is another option which we are considering. Basically the courses and the actual training is basically the same, it is just the final presentation as to who will eventually issue the certificates and a decision will be taken before the course starts on the 21<sup>st</sup> September.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

I would understand that on the level of academic qualifications, probably they are similar or they have the same standing within the hotel industry but there is a difference on applying the different systems. For example, is it not correct that for an NVQ one needs internal verifiers, assessors, external verifiers? I am asking this because seeing that this is going to start this month, they have to have all these things in place if they do not go for the NVQ 1. Is that the consideration that the Minister is taking in weighing one with the other?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Both options actually function in the same way. Let me tell the hon Gentleman that the hotel industry, as it stands today in Gibraltar, does have suitably qualified people at managerial level who are able to carry out the necessary supervision and necessary examination. In addition to that we will be having external tutors and examiners who will be coming out from Julia Sibley and Associates to monitor and examine the trainees as they approach the different levels throughout the first year. But let me say that we are dealing with a small number of people, 20 people is not a big number to deal with, firstly, and secondly, a one year course covering such a wide range of basic training in

the hotel industry is not a massive amount of specialisation that will be accredited in one year. The standards at NVQ level 1 and level 2 are quite basic in the initial stages. Once the first year is over and they wish to move on to level 2 or level 3, then the situation changes completely.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is it that everybody will be trained to be a waiter, housekeeper and a chef or are people going to be deciding between the three options that the Minister has mentioned?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

My understanding is that there will be basic training being given in waiting, housekeeping and in becoming a chef and then after that comes the area of specialisation where then the trainees will start to branch off depending on what areas they feel they would like to work in. It is not a matter of everybody becoming a chef but everybody will have some basic training as to what happens in a kitchen.

HON J J BOSSANO:

So the chef part of it may be simply learning to peel potatoes or wash pots and pans, is that the kind of level?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The hon Member may not be aware that that is what happens in the hotel industry. The hotel management course in the United Kingdom involves people starting at the bottom and one starts as the bellboy and by the time one gets to hotel management one will have worked on a dirty one's hands basis in every department of the hotel and that is the basis of the training for hotel management in the United Kingdom generally. That is exactly the case.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Yes, I am well aware that that is the case, in fact the managers that we have got in Gibraltar in hotels started off precisely like that and they worked their way up not by going to school and getting qualifications but in fact by getting a job as a bellboy. I am aware that that is the system that presumably the School of Tourism is not intended to be emulating that. What we are doing, presumably from the information that has been provided, is seeking to provide people who will be able to apply for vacancies as waiters because at the moment they cannot apply because they are inexperienced or unqualified, is that not the case?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Let me say that each individual trainee before applying has been given a package of literature for them to consider and read through and in that literature there is a 52 week programme which basically gives details of exactly what they will be doing during those 52 weeks. If the hon Member wants I could go through the 52 weeks but let me say that in addition, for example, in the first week of doing the basic induction course, weeks two to six they will be doing purchasing, stores, linen room, house portage, maintenance and then they will move back to the school and then return back to the hotel and do room service, restaurant, grill rooms, bars, et cetera. Then they will move



in to week 18 to 29 when they will be in the kitchen, possibly peeling potatoes as the hon Member has rightly pointed out. Then they will be back to the school again and then returning back to the hotel on weeks 32 to 43 when they will be doing housekeeping. Towards the end of the course, on weeks 46 to 52, they will be in the front office, reception, cashier and reservation. So therefore within those 52 weeks programme they will have achieved a basic knowledge of most of the departments that actually run a hotel.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is it that it is an NVQ 1, for example, if it is decided that that is what is going to be provided at the end, in housekeeping, kitchen work and waiting, because he mentioned those three in particular or is it that there is an NVQ 1 in hotel work?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

My understanding is that they will be achieving NVQ level 1 and 2 depending on the skill and the potential of the individual candidate in the three basic categories of waiting, housekeeping and chef. If they do housekeeping they are covering purchasing, stores, linen room, house portering, maintenance, what I have given is a more detailed analysis of these three particular headings. But everything that I have gone through in these 52 weeks come under these three headings so they will be getting qualifications at NVQ level in these three particular categories or areas of specialisation.

HON J J BOSSANO:

So what they get is three NVQs, not one NVQ for the three things, is that correct?

HON DR B A LINARES:

If one wants an umbrella qualification for the NVQ and name a label, it is hotel, catering and hospitality and that covers a whole range of elements within that which is basic food hygiene, basic wine and spirit, housekeeping, customer care, selling skills, wine butler certificate and diploma from the Gibraltar School of Tourism. So those are the elements that make up the one NVQ which is labelled hotel, catering and hospitality and it is validated and accredited by the City and Guilds International Certificate.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I think perhaps then we have been misled by the original answer which said that they will get NVQ qualifications in waiting, housekeeping and chefs. In fact they will all come out with the same certificate then and the certificate will have that title?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

HON A J ISOLA:

The Minister intimated that at the end of year one there was an option for trainees to take it further in any of these specific areas. Is that the case? Does a trainee who does his first year course have the ability to say, "I want to stay for a second year now" and to increase his accreditation or his certificate?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

This option will not become available until the end of the first year because within the year all they can achieve is an NVQ level 2. Once that option becomes available we will be considering throughout the course of this year whether we are going to take this forward depending on the level of interest that there is in trainees taking their studies further.

HON A J ISOLA:

So at the moment, as far as the trainees are concerned, the only thing on offer is the certificate that the Minister has just referred to? There is no, at this stage, question of any of these trainees being able to take a second year if they want to, that will come later?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The option will be considered at the end of the first year.

NO. 383 OF 1998

THE HON J J GABAY

**HOTEL TRAINING COURSES**

Will Government inform the House whether students attending the hotel training course will be in the employment of the Employment and Training Board?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Yes.

NO. 384 OF 1998THE HON J J GABAY**HOTEL TRAINING COURSES**

Will Government state how much is going to be paid to trainees in the hotel training course?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Government will pay trainees in the Hotel School programme similar allowances as per other Government training programmes, such as in the Construction Centre. The rates are as follows:

<b>AGE GROUP</b>	<b>TRAINING ALLOWANCE PER MONTH</b>
15 to 16	£227
17+	£254
18+	£330
19+	£356

Government are presently considering increasing these allowances.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 384 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

So in fact the rates are the vocational cadet rates that are currently being paid and that everybody else gets? Could he further clarify, when the Minister is talking about the possibility of increasing it, is he talking about increasing it for everybody or just for the people in the School of Tourism?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct and obviously we are looking at increasing it across the board.

HON J J BOSSANO:

So in fact the statement that was made by the representative of his department in an interview that what they would be getting would be pocket money was incorrect, it was misleading, we are not talking about pocket money?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I am sorry, could he repeat that question again?

HON J J BOSSANO;

Yes, when there was some concern being expressed about the lack of response there was an interview with a representative of his department who said on television that people might not know that they would be getting pocket money if they went to the School, that was in fact a misleading description, what they will be getting is the kind of pay that trainees are getting in any other field?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

NO. 385 OF 1998

THE HON J J GABAY

### HOTEL TRAINING COURSES

Can Government state, in respect of the one-year training course for the hotel industry, how much time the trainees are to spend at school and how much time attached to a hotel?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The students will spend five weeks in the school, 44 weeks in hotels and three weeks on holiday.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 385 OF 1998

HON J J GABAY:

I think one needs to be concerned with the question of the amount of time to be spent actually working in hotels because as the Chief Minister pointed out earlier on, there is always a danger of a placement in an hotel being converted into some sort of cheap labour. I believe in the interview given by Julia Sibley she said that they would be monitored by hotel managers and the School's monitor. As we all know, hotel general managers are very busy people and I cannot imagine them spending much time with these trainees. Therefore the question is, is the Minister satisfied that the School has the right person as a monitor with the required amount of time to literally supervise their work and to see that it has an educative purpose and not merely time-consuming chores of very little educational value?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Let me start by saying that the programme that has been worked out for this particular course follows very much in line with similar courses in the UK. The split between what time they spend in schools and in hotels follows the trend in most UK hotel training programmes. So there is nothing special or different in this particular course to raise any alarm. I also want to inform the hon Gentleman that these courses need to have internal verifiers and these internal verifiers are members of the hotel staff who have to verify that certain work is being done by these trainees according to the training programme that is specified by the school. Obviously there will be a monitor who will be monitoring not just the performance and work of these trainees, but verifying that the verifiers are undertaking their scrutiny of ensuring that these trainees are being trained. So that is basically the structure that will be in place and follows very much the trend in all hotel training courses.

HON J J GABAY:

Will the work required of the monitor be full-time employment or is it just a casual visit now and again? How is the time supervision to be divided?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Yes, the monitor will be full-time employment and will form part of the staff at Bleak House undertaking training under the Ministry for Education and Training.

HON J J GABAY:

In a Chronicle interview Mrs Julia Sibley indicated there could be interchange with UK hotels, is this to form part of the present course for the duration of the year or is this some aspiration for the future?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That comment was probably made as a result of one of my meetings with her where I intimated the fact that it is some times wise may be to send some of these trainees for a short period of time to an hotel abroad and seeing that she does similar work in the UK and has similar programmes, that we could interchange in that we would have some of the Uk trainees coming out to Gibraltar for a few weeks to see what they could learn locally and we in turn could do likewise. It is something of a proposal that may be considered but it definitely cannot be considered at an early stage because there is no point in sending a trainee in his initial stages of his training programme but later on in the year that could be a possibility.

HON J J GABAY:

In the Minister's comments a minute ago he said there was nothing really dramatically different about the course, it was really the standard course provided in the UK and yet in her interview, again, Mrs Julia Sibley said that this was a condensed version of a course she had run for training at the Savoy Hotel, which is of course very impressive, and that the whole thing had been condensed to one year. So I would have thought there was something really very special about it and not simply what is standard in most courses in the UK, could he comment on that?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

What I think Mrs Sibley must have been referring to was the fact that in the UK training programmes of the Savoy group are quite extensive and on-going and this had been tailor-made on a training programme for 20 individuals initially as a first intake, considering the size and considering the fact that they would not be training just in one specific hotel but would be training in a number of hotels and therefore one cannot compare possible training in a four star hotel to a two star hotel which is something that will happen in Gibraltar but does not happen in the UK. So there are some local tailor-made parts of the course in order to meet local requirements.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

The Minister has said there are certain things which have been tailor-made to meet local requirements but obviously as the Minister for Education explained what is the NVQ 1, for example, the Minister mentioned three headings which obviously are modules within that specific NVQ which have to be covered. By having a modification has he had confirmation from the authority, in this case it might be the hotel industry in the UK, that that will be acceptable once they are given those qualifications? If they are

doing an adjustment, is it based well above what is normally required for that NVQ 1 and then it has nothing to do with the qualification they are going to get but if there are certain modifications, has the Minister got clarification that that modification will, at the end of the day, cover the qualification?

HON DR B A LINARES:

Yes, the whole concept of NVQs as the hon Member knows is very much to make training as realistic and as down to earth as possible, as meeting the real demands and the real needs of a particular industry, in this case the hotel and catering industry. Precisely the beauty of NVQs is that they are so flexible, so adjustable to the needs; cultural needs, economic needs, very special particularised needs of the hotel industry in Gibraltar and nevertheless, so long as that training is geared, as I say, into the specific needs of the particular industry in Gibraltar meets with certain general criteria and certain principles, underpinning principles which are validated by the accrediting body the NVQ will be granted although it gives us the opportunity to tailor-make the training of these trainees very much to the real and specific needs of our industry and our hotels in Gibraltar.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

That is obviously the advice that the Minister has had because I had advice to the contrary when I was in Government. So the Minister is clear that if that happens the person at the end will have no difficulty in getting an NVQ, is that correct? Can I ask the Minister because he said that the supervision will be done within the hotels by the hotel employees, am I correct in that whoever does an assessment needs a qualification himself to assess the person in that area? Are the hotel employees who are going to carry out this monitoring qualified to a D32 and a D33?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

HON A J ISOLA:

Just so that I can be clear, am I right in saying that the entire training will take place at the School of Tourism in Bleak House and therefore what will happen in the hotels will be work experience? There will not be any actual training from the School, there will be training from the hotel but not from the School? They are going to be spending five weeks in Bleak House and 44 weeks at hotels, is the element of training from Julia Sibley and Associates, is that element of the work only carried out at the Bleak House School of Tourism and if that is the case, are Government satisfied that with one week in every 10 that the training they are going to be given by Julia Sibley and Associates will actually have an impact on their training at the end of their 52 week course?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, the analysis that the hon Member makes, whilst strictly speaking is accurate, it is not the whole picture. There is also careful monitoring and supervision by qualified monitors of the on-going placement to make sure that it is taking the form of training delivery as opposed to just straightforward work and that is an important part of the training course. This course has been designed by them and this is what they do professionally.



HON J J GABAY:

Taking into account the remarks made by Mrs Julia Sibley she said, speaking on behalf of the Government, that the course should be fun. If by this it is meant that the course should be enjoyable, creative and exciting, perhaps even absorbing and adventurous, by all means I am sure that we all share that view. But does not the Minister find it a little amusing or perhaps even hilarious when the fun remark was followed by her in these words, "There will also be a treasure hunt in the first week". In terms of propagating education I thought that this was almost as hilarious as her use of the word "fantastic" when describing the particular people in the hotel industry who would actually be teaching our pupils, I thought there would have been a more apt word to describe head waiters rather than fantastic. What is the Minister's opinion on this?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 386 OF 1998

THE HON J J GABAY

### **HOTEL TRAINING COURSES**

Can Government state what is the type of work for which trainees will be qualified on completion of the one-year training courses for the hotel industry?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Trainees who successfully complete the one-year course will have an internationally recognised qualification in hotel catering and hospitality but with waiting, housekeeping and chef under its umbrella.

In addition, trainees will have received an extremely thorough and comprehensive basic training in all areas of a hotel environment.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 386 OF 1998

HON J J GABAY:

We are aware and we were from the very start as to the actual subjects that will form this course. Would the Minister be more specific as to what particular jobs the graduates will be able to undertake in the hotel industry, for example, wine butler, housekeeper, waiter and so on?

HON DR B A LINARES:

I think really there is an overlap between the previous question and this one, I think we covered really a list of areas which I read out: basic food hygiene, wine and spirit education, housekeeping, customer care, selling skills, wine butlers certificates. It is that particular jigsaw of skills and areas of training that will cohere in the hotel, catering and hospitality qualification.

HON J J GABAY:

What jobs will be available for these youngsters once they graduate? I think there was a worrying note in the words used by the spokesman for the hotel industry who was quoted as saying, if I may quote his words, "Obviously what we now need is as many tourists as possible to ensure that we can take all 20 trainees aboard at the end of next year and take further intakes in future". Well, in the light of such uncertainty, might it not have been more financially prudent, as I mentioned earlier on, to send initially some of these candidates for training abroad and then study the uptake locally and if the uptake of course is satisfactory, then to have embarked on institutionalising the process but I feel we have already gone into that, perhaps the Minister might wish to comment.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I think we ought to agree to disagree.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I think the Minister has in fact failed to answer specifically the original question because surely, although the Government have said they cannot require hotels to provide jobs for the people who finish the course, they have said that they are going to use every opportunity to persuade them and use their influence. So therefore they must know what is the potential pool and at what level and what types of jobs we are talking about and consequently that is a slightly different thing from the nature of the content of the course. This is why, originally, it was not very clear whether what we were talking about was training somebody who would come out as a waiter like somebody might come out as a painter and we would be able to do that and nothing else which, apparently, is not the case. So is it in fact that the Government themselves have not done any kind of exercise to establish what is the nature of the kind of work which hotels would be able to recruit these people into?

HON DR B A LINARES:

I believe the Tourist Department has carried out considerable survey in consultation with the industry as to their requirements and needs and it is emanating especially from that type of consultation and survey and enquiry that the whole idea of the School of Tourism has emerged and I think even at a layman's level, I think it is very obvious that the hotel industry is recruiting from outside the local population precisely because they claim the skills are just not there in our own people. I think it is almost obvious and manifest that we are meeting a real need within the hotel industry and also a real need as far as a possibility, as a potential employment resource for our own school leavers.

HON J J BOSSANO:

So the answer then is that it has not been done, that no exercise has been done to identify specifically the jobs that these people would be well trained and therefore have a high prospect of obtaining at the end of the one year? What we have got is a general sort of intuitive thing?

HON DR B A LINARES:

What I am answering is exactly the opposite, that there has been an exercise and there has been a study, there has been a survey, that we know that we are meeting real needs. What we cannot do, and I think the hon Member will understand, is actually guarantee that those needs are going to be filled by particular and specific trainees as they qualify. That is something that was discussed earlier and I think in line with the cadet scheme that was initiated and steered by the previous administration, it is impossible to actually guarantee the prospective trainees an opportunity of employment which is not to say that the potential jobs and openings have been studied through a careful exercise of consultation.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I am not asking for the guarantee. I am asking for the description of the potential jobs. If the potential jobs have been identified, can the Minister say, "Yes, the potential jobs is that we expect that there will be a requirement for waiters and for cooks and for linen keepers and that these are the kind of jobs that people", that is what the original question seeks to have, the type of work. We are still trying to get the answer to the original Question No. 386 which the Minister says he has done.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

When Julia Sibley was in the process of putting together the training programme she did this in consultation with the Hotel Association. In my answer to the question the hon Gentleman is referring to, I have said that the qualifications will be in waiting, housekeeping and chef so these are the three particular sectors that have been identified as having the areas where training is required because potential does exist at the end of the road.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I am afraid it sounds as if the Minister is avoiding giving a straight answer because, in fact, when I asked originally in a supplementary whether people would come out able to work as chefs the answer was no, because the chef element would be working in a kitchen possibly peeling potatoes which the Chief Minister confirmed was a perfectly natural and normal thing. If what they are saying is, "Yes, when they come out they will be able to apply for vacancies as potato peelers" then fine, we know what type of work we are talking about. But certainly it is not conceivable that they would be able to work as chefs at the end of a one year course based on the content that has been described. Do we know, apart possibly from waiters, is there anything else that there will be vacancies which the hotels will be opening and which the Government will seek to encourage them to offer to these people because these people will be equipped to perform those jobs? Is that known?

HON DR B A LINARES:

It is a question of perspective on the whole thing. No one will qualify as a chef in a top hotel after one year's training, I think it is obvious but one will qualify to start off as a chef from the bottom of the ladder which is the normal course of events in any job opportunity and prospects in that industry. The course will prepare trainees precisely for these potential opportunities of employment whether as chef or waiting and housekeeping but nevertheless it does not preclude those trainees from actually getting down to starting off their career from the bottom of the ladder, particularly in the hotel and catering industry which pretty well demands that sort of experience, starting from the very basic skills.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is it that the Minister does not realise that the nature of the career structure that he describes is the normal way in which the hotels recruit people when the hotels are large enough organisations to be able to have a staff in a kitchen where one can start off at the bottom and eventually, as vacancies open, one moves up. Surely he does not think that, say, the Bristol or the Queen's Hotels can afford to employ somebody, if they need somebody to cook a meal now, in the expectation that in several year's time he

will be ready to start cooking meals. Are we doing anything to be able to provide them because surely the Minister must understand that if the rationale of the School is that the hotels should employ local people it is because they are now arguing that what they need is somebody trained to cook ready to go into the job not somebody who is going to start at the bottom of the ladder and will be ready to cook in five year's time so the School will not be providing that supply of labour, will it?

HON DR B A LINARES:

I accept that many employers, not only in the hotel industry but in many other industries, prefer to recruit people from scratch, so to speak, without any basic skills qualifications but because they feel they have a character, the attitude and the possibility and potential of training within their own ambit. That is a route which is often followed but in our study of the situation we find that more and more employers, particularly in the hotel industry and in other industries as well, are now requiring, I suppose it is a question of the laws of supply and demand, certain basic training before they can even look at somebody for this route of starting from scratch and that is what the course, I think, will provide and as the Chief Minister was saying a moment ago, will actually take away steals of thunder from that excuse that is often heard from employers that the local people just simply do not have any form of training and therefore they have to recruit from labour abroad.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 387 OF 1998

THE HON J J GABAY

### HOTEL TRAINING COURSES

Will Government state the fee being paid to Julia Sibley Associates in respect of the hotel training courses?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The total fee for the hotel school course is £8,750 for this financial year and for other training for the hotel industry £5,750.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 387 OF 1998

HON J J GABAY:

Without wanting yet again to go over the previous question but it is relevant at this stage, would there be other additional expenses as well that we are not reckoning with at the moment? Would the Minister be prepared to provide the information at a later stage to contrast the per capita cost elsewhere abroad, whether in the neighbouring area or in the United Kingdom, so that we can have some parallel idea even if only as background information?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I think that the cost is not the only element that needs to be considered as the Chief Minister clearly pointed out earlier on in this session. Therefore we have taken the view in Government that we do want to have our School of Tourism in Gibraltar and therefore that will remain.

HON J J GABAY:

Nobody is questioning the authority of the Government to do so but I think it is a sensible question to ask about relative costs, we are all concerned about the way we use taxpayers money and I have said I do not want the information now but would the Minister consider making such a study, which is relatively simple and shed light on this question that I am asking him?

HON DR B A LINARES:

I have not, I confess, done an actuarial analysis of cost comparison, cost relativities, but I can tell the House from my experience what it costs to send abroad students for academic careers, the maintenance grants which have to be paid so that the students can actually sustain themselves abroad together with tuition fees which can, in this particular industry, be quite hefty because mostly it will be private colleges which is not the £1,000 charge to us by State universities. I do not know what the cost effectiveness aspect of keeping the tuition locally is.

HON J J GABAY:

My final question is that I would still welcome the possibility of getting facts rather than general impressions in the same way as I would have welcomed really a greater detailed explanation as to what the Minister meant by a survey when talking about the prospects of jobs in the hotel industry. We get the feeling that it is all rather intuitive.

MR SPEAKER:

That is not a question.

HON A J ISOLA:

In respect of the fee that the Minister has given us, are there any other costs or expenses relating to the course other than this fee being paid to Julia Sibley? Is there anything else being paid to that company or tutors? Does this fee cover the tutors, for example?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I gave a figure for six months because it basically started on the 25<sup>th</sup> September going on until the end of March next year. We have the cost of Julia Sibley Associates which is £8,750 and the cost of external courses and packs which is £5,750. Then there is the standard pack which is £500 which is the syllabus and the work files that trainees work with and then the cost of registering the 20 students with the City and Guilds which is £4,330, assuming that we go down the route of the City and Guilds. So that would come up to a total of £19,330.

HON J J GABAY:

Would the Minister not also have to add to that sum the expenses in terms of electricity consumption, services, care of the building and so on? That would be obviously an expense incurred.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The running cost of Bleak House comes under the Ministry for Education and Training because there are going to be other courses being undertaken at Bleak House so the capital cost, as such, of setting up the School and the actual running will form part of the cost of a number of courses and not just specifically in respect of tourism itself.

HON J J GABAY;

Yes, I totally agree with that but should not a proportion of that outlay be taken into consideration in costing the expense of the course?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Yes, there are some other costs which I have not highlighted earlier on because the question before was geared towards Julia Sibley and her related contract but there is the cost of the training monitors which we have set at £70,000. The trainer's flight expenses is about £2,000; the consumables at £10,400; electricity, water and telephone at £5,000; stationery at £1,500.

HON J J GABAY:

Perhaps as we keep on adding to the cost as we discuss it we may eventually come round to my suggestion which is only a suggestion at this stage, of a comparison costing per capita of what it might cost elsewhere even having accepted that it is the prerogative of the Government to make a School if they so desire, it is quite understandable.



NO. 388 OF 1998

THE HON J J GABAY

**TRANSPORT - COMPLAINTS ABOUT STATE OF A ROAD AND DANGEROUS PARKING**

Have Government investigated the complaints about the filthy state of the road as well as the incidence of dangerous parking in the immediate vicinity of St Paul's School?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Government are not aware of any specific complaints having been made with regard to the state of the road in the immediate vicinity of St Paul's School. The issue of parking in the immediate vicinity of the school is being examined at present as part of an overall parking study which is being conducted by the Buildings and Works Department with the assistance of the Highways and Sewers Department under the Ministry of Tourism and Transport.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 388 OF 1998

HON J J GABAY:

I am surprised that the Minister is not aware of any complaints. There have been two or three letters in the press on this subject, if I remember correctly, and I have actually.....

MR SPEAKER:

That is what you cannot ask. You cannot ask if letters in the press are accurate.

HON J J GABAY:

With all due respect I am not asking him whether they are accurate, this is only to point out that there is an awareness of problems with regard to cleanliness and parking in the vicinity of the school and these pose a danger both to health and the safety of the children. Again this has been illustrated in the press generally which I saw and therefore the main point that I would ask the Minister, if he is aware, is if he has visited the place, the danger of children crossing from behind parked cars on the pavement as the flow of traffic continues. Also whether he has found it easy to walk on that pavement because of the baroque display of excrement, it seems to have settled there as a permanent exhibition and I dare say that any tourist that strays into that area would get a very poor opinion both of our art and standard of cleanliness. The question is would he agree that there is this art display on the pavement and whether it is dangerous and whether the parking conditions are acceptable?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am sure that the Minister has no personal knowledge of whether there is a particular piece of dog excrement on a particular square metre of pavement on a particular street but certainly the Government could agree that the general thrust of what the hon Member is saying is that if the position were as he is, I suspect, with a degree of exaggeration describing then I would agree with him but it would not expect tourists to be impressed either with our cleanliness or with our art.

NO. 389 OF 1998THE HON J J GABAY

## ROSIA ROAD - PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Will Government consider putting a pedestrian crossing midway up Rosia Road to facilitate crossing from the Alameda Estate to the Bateria Promenade?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The possibility of placing a pedestrian crossing midway up Rosia Road has been considered by the Traffic Commission in the past and rejected on the grounds of safety.

Pedestrians crossing from the Promenade towards Alameda Estate are not visible to motorists until they actually step on to the road.

In the circumstances it was felt that a pedestrian crossing would give a false sense of security, especially to the many young children who use the promenade as a play area.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 389 OF 1998

HON J J GABAY:

Would the Minister not agree that by having a practical zebra crossing midway up Rosia Road it would serve two purposes – (a) the elderly and children crossing from the estate into the promenade would find it easier and less hazardous, and (b) it would also, in my opinion and I hope it may well be his opinion, check the speed at which vehicles travel along Rosia Road, at times it seems to have become a speed track so I think it could serve both purposes. Might not the Minister reconsider on those grounds?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

It is not a question of the Minister reconsidering, it is a question for the Traffic Commission to consider and, as I have said, the Traffic Commission has considered this idea in the past and have been rejected and I have already explained the reasons why it has been rejected and that is how the story goes.

HON J J GABAY:

Is it never the practice of the Minister to express his own views which would obviously be influential to this particular Committee?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

What the Minister has said is that if safety considerations permitted it, it would seem like a jolly good idea to have a zebra crossing where the hon Member suggests but those who have more experience in these matters have advised that the safety advantages are outweighed by the safety disadvantages and therefore the fact that

there are safety pros is not enough to go ahead with it. The safety pros have got to be greater than the safety cons and the advice that we have is that they do not. As the hon Member is aware the Government would not be adverse to spending the few pounds that it would cost to paint zebra crossings on the road so if the Government do not do it, I am sure he can accept that it is for a good reason, it would not be a controversial issue between us.

HON J J GABAY:

Or to use one of the Chief Minister's favourite phrases, it may well be just merely a matter of judgement.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Of course it is a matter of judgement.

NO. 390 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - AIRLINES ASSISTANCE SCHEME**

How much of the Airlines Assistance Scheme has been paid out as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 and in respect of which operator?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The amount paid in the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 is £64,188. Payments of £32,094 were made to each of GB Airways and Monarch Airlines.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 390 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

Am I right in saying that the payments under the Airlines Assistance Scheme are linked to the number of passengers being carried and, if so, is it just coincidence that they are both exactly the same?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is not correct. There is a Memorandum of Understanding with Monarch Airlines which started in May 1997, details of which have already been given to the hon Member in this House, covering three years and during those three years there are agreed levels of subsidy to the airline based on frequency of actual flights to Gibraltar and not passengers. The agreement with GB Airways is that we were going to subsidise them on this at the same level as we did with Monarch. So, in other words, when Monarch presents an invoice for a particular quarter based on the number of flights to Gibraltar, GB Airways is subsidised at the same level.

HON A J ISOLA:

Is there another form of payment under the Assistance Scheme to airlines which is linked to the number of passengers carried? I recall at the time when it was explained to us that, in fact, I think it was the Chief Minister or the Minister for Tourism, who said that obviously the more passengers they carry the quicker they would receive the payments because it is an amount in respect of the passengers. I think it was linked to the departure tax, if I remember rightly.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The hon Member is incorrect and I can only assume that he has misinterpreted what may have been said before. What I am saying today is what the situation really is.

HON A J ISOLA:

Am I right in saying then that, if Monarch submit an invoice for a quarter in the amount of £15,000 because I assume this is two quarters, and GB Airways have one flight or 15 flights will they still get the same?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

What we have agreed with Monarch Airlines – I do not have the details here in front of me – but hypothetically speaking, they would have four or five flights in the summer and two or three flights in the winter and for that they would get a certain subsidy and GB Airways would get the same level of subsidy assuming that they kept to their x number of flights that they had agreed at the time which was, I think, 13 or 14 flights from Gatwick and one from Manchester.

HON A J ISOLA:

So the subsidy is actually linked to the number of flights as originally agreed with Government, is that right?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

HON A J ISOLA:

So if somebody is flying less frequently does it affect the figure negatively and I assume that if it is more frequently it does not push it up anymore than what the limit was?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

In principle the hon Member is correct. Monarch, for example, increased their flights by one at some point during the Memorandum of Understanding and in order to promote that particular extra flight they asked whether we could assist them with an advertising budget for that in order to actually promote that particular flight and what we did was we did a joint advertising campaign targeted at particular additional flights which I think is on Fridays, but that is something outside the Airlines Assistance Scheme and that particular additional advertising as such comes from the Gibraltar Tourist Board advertising budget.

HON A J ISOLA:

Basically the Airlines Assistance Scheme is today the same as it was when it was initiated and it was announced in the House?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is the Minister then saying that there is no other payment to the airlines related to the departure tax?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

If I can recollect what I said, I have not read the Memorandum of Understanding with Monarch for a few months but as far as I can recollect, Monarch has a level of subsidy on year one, year two and on year three based on a particular number of flights and a commitment of minimum weekly flights during those three years and there is an agreed amount whether they bring in one passenger or they bring in 180 passengers on a particular flight. It is not paid as a rebate of passenger tax. They pay their landing charges in full, they pay their departure tax in full and they send us an invoice for that amount and we actually pay them the agreed amount. There is no netting of the subsidy.

HON J J BOSSANO:

This has nothing to do with netting. Is the Minister confirming that there is no payment other than the one that he has mentioned related to departure tax? I distinctly remember having been given an explanation here, indeed I remember the Chief Minister in clarification saying that the share of the departure tax that would go to the airline would not be the share that went to Terminal Management. If we get confirmation that there is no payment related to departure tax then that is fine, we just want it for the record and make sure we are getting the answer that is correct.

HON JJ HOLLIDAY:

There is no payment.

NO. 391 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**I&D FUND - HEAD 104, SUBHEAD 18**

How much of the £1,599,000 provided in the Approved Estimates in Head 104, subhead 18, has been spent to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 and in respect of which projects?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

A total of £350,000 has been spent to date from the I&D Head 104, subhead 18, Beautification and Refurbishment Works, on the extension of the city centre beautification works, Harbour Views promenade on the western reclamation and the completion of the Winston Churchill Avenue works.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 391 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

Are there any projects which the Minister expects to add on to that list before the end of the financial year or will these projects entail the entirety of that budget under that Head?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

There are other extensions and payments that have to be made in respect of the city centre beautification works. Harbour Views has not been fully paid for and I believe that there is Queensway east which is a project that is about to start.

HON A J ISOLA:

Could the Minister, by way of clarification, what is Queensway east? It does not mean anything to us.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Queensway east is the area of the old pre-fabs housing area and some of the area along where Queensway Quay is.



NO. 392 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - HEAD 6A, SUBHEAD 8**

Can Government state how much of the £650,000 provided in the Approved Estimates in Head 6A, subhead 8, has been expended to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 and in respect of what matters?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The figure spent to date is £247,366 and this can be broken down as follows:

Literature	£71,147
Promotional material	£ 6,520
UK consumer & trade road shows	£ 7,872
Press & travel agent familiarisation trips	£21,477
Advertising	£36,112
Travel fairs	£61,912
Events	£24,001
Marketing & PR contracts	£18,325

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 392 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

The one figure that seems to stand out is literature £71,000. Is there any explanation for that? It seems an awful lot of money on literature.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The explanation for that is that, for example, the cost of the UK/GTA brochure which will be launched later this month in October has already been paid for from this budget. The total budget that has been allocated to literature this year is £101,000 because we are working on a big new concept for literature which will be launched at the World Travel market so there has been an amount of literature production that has already incurred cost this year.

NO. 393 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - HOTEL ASSISTANCE SCHEME**

How much money has been paid out to local hoteliers as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 by Government in respect of the soft loans under the Hotel Assistance Scheme?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The amount paid out is £2,213,172.25. This figure includes all payments since the scheme began in the 1997/98 financial year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 393 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

I do not know if the Minister has the figure available but in respect of the £2 million budgeted for this year, how much of that has been spent? It is £900,000 this year, is that right?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Roughly since the beginning of this financial year it is about £1.168 million.

NO. 394 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - HOTEL ASSISTANCE SCHEME**

Is any hotel in breach of the arrangements entered into with Government in the Hotel Assistance Scheme?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Government are aware that the Elliott Hotel had certain problems in relation to staffing, and these were discussed with the hotel and are the subject of on-going discussions. Seven employees were involved.

Following a meeting with the Hotel's General Manager on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1998, the hotel was informed in writing on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1998 that Government could not accept that a state of redundancy should be declared at the hotel; and should some of the hotel's employees wish to leave of their own accord, and the hotel wished to assist them through the grant of redundancy pay, then there was no Government objection to this provided that the resulting vacancies were advertised through the Employment and Training Board.

The Government are aware that five persons have indeed been made redundant by the Elliott Hotel, and two continue in employment but working fewer conditioned hours. The five vacancies have not as yet been filled. Discussions continue with the hotel with regard to the recruitment of new staff.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 394 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

Am I right in saying that the Minister has accepted the five redundancies as being in compliance with the arrangements entered into with the Government?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

No, the Government have not accepted this and, in fact, I wrote to the hotel myself on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July following my meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> July putting them on notice as to the fact that it was contravening both the spirit and the actual terms of the Hotel Assistance Scheme. Nevertheless explanations were given to me and the Transport and General Workers Union were involved in the redundancy situation and some of the people involved were people who wanted to leave and would have probably left without absolutely no payments whatsoever. There was also someone who wanted to stop work as a result of maternity leave and therefore there were cases where there was a need, possibly, for consideration to be given. I have not accepted that and I have said that maybe there is a need not to replace the people concerned but in actual numbers I would want vacancies to be registered for the numbers involved to ensure that numbers are maintained according to the soft loan agreement and the Hotel Assistance Scheme which classifies that no redundancies are to be effected within the first 12 months after the signature of the document.

HON A J ISOLA:

There have been redundancies, the Minister has not accepted them and therefore there is a breach technically of the agreement. What is going to happen next? The Minister has said that vacancies have been opened, some may or may not need to be replaced. Will it just stay like that or is the Minister insisting that the five vacancies, if any, are filled to maintain the number? What is it that concerns the Minister? Is it a fact that there have been redundancies, the fact that the numbers are down, what are Government demanding, is it that the level of employees has to stay in the same amount as when the arrangements were entered into which is what the commitment was when it was signed?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

It has been made known to the hotel that they are in breach of their Hotel Assistance Scheme contract. It has been made known to them that the Government could not accept the state of redundancy. They nevertheless explained and showed us the circumstances under which these redundancies had been made and as long as vacancies are offered at the Employment and Training Board then Government would be willing to consider allowing them to fill these new vacancies in order both to keep up numbers and to ensure that employment is offered in those particular areas where redundancies have actually taken place.

HON A J ISOLA:

Is there not a sort of contradiction there in that if somebody is made redundant it means there is no work for him, that is the only legal basis for a redundancy that there is no longer any work for that person to do. If it was a dismissal, for example, for misconduct then fine, there is no problem, if the guy misbehaves he is sacked. How can somebody be made redundant and then open five positions to replace the ones that have been made redundant only because lack of work, that is the only basis for redundancy otherwise these five individuals could get five claims from the Industrial Tribunal for unfair dismissal, how can it be a redundancy if they have opened five vacancies at the ETB?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I take the hon Member's point and possibly what they term as redundancies may not strictly have been redundancies as such and that the employees themselves were in agreement, in fact, were quite willing to move on because of the package that was being offered. So in actual terms one had a situation, for example, where we had a chambermaid who had become pregnant and she was delighted that she was going to be offered a package to terminate her employment. Government did not accept that and we may have a situation that this pregnant woman terminating her employment but we do insist that the vacancies are filled and are registered with the Employment and Training Board so that the position is not lost.

HON A J ISOLA:

Firstly, if in fact there had been redundancies then obviously that is something that the Minister should consider himself with because that is exactly what the agreement tries to prohibit from happening. In other words, a hotel taking the benefit of the grant of the subsidy and then reducing its numbers and that is exactly what the Government intended to stop. If it was a dismissal, as I said before, it is a different question. To make it slightly worse, when there are five redundancies under the Gibraltar law it is a collective redundancy, we have to give notice to the union.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The position of the Government, which is all that the hon Member is legitimately entitled to press us on, is that hotels that have received the Assistance Scheme on certain conditions as to the level of employment the Government are not willing to turn a blind eye to breaches of those terms of the Assistance Scheme. The hotels are free to change the identity of their employees by whatever means they can lawfully do so and if they do so in a way which breaches any employee's rights no doubt those employees will pursue their remedies. I think we should try and keep both things apart, we are not the Personnel Department of the Elliott Hotel, we are the guardians of the public interest in relation to the Hotel Assistance Scheme and in that capacity I can assure the hon Member that we will assert our rights in full under the terms upon which the loans have been made available should any condition, in relation to employment levels, be infringed.

NO. 395 OF 1998THE HON A J ISOLA

## TOURISM - HOTEL BED NIGHTS

Can Government give the hotel bed nights sold in each month of 1998 up to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 and the comparable figure from 1997?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

From the compilation of information supplied by the hoteliers, the number of bed nights sold from January 1998 to July 1998 by month and from January 1997 to July 1997 was as follows:

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>
January	7495	7400
February	9721	8853
March	10378	10616
April	11138	10828
May	14335	12407
June	13484	12858
July	13750	12557

The August figures are not yet available.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 395 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

In respect of the figures for 1998 as compared to the ones of 1997, are these the figures that would appear in the Hotel Occupancy Survey being responses directly from the hotels themselves and not the subject of any other survey or information? Are these the figures that we have just been given?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Yes, I believe they are correct but rounded off to the nearest thousand.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister explain what is the source of the information that he provided in answer to Question No. 258 when he said there had been a 14.6 per cent increase in May 1997 over May 1996 and a 14 per cent increase in June 1997 compared to June 1996 given that the figures he has now given for 1997 do not seem to be the same ones as he gave in answer to Question No. 258?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I am sorry but Question No. 258 happened some time ago.

HON J J BOSSANO:

When we asked a year ago for the figures we were given that there was a 14 per cent increase in May and June compared to May and June 1996 but the figures he has now given for 1997 are totally different from the ones that he told us in 1997 were the figures for 1997. Does he know whether the source of those figures was the same as the source of these figures because we cannot make sense of the answer?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That information is not available but can be obtained. There are, as the hon Member knows, two distinct sources of this sort of information; one are the hotels themselves and the other is the survey the Government conduct. It would have been one or the other of those. The hon Member's supplementary is, "Can the Minister identify the source of the figures that he used in his answer to Question No. 258 of 1997?" I cannot help him with that right now and I do not think the Minister from memory can either but we will provide him the source so that he can follow up with a new question when the House next meets.

HON J J BOSSANO:

He has confirmed that on this occasion the source is the guest nights sold declared by the hotels?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

HON A J ISOLA:

Although I did not ask for it last time but I got the information from my hon Friend that the figures had in fact increased by 14.6 per cent. I wonder whether he has taken the trouble to see of the figures he has just given for 1998 as to whether there has been a similar or if there is any increase at all of 1998 over 1997 in those months? I have got the figures for March, April and May, is May 12447 for 1998?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

No, for May it is 12407.

HON A J ISOLA:

And June?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

June 12858.

HON A J ISOLA:

And July?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

July 12557.

HON A J ISOLA:

Would the Minister agree with me that, in fact, in those three months that we used in Question No. 258 which is May, June and July, that the figures on 1997 are actually higher than they are in 1998 therefore there has been a drop this year?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct. I think one must realise that during this period in question and, in fact, since about the last quarter of 1997, most hotels have been undergoing major refurbishment works and so therefore the availability of rooms has not been what it normally is. Apart from that most hotels have had to inform tour operators in the UK, according to EU regulations, that major refurbishment works were being undertaken in the hotel during this time. So therefore a number of tour operators have refrained from selling Gibraltar during this period in order to avoid problems with their clients in respect of noise, et cetera that would have been encountered should they have opted out to take a holiday in Gibraltar. Therefore the results are obvious considering the major refurbishment works that most hotels have been undergoing during this period.

HON J J BOSSANO:

If that is the explanation then presumably the air traffic figures will reflect that? The Minister is saying that it is the tour operators in the UK who are responsible for the drop in these figures, is that right?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Could the hon Member repeat that?

HON J J BOSSANO:

Yes, the explanation we have been given would imply that what we can expect is that those three months when we asked the question which reflect the drop in the numbers arriving from the United Kingdom which is where the tour operators, because of the work taking place in the hotels, have been selling less, that is what we have just been told. He is talking about people from UK, is that correct?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct, we are talking from the UK. I do not think that it is true to say that air traffic during the months of May, June and July will have dropped. To be honest I have not got the figures in front of me to respond positively or negatively on that but there is no direct correlation why this should be so. It may be so but not necessarily.



HON J J BOSSANO:

But if it is not so it would mean that, in fact, although the people are coming to Gibraltar they are not staying in hotels.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, or alternatively it could mean that had it not been for the hotel refurbishment scheme and the fact that rooms were less available, air traffic might have risen by even more. In other words, there are a number of possible explanations. It may well be that the reduced number of hotel room availability, it may well be that that will convert itself into a reduction in air passengers, it should be but because this is a netting thing, air traffic may be rising in respect of, for example, people going to the Costa del Sol. One cannot extrapolate mathematically one from one column to the other. But there may well be a reduction in air traffic that reflects the fact that there are less people coming on package tours to Gibraltar.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The Air Traffic Survey that the Government table in the House does show the distinction between the people who go to the Costa del Sol and the people who stay in Gibraltar. So if in fact the explanation why there are less people staying in hotels, given that we are still in an unknown area as to the origin of these people as other questions on the Order Paper indicate, since the explanation of the Minister is that it is down because of the effect on tour operators selling Gibraltar which means, of course, the United Kingdom, we would take it that a drop in these figures would be of the UK content of the hotel stayers as opposed to the content from other sources. Did the Minister not answer in an earlier Question, I believe it was earlier this year, that he was anticipating an increase in the number of bed nights sold this year and is it that at the time that he gave the answer in the House he did not know that there was going to be a hotel refurbishment programme?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Yes, I did know that there was going to be a refurbishment programme but let me remind the hon Gentleman that the year has not yet finished and figures are only available until July. We are hopeful that the situation will vastly improve now that some of the hotels have finished their refurbishment programme, for example, the Rock Hotel finished their refurbishment programme only last month; the Elliott is bound to do so in the next few weeks and there are others that are still on-going and will not be finished until the earlier part of next year. But all in all, we are now trying to get our house in order in terms of the tourism hotel product which will hopefully signal to the trade that we do have a product which we can be proud of and that will encourage the increases that we are all hoping for.

HON A J ISOLA:

In a supplementary to Question No. 258 of 1997, the Chief Minister said, "I think the increase in bed nights" which is the question that is now going to be answered as to the source of that information because from page 12 of the survey the figures do not seem to show any increase at all, in fact, they show a decrease but anyway, "sold represents early success for the Government's tourism policy generally, including our marketing strategy, including the repositioning of Gibraltar in terms of international reputation,

including what the Government have tried to do to improve the product available to tourism in Gibraltar and certainly also including, I have no doubt, the Monarch service.” To what extent does the Chief Minister think those factors may have an influence on the declining numbers for the first part of the year?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Chief Minister thinks that they have no relevance whatsoever but the Chief Minister does find extraordinary that the hon Member who represents a client who is one of Gibraltar's leading hoteliers and who therefore knows the extent to which all hoteliers in Gibraltar, including the one whose affairs he is intimately knowledgeable, have welcomed the Hotel Assistance Scheme as being a major boost to their fortunes and to the tourism industry in Gibraltar and who is boasting a record improved hotel occupancy. I am surprised that the hon Member should persist with giving the impression that he is the only person in Gibraltar who appears to be blind to the fact that even though there is still much more success in the pipeline that already there has been a large measure of improvement and success in Gibraltar's tourism. Everybody else appears to accept that this is so: the airlines, the hoteliers, the travel agents, everybody appears to accept this except the hon Member. The hon Member ought to bear one thing in mind, however much he tries to twist and turn statistics and look at them upside down and back to front and turn the page backwards in the hope of finding some arithmetical formula that allows him to make a half truth about the Government's tourism policy, the fact of the matter is that 17,000 people to whom we shall both be appealing for electoral support come the next general election have eyes in their head and brains in their head and they can see things for themselves and I am very happy to rely on the judgement of that real sort and I suggest to the hon Member that few people are going to make their judgement on the basis of the contorted use to which he seeks to put statistics.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is it the Chief Minister's view then that the figures that we have been given by the Minister today which show a decline in the months of January to August are in fact contorted to assist us in giving a false picture?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, I have not said that statistics are contorted, I have said that the use to which the hon Member puts them is contorted and exactly what the hon Member has said is precisely what I mean. These figures do not suggest, which is the hon Member's last supplementary to me, the fact that there is a decline in May, June and July 1998 as opposed to May, June and July 1997 does not, as the hon Questioner sought to suggest, suggest pessimism about the prospects of the Government's tourism policy, it suggests only the explanation that the Minister has given that this was a period during which the hotels were basically a building site. Indeed many of them had whole corridors closed to sale because they were under contractors refurbishment. That is the explanation. If the hon Member wants to suggest that in those circumstances the figures still suggest a failure of Government policy when actually they suggest a success in Government policy, namely the Hotel Assistance Scheme, that is a contortion of the statistics which is precisely what I am accusing him of.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Since we are not in the business of suggesting anything but simply of asking questions to which we are trying to get answers, does the Minister not agree that whatever may or may not happen in the future which is hypothetical, which is something he does not like giving expression to hypothetical answers to hypothetical questions, the historical position at the moment is that there has been no increase. Is that a correct factual statement or not?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, it is not. There have been periods during the last 12 months when there have been increases and that increase has been interrupted by what is a blip as a result of the fact that the hotels have been going through a process of physical refurbishment and rooms have simply not been available to sell and if rooms are not available to sell it is clear that the occupancy has got to suffer that is what we are saying.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Has the increase which the Chief Minister claims happened in the past, that is before January, is that the increase on the basis of the figures that the Government claim to have arrived at by interviews and not on the basis of these figures which are the reported figures by the hotels? Because in fact will the Minister not agree that the reported figures of the hotels for last year which are the equivalent of the ones we have been given today show that there was no increase in 1997 over 1996 in the same months? He does not agree with that? Then I suggest he reads the report.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There was a marginal increase and indeed some hoteliers, the one that the hon Member represents, have made public statements about what a successful year 1997 was for his client's hotel compared to previous years but it seems to me that the hon Member wishes, by hook or by crook, to disprove what people out there are saying and if he does not want to believe us at least let him believe them. They have got no reason to lie to him even if he thinks that we have.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The Chief Minister is not responsible for what may be said by a hotelier whether he happens to be a client of my hon Colleague or a client of his former firm, it is irrelevant whose client they are and it is irrelevant what they say. Is it not the case that the Government are on public record as saying they are the ones who do not believe what the hotels say because the figures of bed nights sold given today are those provided by the hotels and what they have said in respect of the 1997 figures, which have been quoted today in the answer, is that they do not believe these figures to be accurate, is that not the case?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is not the case.

HON J J BOSSANO:

No?

MR SPEAKER:

You will have a last question and there will be a last answer. There will only be one more question. This is not a debate, this is a question and answer session.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The Chief Minister has said, "Who has said that?" Well, the answer is, in the figure given for 207,000 bed nights sold for 1997 by the Minister, that figure is 60,000 beds more than the figure reported by the hotels reflected in the answer we have been given today. If the figure for 1997, according to the Minister, is out by over 50 per cent, 60,000 over 140,000 nearly 50 per cent out, then how are we to know that he will not come along and revise all the 1998 figures and show a different result? So in fact we are not putting in doubt what the hotels claim, this is what the hotels survey says, and I am only making the point that surely the Chief Minister must know that that is precisely why we are seeking information as to how the figures are arrived at because they are questioning the hotel nights sold which the hotels claim to be selling.

MR SPEAKER:

One final answer, whether it is the Chief Minister or the Minister.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I find it absolutely surprising to hear the Leader of the Opposition claiming that I am distorting figures when this is precisely not the case. He refers to 1997 and says that in the Hotel Occupancy Report the figure reported was approximately 143,000 whilst in the Tourist Survey Report the figure comes to about 204,000. The sources of these figures are completely from different places: the Hotel Occupancy Report is based on the figures that are presented to the Government Statistician by hoteliers whilst the Tourist Survey Report is based on surveys that are carried out by the Government's Statistics Office and therefore he should know better and should be aware of the fact that if one carries out surveys and one gets information from two different sources while compiling information, one is bound to get different answers. No way is one going to be able to correlate one figure with the other exactly if one is seeking the information from the other. He refers to 1997 as a figure where there are 61,000 difference between one and the other. He should be made aware of the fact that when he was in office in 1990 the figure distortion was 54,000 and I wonder whether he distorted the figures if he is accusing me of that. In 1990 the Hotel Occupancy Report showed a figure of 197,000 whilst in the Tourist Survey Report the figure is 251,000. How can the Leader of the Opposition make and explain the difference of 54,000? I presume it is quite similar to the 61,000 and I am assuming that he did not distort the figure in the same way as he has insinuated that I have and he has been in the press as actually saying that. If we look at 1991 the difference is 23,000; in 1992 it is 39,000; in 1993 it is less, it is 5,000; in 1994 it is 7,000 and then in 1996 the difference is 33,000. So there is discrepancy in every year between 1990 and 1997 under which six or seven of those years he was Chief Minister.

MR SPEAKER:

No, there was no further question.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The Minister has made a statement which I challenge in its entirety except that I cannot answer.

MR SPEAKER:

That is right. We will have a 10 minutes recess.

The House recessed.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, as I am on my feet with the word, I give way to the Leader of the Opposition to give him the opportunity to answer lest he should say that he was not given one.

MR SPEAKER:

But he has not got the last word.

HON J J BOSSANO:

He is gracious enough to give me an opportunity.

MR SPEAKER:

Do not take advantage of it, carry on.

HON J J BOSSANO:

A statement has been made by the Minister which was not an answer to the question that I had just put. It was an answer to the exchange of press releases that we have had and I want to make absolutely clear that, in fact, what he has said today is wrong and that I will expect him to be coming back to the House and putting the record straight. Therefore will the Minister check the fact that the method of calculating expenditure by reference to interviews as opposed to the guest nights sold reported by the hotels was introduced in 1996 and that in 1995 and prior to 1995 the guest nights sold reported by the hotels, the figure he has given in answer to the question we have just finished dealing with today, have been the guest nights sold used by the Statistics to produce the Tourist Expenditure Survey until 1995, so there could not be a discrepancy as he claims that there is because the estimate of the difference between arrivals by air from the United Kingdom which was obtained by the survey interviews was a residual figure, will the Minister investigate and confirm and then come back and put the record straight? In 1995 the hotels told the Tourist Department, "We have sold 144,000 bed nights". The Statistics Office, from the survey, arrived at a figure of nights sold to tourists from the United Kingdom and by subtracting the survey from the reported figure of the hotel, which was always larger than the survey, they produced a residual figure which they assumed came either by sea or by land because there was

no other way of coming if it was not by air and that that was done until 1995. In 1996 for the first time a figure was used for calculating tourist expenditure which differed totally and by a huge margin, from the reported figure for the hotel. In the case of 1996 the Tourist Office claims that the hotels did not sell 140,000 guest nights, that they sold 100,000 so they believe that the hotels were exaggerating the guest nights sold in 1996. In 1997 they believed that the hotels were understating and the 40,000 that they took off one year and the 60,000 that they added to the other year is the 100 per cent figure that the Minister has been claiming. The only reason why we point a finger at him is because he has chosen to disregard the apparent contradiction between these two figures and pick the one that seems to suit him to claim 100 per cent success. That has never happened before 1996 either so will he check those facts and come back and put the record straight in the House?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Minister will, of course, check his facts simply to come back and confirm that the position as he has previously stated is correct given that the hon Member seeks to impugn it. The Government do not accept the assertion that he has made at the beginning of his statement to the effect that the practice began in 1996. The suggestion that for statistical purposes prior to 1996 only the data received directly from the hotel was taken into account for hotel and tourism statistics is not a statement that the Government accept as accurate.

NO. 396 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - INTERVIEWS - HOTEL GUESTS**

Can Government state how many interviews with persons staying at hotels were carried out in 1996 giving the number of persons interviewed, the dates of the interviews, the hotels at which the interviews were conducted and the persons who conducted the interviews?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Answered together with Question Nos. 397 and 398 of 1998.

NO. 397 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - INTERVIEWS - HOTEL GUESTS**

Can Government state how many interviews with persons staying at hotels were carried out in 1997 giving the number of persons interviewed, the dates of the interviews, the hotels at which the interviews were conducted and the persons who conducted the interviews?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Answered together with Question Nos. 396 and 398 of 1998.



NO. 398 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - INTERVIEWS - HOTEL GUESTS**

Can Government state how many interviews with persons staying at hotels were carried out in 1998 (to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998) giving the number of persons interviewed, the dates of the interviews, the hotels at which the interviews were conducted and the persons who conducted the interviews?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

For the purposes of the Tourist Survey, visitors were interviewed at points of departure and not at hotels. The following were the number of persons of those interviewed who said that they had stayed in an hotel:-

1996	84
1997	125
up to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 1998	77

The interviews took place throughout the periods in question. The interviews were carried out by staff of the Statistics Office and others who had been suitably briefed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 396, 397 AND 398 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

So the public statement made by the Minister that the figures he was quoting was the result of interviews at the hotels was, in fact, incorrect? Can he confirm that? His answer confirms that his previous public statement that these were interviews conducted at hotels is in fact incorrect?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Could the Leader of the Opposition please clarify when I made that statement?

HON J J BOSSANO:

Yes, in the context of the exchange of the press releases on the accuracy of the figures that had been quoted. The Minister said, "interviewed at hotels".

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, would the Leader of the Opposition quote the statement because what I am not willing to have is an exchange across the floor of the House on his vague recollection of words that he now seeks to attribute to the Minister. Let him quote from the Minister's statement before we start a discussion about whether the statement was accurate or not.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I cannot help if the Minister does not remember what he says but I will certainly produce the statement for him and then he will presumably come back and confirm that that was incorrect and that no interviews have taken place at hotels.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

When the hon Member is able to quote with accuracy and the necessary degree of certainty the statements that he is attributing to the Minister, the Minister I am sure will gladly debate the matter with him.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister then confirm that the only interviews that have been carried out are those that are reflected in the Hotel Occupancy Survey at the beginning of the survey where it gives the numbers at the points of entry and where it says that interviews were carried out at the frontier and the coach park and the airport, is that in fact the extent of all the interviews carried out?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The sampling method as detailed in the Tourist Survey Report are correct, they are carried out by the Statistics Office and I personally, as Minister for Tourism, do not have an influence as to the sampling that they use.

HON J J BOSSANO:

No, I have not asked anything about the sampling. I am asking about the location. It says, for example, in respect of the 1997 figures, that people were interviewed at the airport, there were 272 interviews at the airport and 561 at the coach park and 1,598 at the frontier and 48 at the Marina and 105 at the port and none took place at Waterport in respect of disembarking ferry passengers. Can he confirm that there are no interviews other than the ones listed there? Those are the interviews on which the survey is based because that is how it has always been before.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct. From my understanding from the Government Statistician no surveys have been carried out in Waterport since 1986.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can I draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that in Press Release No. 135 of 1998 the Minister stated that the discrepancy in the published figures on hotel occupancy was due to the fact that the figure given by the hotels with regard to the average stay of guests and the other information is the information given by an actual sample of hotel guests who were questioned on this matter. In fact, this is not the case, there were no hotel guests questioned on this matter, in any of the points of entry the people who were questioned were tourist arrivals and not hotel guests.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is a different matter. Before the Leader of the Opposition was trying to attribute to the Minister the erroneous statement that he had said that the surveys had taken place in hotels and now what he has read is very different. The statement that he has read does not mean that the Government have said that the surveys were physically conducted in hotels, they were surveys of hotel guests. If we catch somebody in the airport and we ask him, "Have you stayed in an hotel in Gibraltar?" and he says, "Yes, I have just come down from the Rock Hotel", "Well, how long have you been there, Sir?", "Well, I spent three nights there". That is a survey of somebody who has been a hotel guest but it is not a survey conducted on the premises of the hotel. Therefore I am glad that I did not allow the previous debate to take place on the basis of an erroneous attribution by the Leader of the Opposition to the Minister.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Are then the Government aware that what they call surveys of hotel guests which is no different from the surveys that have been carried out in all previous Hotel Occupancy and Tourist Expenditure Surveys tabled produced no discrepancy because in fact it was not hotel guests that were being interviewed, it was arrivals in Gibraltar of which a small percentage were people staying in hotels and therefore the sample was not hotel guests. If the answer is that the survey has been carried out as before then how does the Government explain that for the first time in 1996 it is suggested that they produced different results?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Government are not suggesting that it produces a different result for the first time in 1996. He is suggesting that it produces a different result for the first time in 1996. The Government are suggesting that there has always been a discrepancy between the statistics that derive from the hotels own returns and those that derive from the Tourist Survey which is hardly surprising given that a survey is, by definition, not a scientific process.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Are the Government not aware that the results of the survey have always shown that the number of bed nights sold according to the hotels have always exceeded the numbers produced by the survey until 1997 when an assumption was made in the opposite direction, are the Government not aware of that?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, the Government are aware of the contrary. On the basis of information provided to us by officials, the Government are aware that the opposite of what the hon Member has just said is the case.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I have already asked the Government to go back and check their facts because they are wrong. Are the Government able to point out in which table in the surveys the discrepancy that they claim is demonstrated in published figures, where?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I have here in my hand a lengthy letter addressed by the Government Statistician .....  
*[Interruption]* Does the Hon Juan Carlos Perez wish to make a formal statement about his views about the Government Statistician? No, he does not, then he should not make it as an aside either. Either he has the courage to say what he feels or he should just sit there quietly and not pass under the breath aspersions about public servants.  
*[Interruption]* Yes he has.

MR SPEAKER:

I do not want to call to order anyone because this is enjoyable but do not take advantage.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

This letter contains on its second page two tables, which the Statistician offers as an explanation to which we are relying in this House for the very things that they are saying and it has three columns. One column is every year from 1989 to 1997, the other column is length of guest nights sold and the third column is length of stay estimated from expenditure by visitors arrival at hotel calculations which he says always been based on the survey and not on the guest nights sold. The hon Member in some Statistician's Convention may be able to have an enjoyable time analysing the comparative use of statistics. What I am saying to the hon Member is that this Government rely in this House as we believe we are entitled to do, on the statistics and the analysis of the statistics made available to us, as explained to us and as put in our hands by those public officials who are paid by the taxpayer as experts precisely to do that material and whilst we take political responsibility, as the rules of the House require us to take for that information, Ministers do not ourselves compile statistics and Ministers do not ourselves check the accuracy, not that I am suggesting that they are inaccurate, of statistics provided to us by the public administration through the various means that it produces. If the hon Member wants to challenge the accuracy of the assertion I can only suggest that he writes to the Head of the Statistics Office which now resides in the Ministry of my hon Colleague, the Minister for Trade and Industry, and I am sure that if he has some reason to believe that there has been a change since he left office which I can assure the House is certainly not as a result of any policy decision of the Government and we do not believe that there has been any change but he cannot debate the science of statistics with us. We bring them as factual information to this House as they are provided to us by the statisticians and on the basis of the information provided to us by the statisticians, what the hon Member is saying is not right. Let me put it another way, I cannot concede to the hon Member that he is right on the basis of the best advice that I have available to me which is from the Government Statistician.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I do not know to what degree the Government have checked the accuracy of the figures that they were making use of but will the Government accept that given the obvious inconsistency in the figures that are produced we asked them to go back and check this because it did not seem right and they have kept using it notwithstanding the

fact that there is a discrepancy of one figure showing an increase of 3 per cent and another figure showing a difference of 100 per cent and will the Chief Minister go back to the Government Statistician and get confirmation from him, as I have in writing, that the procedure was adopted from 1996 onwards?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Will he perhaps try and find out why it is that the explanation for the new procedure is based on more interviews being carried out at the frontier when, in fact, the figures do not reflect more people staying in hotels as a result of crossing the frontier? If the explanation is that because more interviews are carried out at the frontier, one assumes that there are more people staying in the hotels one would expect to see that the more interviews one gets a percentage of the people who respond goes up because if one asks 1,000 people if they are staying in hotels and half of them say yes, and if one asks 2,000 and half of them say yes, the estimated number of people staying in the hotels is still based on the pro rata response that one has had. It is only as one asks more people that the percentage that stay in the hotels goes up but in any case, the breakdown provided by the Government does not show that more people cross the frontier and stayed in the hotels. What is the logic of arguing that a new procedure is brought in in 1996 which says more people must be staying in the hotels because by having interviews at the frontier that is the conclusion we have come to and therefore we disregard the reports in the Hotel Occupancy tables and if, in fact, the Minister would have no objection – I know it is in Hansard but I have to wait a long time to get the figures that he has quoted if he can actually let me have those figures I am sure that I can demonstrate to him that they are not right.

MR SPEAKER:

The only thing is will he look, that is the question?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, I can say to the hon Member that without thereby implying any concession to him on the merit of his argument, the Government will ask the matter to be looked at again so that we can satisfy ourselves that the position is as we are saying that it is and not as he is saying that it is and I will certainly provide him with an advance copy of the statistics that we have quoted so that he should not have to wait for Hansard.

NO. 399 OF 1998THE HON A J ISOLA**CRUISE LINER VISITS - 1998**

How many cruise liners have called at Gibraltar in 1998 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998 and how many are expected to call up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1998?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The figures are as follows:-

Arrivals from 1 <sup>st</sup> January to 31 <sup>st</sup> August 1998	71
Bookings from 1 <sup>st</sup> September to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998	<u>65</u>
	<u>136</u>

However, the figure of 65 from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> December should increase as it is likely that there will be a few extra calls in the autumn. In fact, since this answer was written earlier this week, there have been two additional bookings.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 399 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

In respect of the figure given up until the 31<sup>st</sup> August, is that figure actual arrivals? Does it include taking out the cancellations which there are from time to time?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The figure up to the 31<sup>st</sup> August are actually cruises that have stopped at Gibraltar.

HON J C PEREZ:

May I take this opportunity in informing the Minister that the cruise liners that arrive early are normally subject to the Upper Rock facilities being open early and that I understand that to date this has not happened and that there have been problems there and that it is not the first time that this has happened. When cruise liners arrive early, the facilities in the Upper Rock ought to be open early and they are not. I know it is not appropriate, I am just making the point to inform the Minister of the situation as it has been reported to me today.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I take note of the comment.

NO. 400 OF 1998THE HON A J ISOLA**TOURISM - VISITOR ARRIVALS BY SEA**

Can Government state what were the visitor arrivals by sea giving a breakdown by cruise passengers, yacht visitors and other arrivals in respect of the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, July and August 1998?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The following were visitor arrivals by sea broken down into cruise passengers, yacht visitors and other arrivals for the months January 1998 to July 1998. The August figures are not yet available. In fact, in the case of yacht visitors, July is not available either.

	<u>CRUISE PASSENGERS</u>	<u>YACHT VISITORS</u>	<u>OTHER ARRIVALS</u>
January	2646	424	729
February	2076	289	654
March	2068	680	1306
April	7834	992	1203
May	17234	1592	1030
June	6118	1830	1781
July	4658	-	1232

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 400 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

In the arrivals by sea that has been given we have got other questions which deal with the figures for the previous year, can I ask in the ones that we have just been given for 1998, do the figures include arrivals from Morocco?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I understand that that is under 'other arrivals'.

HON J J BOSSANO:

So, for example, the 1232 arrivals in July will include people arriving from Morocco?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Does the Minister know how it is decided, of the people who arrive from Morocco, who is included here as a visitor and who is left out because he is a returning worker? Does he know how that is done?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I recollect having discussed this matter with the Government Statistician and although I cannot specify actual percentages, I believe that a percentage is used to define what would be a visitor to Gibraltar and what is a non-visitor to Gibraltar for the sake of this particular survey. In other words, for example, somebody coming here to work and has travelled through Morocco a percentage of that is used as a percentage of those that would be staying in an hotel as opposed to those that would be staying with friends and family. I believe that as from 1996 and 1997 the proportion is 75 per cent whilst prior to that, in 1994 and 1995 this used to be 50 per cent. I understand that these were changed in 1994 by the Chief Secretary under the previous administration when the Leader of the Opposition was then Chief Minister. But, as I said, these are just rough notes that I have here which I am not 100 per cent sure whether they are strictly correct.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I was not actually asking at this stage how many of them were staying in the hotels, that will come later and I will have the chance to use the information.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I was trying to give the hon Member a full résumé of my notes to give him as much information as possible in good faith.

HON J J BOSSANO:

What I am trying to establish is if in terms of the figure that is shown that will eventually appear in Table 8, other visitors by sea, we have got a number of questions to establish how they get here by sea but in the figures we have been given today there will be included some people who will have arrived on the ferry service. Can he say where the ones who do not arrive by the ferry service from Morocco where they come from?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Could the hon Member repeat that again?

HON J J BOSSANO:

We have been given figures of arrivals by sea month by month who are not people who arrive either on a cruise liner or on a yacht and the Minister has confirmed that of those, for example, of the 1232 arrivals in July by sea some of the 1232 will have been people who have come on the ferry service from Tangier and who are assumed to be visitors as opposed to returning workers and they constitute some of the 1232 arrivals of July. Where do the remaining people come from? How do they arrive by sea?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There are only so many ways that one can arrive at Gibraltar by sea. One can arrive on a cruise ship, a yacht, on a ferry from Morocco and the only other category that I can think of might include people who disembark from merchant shipping, there might be a small element of that but I cannot personally think of any other but the Statistician must have a list of the items that fall under other arrivals but I cannot think of any other than those two which is the ferry from Tangier and disembarkation from merchant shipping. I would be very surprised if it was any other.



NO. 401 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - VISITOR ARRIVALS BY SEA**

Can Government explain the method of arrival of the visitors by sea other than cruise ship and yacht visitors showing an increase from 9,500 in 1996 to 20,700 in 1997 reflected in Table 8 of the Tourist Survey Report 1997?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Answered together with Question no. 404 of 1998.

ORAL

NO. 402 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - ARRIVALS BY SEA - MOROCCO**

Can Government state whether arrivals by sea from Morocco are included in the figure of 20,700 visitor arrivals by sea for 1997 in Table 8 of the Tourist Survey Report 1997?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Answered together with Question No. 405 of 1998.

NO. 403 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - VISITOR ARRIVALS BY SEA**

Can Government state of the 9,500 visitor arrivals by sea shown in Table 8 of the Tourist Survey Report 1997, how many are estimated to have stayed in hotels and the average bed nights stayed?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

It is estimated that in 1996 of the 9,500 visitor arrivals by sea from Morocco, approximately 5,200 stayed in hotels and the average bed nights stayed per visitor were estimated at two nights.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 403 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister say whether the assumed numbers of arrivals from Morocco who stayed in the hotels are 5,334 and for two nights, whether that is the result of survey interviews or some other methodology?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

This is the result of pure estimates.

HON J J BOSSANO:

But are the estimates based on interviews?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

They are not, they are based on pure percentages that are attributed for calculation purposes so therefore they are an estimate.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Perhaps the Minister will re-read the explanation he sent me produced by the Statistician in which he will find that he claims it is the result of interviews.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That the general hotel occupancy figures are on the basis of interviews yes, but that specifically in relation to visitors by sea from Morocco an estimate of how many of those have stayed in hotels I would be most surprised if anybody had suggested that that was done by interview given that the Statistician says that no interviews were conducted down at Waterport ferry station. I do not know if the hon Member has the letter in front of him from which he is attributing that. I have not read the letter but I suppose that it might say that hotel occupancy figures generally are done on the basis of estimates but I very much doubt if the Statistician has said that any estimation given which is in any case not

given in the survey, it is given in here in answer to this question in the House, that the estimation given here about how many visitors from Morocco by sea stay in hotels, that is done by survey, I stand to be corrected almost immediately, but I would be very surprised if the Statistician had said that.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I am being invited to correct almost immediately. Are the Government aware that the number staying in hotels in the calculation for 1995, was arrived at by a residual calculation on the basis of deducting from the total reported by the hotels the numbers estimated to be staying in the hotels from the surveys at the airport and that the method was changed in 1996 and that that produces a change in the numbers and the length of bed nights between 1995 and 1996 and that the explanation that has been provided for the change is the fact that there were more interviews conducted?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, the Government are not aware of that.

HON J J BOSSANO:

If the Minister reads carefully the letters he has written which are confidential and I cannot read out then he will see that that is in there.

NO. 404 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - VISITOR ARRIVALS BY SEA**

Can Government explain the method of arrival of the visitors by sea other than cruise ship and yacht visitors showing an increase from 3,100 in 1995 to 9,500 in 1996 reflected in Table 8 of the Tourist Survey Report 1996?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The method of arrival of visitors by sea other than cruise ship and yacht visitors was by ferry in both cases.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 401 AND 404 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

Does that mean then that in the previous question referring to the first six months of this year the same applies and, in fact, they are all arrivals by ferry? That is what we have just been told.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, to the extent that the answer in Question No. 404 purports to be exhausted and provided that it comes from the Government Statistician and that he is saying that other really means Moroccan ferry only then that would be the case.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Therefore then it means that the ones that we have been given for the six months of this year presumably is just from the Moroccan ferry? Can the Government say whether the increase which is from, taking Question Nos. 401 and 404 we have a position where 3,100 visitors arrived on the Moroccan ferry in 1995, it went up by 300 per cent in 1996 to 9,500 and then it more than doubled to 20,700 in 1997. This is in fact a 700 per cent increase in arrivals by sea from Morocco in those two years. *[interruption]* Yes, but in fact this is not the case that the ferry was out of action in 1996. It cannot have been in 1997, in 1997 is when the increase took place.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The changes are attributable to the changes in frequency in the ferry throughout 1995 and 1996 and 1997

HON J J BOSSANO:

In fact, are the Government not aware that the number of arrivals from Morocco for 1995 was higher than for 1996 according to the figures in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure showing the arrival and departure tax paid by arrivals on the ferry?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I am afraid I am not aware of that analysis.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Will the Government therefore check how these figures have been calculated since there actually seems to be a discrepancy, if it is the ferry, between the figures that are shown as other visitors from the sea and the actual movement of people from Morocco to Gibraltar which includes all the Moroccan workers? That is to say, will the Government establish for themselves, for the sake of ensuring the accuracy of these figures, will they check that in fact the numbers of visitors shown in 1995 is something of the order of 3,000 out of 23,000 arrivals or something like that, whereas in the case of 1996 and 1997 it would indicate that there was a huge increase in non-Moroccans travelling on the ferry?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, the Government are content otherwise we would not give the information to the House that the information that is given to the House is accurate. However, the hon Member has argumentative reason to believe that the figures may not be accurate. The Government are not going to check every information that the hon Member asserts may be inaccurate in the statistics but certainly if he wishes to write on a particular matter in which he believes that the information is inaccurate, certainly his letter will be passed on to the Government Statistician and a comprehensive reply worked out and provided for him but that is not something that we would wish to do on each and every occasion of our own notion. Certainly if the hon Member has serious reason to doubt the accuracy of information put in the public domain which originates in the Government Statistician and if he wishes to put his detailed reasoning in writing I will certainly have that looked at as an administrative act by the Government Statistician and indeed by his superior within the civil service structure.

HON J J BOSSANO:

But the Government in fact cannot explain the increase of 700 per cent in visitors on the ferry?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Not on any grounds that I am personally aware of at this precise moment in time. Either it is a mistake or there is an explanation and as I am not accepting that there is a mistake there must be an explanation and if there is not an explanation there must be a mistake. It is the hon Member's proposition.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Government say whether I am right in thinking that in order to have visitors who are Moroccans, in fact, there would have to be visa waivers and in this period there is no, to my knowledge, increase in the availability of visa waivers for visitors from Morocco? Am I correct?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The hon Member should be careful in the use that he makes of that apparently logical statement because, of course, there are many pensioners who come to Gibraltar who would be categorised as visitors yet have visa waivers so a lot of the people that he is describing in his own mind as Moroccan workers for statistical purposes, because they are not actually workers but visiting pensioners coming to collect their pensions, may be in these figures, I am sure are in these figures.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The Government do not seriously think that if in fact the monthly visit of Moroccan pensioners accounts for this increase or a significant part of it, that then it must follow that the figure that was being quoted in an earlier question by the Minister for Tourism.....

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, I am not addressing that issue. I have narrowed the point about the logical use that the hon Member seeks to make of the connection between visas and visa waivers and whether somebody is a tourist or a worker.

NO. 405 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - ARRIVALS BY SEA - MOROCCO**

Can Government state whether arrivals by sea from Morocco are included in the figure of 9,500 visitor arrivals by sea for 1996 shown in Table 8 of the Tourist Survey Report 1996?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

In both cases arrivals by sea from Morocco are included.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 402 AND 405 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is anyone else included? The answers that we get to different questions do not seem quite to match up. "Included" seems to give the impression that the visitors from Morocco do not account for the whole of the 20,700 and the whole of the 9,500.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is in answer to the question that was formulated. The question asked, "Can Government state whether arrivals by sea from Morocco are included...?" and the answer slavishly follows the same sentence construction and word choice as the question, "In both cases arrivals by sea are included". The point that the hon Member is making is that given that we think that it is the only item it might have said, "in both cases the figures constitute exclusively arrivals by sea from Morocco". Is that the point that he is making?

HON J J BOSSANO:

If not can we know if they are included, how many of the 20,700 in 1997 and how many of the 9,500 in 1996 are in fact from Morocco, if they are not the whole of it?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Obviously it will not surprise the hon Member that we will not have that information available here but if he wants a breakdown, indeed if there is a breakdown that we have for that figure, I am sure the Minister will provide it to him.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Government confirm that they have not had an indication in the answer that there is another source? Am I right in assuming that?



HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, Table 8 of the survey is all three – cruise ships, yachts and others and I suppose in answer to the question whether the whole of Table 8 includes visitors from Morocco then the answer is correctly formulated.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Whether they are included in the figure of 20,700 and that figure is at the bottom of the column which says “other visitors by sea” and therefore excludes yachts and cruise liners.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I agree. The question is targeted specifically at the others as opposed to the first two.

NO. 406 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - VISITOR ARRIVALS BY SEA**

Can Government state of the 20,700 visitor arrivals by sea shown in Table 8 of the Tourist Survey 1997, how many are estimated to have stayed in hotels and the average bed nights stayed?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Out of the 20,700 visitor arrivals by sea from Morocco in 1997, it is estimated that approximately 11,000 stayed in hotels and the average bed nights stayed per visitor was estimated at four nights.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 406 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Government explain why the estimated length of staying in the hotels was two nights in 1996 and four nights in 1997?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

My understanding is that the average bed nights for visitors staying in hotels from Morocco has always been based on the average bed nights per visitor from visitors coming from Spain. That increased from two to four nights from 1996 to 1997 so the average bed nights for arrivals from Morocco increased from two to four.

HON J J BOSSANO:

So I am correct in stating that the position is that as a result of conducting interviews at the frontier which led the Statistics office to the conclusion that of the Spaniards who were crossing into Gibraltar and staying in hotels they were staying for four nights instead of two, they made the assumption that those who stepped off the ferry were also staying four nights instead of two with no other evidence to indicate that this was true?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct, this has always been the way it has been done traditionally.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I am afraid the Minister is wrong. If in fact he cares to find out why it was always the same up to 1995 he will find that it was not as a result of interviews at the frontier but as a result of the residual figure and the residual figure was divided by a notional number and it was simply to make sure that there was no discrepancy between the survey result and the hotel reports. So if he cares to check he will find that up to 1995 the statement that he has just made is not accurate and that this is a new approach adopted in 1996

where an assumption is made that because one asks somebody at the frontier, "Are you going to stay in a hotel and for how long?" one then assumes that the person from Morocco will stay the same as the person who has answered the interview at the frontier. Before that all that was happening was that one was dividing the number of guest nights the hotel had by the number of people one assumed were coming in and one arrived at a figure which was 2.6 nights which did not mean anything except that the results squared. Will the Minister look into that and find if it is accurate?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, the result is still the same, is it not? The result is still the same that for empirical purposes the same factor was attributed to the arrival over the border, which incidentally are not just Spaniards it is just I think the hon Member is using language loosely, people coming from Spain across the land frontier and people who arrive by ferry from Morocco. The same factor was always used, whatever factor was attributed to the frontier crosser was attributed to the ferry arrival.

HON J J BOSSANO:

But the factor that was arrived at by an arithmetical calculation did not result in a discrepancy between the estimate produced by the hotels of guest nights sold and the estimate produced by the interviews of guest nights sold because the reason why the interview is producing an estimate is because in fact what the Minister is telling us, will he confirm, is that the alleged 100 per cent increase in expenditure between 1996 and 1997 is principally due to arrivals from Morocco? Is that correct?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not think so, not just from Morocco because, of course, the figures arrivals from Spain were increased from two to four as well in the average stay. The tourist expenditure was principally due to the fact but not exclusively that a factor of four instead of two days was used as the average length of stay for visitors from Spain as well as visitors from Morocco.

HON J J BOSSANO:

But is the Government not aware that the visitors from Spain are assumed to be down and the visitors from Morocco are assumed to be up and therefore the factor of four is being added to a factor of 100 per cent increase in arrivals in numbers? Do the Government realistically think that if we had had, in 1997, 44,000 guest nights sold to people coming off the ferry the hotels would not know it? That is what the implications are of the discrepancy between the two figures. Do the Government really believe that people staying in hotels who arrived in Gibraltar on the ferry from Morocco bought 10,000 guest nights, which is 5,000 people buying two nights, in 1996 and 44,000 guest nights in 1997? Why is the Minister bothering to go to London to promote Gibraltar he should go to Morocco.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

We are doing precisely that. The points that the hon Member I think omits to take into consideration when he makes all these statistical points is that the Government do not make a judgement on the relative worth of one statistics from one source or from another, the Government publish both. The statistics are published and the hon Member and others are at liberty to make their own value judgements on the figures such as they please. The Government do not create any of the figures except those that are created

on the basis of statistical assumptions by the Statistics Office. We are relying on exactly the same Statistics Office as he had and we have not given any policy instructions to the Statistics Office to perform their science of surveying and statistics creation in any different way. Therefore the hon Member, if he challenges the validity of the statistics, really what he is doing is challenging the skill and competence applied by the Government's Statistician to this statistical exercise and, of course, that would be a very different matter which we would have to look at as well but the hon Member has to acknowledge that these are statistics which are created by professional statisticians without any form of guidance from political Government.

HON J J BOSSANO:

First of all, will the Chief Minister accept that he is incorrect in saying that these are published figures because they are not published figures, they are figures that were produced subsequent to the last meeting of the House because they were not available to the Minister in the House and then after they were produced in respect of 1997 when I asked for the comparable figures for 1996 which I had asked for in the House I was told that I could have them in confidence both 1996 and 1997. I do not see why because it is in fact very difficult, this is why we have to get the information given to us in this House because for reasons best known to them they have decided that they did not want the calculation to arrive at the figure but that calculation was not in the public domain. That is to say, the only figure.....

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There never has been. No Government have ever published the basis upon which statisticians calculate the figures, what they do is publish the figures.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The figures that have been published in the Tourist Survey for 1995 and the Tourist Survey for 1996 and the Tourist Survey for 1997, when one looks at the numbers in those surveys those numbers match except in 1996 and 1997, this is why we have raised the question. They match always except those. I know the Minister says he has got a letter with different figures and I am sure that we will be able to demonstrate the accuracy of what I am saying, I could do it now by reference to what is public. Therefore what I am saying is if the apparent 100 per cent increase in money spent seems strange and is questioned and it appears that the explanation that he has given is based on an assumption that there has been an increase of 100 per cent in tourist spending because there has been 100 per cent increase in the numbers arriving from Morocco and staying in hotels, and 100 per cent increase in the duration of their stay and that this is by far the most extraordinary increase that there has been and the hoteliers do not confirm that there has been a 400 per cent occupancy increase from the ferry service, then irrespective of the methodology or anything else it is clearly something that needs to be investigated so that the accuracy of the information is beyond question because these are the figures that are being quoted publicly by the Government and are the figures that are supposed to go into all sorts of other calculations about the economy of Gibraltar.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, if the hon Member is saying that the figures show fluctuation from one year to the other which he regards as extraordinary and the accuracy of which he therefore doubts in the absence of an explanation, then I think it is entirely legitimate of him to ask for the Statistician to explain that fluctuation from one year to the other so that he can revisit the issue of whether it is extraordinary but real or whether it is extraordinary and unreal. Certainly I think that the Statistician should be invited to explain this 100 per cent increase which his figures suggest and certainly the Government have no difficulty with doing that.

HON J J BOSSANO:

I will take up that invitation because I am sure that the matter will be cleared up and the matter will be corrected. Is it not reasonable that the Minister for Tourism who, after all, is in the business of bringing people to hotels, does he not find it odd that according to the figures that he is quoting the numbers of people staying in hotels who arrive by sea from Morocco exceeded by 20 per cent the numbers who arrived by air from UK and that his calculations of the improved performance in the industry is based on that assumption? One would have thought that in looking at that figure the question would arise in the mind of somebody that has got his hand on the pulse of the industry, either the hotels are full of people who have just come in from the ferry service or they are not. Where are they? The hoteliers do not seem to know about them.

NO. 407 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - ARRIVALS BY SEA - MOROCCO**

Can Government state, in respect of 1995, 1996 and 1997, how many persons arrived by sea from Morocco and how many of these for each year are estimated to have stayed in hotels?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

In 1995, 3,100 visitors arrived by sea from Morocco. Of these it is estimated that around 550 stayed in an hotel.

The figures for 1996 were 9,500 arrivals, with about 5,200 visitors staying in hotels.

In 1997, there were 20,700 arrivals, with about 11,000 visitors staying at hotels.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 407 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

Other than this estimate, has the Minister for Tourism had any indication that between 1995 and 1997 the numbers of visitors from Morocco in the hotels went up from 550 to 11,000? Would the Minister not agree that an increase of tourists from one particular source of this magnitude would draw some attention?

MR SPEAKER:

You do not want to reply? Next question.

NO. 408 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - ARRIVALS BY SEA - MOROCCO**

Can Government state what is the estimated expenditure by persons staying in hotels who arrived by sea from Morocco in 1995, 1996 and 1997?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The estimated expenditure by persons staying in hotels who arrived by sea from Morocco was estimated at around £100,000 in 1995; £700,000 in 1996; and £3.1 million in 1997.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 408 OF 1998

HON J J BOSSANO:

Would the Minister not agree that the £3 million accounts for a significant percentage of the improvement in the figure that he believes to be accurate of £17 million expenditure in 1997?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is the same point that the hon Member is making except that this is the expenditure manifestation of the same point that he made in respect of the previous question in respect of arrivals and visitors. The only thing that can be said if there is a mistake in these figures, at least they are consistently extrapolated

HON J J BOSSANO:

They are all mistaken. Does the Minister have the per diem expenditure which has been used to arrive at these figures, the daily expenditure? The average expenditure per person per day?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The average expenditure per person per day in 1995 it was calculated to be £45 in respect of accommodation and £24 making a total of £69; in 1996 the hotel increased to £46 for accommodation and £25 expenditure; and in 1997 the figures are exactly the same, £46 for accommodation and £25 for any other expenditure.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister confirm that the figure of £25 for 1997 is, in fact, the same as is shown in Table 4 of the published Tourist Survey Report which says £25 arrivals from Morocco so that in fact that would indicate that it is all from Morocco notwithstanding that it says in the table "other visitors by sea"?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister explain why in the case of flight departures the figures do not match? I think when I asked him that question in the last House he gave me to understand that the reason was because the figures of people staying in the hotels represented numbers from different sources and I pointed out to him, if he would remember, it was recorded in the Hansard in April, I pointed out to him that the £36 was the highest figure. So can he explain why it is that in the case of visitors from the UK the published figure does not coincide with the figure that has been used in the estimates whereas it does in the case of Morocco and which he indicated it did in the last meeting of the House?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Yes, the difference is because in the Tourist Survey the actual average expenditure per person on the UK flight departures includes passengers that may be travelling to the UK by air who are on transit in Gibraltar and may not actually have been in Gibraltar spending any money as such, whilst in the analysis which I sent him in the letter on the calculation of expenditure by visitors in hotels the figure is £53 and that is based on the surveys that have been conducted by the Statistics Office for people that have actually stayed in hotels so obviously the figure does change as a result of the average, I presume, on the fact that the number of passengers travelling to the UK includes the transit passengers as well.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister say whether this is in fact also an innovation that came in in 1997 and 1996?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I cannot really tell him whether it is an innovation, all I did was request the Government's Statistician to explain to me the discrepancy or what looked to me like a discrepancy and it was pointed out to me why there was a difference in this. Whether the practice has been changed or not I really do not know. This was the answer when requesting information in respect of 1997, I do not know whether it also applies for 1996 or not. Yes, it does as well.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Is it not the case that in 1996 the figure that was used was £34 instead of £53?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I cannot answer on every single survey that is being carried out by the statisticians. The hon Member cannot expect me to be answerable for every answer that is given to every question carried out by the Statistics Office. These are the results that the Government's Statistician produces and I accept them on that basis. The sampling of some of these surveys and the cross-section of the sampling of these surveys is not adequate, that I do realise but that has been historical for many, many years. I have requested information



in respect of the sort of questions that are available of surveys that were carried out in the past to see whether the sampling was any better and the reality is that I am shocked to see some of the reliability of some of the statistics that have been produced historically under his administration. If I can just grab some of the information here that I had pencilled in as a result of my meeting with the Statistics Office.....

HON J J BOSSANO:

Then produce those statistics.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I beg your pardon?

HON J J BOSSANO:

The person who supplied the statistics which shocked him is the person who actually calculated them so why did he not tell him that he was shocked when he got them?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The idea that in 1992 the statistics that were produced for the Tourist Survey Report were based on 21 surveys being carried out at hotels is a very, very small sample; 21 questions in a whole year. How can one have in 1993 and 1994 school students carrying out surveys in April and May, two single months of the whole year, of a total of something like 270 – I stand to be corrected on that figure – but the actual amount of questionnaires that were carried out, it just does not show a good cross section of the all-year round type of situation and the numbers that are being used as the basis to produce these reports tends to be questioned but questioned historically, not now but going back a number of years. So I do not know why the hon Member should be questioning every single figure in these reports because at the end of the day they are figures that have been historically worked out in a very unsympathetic way.

HON J J BOSSANO:

The reason why I am questioning it is because I get paid to ask the questions and he gets paid to answer them, it is as simple as that and when we were in Government we were entitled to be questioned. I am not asking him about what happened 10 years ago or the method of sampling or whether it is good, bad or indifferent. I am asking specifically about three years: 1995, 1996 and 1997. Can the Minister confirm, given the explanation he gave to my previous supplementary, that the published figure in 1995 in Table 4 is £34 expenditure per person per day and the figure used to calculate expenditure in the survey is £34 per person per day? In 1996 the published figure is £39 but the unpublished figure is £34 and in 1997 the published figure is £36, so it goes down but the unpublished figure goes up to £53. This is not a different point, this is a different element. That is to say, I am trying to demonstrate to the House, for the benefit of the Minister, what I failed to demonstrate in my correspondence with him because he did not accept the point, that the alleged increase is the result of three elements: a discrepancy in numbers, a discrepancy in average daily expenditure and a discrepancy in length of stay and that such discrepancy exists for 1996 and 1997 and they do not exist for 1995.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, the Government do not accept what the hon Member calls discrepancies. He may wish to call them discrepancies, I would wish to call them variables; in both cases they have been produced by statisticians, he is assuming that they are in error, I am not willing to accept that they are in error, all I am saying to the hon Member is that the people used to work out these statistics and the empirical statistic gathering techniques that they have used to put together the figures which eventually become these reports which are now tabled in the House, have not varied between now and as far as I am aware the last 10 years. The hon Member wishes to pick on 1995, 1996 and 1997 to start to cast out on a system which he presided over for eight years and chose to do nothing to correct. The hon Member may be right in believing, indeed I have no doubt judging by the nonsense that has historically been published in Gibraltar as a poor excuse for national accounts, GDP and GNP..... [HON J J BOSSANO: *Is that driven by the statistician, that remark?*] No, because there is a difference between the skill that one applies to making the calculation and the reliability of the information gathering techniques. What is deficient in Gibraltar is not the techniques that they apply when they have the information in hand, it is the legion amateurishness of the systems that have always been in place in Gibraltar for gathering information in the first place, whether it is about PAYE records, unemployment, national accounts or tourism, the techniques applied for collating information are such which casts serious doubt of the reliability of the raw material that is eventually applied by the statisticians to the formula. The hon Member must be aware that this is the view that the statisticians have been expressing for many, many years especially in relation to the national account figures where they have now stopped publishing them because they say that there is at least £100 million which they cannot find and whereas they have been required to publish these things in the past, this Government's view is that we do not require the statisticians to publish figures in which they, by their own admission, have no confidence. The hon Member may well be right in saying that what is now required is a complete overhaul of the techniques of the computerisation of the information gathering apparatus available to the Government and I am willing to take responsibility, given that I am the Government of the day, to do that as we are already doing in the computerisation of Government. So all those questions that the Hon Mr. Mor and the Hon Mr. Baldachino asked this morning which the Government could not answer because the information is not available because it is not kept in that form, in future years when the Government's computerisation programme has been put in place it will be available. But what I really do not think the hon Member is at liberty to do and in this respect I make the distinction between the main point that I am making and one of the points that the hon Member is making is that he doubts the reasonableness of one or two possibly of the assumptions that have been made. Save for that point, I do not think it is open to the hon Member to launch the attack that he has launched on the whole credibility of the statistics published by the same machinery, applying the same techniques, presumably as free from political interference as they were in the days when he was in Government and that is what I am saying, that he cannot now separate the criticism of the system post-1996 from the criticism of the system pre-1996.

HON J J BOSSANO:

In that long speech the Chief Minister has not addressed the question that I am asking and my question is a very simple one. My question is, given the explanation that the Minister read out for the figure of expenditure for 1997, average daily expenditure, can they explain to me, given that they say that everything is the same as it used to be, why it is that in 1995 the figure published in the survey is the figure used to calculate the expenditure and it is not in 1996 or in 1997? It is a very simple question, do they not know the answer?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Government cannot explain it because the decision was not made by the Government, it was made by the statistician in the exercise of his professional judgement and the Government cannot explain why these statistics are matters of statutory obligation, there is a statutory obligation on the statistician to produce these figures, these are not figures that the Government bring to this House as a matter of political judgement of the Government of this day, these are figures produced by the professional civil servants available to the Government for this purpose and tabled in this House pursuant to statutory obligations. If the hon Member is asking me or any one of my Ministerial Colleagues for us personally to explain why some public official has done this or that in the exercise of his public duty, the answer is that I cannot explain it but I am willing to repeat what I told him 20 minutes ago, that I am sufficiently interested in the answers to his questions to cause the statistician to provide the explanation so that we can both read it. That is where we were half an hour ago and we are going to get no further by simply pursuing this line. The Government cannot and therefore will not explain why the statistician has chosen to do it differently, if indeed he has as the hon Member suggests.

HON J J BOSSANO:

Does the Minister accept that if a report is tabled in this House we are entitled, having read the report, to question all the figures that are in it and if the Minister then says, in answer to a question that it is being done the same today as it was being done before 1996, then I am entitled to say, "If you claim that it was being done how is it that I can demonstrate to you that in 1995 the figure in the House was £34 and the figure in the calculation was £34 but that it was not in 1996 and it was not in 1997? Since in fact the difference that exists in 1996 and 1997 is what produces the 100 per cent increase which you are claiming the credit for, you are claiming the credit for the 100 per cent increase but not claiming the responsibility for the accuracy of the calculation." The Minister must be satisfied when he is talking about 100 per cent increase that is not capable of being challenged and we are challenging it because we have spent many, many months trying to do it some other way and we have to wait for the opportunity that the House gave us.

MR SPEAKER:

You have finished, the Chief Minister has the last word and we will go to another question.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

All Members in the House are entitled to rely on the accuracy and validity of officially published statistics and that includes Members in the Government since we do not all engage in the administrative function of statistics creation. What the hon Member is saying is that he doubts the accuracy and therefore the validity and reliability of officially published statistics and he asks Ministers to explain the reasons for things that he alleges are deficiencies. Well, I cannot commit the Government to provide explanations on the basis of assertions which he makes of things to be discrepancies which we have not conceded as a discrepancy because if indeed there is not a discrepancy, there cannot be an explanation because there is nothing to explain. So the first thing that needs to be established is whether or not the hon Member's primary assertion that there is some heinous inaccuracy in these statistics is accurate.....

HON J J BOSSANO:

I am bringing the matter to his attention and quoting the reports.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, fine, he is bringing it to my attention and I have told him that I am going to get the Government's Statistician to explain his statistics but he is going beyond that. He is not asking me to get the explanation from the statistician, he is asking us to explain the situation now and that is not possible and it is not going to happen. I told the hon Member half an hour ago what we were going to do about it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 409 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - ENTRY POINTS - WORKS**

Have Government concluded their programmed works to the entry points of Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

No.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 409 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

Could the Minister indicate by when Government expect those works to be completed?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The Air Terminal and the cruise liner and North Mole Avenue as far as Sir William Jackson Grove and part of Sir Winston Churchill Avenue has been finished although Sir Winston Churchill Avenue will require resurfacing. A tender has recently been awarded for the Ferry Terminal and should be completed in April next year. Then obviously there are the other entry points which is the Cruise Terminal and the Customs and Immigration building at the land frontier; the extension of the North Mole Avenue to Watergardens and the extension of the road from Watergardens to Glacis gates which will form part of the 1999/2000 beautification programme. The Coach Park, the Customs and Immigration building and the extension of the North Mole Avenue to Watergardens should be completed during this financial year.

NO. 410 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - YACHT ARRIVALS**

How many yacht arrivals have been recorded in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1998?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The number of yachts which arrived at Gibraltar from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 1998 was 1,437. Figures for July and August have not yet been compiled.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 410 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

How does the number of visitors of yacht arrivals to the 31<sup>st</sup> June 1998 compare with previous years?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Is the hon Member asking for a comparison of yacht arrivals or people arriving by yacht?

HON A J ISOLA:

Yacht arrivals.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Covering the period January to June 1997, the figure was 1,428; in 1996 the figures January to June was 1,412 and 1995 January to June was 1,378.

NO. 411 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**RE-INTRODUCTION OF LONDON HEATHROW FLIGHTS**

What steps have Government taken to re-introduce flights to Gibraltar from London Heathrow?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The Government have taken the steps that are to be expected in order to try and re-introduce London Heathrow flights. I have been discussing the matter with GB Airways and other airlines. I will also be holding talks with potential new operators on the Gibraltar route in London later this month during the Routes '98 Conference. This Conference is designed to put airports in touch with airlines to discuss the opportunities that are available in the form of new routes.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 411 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

Does the Minister hold out any hope of those operators introducing flights to Heathrow? Is it likely or does he believe there is no chance at all?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Let me say that representations to GB Airways have been made and there are possibilities but at the end of the day these are commercial decisions that have to be taken by the airline. We traditionally have put pressure, not just the Government but other bodies, in order for GB Airways to reduce their fares to Gibraltar and therefore they need to look at the most economical route to operate from the UK and obviously Gatwick represents a far more economical airport than Heathrow. Nevertheless Government attach a lot of importance to the connection between Gibraltar and London Heathrow and will continue to pursue it. Whether success will be eventually achieved the hon Member's guess is just as good as mine.

HON A J ISOLA:

My guess is not very good. Obviously in respect of GB Airways as the Minister has just said, the move to Gatwick airport by GB Airways is a commercial decision, my own personal view is that it is unlikely that they will re-introduce Heathrow flights because all their operations are centred at Gatwick airport and bearing that in mind, are Government considering or have they considered offering the same assistance as they did to Monarch when it first came to Gibraltar to any possible new operators that may contemplate such a move to fly Gibraltar Heathrow?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

We have not contemplated.

NO. 412 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - MADRID OFFICE**

Have any appointments been made in respect of the proposed Tourist Office in Madrid?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

No.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 412 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

Am I right in saying that interviews have already been carried out, I think that was the answer I have had in the past?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Interviews were carried out in November 1997 and a shortlist of candidates was approved by the selection board. However, the appointments have not taken place because there was no point in offering a job to somebody if an office was not available. The Licencia de Apertura has now been granted by the Madrid Municipal Authorities and this happened at the end of July. We are quite hopeful that the office should start operation possibly towards the end of October when we will be making the relevant appointments very shortly.

HON A J ISOLA:

Will the appointments that are made very shortly consist of people who were on that list in November 1997 and interviewed or are there people from outside that list who will be considered?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Government cannot answer the last part of this question in the affirmative, it may turn out to be like that but depending on whether the Government change our view about the seniority and calibre of the person who should man that office it may or may not be possible to fill the post from the persons who have applied. If the Government take the view that none of the applicants are suitable, given any upgrading of the job specifications, in other words, if Government change our mind about the nature of the job there would be a readvertising process so either he will come from the existing selection process or from a new selection process started from scratch if there is any substantial upgrading of the job's specifications.

HON A J ISOLA:

The previous answer I received from the Minister for Tourism was that the appointments would be made shortly. Are the appointments that the Chief Minister is referring to in addition to those, are they the same ones?



HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, it applies mainly to one of the posts, the lower of the posts will very likely be filled from the selection process.

HON A J ISOLA:

How many posts, are we still talking in terms of two posts?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes.

NO. 413 OF 1998

THE HON A J ISOLA

**TOURISM - MARKETING CAMPAIGN IN SPAIN**

Which company have Government contracted for their marketing campaign in Spain and at what cost?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The company contracted is Copywrite, and the total cost is £16,983.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 413 OF 1998

HON A J ISOLA:

Is this contract for the promotion that the Government carried out in Spain in July and August? Is it restricted to that or does it extend to other aspects of marketing?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

No, it is totally restricted to the magazine advertising and billboards that was carried out in July and August.

HON A J ISOLA:

On what basis was this contract awarded? Was it a proposal from them to Government or did Government offer it out to a number of people on tender or any other way?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

There was a concept paper produced and it was offered to Copywrite and another company which had been used in the past Monte Publicidad and the proposals that were put by Copywrite were more competitive so we decided to go down the Copywrite proposal.

HON A J ISOLA:

So it was offered to Copywrite and Monte Publicidad, the one that was used previously. Was it offered to any other Gibraltar company or just those two companies, one from Spain and one from Gibraltar?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

No, they were only offered to these two companies because the availability of billboards in Spain is not really open to every company, it is fairly restricted, it is very much a closed shop and having talked to a number of others, and I mean 12, the idea of the billboards was not something of an option so we were able to get proposals from only these two entities.

NO. 414 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**PEDESTRIANISATION - PHASE I**

Has Phase I of the pedestrianisation works been passed on to the Government by the contractor?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

No.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 414 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

Is the Minister still waiting for the final modifications that were announced by the Hon Mr Azopardi in this House the last time I raised the issue for that to be completed and is that why Phase I has not been handed over?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I cannot recall what my Colleague, the Hon Keith Azopardi, said in this House but what I can say is that Phase I is the side streets off Main Street and these have not been handed over yet as there are certain aspects of lighting and adding small raised kerbs along Tuckey's Lane that require to be put in place and so therefore once the snagging is complete in addition to what I have said, obviously then Phase I will have been completed but until then it has not been handed over yet.

HON J C PEREZ:

Given that I understand that the work was to have been completed in December or January, does the Minister not think that an unreasonably long time has taken place between when the works were supposed to have finished and when these minor aspects have to be put in place? Is there not a procedure for this or a demand in the contract that these things should be done as quickly as possible?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Yes, the hon Member is right in making that comment. However, the situation as it stands today is that there have been problems with the lighting in some of the area and the question of the kerbs along Tuckey's Lane have been a problem not just from the point of view of the resurfacing of the road but the actual property owners and landlords. The same can be said of the lighting because some of the lighting had to be fixed to the walls of some of the properties and that has meant getting permission from landlords et cetera which has been rather cumbersome. But we are now on the final stages of the marathon.

HON J C PEREZ:

So what the Minister is saying is that it is not all the fault of the contractor, that there are other people involved and that the delays are other than on the part of the contractor?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

That is correct.

ORAL

NO. 415 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**I&D FUND - HEAD 103, SUBHEAD 6**

Is it the intention of Government to contract out all of the works paid from Head 103, subhead 6 in the Improvement and Development Fund?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Yes.

ORAL

NO. 416 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**I&D FUND - HEAD 103, SUBHEAD 6**

Can Government state how much of the £1 million in the Improvement and Development Fund under Head 103, subhead 6, has already been spent in the financial year and on what works?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The amount spent to date is £71,265.

This is made up as follows:

Upper Rock resurfacing (Phase I)	£51,878
Europort Avenue	£19,388

NO. 417 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - ROAD WORKS**

Can Government give details of the road construction and resurfacing programme for the current financial year with an order of costs for each of the projects?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The road construction and resurfacing programme has this year been divided into two parts. One part consists of the works to be carried out by contract under the Improvement and Development Fund. The second part consists of works of a smaller nature and these will be carried out by the Department's Direct Labour force.

Under the Improvement and Development Fund, the following works have been included:

- 1 Winston Churchill Avenue, from the Sundial Roundabout to Corral Road. Reconstruction of the inner lanes and total resurfacing.
- 2 Upper Rock Road Resurfacing. Works let out under the original tender were completed at a cost of £51,878.01.
- 3 Upper Rock Roads Resurfacing, extension to contract (phase II). Works on Queen's Road completed and about to start at Signal Hill up to the Cable Car Station.
- 4 North Mole Road, from Waterport Road to the roundabout at the junction with Europort Avenue. The works involve road construction, road widening and complete resurfacing

For obvious reasons, the order of cost of the projects to be let out to contract have not been included.

Resurfacing programme for the Department's Direct Labour

- 1 Much emphasis is now being placed on maintenance works, such as patching, reinstatements et cetera so the Department's Direct Labour has spent considerable time on such works. With respect to resurfacing works the following programme will be undertaken.

Works completed and in progress -

- 2 Glacis Road, form Waterport Roundabout to the junction with the new Marina link road has been overlaid and the section up to Winston Churchill Avenue will be overlaid once the works at Winston Churchill Avenue have been completed. Order of cost £23,000.
- 3 Turnbull's Lane. Resurfacing of the lane has been completed at a cost of £6,000.

Works to be carried out -

- 4 Naval Hospital Hill, from junction with Buena Vista Road to Europa Road. Order of cost £16,500.
- 5 South Barrack Road (south). Order of cost £40,500.
- 6 Buena Vista Road. Order of cost £16,500.
- 7 George's Lane. Order of cost £9,000.
- 8 Minor resurfacing as part of the maintenance programme will also be undertaken, such as a small section at Irish Town, to the north of Parliament Lane at an order of cost of £2,100.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 417 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

The Minister will probably agree with me, given the reply that I have had to the three last questions, that certainly if everything that is going to be used from Head 103, subhead 6, is going out to contract and of the £1 million he has only spent £71,000 from April this year and that there are four contracts pending, certainly it is ambitious to expect the Minister to spend the whole or even half of the £1 million provided in the Estimates for road resurfacing and construction.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

We will expect to spend certainly more than half, at present rate we would hope to get to about three quarters and we are going to try jolly hard in the last six months, this is one of the projects that we wish to give some impetus to in the remaining part of the year but the hon Member is right, it seems unlikely that we will get through the whole £1 million. One of the problems is that there are not enough companies with the capability to do this type of work to have several companies working on road resurfacing at the same time, what tends to happen is that one company tends to win most of the contracts and then they do not have the capability to do several jobs at the same time.

HON J C PEREZ:

One tends to get the opposite story, that there are many companies willing to do it and only one gets them.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

But the reason why that company gets it is because it wins all the tender processes. Before only one company..... [*HON J C PEREZ: but certainly more than one company applies for the tender.*] Before, in years gone by, one company tendered to get them but without tender. [*HON J C PEREZ: most of the work was done by direct labour.*]



HON J L BALDACHINO:

Is it correct that when the tender goes out that it specifies a starting date? Taking up what the Chief Minister has said, if there are tenders coming out is one of the conditions of the tender that he has to start by a certain date?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, there was invariably a contract period indicated in the invitation to tender that is more usually the case but I just wish that we had the machinery to police a system like the hon Member is describing which would certainly be much more efficient and would get much more done much more quickly. The reality of it is that we struggle to produce the documentation and to carry out the tender procedures even on the basis that it is presently done.

NO. 418 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - ROAD WORKS - UPPER ROCK**

Can Government explain why it was decided to carry out road works in the Upper Rock during the month of August at the peak of the tourist season?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The resurfacing works at Queen's Road were undertaken in August 1998 as an extension of the original contract as only one contractor tendered for the Upper Rock works in hot asphalt. The Contractor agreed to carry out these additional works at the same rate and conditions as the original tender. Queen's Road was patched as part of the original contract, but it was found that other potholes were forming and the road was deteriorating quickly. Therefore, a decision was taken to resurface this road immediately instead of at a later date as originally programmed. The date for the works was agreed in consultation with Sights Management and the Gibraltar Tourist Board who provided the slot when it was most convenient. An alternative route was provided for vehicular traffic while the works were in progress. These works have now been completed and the contractor will soon commence resurfacing works at Signal Hill up to the Upper Cable Car Station.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 418 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

The Minister is aware that during the works many of the tourist coaches and taxis could not get up to the Apes Den? I am asking not because I do not want the works to be done, in answer to a previous question the Minister said that there would be co-ordination in order to affect as least as possible the tourism during the tourist season, August and September are obviously two months where there is a lot of tourism and I am questioning the judgement of doing it in the middle of August when tourists could not get to the Apes Den as a result of the works. I am not questioning that the work needed to be done or that it should not have been done.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Certainly the Government are aware that substantial inconvenience was caused. The reason for that is that the contractor had finished Phase I and the Government were advised that Phase II would be cheaper if the contractor could just carry on on site given that he was already mobilised on site up there and that for the contractor to have demobilised, gone away and then remobilised again several months later would have made it a brand new job and that the price and the quotation would have been higher. That is the reason, the Government made the decision in the knowledge that it was not ideally the time of the year to have done this work but took the risk and pressed ahead in order to obtain savings on the cost.

NO. 419 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - CASEMATES SQUARE PROJECT**

When is it envisaged that Casemates will be closed permanently to vehicular traffic if Government proceed with the final phase of the traffic changes announced in January?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Casemates Square is already permanently closed to vehicular traffic, other than deliveries in one segment.

Once the beautification project gets under way, Casemates roadway will be permanently closed to vehicular traffic. There is not as yet a specific date set for works to commence in the area of Casemates roadway.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 419 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

Has the Minister not got an inkling of it, whether it is going to take six months, a year? The excavation works started and have been completed, the project is said by Government to start to begin. Obviously they should have at least an idea of when they expect the road to be closed permanently.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is difficult because although the tender process is almost complete, indeed I think the tender closing date is now passed and the tender bids are in. It is not until the Government allocate the tender to one particular contractor and agree with that contractor the phasing and the programming of the works which are scheduled to last in excess of one year, one year and three months I think is the latest estimate that I have heard, that it will not be possible to know when it will be necessary for the Square to be closed. There are several aspects of the works and it will not be necessary to close the roadway immediately that the contractor moves on site necessarily and it is not until the execution of the works programme and that is agreed between the successful contractor and the Government officials involved that it will be possible to make the decision but certainly that exercise of phasing the works with the successful contractor will be taking place during the next fortnight.

HON J C PEREZ:

But once the road is closed is it the intention of the Government not to re-open it again as part of the scheme? That is what Phase III of the Government changes announced in January mean.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, that is the intention which is not to say that once the road is closed to allow work in a particular corner of the Square, it will necessarily be kept closed. It may be re-opened during the continuance of the works...*[HON J C PEREZ: But not after completion.]* Yes, and the full pedestrianisation may be delayed until the project is finished.

ORAL

NO. 420 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - SIR HERBERT MILES ROAD**

Is it expected that Sir Herbert Miles Road, from the Caleta Palace Hotel to Dudley Ward tunnel, will be open to vehicular traffic by December this year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Yes.

NO. 421 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - TRAFFIC FLOW**

Do Government still intend to put into effect the remaining phases of the traffic flow changes announced in January or have they now taken heed of the warnings and advice of the Opposition?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Yes, the Government's intention is to implement the remaining phases of the traffic flow changes which will indeed be introduced.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 421 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

Has the Minister got any idea when this is going to take place given that the equipment for the changes have been erected since January and when it is expected that the Government would proceed with Phase II?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Government expect to implement some of the remaining phases in the autumn. Let me tell the hon Gentleman that the introduction of these changes are not purely geared on a specific issue as they have other considerations to consider like road resurfacing programmes, et cetera to ensure that there is as little disruption as possible whilst the phases are being introduced and they will be phased in by stages.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

On these changes in the flow of traffic, Hospital Hill will be two ways or will it be just one way? Does that also include the ambulance?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It will be accessible by the ambulance but not by general traffic.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

Is that going to be one way up or one way down?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

If my memory serves me and I am testing it now, that is one way down except for the ambulance which will continue to be able to go up. It is two way for the ambulance but one way down for him and me.

NO. 422 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - DERELICT VEHICLES**

Are Government aware that there are a number of derelict vehicles lying idle in the Port area, in the vicinity of the Liner Terminal?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

Derelict vehicles and other unsightly items in the vicinity of the North Mole and the Liner Terminal are being removed on a continuous basis to upgrade the area.

There were recently some derelict vehicles in the area of the Cruise Terminal and these have, of course, been removed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 422 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

Yes, I did find out subsequent to the question being put that matters were taken in hand.

NO. 423 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - MOT TESTS**

Will Government state how many vehicles requiring to have passed an MOT test by the 1<sup>st</sup> November as a result of the legislation recently passed, have already undergone the said test?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

The number of vehicles that have passed a roadworthiness test in accordance with Directive 96/96 is 9,450.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 423 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

Is the Minister satisfied that there are enough bookings available between now and the 1<sup>st</sup> November for the vehicles that need to pass the test to be able to do so by that date?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The Government are satisfied that there are enough bookings available to be able to have most of these vehicles tested before the deadline of November this year. However, as the Government notice did say in the Chronicle, it is imperative that people book a test and if they are in possession of a booking then obviously the Police will accept them until the test has been able to be effected.

HON J L BALDACHINO:

How many vehicles are still to take the test, has the Minister got that information?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

The figure is 3,133.

HON J C PEREZ:

For next year, I presume, that there will be an average of 350 or 400 more vehicles added to the list that would need to pass the MOT test given that that is the average per year that is sold and therefore they pass on to the category of having four years or more?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

Could the hon Member repeat the question?



HON J C PEREZ:

I am saying that every year a proportion of cars become eligible for MOT testing and that the number is increasing, whether they take an MOT test after 10 years or after four years now is neither here nor there, every vehicle after four years would take a test so it is supposed to eliminate the older cars from the road but that is not necessarily the effect of it. I am wondering whether the MOT Test Centre, supposing that everything goes well between now and November and by November/December all the cars that have passed the Mot test, whether there is sufficient capacity to do this which is 12,000 every year? I know they have been done in one year on this occasion.

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

I have discussed the matter with the Chief Motor Vehicle Examiner and he confirms that there are provisions to be able to intake the additional cars that will have to take the MOT. We also have to take into consideration that a number of them will leave the MOT register as well as a result of being abandoned as derelict or no longer in the public highway. [*HON J C PEREZ: Abandoned in the Minister's Liner Terminal.*] Yes, some of them do end up there.

NO. 424 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - BUS SERVICE STUDY**

Have Government now received the conclusions of the study into the bus service in Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

No.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 424 OF 1998

HON J C PEREZ:

Has the Minister got an idea when it is that the Committee expects to report to him on this study?

HON J J HOLLIDAY:

My understanding is that the Committee has now produced what they term as their penultimate draft and consideration is being given to compile the study very, very, shortly. As the House knows, Mr Brian Clark forms part of this Committee, unfortunately due to illness, he was not able to undertake the function that he was appointed to do with the speed that we would have liked but he is now on board and I am expecting something from this Committee very shortly.

NO. 425 OF 1998

THE HON J C PEREZ

**TRANSPORT - APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTORS**

When does the Minister for Transport intend to appoint Transport Inspectors and what is to be the method he will use in selecting them?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND TRANSPORT

It would be inappropriate to appoint Transport Inspectors until such time as the Transport Ordinance and the Transport Regulations come into force. It is envisaged that this will happen during the latter part of this year, but no firm date for this has as yet been set.

No decisions have yet been taken with regard to the method of selection of Transport Inspectors. What has been decided is that there should be two distinct groups of Transport Inspectors: those who will inspect the mechanical and roadworthiness aspects of vehicles and those who will be charged with ensuring that standards are maintained and that a proper service is offered to the public.