



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

AFTERNOON SESSION: 3.00 p.m. – 5.50 p.m.

Gibraltar, Wednesday, 15th May 2013

## The Gibraltar Parliament

*The Parliament met at 3.00 p.m.*

[MR SPEAKER: Hon. A J Canepa GMH, OBE, *in the Chair*]

[CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENT: M L Farrell Esq RD *in attendance*]

### PRAYER

*Mr Speaker*

5 **Mr Speaker:** At this juncture I am going to ask the Chief Minister because he would like to address the House following the sad death of the Hon. Charles Bruzon.

### In Memoriam

**Hon. Charles Bruzon**

10 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, this is the first time that the House will have to mourn the passing of a Member from the Government Benches.

15 His passing is, for the House, quite like the passing of any Member, whatever side he might sit on. He is one of us that has passed in the lifetime of this Parliament whilst he was a servant of the House and whether he was sitting today on the Opposition benches or on the Government Benches, we have lost one of us.

I know that people from across the House have already indicated the affection and the regard in which they held Charles Bruzon. Speaking for the Government, I think I reflect the views also of the whole House when I say that he will be very sadly missed. He was very sadly missed when he was not here as a

20 result of illness and hon. Members opposite expressed sentiments wishing him a recovery, much as those of us on this side of the House very much hoped that he would soon be with us.

I will take this comfort and I hope that hon. Members across the floor take this comfort also, the words you have spoken in the Prayer opening the session are not the words of the Prayer as it used to be before this Parliament. The prayer was changed, principally as a result of Charles' desire to update it –  
25 and I think with your assistance – into the words that we have heard you utter today. So, all of us will note that every time we hear that prayer at the beginning of every session of this Parliament we are hearing Charles' words.

Before I sit down and call for a minute's silence, I will give way to the Hon. the Leader of the  
30 Opposition if he wishes to say anything.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Opposition, on this occasion, I wish to associate myself entirely with the words of the Chief Minister.

He not only has spoken on behalf of those on that side of the bench but he also speaks, on this  
35 occasion, for those on this side of the bench.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, therefore without more, I would call on all hon. Members to keep silent for one minute in honour of the late Charles Bruzon.

40

**Refurbished Chamber  
Thanks to all involved in project**

**Mr Speaker:** Before we proceed any further, we are making history, of course, as we sit here in this  
45 refurbished Chamber at this very moment. It is a far cry from the Chamber that we had for decades, perhaps since the 1950s, which was drear and unprepossessing.

I think, whatever one might say, this is an enormous improvement. I am reliably informed that the  
50 fossils of the cockroaches have been consigned to the dustbin of history and whilst we may have a few teething troubles over the next few days, I am sure we are all much happier to see something that befits the times in which we live.

I would like to congratulate on my own behalf all those who have worked in refurbishing the Chamber, for the very hard work that has been put in, in a very, very limited period of time. So I thank all the workers and all those involved with the project on behalf of all of us.

55

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, thank you for those words.

This refurbishment is the fulfilment of a manifesto commitment of the Party today in Government and I think it is worth saying that thanks must go, in particular, to your staff for not just putting up with the works whilst they were ongoing – we were not able to move them out to other offices – they have had to  
60 put up with the work, much as one sometimes has to put up with work at home whilst kitchens or bathrooms are refurbished and we all understand the annoyance that that causes! But they have not just done that, they have also been a source of guidance for those who were in charge of the refurbishment, giving hints and tips here and there of how the refurbishment should take into consideration the peculiar workings of a Parliament such as this one.

So, thank you, Mr Speaker, to you and to your staff for not just putting up with the works but also for  
65 the input you have provided in the period. I think thanks must go, on behalf of the community, to those who have been involved in the 'nitty gritty' of the work, in particular GJBS and their sub-contractors for, as usual, delivering this project – an excellent product and all of it on time. Timing is particularly important when dealing with an institution like Parliament that now meets on a monthly basis and had foregone one of its meetings in order to ensure that the work of the refurbishment could progress. I think  
70 this demonstrates GJBS's ability to deliver on Government projects, on time and as a 'best in class' company that delivers excellent results.

I think, because this is the Chamber of Gibraltar's Parliament, it is also important to highlight that all of the woodwork that we see around us, even the panels that we see, the furniture and the chairs, some of which come from that debating Chamber from the 1950s and have been re-done, have been produced in  
75 Gibraltar by Gibraltarian craftsmen. I think, in particular, in this Chamber, that is an important point to make and I wish to thank them for having been able to deliver on time.

Mr Speaker, in coming days and during the course of the debates that I expect we will have during the course of the consideration of the Independent Commissions Report, this House will be considering the use of the cameras that we now see have been installed in order to broadcast the proceedings of this  
80 Parliament, once we have adopted the rules relevant to broadcasting etc. I think that will be a very important step forward for our community, when this Chamber will not just have been *brightened up*, it

will also be *opened up* to the whole community so that they can see what is ongoing and the work that we do here.

85 Today I understand that the cameras are on, simply for the purposes of testing. Nobody will be able to access the images that the cameras produce today but Members of the House will be able to see, in order to inform the debate that we have, what it is that the cameras do, what sort of angles they produce, so that we can then make a determination of whether or not we agree to the broadcasting, having seen the sorts of images that are going to be produced... but I do hope that the Budget debate this year will be a Budget debate that people can watch in glorious technicolour and not just listen to in Dolby.

90 Mr Speaker, I think it is important to thank Carl Viagas, who has led for the Government as Project Manager on this project. He has delivered now, for successive administrations, a number of different projects and his work is always to the standard that is required of him by the Taxpayer, so sincere thanks for the delivery of this first phase of the works and, in particular, to the Deputy Chief Minister who has led politically for the Government on this particular project. As usual, anything that the Deputy Chief Minister touches is delivered on time and to the usual very high standard, so thank you also from  
95 Ministerial colleagues to him.

Mr Speaker, you have had circulated to all of us new rules on how to use the technology. It is just a button for a microphone but it triggers all sorts of technology nowadays! I think you have indicated that we should see how we go in using this new system of getting up but not speaking, seeking your eye in order to make points. It may be that it is not as workable as we need it to be for the Parliament to have life: it may be the price of bringing cameras into the House. I know you are keen to see how we go with it, so I am grateful that you have given us an indication of how you would like to see us use the technology. From this side of the House, of course, you can count on our co-operation – and I am sure from both sides of the House – so that whenever somebody is speaking, somebody else pressing the microphone button does not interfere with that, in particular for the purposes of *Hansard*, so that we always have a record of what is said in this House.

I think today is a momentous occasion but only the beginning because we still have to refurbish the ante-Chamber to provide more offices and to provide spaces for Members of Parliament on both sides of the House to be able to do their work, for Select Committees to be able to carry out their deliberations and, in terms of the access to the Parliament, also to ensure that there is an accessible entrance for those who may not be able to negotiate the stairs.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to record the changes in our Parliament.

I am reliably informed that the carcasses of the cockroaches have not been confined to the dustbin of history, they are being studied by Dr Cortes every evening to determine exactly what species they were!

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Now, Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

The Opposition, too, would wish to congratulate everybody involved in relation to this project. I know Carl Viagas very well. Carl Viagas helped me immensely in relation to both the Prison project and also the Court project, which was a very difficult project indeed and I see that there are similarities in the internal décor of the Magistrates' Court and, indeed, the Supreme Court to some of the furniture that we see today in this renovated Parliament Chamber.

Mr Speaker, I would also, of course, like to thank all those involved, the contractors, GJBS, as well as thanking members of staff for their patience during the renovation period. I know, again, having been involved in other projects, that it is not easy to have a situation where there is an ongoing project and, at the same time, the building itself, or the vicinity of the buildings being renovated, are being used as working offices.

It is indeed a great improvement on the Parliament that existed as we knew it a few months ago. What is important in our view is not that this is an improvement in the comfort of MPs or that it is an improvement in the internal decoration: clearly, it is. It is, of course, important from the point of view that the dignity of Parliament is, of course... the Parliament of all Gibraltarians is, of course, enhanced by a project and an improvement of this nature. But the importance in our view is that it allows greater access for democracy inside this place and allows us to pursue what is a joint initiative of this House, an all-partisan initiative of this House, which is to allow cameras and better technology, that allows us to effectively take proceedings of this House and of this Parliament out there to members of the public. In that regard, I note that the Hon. the Chief Minister would like to see Parliament televised for the Budget session, that will also be very welcome certainly on this side of the House, but of course the Hon. Chief Minister needs to contact us and I expect that he will do so during the next few weeks, to finalise the rules in relation to the televising of proceedings for Parliament. The quicker that we do that the better because then it will allow us to have that joint aim which is televising of Parliamentary proceedings, and televising of the Budget session in particular, that that will come to fruition by next month.

So, to sum up, Mr Speaker, my congratulations to everybody involved in this project. We certainly believe that it is a huge improvement and we have no hesitation in recognising that.

145 **Hon. P R Caruana:** Mr Speaker, I wonder if I might be allowed to say, I believe that, in the absence of the Hon. the Minister for Employment, I am the Father of the House (Acting) and, in that capacity, perhaps I might be, sort of, humoured just for a moment.

150 First of all, I think it would be churlish not to congratulate the Government for having prioritised this project: I think that they are to be congratulated for that. It is something we could have done in sixteen years and did not prioritise and I think it is correct to recognise that it has been right, on their part, to prioritise.

155 Secondly, speaking as something of a traditionalist, I think it is also right to recognise that there is just enough, sort of, genuflection to those of us that are very traditionalist and I think the right balance probably, all around us, between modern facilities and traditional facilities and I am particularly keen to note that some of the older bits have been retained.

160 If I could just be allowed one small element – not a criticism – just an expression of personal preference, of course different people would have different tastes and it might be that the majority of the House does not share it, I would have preferred to have seen a different arrangement behind the Speaker's Chair and perhaps the Government is still in time, if it is minded to, to consider restoring the traditional shield there. I do not know if that is the intention and that it is only temporary but I think, with that improvement, I think the Government is to be congratulated for this project.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the statements of both hon. Members.

165 I should have said that there are still matters to be dealt with. One of them is that the Government agrees that the depiction behind the Speaker is not perhaps the one that we imagined it would be and that, therefore, there was an element of restoration perhaps of what was there to come – and there may be some technical changes to be made.

170 For example, I understand that additional cameras are to be added to provide the sorts of angles that I think we all expected we would see. Those, I understand, will be installed today or tomorrow or in the coming days and some other tweaking.

175 Mr Speaker, this is the Parliament Chamber of Gibraltar and all the Members of it, if they have an opinion, should feel free to express it either directly to the Government or through the Clerk so that, having started today to use this renovated Chamber, we improve on it if we can, working together to deliver the best product for coming generations. I do hope that this Chamber will be the place where matters relating to the affairs of our nation are debated at least for another half century, given the very good use that we got out of the old Chamber.

## 180 Order of the Day

### CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

185 **Clerk:** Meeting of Parliament Wednesday 15th May 2013.

(i) Oath of Allegiance; (ii) Confirmation of Minutes – the Minutes of the last meeting of Parliament, which was held on 15th, 21st and 22nd February 2013.

190 **Mr Speaker:** May I sign the Minutes as correct? (**Members:** Aye)

*Mr Speaker signed the Minutes.*

**Clerk:** (iii) Communications from the Chair; (iv) Petitions; (v) Announcements; (vi) Papers to be laid.

### 195 DOCUMENTS LAID

**Clerk:** The Hon. the Chief Minister.

200 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the table the Gibraltar Annual Policing Plan for 2013-14.

**Mr Speaker:** Ordered to lie.

205 **Clerk:** The Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

**Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the table the Report of the Principal Auditor on the Accounts of the Gibraltar Port Authority for the financial year ended 31st March 2011.

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**Mr Speaker:** Ordered to lie.

**Clerk:** The Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

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**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the table the Report and Audited Accounts of the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority for the year ended 31st March 2009.

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**Mr Speaker:** Ordered to lie.

**Clerk:** (vii) Reports of Committees; (viii) Answers to Oral Questions.

225

## Questions for Oral Answer

### SPORTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE AND YOUTH

230

#### City Fire Brigade Audit Report findings

**Clerk:** Question 218/2013, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

235

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, further to the answer given to Question 95/2013 can the Minister with responsibility for Civil Contingencies give this House the findings of the Audit Report of the City Fire Brigade?

240

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, H. M. Government, together with the management and staff representatives of the City Fire Brigade, with their Unions, are now analysing and studying the Report.

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The findings of the Report will be made public in due course.

**Clerk:** Question 219, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond...

**Mr Speaker:** The Hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

250

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes. Mr Speaker, is there any particular reason why the Minister with responsibility for Civil Contingencies cannot provide a copy of this Report at this present moment.

That is one supplementary and another one is, what timeframe does he envisage expiring before he can provide a copy of this particular Report to my hon. Friend?

255

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, first of all, the Report is a report which we have to discuss. I think it is only fair that we do so, we discuss with the staff, management and the people concerned.

Therefore, what we are doing currently is having discussions with them. The timeframe we are hoping will not be more than two months. Therefore, after that, if it protracts a bit more, so be it but we are intending to make it public after that, once we have had the discussion with staff and management.

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**Mr Speaker:** Next Question.

265

**City Fire Brigade  
'Train the Trainer' course**

**Clerk:** Question 219, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

270

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Civil Contingencies explain why, as per Table FB.2 on the Government website, no-one has yet undergone the 'Train the Trainer' course with the City Fire Brigade Fire Prevention Officer since 9th December 2011?

275

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

280

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the 'Train the Trainer' course was specifically devised for the GHA at their request so that some of their members of staff can deliver refresher fire safety training at departmental level. Nine GHA members of staff received the 'Train the Trainer' course in 2011. This course is different from the basic Fire Safety Course, which continues to be delivered by the Fire Safety Department.

285

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister say what the requirement is for trainers to receive continuous training development in order to update their skills?

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, all GHA employees receive the basic fire safety courses delivered by the CFB Fire Safety Officers as part of their induction to the GHA, so it is everyone.

290

**Government premises  
Number of fire drills**

**Clerk:** Question 220, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

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**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Civil Contingencies say how many fire drills need to be conducted per year in Government premises?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

300

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, no fire drills need to be conducted in Government premises unless they are specifically identified as part of a risk assessment. However, schools must ensure that fire drills are carried out periodically.

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**Mr Speaker:** Any other questions?  
Next Question.

310

**Medical Priority Despatch System  
Progress in going live**

**Clerk:** Question 221, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

315

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Civil Contingencies update this House on any progress made in introducing the new Medical Priority Despatch System and say when it will be going live?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

320

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, discussions have been held between officials of the Departments concerned, with a view to presenting the inter-Ministerial Committee of Ministers some proposals.

325

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, in October of last year the Minister stated in a press release that the system was going live in Spring of this year, 2013. Can the Minister advise when this Spring?

**Hon. S E Linares:** Well, we are still in Spring but there will be probably some more delays, maybe go just slightly beyond Spring.

330 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

335 **Sports Grants**  
**Details of awards since Question 97/2013**

**Clerk:** Question 222, the Hon. E J Reyes.

340 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Sport and Leisure provide details of payments made, since the answer to Question No. 97/2013, in respect of 'Sports Grants' under each of the following: (a) Grants to Sporting Societies; (b) International Competitions; (c) Sports Development Projects; and (d) Hosting of Special Sports and Leisure Events?

345 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, I now hand over to the Member opposite details of Sports Grants awarded since the answer to Question 97/2013.

**Schedule to question 222/2013**

a) <u>Grants to Sporting Societies:</u>	
Swimming Championships	2,430.57
Pool Association	6,600.00
Cricket Association	3,750.00
Cricket Association	2,500.00
Athletics	700.00
Sea Angling Federation	3,010.45
Pool Association	12,596.58
Netball Association	6,641.82
Ten Pin Bowling Association	1,580.50
Hockey Male and Female Competition	18,000.00
b) <u>International Competitions:</u>	
Commonwealth Games Scotland	5,000.00
Straits Games	10,000.00
Island Games Bermuda	80,000.00
Island Games Bermuda GOG Expenses	36,000.00
c) <u>Sports Development:</u>	
Hockey Association Schools development	4,000.00
Athletics Association Gothenburg Event	700.00
d) <u>Hosting of Special Sports and Leisure Events:</u>	
Tradewise Chess Festival	80,000.00
Tenpin Bowling	5,000.00

350 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, does the Minister happen to have at hand a bit further... sort of broken down of the grants made?

If I take under section (a), it says 'Swimming Championships': I would like to know if that refers to locally hosted championships or whichever type. I know there are international competitions but there could be other types of championships and so on.

355 I do not know if he does have available today, or I am even willing to wait until he can procure the information so that one is a bit more informed of where exactly, or what exactly, the swimming championships and so on entails.

360 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I do not have that information with me, but if the hon. Member writes to me I will give him all the information in detail, of where... because there are headings... and as he was the Minister for Sports previously: he should know that the grants to sporting societies, when it is related to a championship, it is a local championship, when it is international competitions – (b) – it

would be going to an international competition and so on, but if he wants more details I am willing to wait for his letter and give it to him.

365

**Cultural Grants  
Awards since Question 99/2013**

370

**Clerk:** Question 223, the Hon. E J Reyes

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Culture provide details of any further Cultural Grants awarded since the answer to Question No. 99/2013.

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**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth, (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, since my answer to Question 99/2013, a further £79,564.75 has been awarded.

380

This information is already updated on the Government website.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** I do not doubt the veracity of what the Minister says now, but at the time of the deadline of posing the Questions the information was *not* available on the Government website.

385

I have been through this in previous months, hence why I pose the Questions and both the Speaker and the Chief Minister have, on previous occasions, agreed that if it was not available on the day that the Question had to be handed in, then, in some shape or form, the Government would provide that across the floor.

390

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I have the information, actually I brought with me a whole breakdown of all the expenses, which I am willing to pass on to the hon. Member as soon as a photocopy is made.

**Supplementary to question 223/2013**

Cultural Grants paid since Q99/2013

Elena Scialtel's book "Nepenthes"	864.75
The Music Festival (Gibraltar) Ltd - Song Festival part grant	20,000.00
Craig MacDonald - part funding for "Live at Moorish Castle"	2,000.00
The Music Festival (Gibraltar) Ltd - Song Festival final grant	30,000.00
Gibraltar Regiment - steel band	2,000.00
Bayside Comprehensive School	1,500.00
Gib Fringe - part funding first Fringe Festival Gib	4,000.00
Transitions Dance Academy	7,500.00
Publication of book, "We thank God for England"	7,200.00
Colourworks Limited - Sponsorship for Runway 2013	4,500.00

**Mr Speaker:** Next Question.

395

**Victoria Stadium  
Improvements and modifications for UEFA approval and certification**

400

**Clerk:** Question 224, the Hon. E J Reyes.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, I need to clarify: I may have, in my keenness, sort of, going back over previous notes of Parliament sessions, I think I have got a bit of repetition. No. 224 and 226... it is the same question, just obviously referring to different Question numbers, whether the subject has come up



405 before, so I do not know whether Mr Speaker would like me to join them up, which I will do, to... tackle  
this Question. Then, if the answer is forthcoming, there may even be a need for me to withdraw No. 226,  
but all that...

410 Mr Speaker, I am grateful, and therefore Question No. 224 is: further to the answer to Question No.  
15/2013, is the Minister for Sport now in a position to provide this House with details of all  
improvements and/or modifications which will have to be carried out at Victoria Stadium, inclusive of  
players, officials' and spectator facilities, in order to meet UEFA requirements for the hosting of official  
international football matches?

415 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, I will answer  
this Question, together with Question 225 and 226, so therefore it just avoids what he has just stated.

420 **Clerk:** Question 225.

425 **Hon. E J Reyes:** We got it. Question No. 225, Mr Speaker, sir: further to the answer to Question No  
98/2013 can the Minister for Sport and Leisure now confirm that the football pitch at Victoria Stadium  
has achieved full approval and certification, thereby meeting UEFA standards for the playing of  
international competitions?

**Clerk:** Question 226.

430 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to the answer to Question No. 100/2013, is the Minister for Sport now in a  
position to provide this House with details of all improvements and/or modifications which will have to  
be carried out at the Victoria Stadium in order to meet UEFA requirements for the hosting of official  
international football matches?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

435 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, Government is  
already working with the Gibraltar Football Association and the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority to  
make the necessary modifications to be able to host international competitions at the Victoria Stadium  
and make it a category 2 UEFA standard.

440 For information on UEFA standards, the hon. Member opposite can log on to ...and there is a website  
address, which I will not go through it, but I will give him the copy, because he can get it online and  
therefore he will have all the information that he needs as to UEFA standards there.

**Mr Speaker:** Any supplementaries?

445 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, sir, although I may be able to access this website and what is  
required, that does not put me in an updated position of what is already available and what may have been  
modified at the Stadium in the, what, 17 or 18 months that I am no longer the Minister for Sport, and  
therefore something could have been done in the meantime and therefore there is work done and not still  
pending...

450 Mr Speaker, I can bear with the Hon. Minister and wait for, perhaps, that information because it is a...  
as well when it comes to Budget time. It allows both sides of the House to see how much is being pumped  
into that area and whether it makes sense if there is suddenly a big figure, rather than my rumbling upon  
why such a big expenditure it is 2 and 2 equals 4 and it could be because of these requirements and so on.

455 Also bear in mind, Mr Speaker, that both sides of the House are extremely keen and great followers  
and, hopefully, within days now we will become Team 54 in UEFA, joined with today's good news that  
Charlton Athletic will be coming over and playing at the Stadium. We want to impress the visitors not  
only with our football playing but also with our facilities, of which we all want to be really proud.

460 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, it is too early and I would be... It is confidential, as he will know,  
about budgets and therefore I am not privy to what is going to happen, or at least I cannot anticipate what  
this Parliament is going to pass or not pass at budget time. But I can assure the hon. Member that we are  
working very closely with the GFA, that we are looking in order to put the Victoria Stadium into a  
Category 2, which is like a minimum category of the stadium, in order to have international competitions  
and we are even looking at *some* areas in which the Stadium can become even Category 3, so only in  
465 parts.

So we are working closely with the GFA and it would be pre-empting at this time if I give the hon.

Member any information on how we are working with the GFA and the GSLA. I hope the hon. Member understands that.

470 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I may be of assistance to the House, the hon. Members have indicated that, of course, although we are keeping our fingers tightly crossed for what may happen on 24th May in London, we should take nothing for granted and, in fact, what happens in London is not a political issue that Gibraltar politicians would ever dare to delve into, other than to reaffirm that I am sure – whatever Party might be in government at any particular time – we would ensure that the sporting facilities necessary for our footballers will be made available.

475 But I would just highlight at this point there are different criteria for different sorts of UEFA competitions, that Members will be aware of, and this is publicly available information on the UEFA website. There are different standards that UEFA require for different types of matches and at different levels of competition, and it may be that some of those are things that we can aspire to, in the context of the Stadium that the hon. Member is asking about – Victoria Stadium – and some which are just simply impossible to aspire to in the context of Victoria Stadium, because of its environs: but the hon. Member also knows that there are opportunities for the development of footballing areas outside of where Victoria Stadium is today which are being considered by the GFA and the Government.

485 **Mr Speaker:** Any other supplementaries?  
Next Question.

490 **Sports and Leisure Authority**  
**Appointment of Centre Manager and other staff changes**

**Clerk:** Question 227, the Hon. E J Reyes.

495 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to the answer to Questions Nos. 101/2013 and 102/2013, can the Minister for Sports and Leisure confirm that the post of Centre Manager, together with any other vacancies within the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority, have now been filled on a permanent basis.

500 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this Question together with Question 228.

505 **Clerk:** Question 228.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Sports and Leisure provide details of any changes there may have been in respect of persons employed by the Sports and Leisure Authority since the answer provided to Question No. 104/2013?

510 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the vacant post of Centre Manager was filled on 1st March 2013. This has been the only change of the staff complement of the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority.

515 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Thank you for that, Mr Speaker.

I am not entirely clear, by the post of Centre Manager having been filled in has it not created a knock-on effect and therefore a lower down grade has a vacancy – or was the successful applicant an external candidate to GSLA employees?

520 **Hon. S E Linares:** No, Mr Speaker, the vacancy was advertised internally and therefore somebody from the GSLA filled that post and the post... it is projected to advertise the vacancy in the near future.

525

**Question 223**  
**Supplementary**

530 **Hon. E J Reyes:** If the Hon. Mr Speaker would allow me, is reference to Question 223, which was answered a short while ago but the Hon. Minister has now kindly passed on to me the details of the cultural grants, I do have a small supplementary from there. I see that £1,500 has been granted under heading of Bayside Comprehensive School, can I please have some details as to what sort of cultural event or facility, or whatever, was granted to the school, so that it is clear to me that it was a cultural related matter and not just the purchase of, for example, mathematics text books.

535

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, unfortunately I have not got that information, but I will pass it on to the hon. Member, if he so wishes, later.

540

**Gibraltar RFU**  
**Development discussions**

545

**Clerk:** Question 229, the Hon. E J Reyes.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Sports and Leisure state if he has, since the answer to Question No. 934/2012, held discussions with the Gibraltar Rugby Football Union in respect of providing renewed facilities for the playing, teaching and development of the sport; and, if so, provide details of any agreements/understandings reached?

550

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

555

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, no formal meetings have been held since my answer to Question 934/2012 but have met informally with members of the Gibraltar Rugby Football Union in March.

560

**Victoria Stadium playing surface**  
**Approved by International Rugby Board**

**Clerk:** Question 230, the Hon. E J Reyes.

565

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to the answer to Question No. 105/2013, can the Minister for Sports and Leisure now confirm that the playing surface recently installed at the Victoria Stadium enjoys full approval and certification by the International Rugby Board?

570

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the situation remains the same. HM Government is still awaiting the certification from the International Rugby Board.

575

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Any indication, Mr Speaker, on a time span, or whatever, when this is expected?

**Hon. S E Linares:** Well, Mr Speaker, I can tell the hon. Member that an international rugby match was held in Gibraltar in March this year between Gibraltar and Cyprus. A representative of the IRB was present and was very satisfied at the playing surface, so that does not equate to actual certification but, again, we are trying to pursue to have it actually certified by the IRB.

580

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, but although I agree that certain individuals may start to moot that the facilities look good and so on, do we have an estimated date, a target date, by which we think we will probably have the certification?

585

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I wish I had it now. It is a question of the GSLA following it up constantly with the IRB. Until the IRB actually sends that certificate we can keep on following it up with them and I think the GSLA – I know that the GSLA – is also following it up with a company that actually laid the turf, so that they can see if they can also press on to the IRB about the certification.

590 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I might also assist the House in this, the hon. Gentleman knows that there is another issue pending in respect of rugby in Gibraltar, and that, therefore, pressing too much just for the purpose of getting a certification might not be in the interests of local rugby, given that there are bigger issues at stake.

595 For example, if the issue had simply been to get UEFA to say yes or no to whether Gibraltar should form part of its Association, no is the quickest answer that somebody can give. Therefore, I think he will know what I am referring to and that it is for that reason, that there are bigger issues at stake than just the certification of the pitch... which is obviously acceptable because it has already hosted international events.

600 **Hon. E J Reyes:** No, I understand that, Mr Speaker.

605 One of my reasons for following this up, as well, is, like the Minister was saying, the contractor has come and laid the pitch, there are snagging periods and warranty periods and so on, and in being prudent and so on we have got to make certain that we do not sort of run out of time where one can go, I know the company that has sold it is not one of those cowboy companies and so on and are probably interested in carrying out further works in Gibraltar in the future but, for the interest of sports lovers and the rugby fraternity itself, I think we – both sides of the House – owe it to them to give reassurance that we will follow it up and provide the best facilities that are most affordable for this community in as soon a time as possible.

610 **Hon. S E Linares:** Yes, Mr Speaker, the guarantee of the company that laid the turf was for the football and that certification has been given. What we have tried now is to get the certification of the IRB, which is what we are following, we are trying to get.

615 Like I said in answer to a supplementary before, the rugby fraternity, as international, are happy with the turf. They were here, they played Gibraltar, Cyprus. They were extremely happy because it is... if I remember correctly, they equated to the Saracens pitch in London: it is exactly the same turf and they are quite happy about the quality and the turf that we have got, it is just a question of trying to get a certificate that just gives us a certificate, basically.

620

**Gibraltar Cricket Association  
Discussions over renewed facilities**

**Clerk:** Question 231, the Hon. E J Reyes.

625

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Sports and Leisure state if he has, since the answer to Question No. 1018/2012, held discussions with the Gibraltar Cricket Association in respect of providing renewed facilities for the playing, teaching and development of the sport; and if so, provide details of any agreements/understandings reached?

630

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

635 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, no further formal meetings have been held since the answer to Question 1018/2012 but I have met informally with members of the Gibraltar Cricket Association at the launch of their new logo in March.

**Europa Sports Ground  
Details and cost of works carried out**

640

**Clerk:** Question 232, the Hon. E J Reyes.

645 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to the answer to Question No. 106/2013, can the Minister for Sports and Leisure provide details of works and cost carried out at Europa Sports Ground, together with pertinent information in respect of any other works which are planned but not yet commenced or completed?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

650 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the following are the details of recent works and their costs, carried out at the Europa Sports Ground: recycled turf for

rugby and cricket training, excavation, preparation, laying of sub-base, removal of debris, etc. and laying down of 3,019 sq. m. of turf – £68,172.62; Repairs to perimeter fence and accesses – £1,340; Repairs to cricket playing area, including laying of turf at cricket wicket – £7,128.80; This is a total of £76,641.42.

655 There are still some minor items to be invoiced by the contractor: these are not expected to be over £3,000 in total.

660 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Sorry, Mr Speaker, I just missed the first figure, because the turf that was laid for training, when the Minister spoke about 3,019, I thought it was the figure which I noted and then it happened to be square metres, so can I actually have the financial figure as well.

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, if he wants, I will pass him over all the information.

**ANSWER**

**THE HON THE MINISTER FOR SPORTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE AND YOUTH**

Mr Speaker,

The following are the details of recent works, and their costs, carried out at the Europa Sports Ground:

**Recycled turf (for Rugby and Cricket Training):**

Excavation/preparation/laying of subbase/removal of debris etc and laying down of 3019 sq m of turf: **£68172.62.**

Repairs to perimeter fence and accesses: **£1340.00**

Repairs to cricket playing area including laying of turf at cricket wicket: **£7128.80**

Total as at 9 May 2013 is **£76641.42**

There are still some minor items to be invoiced by the contractor. These are not expected to be over £3,000 in total.

665 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

670 **Youth Clubs  
Volunteer recruitment and opening**

**Clerk:** Question 233, the Hon. E J Reyes.

675 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to the answer to Question No. 107/2013, can the Minister for Youth confirm if the campaign to recruit volunteers to work in the Youth Clubs has now been completed and, therefore, as from when does his Ministry expect to open youth clubs every weekend as per his Party's manifesto commitment?

680 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, as stated in answer to Question 107/2013 the campaign to recruit volunteers to work in youth clubs is continuous. The youth clubs are currently working on projects which include weekends.

685 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, do we have a concrete date by when we expect the youth clubs to be open every weekend.

690 **Hon. S E Linares:** No, sir.

695

**Queen's National Theatre project  
Involvement of Gibraltar Amateur Drama Federation**

**Clerk:** Question 234, the Hon. E J Reyes.

700

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Culture provide this House with details of reasons why the Gibraltar Amateur Drama Association has not been invited to form part, nor consulted on the matter, of the Committee which is tasked with advising the Government in respect of the recently announced Queen's National Theatre project?

705

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

710

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the Committee set up to advise the Government on the refurbishment of the Queen's National Theatre is made up of individuals and not any organisations or any representatives of any organisations. One of the things that the Committee will be asked to do is to consult organisations such as GADA and others.

715

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, one sees from the press release of those nominated and invited to form part of the Committee that this has been an invitation to individuals. But is the Minister aware that there has been great disappointment within those involved in the amateur dramatics world, that a long established drama association, which is apolitical and therefore would always wish to work well with whoever is in administration at the time, have not been involved as, in many ways, they would have expected to be leading players in this respect, even though there is a consolation that some individuals who also happen to be part, and members of GADA maybe, but they are not there other than in their own capacity and therefore not representing the proper collective views of GADA, which has always been well respected in this community?

720

**Chief Minister (Hon F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I draw the hon. Gentleman's attention to the last sentence of what the Hon. Minister has said, and that is that one of the things that the Committee will be asked to do is to consult organisations, such as GADA and others.

725

The hon. Gentleman knows that Gibraltar is rife with talent, whether it is in dance, or in drama or in any of the other disciplines that are displayed on a stage, and therefore there is a proliferation of organisations, all of which represent an element of expertise and the Government had a choice of simply selecting all of those organisations and asking them for a representative to put on this Committee or to appoint individuals who have specific expertise, some of them across those different organisations, and asking that Committee to make recommendations to the Government and, in doing so, to take into consideration the representations of the organisations that are relevant and, indeed, to meet those organisations.

730

The hon. Gentleman may not be aware but the disappointment expressed by one particular organisation has now been tempered and that some of the things that might have been said in public are not the *current* position of those organisations, having now understood what the intention of the Government is.

735

But, of course, Mr Speaker the whole point is that the Government is taking the view that it does not know best on how to create a theatre and how to deliver what that theatre must contain in order to be a new theatre for our community that fits its needs both in respect of amateur dramatics such as that new theatre may be relevant to amateur dramatics and the sort of touring productions that all of us would like to see able to be hosted in such a facility.

740

Mr Speaker, I put it no higher than that, other than to say that we believe that the expertise is there to give us that advice in the Committee that we have constituted, that the Committee will want to talk to these organisations and that therefore we will be able to deliver a new theatre, fit for purpose, within the lifetime of this Parliament.

745

**Hon. E J Reyes:** I am grateful to the Chief Minister, Mr Speaker. Yes, in the light that consultation will take place with bodies which, of course, will include GADA does change and does calm matters.

750

I feel that, at the time of drafting this I think the Chief Minister and the Minister for Culture can both understand that – I even feared there may be a certain amount of resignations, if not even a block resignation by GADA, sort of saying no-one is really interested in us and they are not taking us seriously. That would be a sad day for Gibraltar, but I think, from that answer, one can safely deduce that the consultations and exchange of ideas will come forth and certainly if, at the end of the day, we are going to get a better product for Gibraltar and, at the same time, ensuring that GADA's views are taken into account, like everybody else's, but given that sense of appreciation, then we are starting to head in the right direction, Mr Speaker.

755

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, I am grateful for his words, except for the fact that he suggests that this represents a change in the point of view of the Government and what it is that we have asked the Committee to do. It does not.

760 I am expressing to him now what I have expressed to the Committee and what the hon. Member will be asking the Committee to do and what it was the intention that the Committee should do from the very, very beginning. In fact, I think that I may even have expressed sentiments to this effect during the course of the lengthy interview I gave GBC or, if not, during the course of the press conference that we gave at the Queen's Cinema on the day of the launch of the Committee and the announcement that we made. So  
765 he should take it from me that this is not a change of position, this is actually the position that was adopted and hence why he need not have feared that there might be mass resignations from any particular organisation, feeling that they were less than appreciated. Indeed, in the time that we have been in office, we have worked with GADA and supported GADA in its productions and they can continue to count on the support of the Government as much as they had it before the announcement of the Queen's Cinema and the Committee that has been put in place as afterwards.

770 The hon. Gentleman will know that certain plans were envisaged for Ince's Hall which might have required changes to the way that GADA was housed. Some of those changes may still be required and GADA will form part of the re-provisioning of what it is that GADA have, so that they can continue to produce amateur dramatics for our community, given the investment that this Government is making not just in respect of the Queen's Cinema but also, of course, as he knows, I have made some announcements  
775 in respect of Ince's Hall and how that might be refurbished, and there may be some changes to those, to the detail of those plans. So he can rest assured that everyone is not just appreciated but they form an important part of what it is that we want to do.

780 Of course, it is difficult to see how one can be accused of wanting to be all things for all men and having disappointed some others – so it is either one or the other.

**Culture and Heritage Agency  
Changes in personnel since Question 103/2013**

785

**Clerk:** Question 235, the Hon. E J Reyes.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Culture and Heritage provide details of any changes there may have been in respect of persons employed by the Culture and Heritage Agency since the answer provided to Question No. 103/2013?  
790

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, there have been no changes.  
795

**Work on heritage sites  
Details and cost**

800

**Clerk:** Question 236, the Hon. E J Reyes.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Heritage provide details of all works, together with respective cost, undertaken at any heritage-related site; stating by whom these works were carried out, as well as confirming that the Gibraltar Heritage Trust was duly consulted before commencement of any works?  
805

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, sites that appear listed under the relevant schedules of the Heritage Trust Act and have had works carried out to them are the Grand Battery and Parliament.  
810

In relation to Grand Battery Phase 1, the works consisted of removing and clearing of debris to expose the eighteen embrasures and fire steps. This has allowed for the salutes by the Royal Gibraltar Regiment to take place in the area. The Heritage Trust Board was duly consulted and the scheme was approved. The scheme was also approved by the Development and Planning Commission. The contract, with a value of £73,445.92, was awarded to GJBS. It was completed on 11th June 2012.  
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820 Works to Parliament, as we have all heard this morning, Phase 1 consisted of a complete refurbishment of the debating Chamber and public gallery: new audio and visual equipment has been installed, new air conditioning equipment fitted and new furniture manufactured.

The Heritage Trust Board was consulted on 20th December 2012. The contract, to the value of £678,000, was awarded to GJBS.

825 Two other sites, even though not listed under the Gibraltar Heritage Trust Act, were presented to the Board of the Trust before works were carried out: these are to the Main Guard and Devil's Gap path.

In relation to the Main Guard, phase 1 works, which are located at John Mackintosh Square, consist of replacing the existing roof. Being the Heritage Trust's office, the Board has been, and continues to be, consulted on this project. The contract value of £100,113.57 was awarded to Koala Limited.

830 In relation to the Devil's Gap path works, this consists of clearing up and making safe a footpath that connects the Upper Town area with the Upper Rock Nature Reserve. The Heritage Trust and the Development Planning Commission have been duly informed before work commenced.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, my question was 'works undertaken at any heritage-related site'. If I can bring in a couple of matters that perhaps the Minister can shed some light on that.

835 I know that recently, and also because the RGP had posted notices and so on, some works have been carried out at Parson's Lodge and therefore the Minister might have some information in connection with that. One also sees, walking up Main Street, that there is scaffolding and works being carried out at the Convent, which I believe is a heritage-related site and, if my recollection is correct, it is even listed in the Act and therefore does require the proper permits, after due consultation with Heritage Trust. Likewise, works going on at Wellington Front and Douglas Cave, which I believe are very much heritage-related sites.

840 So, does the Minister have any information relating to those four that I have just brought up?

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, in relation to the Wellington Front, this was commenced by the previous administration so it is a continuation of what was started then and in the Convent, likewise. 845 These were approved by the previous administration and therefore we are just continuing the project.

I do not know which others he mentioned... the other two he mentioned.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Douglas Cave and Parson's Lodge are the other two, Mr Speaker.

850 **Hon. S E Linares:** Well, Mr Speaker, those two are not heritage sites... Well, Parson's Lodge obviously is, but the works done there were not of a heritage nature so, therefore, it does not apply because, as the hon. Member knows – he must have gone to Parson's Lodge before – down below there is the... what is used for the excavation of Gorham's Cave by the Heritage Division. They use kitchens and they use other places within Parson's Lodge, which is not of a heritage nature. 855

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, that part of Parson's Lodge may not be, strictly speaking, protected by the Heritage Act but because my question read heritage-related site, can we have some information of what works and what costs have been carried out there at Parson's Lodge? Can I start with that, Mr Speaker? 860

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, if he gives me notice specifically of that question, I will answer it. I mean, he stated... now he is homing in onto Parson's Lodge, which is not the heritage site that he is asking details for.

865 I am willing to pass on to the hon. Member the information he seeks.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** I am sorry, Mr Speaker, but I disagree. Parson's Lodge is a heritage-related site. That is what my wording says. I did not specifically home in, perhaps, on the words 'Parson's Lodge' but I think Gibraltarians who know the area would certainly call it a heritage-related site.

870 Also, Mr Speaker, can I come back on the other points. Work at the Convent and Wellington Front may have been started whilst I was Minister for Heritage but since I am not answerable for that since 9th December 2011, I think I am entitled to seek that information across the floor of this House, can Mr Speaker, rule on that, please.

875 **Hon. S E Linares:** So the question is what is the ruling from the Speaker?

**Hon. E J Reyes:** The question is, Mr Speaker, can I have then the information of anything that has happened in any of these sites since 9th December 2011? Also my question was because I have worded it a heritage-related site and not exclusively sites or areas of a site that were specifically listed in the Heritage Act, can I have some information pertaining to Parson's Lodge as well?



880 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I have already answered the question. The works related to the area of Parson's Lodge has not got any heritage implications. It was to do with dampness of the place underneath, which is not a heritage site.

885 We did not actually tamper, because, if not, we would have consulted the Heritage Trust and it would have had to go through the DPC, which I can say that Wellington Front and the Convent never went through, but we are going through the DPC and consulting the Heritage Trust. Therefore, what I am saying to the hon. Member is that the works done – and I will give him the information – but it is not related to heritage, it is related to other works that are done in the area which have no heritage implication.

890 For example, I can say that the place where the excavation... the archaeologists that come to do excavations in Gorham's Cave usually stay there the night. They stay at the bottom of Parson's Lodge: they have a place and it was damp – the wall was damp, so that was fixed. That is the works but it did not have any heritage... nothing was touched at the top of Parson's Lodge, so the works are not related to heritage sites as such. That is what I was trying to say to the hon. Member, so I have answered the question.

895 **Mr Speaker:** Is the Hon. Minister saying that he was not in a position to answer that Question because he took that question of Parson's Lodge as being outside the ambit of the Question, but that he is in a position, not today, but to provide the information later. Is that the case?

900 **Hon. S E Linares:** Yes, I do, but it is not answering the specific question. I mean, this is extra information that I am giving. That is why I said if he wants to pose the question I can either do it by him posing another question or me giving him the information. What I am saying is it is not related to heritage.

905 **Mr Speaker:** What does the Hon. Mr Reyes say about that?

**Hon. E J Reyes:** I will gladly receive the information if he has it, Mr Speaker.

910 **Mr Speaker:** Next...

**Hon. J J Netto:** Could I?

**Mr Speaker:** Yes?

915 **Hon. J J Netto:** I would like to ask a supplementary question if I may in relation to Wellington Front, picking up what the Hon. Minister was saying basically was that it is a continuation of the work carried out beforehand by the GSD Government. As far as I can recollect, the work that was carried out was mainly refurbishment of the vaults within Wellington Front. Is that still the case today?

920 **Hon. S E Linares:** Well, Mr Speaker, there are other works that have been done: not only the vaults, the vaults was not part of the works.

925 The works that have been carried out recently are to do with the problems of flooding, which has been traditional to the Wellington Front and therefore what needs to be done there. Infrastructure has been put in place in order to alleviate the flooding and that means that the Technical Services Department is working on having a type of pumps and equipment that will deal with the actual flooding of the whole area, so that is the works that have recently been done.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes?

930 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Yes, Mr Speaker, in relation to the building that is by the pétanque club, could the Hon. Minister say is this a permanent structure, has permission been sought from the Heritage Trust in order to erect a permanent structure there at North Bastion?

935 **Hon. S E Linares:** No, Mr Speaker, the pétanque is a completely different issue, so if the hon. Lady would like to ask me a specific question on the pétanque I will answer it because, again, it is not related to the heritage part of the question that the Hon. Member, Mr Reyes, has asked because it is now going beyond what the questioner has asked me.

940 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, if I may, coming back to the Wellington Front, the Minister said that the work was due to flooding of the place. Is the work being carried out by GJBS or by any other private contractor?

945 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I would not like to say who the contractor is because I am not sure so, therefore, I would be misleading this House, should I give him the company that is doing it. So therefore I would ask the hon. Member if he wants to ask that specific question to put it to the House.

**Mr Speaker:** The Hon. Mr Reyes, does he...

950 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I am grateful sir. Am I getting some information now, which I think the final wording was that the Minister did have some information he was going to pass it on. Am I to wait for that before Mr Speaker says to move on to the next Question or what is happening sir, can you please update me, I am a bit lost at the moment.

955 **Mr Speaker:** I was under the impression that the Hon. Minister was prepared to make that information available in due course. That was my understanding.

**Hon. S E Linares:** Yes, absolutely, Mr Speaker, because it was not part of the Question. I am willing to give him the information but I have not got it here with me now.

960 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Then we agree to disagree because I still maintain that the wording in my question was heritage-related site and not necessarily to those on the schedule there.

Mr Speaker, sir, one of the locations that is actually on the schedule of the Heritage Act is the King's Bastion and I believe some works have had to be undertaken there recently. Is the Minister able to provide us with any information in respect of that location?

965 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I am not aware of any works being done in King's Bastion that I can recall. That answers again the question. So, again I would need notice of that question specifically with King's Bastion.

970 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, the Minister also doubles up as the Chairman of the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority and some of the facilities were recently closed because some works had to be carried out. The advice to public users was that some works were being carried out and nothing else: I do not know under which sort of portfolio he can assist us, but can he please provide some information either as Minister for Heritage, or as Chairman of the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority, what is actually happening at the King's Bastion Leisure Centre – and may I add, as well, allay some fears? Someone says they are constructing new bars or whatever... maybe he is aware of that information.

975 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I am not aware of all that information that the hon. Member is saying.

980 **Hon. E J Reyes:** So, then, Mr Speaker, despite my having given notice of heritage-related sites – and that includes the King's Bastion Centre – the answer is 'no', he is not providing any information across the floor.

985 **Mr Speaker:** The reality is that the Hon. Mr Reyes, you have asked a question related to heritage matters. A fairly detailed answer has been given, you have then raised other matters where the Minister has told you that, in some cases, they do not have implications for heritage, nevertheless he has undertaken to provide you with as much information as possible. Now you are raising the question of King's Bastion, where the hon. Member seems to be aware that there is some work going on there, which the Hon. Minister does not seem to be aware is the case, and which may, in any case, not have any heritage implications. I do not see how we can progress the matter any further.

990 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, but you see the confusion appears to be in the way that the Question has been interpreted. The question is the cost and the work undertaken in any heritage site, it does not necessarily have to be heritage-related work, it is the work on a heritage site, that is the question. Now, the Hon. Minister has interpreted it as heritage related work. That is not the question, it is work on heritage related sites.

1000 **Mr Speaker:** I do not know how the Minister has interpreted it but when I look at it I also notice that he has been asked to confirm that the Gibraltar Heritage Trust was duly consulted. The Gibraltar Heritage Trust are normally consulted on matters which have heritage implications. If that is not the case, then perhaps I am wrong.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Not necessarily, not necessarily you may have work undertaken on a heritage site that requires consultation with the Gibraltar Heritage Trust but it may not be heritage-related work, it

1005 just has an impact on heritage, or it may have an impact on the site, obviously, because the work is being undertaken on the site, but he has asked about work and the question is quite clear, he has asked about works, all works, at any heritage related site. Now we do not want to make a mountain out of a mole hill. That is the question, that is the question. There is no confusion in the question it is the way that the Hon. Minister has interpreted it. If he can provide the information at a future date, we are satisfied with that.

1010 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I might, I think that the question actually creates considerable confusion, for this reason: there may be works ongoing at what is a heritage site – and King’s Bastion Leisure Centre is an area that I think all of us agree is a heritage site – which may not be being carried out by the Government. Hon. Members know that, in fact, they granted concessions in that area to operators of facilities, and operators of facilities may be carrying out works which have absolutely  
1015 no implications for the heritage of the site, where they themselves may have sought either DPC consent, or not required DPC consent, or where they may have consulted with heritage and short of sending a civil servant or the Minister round to each heritage site in Gibraltar to see what may be ongoing there, I think it is actually quite impossible, other than with the generosity of the hon. Member who has answered the question, to say, or to have responsibility for those works.

1020 The hon. Gentleman has asked about what is ongoing at the King’s Bastion Leisure Centre. Those may be works undertaken by one of the landlords of one of the bars there on one of their bars, in other words not on any of the fabric of the place but what is done on their bars. Perhaps if the hon. Gentleman tells us where he says that work is ongoing at the King’s Bastion Leisure Centre, the hon. Member may actually be able to particularly check – because those works may have finished by now – may particularly  
1025 check what those works were and what implications, if any, they had.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, that, with respect, cannot be a reasonable interpretation of this question, for the simple reason the Government is only responsible for Government business to this House. We cannot ask questions about private contractors. They are not responsible for that: the question  
1030 is obviously related to works that are effectively Government approved or Government involvement works, no other work. We cannot expect the Government to be accountable to this House for the work undertaken by a bar privately, by a privately owned bar, and it is not reasonable to interpret the question in that way.

1035 **Mr Speaker:** I get the impression from what I have heard this afternoon that the Hon. Minister has given a *bone fide* answer, based on information that he has.

Matters have been raised by the Hon. Mr Reyes on which the Minister does not appear to have information, but he is not reluctant to look into the matter and see whether he can obtain that information. I do not get the impression that the Minister is avoiding answering matters for some hidden motive or  
1040 other. It is just that he does not seem to have the information because he interpreted the question in a particular way and the ambit of the question has been widened somewhat. I think the Hon. Mr Reyes can refer to whatever other sites he is aware of where there is some work going on, make that information available to the Minister and I think the Minister has undertaken to look into it and provide information.

1045 There will be an opportunity to provide the information later on during this meeting of the House, because we are going to be in session for a few days. Is the Minister satisfied with that?

**Hon. E. J Reyes:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

1050 Yes, like you rightly say, we might be here for a few days. I will wait to see what the Hon. Minister can provide me and then, if need be, I can give him due notice of further questions that I may have arising out of that information. It would save us all a lot of time if he provides me with that information, rather than my duplicating it there, and would work forwards from henceforth.

1055 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, for clarity, the information that he has asked me is to do in relation to Parson’s Lodge, correct? Because there have been other areas that have been mentioned across the Opposition side, not only Parson’s Lodge, Kings Bastion, Pétanque, Convent, Wellington Front... I mean, what I said to the hon. Member is that I will give him – because he pushed me on the Parson’s Lodge issue – that I will give him the information to Parson’s Lodge. I think it is only fair that, should the other Members and himself want further clarifications on *all* the other ones specifically, they can ask the question in another session in this House and I will be happy to give them all the information that they  
1060 seek. Just for clarity’s sake, when I told him that I can give him the Parson’s Lodge information, that is what I offered to this House.

**Mr Speaker:** Next Question.

1065

**Waterport Power Station  
Type, capacity and number of generator engines**

1070 **Clerk:** Question 237, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities please say the type, capacity and number of engines operating from Waterport Power Station during 2012 and 2013, and provide on a monthly basis the megawatts produced (particularly at peak periods of consumer demands)?

1075 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the type, capacity and number of engines operating from Waterport Power Station during 2012 and 2013, has been as follows:

1080 3 x KV12 Mirrlees M3 diesel engines, with an output of 5.2MW each.  
 3 x Caterpillar skid mounted generators, with an output of 1.4MW each.  
 4 x Caterpillar skid mounted generators, with an output of 1MW each.  
 The winter peak in 2012 was 35.1MW. The summer peak in 2012 was 32.8MW.  
 The winter peak for 2013 was 34.2MW

1085 Mr Speaker, I could go on with the energy produced into the Gibraltar grid, which there is a whole chart here, which I should be really reading to this House since it is an oral question, but I am quite happy to pass this information to the hon. Member via photocopy and then it saves me having to read the whole lot! I am willing to do so anyway, so it is up to him, Mr Speaker.

1090 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, I am very grateful to the Minister.

Energy produced into the Gibraltar grid:

2012	Waterport Generated MWh	2013	Waterport generated MWh
JAN	7,684	JAN	5,104
FEB	7,438	FEB	4,506
MAR	7,256	MAR	5,121
APR	5,670	APR	4,616
MAY	7,836		
JUN	7,684		
JUL	8,257		
AUG	8,185		
SEP	7,718		
OCT	8,317		
NOV	7,779		
DEC	7,659		
TOTAL	91,488		

Mr Speaker, I think we can carry on to the next question, if that is OK.

1095 style="text-align: center;">**North Mole Power Station  
Type, capacity and number of generator engines**

**Clerk:** Question 238, the Hon. J J Netto.

1100 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities please say the type, capacity and number of engines at the North Mole Temporary Power Station (connected to the Waterport Power Station) and provide on a monthly basis the megawatts produced (particularly at peak periods of consumer demand) by this temporary station since commencement of operations?

1105 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the North Mole Temporary Power Station is comprised of the following:

5-x T60 Caterpillar Solar skid mounted turbines, with an output of 5MW each

The energy produced in megawatt hours to date is as follows:

1110 December 2012 – 2,392 MWh

January 2013 – 8,176 MWh

February 2013 – 7,644 MWh

March 2013 – 8,116 MWh

1115 April 2013 – 7,756 MWh

The peak power generated into the Gibraltar electricity distribution network from the North Mole temporary Power Plant has been 18MW to date.

1120 **Temporary Power Station at North Mole  
Need for reinforcing high voltage network**

**Clerk:** Question 239, the Hon. J J Netto.

1125 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can I just ask before saying the next Question whether the hon. Gentleman may provide me a copy of the figures of the previous question, so I can have them available, if that is no problem.

1130 **Hon. S E Linares:** No problem, Mr Speaker.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Shall I move on, then, to the next Question?

1135 Mr Speaker, given the recent incorporation of the temporary Power Station at North Mole, could the Hon. Minister with responsibility for Utilities explain if there is a need for reinforcing the high voltage network?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

1140 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, with the commissioning of the North Mole temporary Power Station new high voltage cables were indeed laid between the new site and Waterport Power Station. These new cables have reinforced the high voltage network accordingly.

1145 **Hon. J J Netto:** Right, I take it that what has been reinforced is the connection between the North Mole temporary Power Station and the link to Waterport Power Station. But I think my Question basically was much more wider than that, in the sense of the whole grid. Does the Minister feel that the whole grid needs to be reinforced?

1150 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, it is not whether *I* think that it should be reinforced, it is the technicians themselves who decide what type of distribution network is needed, and therefore they are quite confident that by only laying that cable the distribution of the power is at the voltage that is needed to be done. If not, they would not have done it, I presume.

1155 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I may assist the hon. Gentleman, I think that the answers that he is getting arise from the wording of his question about the high voltage network. Because there is a particularly high voltage that is going to come from where the present temporary Power Station is sited – and where it is very likely that the future power station may be sited – to Waterport Power Station, what is today Waterport Power Station, which is still very likely to be where the distribution network starts.

1160 If he is talking about the whole of the distribution network, then he will have seen that, on a number of occasions when I or the Hon. the Minister for Utilities have spoken about the infrastructure as it is today, then there is certainly a lot of work that is going to be done to that infrastructure, to the distribution network, which is not just high voltage network cables, it is all of the distribution network in Gibraltar, because he may have heard me say that the power cuts we have been experiencing, in particular since the arrival in Gibraltar of the turbines that are at the north end of the North Mole – the north western end of the North Mole – are not related to generating capacity. They are related very often, if not exclusively, to problems with the distribution network, but that is not just the high voltage network but different parts of the distribution network, and what is happening, Mr Speaker, is that the work on that distribution network

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1170 is ongoing work now. It is no longer related to the implementation of the new power station tender programme, although that may require high voltage parts of the network to be upgraded at the same time or in parallel as the whole of the distribution network is in the process of being upgraded, because that is now so aged that a lot of the failures are there.

1175 There is also not just the problem with the *age* of the network but you will also have heard me say that some of the schematic of that network is not entirely up to date. When contractors want to do work in different parts of Gibraltar, they may not have a clear schematic that they are going to go through part of the distribution network and therefore cause a power cut: you will recall that one of the power cuts, I believe in April of last year, which was before the arrival of the turbines, when we did not have the generating capacity, was, nonetheless, caused by a major failure in the distribution network because a contractor went through a cable without knowing it was there – because the schematic was not as it should be.

1180 I hope that assists the hon. Gentleman with understanding why the hon. Gentleman was talking about *that* area in respect of high voltage network alone.

1185 **Hon. J J Netto:** Yes, indeed, Mr Speaker, the Chief Minister's intervention has been quite useful in terms of getting into a much wider picture, which I was trying to get at.

In relation to the upgrading of the distribution network, does the Government have a timeframe as to when the different elements of this are going to take place?

1190 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Can I ask the hon. Gentleman to note that this is an item that will form part of the debate on the Appropriation Bill and that he might have a better opportunity of seeing how we cast the timetable as a result of what he will be told in that debate.

1195 **North Mole temporary Power Station  
EU Directive on Noise Levels**

**Clerk:** Question 240, the Hon. J J Netto

1200 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities please state if there have been occasions in which the engines at the North Mole temporary Power Station have exceeded the EU Directive on noise levels, either on its own or in combination with Waterport Power Station and, if so, could the Hon. Minister say on how many occasions this has happened and for how long?

1205 **Clerk:** Answer the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the EU Directive on Environmental Noise does not apply to noise from industrial emissions. It applies in Gibraltar to noise from traffic.

1210

**Ex-OESCO Power Station  
Type, capacity and number of generator engines**

1215 **Clerk:** Question 241, the Hon. J J Netto.

1220 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities say the type, capacity and number of engines or skids at the ex-OESCO Power Station, and provide on a monthly basis the amount of megawatts produced (particularly at peak period of consumer demand) since December 2011, either by the previous owner or the current ones, into the Government Grid?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

1225 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the type capacity and number of engines operating from the ex-OESCO Power Station is as follows:

3 x KV16 M1 Mirrlees engines, with an output of 5.1MW each (2 units decommissioned, 1 unit under repair)

2 x K6 M1 Mirrlees engines, with an output of 1.8MW and 2.5MW respectively (1.8MW unit decommissioned)

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1 x K8M1 Mirrlees engine, with an output of 2.5MW  
 1 x KV12 M2 Mirrlees engine, with an output of 5.1MW (decommissioned)  
 6 x Caterpillar skid mounted generators, with an output of 1.4MW each.

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Mr Speaker, as I did with the previous Question, if the hon. Member and Mr Speaker allows, I will pass on this information, because I could go on again every single month giving him a figure which he will ask me to pass on – so I will directly pass it on to the hon. Member.

**Energy produced ex-OESCO Power Station into Govt Grid:**

	MWh		MWh
Dec.-11	6,910	Jan.-13	1,669
Jan.-12	7,335	Feb.-13	1,720
Feb.-12	7,660	Mar.-13	2,631
Mar.-12	7,928	Apr.-13	2,781
Apr.-12	8,067		
May-12	5,536		
Jun.-12	5,412		
Jul.-12	5,375		
Aug.-12	4,847		
Sep.-12	5,024		
Oct.-12	5,189		
Nov.-12	4,055		
Dec.-12	2,376		

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**Hon. J J Netto:** I am grateful, Mr Speaker.

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**Hon. S E Linares:** Yes, Mr Speaker, just to add in the information that I am passing over to the hon. Member, in all the information that we are passing over, he has got to realise that, as from December 2011 when we came in, the OESCO Power Station, for example, has been going down and down and down in the production of the megawatts, so much so that in January 2013 it was producing 1.669 MW, as opposed to April 2012, when it was producing 8,067. The same has happened with the other information that I have given the hon. Member.

**Hon. J J Netto:** I am grateful, Mr Speaker.

1250

**Mr Speaker:** Next Question.

1255

**Ex-OESCO Power Station  
 Government's contractual relationship with current operators**

**Clerk:** Question 242, the Hon. J J Netto.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities say what is the contractual relationship between the Government and the current operators of the Ex-OESCO Power Station?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

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**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the current operator of the Ex-OESCO Power Station, Bolaños General Mechanical Engineers, have been contracted by the Gibraltar Mechanical Electrical Services Company, a wholly owned HM Government of Gibraltar company.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** I think perhaps I got a bit confused – if the Hon. Minister could clarify – are we talking about a perfectly private company or is he talking about a different kind of Government-owned company? Which of the two?

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**Hon. S E Linares:** No, Mr Speaker, Bolaños General Mechanical Engineers is a private company that is contracted by GMES, which is the Government wholly-owned company.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, in that context can the Minister for Utilities say what is the unit cost of energy that the Government has to pay to the company for the energy that is being produced?

1280 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I think it is fair to say that we would need, on this side of the House, notice of that question. But, if I can just clarify to the hon. Gentleman, the production of electricity is something that is being done by the owner of the units, which is GMES. So that cost is being borne by the Government. There is a contractual arrangement with Bolaños to operate the units so there is a cost of operation but the units are owned by the Government and the fuelling of the units happens internally. It happens at a GMES level. So I think, with notice, the hon. Gentleman can have the cost per unit but that is not going to give him details of the contract with Bolaños, if that is what he is seeking to obtain, because we are not buying units of electricity from Bolaños.

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1290 **Hon. J J Netto:** I think, Mr Speaker, we are getting confused because the Hon. the Chief Minister is mentioning GMES when I was actually mentioning the ex-OESCO. Now to my understanding if I am wrong, please correct me but we are talking about two different entities.  
Is that –

1295 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Yes, Mr Speaker, but OESCO no longer exists. This is the issue. This is what the hon. Gentleman has explained to him before, OESCO no longer exists.  
OESCO was an operator, the operator and owner of those units under the original contract with the Government. OESCO is now out of the picture; the units are owned by the Government and are owned in GMES. GMES also owns and operates ISGS under the agreement for which the transfer of ISGS was negotiated and GMES was created. In respect of the units at the ex-OESCO facility, that operation is being done by a contract between GMES and Bolaños by Bolaños – but we are not buying units of electricity from Bolaños, as we were buying from OESCO. That is the issue.

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1305 **Mr Speaker:** Any other supplementary? Next Question.

**GMES Power Station  
Type, capacity and number of generator engines**

1310 **Clerk:** Question 243, the Hon. J J Netto.

1315 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities say the type of engine, capacity and number of engines at the ex-ISGS, now known as GMES Power Station, and provide on a monthly basis the amount of megawatts produced (particularly at peak periods of consumer demand) since December 2011 by them into the Government Grid?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

1320 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the type, capacity and number of engines operated from the ex-ISGS, known as GMES Power Station, since 2011 is as follows:

2 x K8 M1 Mirrlees Diesel Engines, with an output of 2MW each.

2 x K8 M2 Mirrlees Diesel Engines, with an output of 2MW each

1 x KV 16 M1 Mirrlees Diesel Engine, with an output of 4.6 MW.

1325 Again, I could go through the whole list but I would rather pass it on to the hon. Member and again emphasise the fact that not only the ex-OESCO Power Station now operated and maintained by Bolaños and owned by GMES, the emissions are very, very low down the South end of Gibraltar due to what is seen in these tables as the lowering of the production of electricity.



**Energy generated into the Government Grid:**

MWh	
DEC -11	223
JAN -12	99
FEB -12	105
MAR -12	12
APR -12	18
MAY -12	30
JUN -12	19
JUL -12	316
AUG -12	1,536
SEP -12	1,213
OCT -12	217
NOV -12	313
DEC -12	1,031
JAN -13	300

1330

**Mr Speaker:** Next Question.

1335

**GMES Power Station  
Government's contractual relationship with current operators**

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**Mr Speaker:** Question 244, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities say what is the contractual relationship between the Government and the current operator known as GMES Power Station?

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**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture Heritage and Youth.

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**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, GMES Power Station runs the ex-MOD Inter-Services Generating Station which was transferred, under the previous Administration, on 1st December 2011 to HM Government of Gibraltar. The arrangement to operate and maintain this power station was between HM Government of Gibraltar and MOD, as detailed in the transfer agreement agreed by the previous Administration, of which he was a Member.

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**Energy International Inc.  
Contractual relationship with Government**

**Clerk:** Question 245, the Hon. J J Netto.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities explain to this House the contractual relationship between the Government and Energy International Inc. for the supply of electricity into the Government grid?

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**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture Heritage and Youth.

**Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, this Question will be answered together with Question 434.

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**Clerk:** We now move on to the Questions to be posed to the Deputy Chief Minister. This will be answered later during the session.

**Mr Speaker:** May I clarify, Question 434 is not being answered just now, is it? (*Interjection by Hon. D A Feetham*)

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**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** No, Mr Speaker, the position of the Government is that 434 is a Question to the Chief Minister and it will be dealt with...

**Mr Speaker:** Therefore, the previous Question and 434 will be answered together by the Chief Minister, okay?

1380

**DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER**

1385

**Development and Planning Commission  
Timeframe for Government projects requiring approval**

**Mr Speaker:** So we are at Question...

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**Clerk:** 410.

**Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. the Deputy Chief Minister say whether the Government has reached a decision on a timeframe for Government projects to require the approval of the Development and Planning Commission in terms more specific than 'sometime during its first term of office'?

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**Clerk:** Answer the Hon. the Deputy Chief Minister.

**Deputy Chief Minister (Hon. Dr J J Garcia):** Mr Speaker, the timeframe for this to happen is linked directly to the new Town Planning Legislation which the Government is presently considering.

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**Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful for the answer, Mr Speaker.

I note that the reform of Town Planning Legislation is a matter that has been raised in the House on a number of previous occasions and I wonder whether perhaps the deputy Chief Minister is in a position to provide us with some kind of update as to how long he expects that process might take?

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**Hon. Dr. J J Garcia:** Mr Speaker, I cannot provide him with an update in terms of how long it is going to take but I can tell him what has happened up to now.

We have considered at a political level two drafts of the Town Planning Legislation. There is a sub-committee made up of the drafter, the Town Planner and myself. There is a meeting of this group again next week and we are very keen to progress the matter but I cannot really tell him when it is going to go through, except that the Government is giving it priority.

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**Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, I am conscious of what the Deputy Chief Minister has very helpfully said and I am grateful for his contribution.

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I am only going to ask, in the hope that there may be some general idea of whether we are talking weeks, months, years, in relation to this process. I am not going to pin him down to a specific timeframe but just a general idea would be very helpful at this juncture.

**Hon. Dr J J Garcia:** I think I can safely say, Mr Speaker, it is not going to be years. It is not going to take as long as that but I would not like to commit myself to weeks or months because I really do not know how long it is going to take. Sometimes you get other things and you have to, sort of, put this to one side. But I know there is a meeting set down for next week where we intend to look at some policy issues in the new legislation and, hopefully, once that meeting is over, we will have a clearer position of how far we have to go.

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1425

**Hon. S M Figueras:** Well, in that case, Mr Speaker, will the Deputy Chief Minister be amenable to a request in writing for an update following that meeting in the next couple of weeks?

**Hon. Dr. J J Garcia:** Mr Speaker, I will be happy to update the hon. Member either in writing if he cares to write to me or, indeed, if he raises the question again at the next meeting of Parliament.

1430

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, Mr Speaker, given the plethora of manifesto commitments in the GSLP / Liberal manifesto, in terms of capital projects, and in the light of the answer that he has given today, does he envisage that most of those projects will, in fact... the decision to proceed with those projects will be kick-started prior to this legislation being introduced, or does he envisage that, in fact, some of those commitments may be tested under this legislation?

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Because of course, the problem here is that he has already said that it is not going to be this year and, assuming that the Government wants to complete its many Government projects on time, it is going to

1440 have to kick-start them quite soon. So the legislation is not going to be this year but, at the earliest, next year. Is it not the case that the majority of those projects that are Government projects will not be tested in accordance with any new legislation?

1445 **Hon. Dr J J Garcia:** Mr Speaker, the answer I gave the hon. Member was that it was not going to take years, not necessarily that it would not happen this year. It may well happen this year, I cannot say at this stage.

1450 Obviously, I think it will be the case that some projects will be tested under the new legislation and others will not. It just depends on the timing of these projects. This is very much the same issue that faced them in Government, when they were confronted with the new Gibraltar Development Plan that came out in 2009, which included already some projects that they had in mind, which they had envisaged, but which had not actually happened. But in our view, I think I can safely say some projects will be tested under the new legislation and others will not, but it is difficult to say which will and which will not.

1455 **Hon. D A Feetham:** So, Mr Speaker, can he confirm, therefore, this is not a case where, effectively, the Government will attempt to proceed with some of these projects in advance of this new legislation to prevent those projects to be tested properly under its stated policy in the manifesto of full planning permission which, no doubt, will be the subject of the legislation when it is introduced to this House.

1460 **Hon. Dr J J Garcia:** Mr Speaker, the policy at present is that projects are going to Planning as soon as they are ready. That is what is happening at the moment.

**Mr Speaker:** Next Question.

1465 **Old Police Barracks block  
Plans for redevelopment**

**Clerk:** Question 411, the Hon. S M Figueras.

1470 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. the Deputy Chief Minister say whether Government has any plans for the development of the area of the old Police Barracks block on Castle Road?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Deputy Chief Minister.

1475 **Deputy Chief Minister (Hon. Dr J J Garcia):** Mr Speaker, a tender for the redevelopment of Police Barracks into residential accommodation was published in the media at the end of last year.

**Mr Speaker:** Next Question. Yes?

1480 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, can the Government or can the Deputy Chief Minister, Mr Speaker, update the House in relation to where we are with that particular tender and those particular plans, please?

1485 **Hon. Dr J J Garcia:** Yes, Mr Speaker, the tender closed at the end of March and the Government is now considering the different submissions.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Can he say how many tenders have been received by the Government in respect of this particular development?

1490 **Hon. Dr J J Garcia:** Mr Speaker, It would be helpful, I think, to the Government on this occasion not to give the number of tenderers. I would be happy to do so privately in the ante-Chamber if he wishes to have the information but it is a situation which arose also when they were in office, where they were faced with a particular number they did not want to disclose.

1495

**TOURISM, COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS,  
PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND THE PORT**

**St Michael's Cave  
Contract works**

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**Clerk:** Question 202, the Hon. D J Bossino.

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**Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism advise the House which companies carried out the works at St. Michael's Cave and whether these went to tender?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

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**Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the following companies carried out the works at St. Michael's Cave – GJBS Limited, with Koda Creative as a sub-contractor; The Gibraltar Electricity Authority; Knightsfield Holdings. These did not go out to tender, as the contractor was GJBS.

1515

**Miami Convention  
Identity and cost of Government delegation**

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**Clerk:** Question 203, the Hon. D J Bossino.

**Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism provide details of who attended the Miami Convention as part of the Gibraltar Government delegation this year, together with a cost of such attendance?

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**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

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**Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport, and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the information requested by the hon. Member is set out in the schedule that I now hand to him.

**SCHEDULE TO QUESTION NO 203/2013**

Miss Edwina O'Mahony of Gibraltar House in London attended the Seatrade Cruise and Shipping Convention in Miami.

The costs were as follows:

Flights	£1679.29
Accommodation	£1014.61
Subsistence	£255.52
Travel expenses	£155.25
Total	£3104.67

Miss O'Mahony represented the Gibraltar Tourist Board on the Medcruise stand and there was no cost for this.

Miss O'Mahony has attended the convention in previous years.

1535

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, may I return just to ask a supplementary in relation to the previous Question, the one about St. Michael's Cave, if that is at all possible. I appreciate your indulgence.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes.

1540 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, Mr Speaker, is the Minister satisfied with the works that have been undertaken to St. Michael's Cave and in particular the frontage which was, in fact, the subject of a photograph in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* on 4th April 2013.

1545 The reason why I ask is there has been a lot of comment publicly by members of the public about this and certainly we do agree with some of the criticisms – with many of the criticisms – that have been made in relation to that particular frontage, that it really is not appropriate – (**A Member:** Aesthetically.) aesthetically pleasing, yes, thank you very much – and certainly not appropriate for that particular site. I just wonder whether, perhaps, the Minister has reconsidered, or considered, some of those criticisms and perhaps thought about revising or asking for further works to be done in order to improve that particular frontage which, quite frankly, does not appear to be what is required? It really is not something that is commensurate with that particular site.

1550 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, has the hon. Gentleman actually been to visit?

1555 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I actually take my dog up the Mediterranean Steps and then I come down via the road outside St. Michael's Cave, so I have, yes.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in that case the hon. Gentleman surely will agree with me that the change to the entrance to St. Michael's Cave is certainly a far cry from the dilapidated and neglected state that it used to be before. I think we can share that across the floor of this House...

1560 It is not for me to obviously counsel the hon. Gentleman on how he asks his questions to me but he needs to be aware that the comments that were made by his supporters on Facebook only served to very much alienate and incense the hard workers of the GTB who spent a lot of time, effort, energy, hard work and dedication on the works that were conducted at St. Michael's Cave.

1565 Whereas he and I may say that perhaps the aesthetic front to the entrance of the cave was not what he or I may have chosen, had the picture been put before me, he has to agree with me that the works inside the cave are magnificent. In the first place, for the first time in our history, there is access to people with disability (*Applause*) so now people with disability can access the cave and enjoy the wonderful concerts and other events that take place in St. Michael's Cave. There is, of course, as well, the widening of the steps in St. Michael's Cave, which has allowed for a much better throughput and thoroughfare of the hundreds of people that come to these events. (*Interjection*)

1570 I am answering his question. He can then of course... I will give way before I finish the answer to the supplementary that he has just asked me.

1575 Also, we have increased the auditorium for 400 seats to 600 seats and the Azamara event was certainly testament to how well received the increase has been. There has also been the lengthening of the steps so that, when people walk in, there is a greater safety distance so all in all, I would say that the works at St. Michael's Cave are 9.5 out of 10 and whereas the aesthetics of the frontage may not have been the one that I personally would have chosen, had I been shown that, I definitely allowed the workers and the people that advise me and do the work for the GTB a full run to be able to exercise their judgements and their professional expertise.

1580 As I say, Mr Speaker, on the basis that we have spent almost, or a little over, £500,000 on much needed embellishments and repairs on St. Michael's Cave, if the only thing that I can be criticised for is the fact that I did not oversee the particular signage that comes just in front of the cave, I am happy to accept that criticism without failing to mention the incredible hard work of the GTB.

1585 Before I finish my answer I will give way, as I promised the hon. Gentleman.

**Mr Speaker:** I will allow another supplementary on this matter because, strictly speaking, we are getting outside the ambit of the Question, but I will allow another supplementary. Yes.

1590 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Not from the Leader of the Opposition...

**Mr Speaker:** We are getting out of... the Question is, which company has carried out the works, whether they went out to tender. That has been answered. You have asked a supplementary, which I have allowed, and I will allow another supplementary and then we move on.

1595 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

1600 Mr Speaker, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism really does not need to take the comments that I made personally. It was not a criticism of him. It was not a criticism of him personally. Indeed, I did prefix my question by the fact I did assume, in my question, that he had not in fact seen that particular frontage, or approved that particular frontage, before the work was actually undertaken. My question to the Hon. Minister was, now that he has seen that particular frontage and, given the criticisms, which I believe are entirely justified – and I do not think that the Hon. the Minister's comments about the comments made by

1605 members of the public, that all those comments are partisan, and neither can I accept that the comments made by so-called supporters of my Party are partisan comments... they are comments based on what is a pretty awful frontage, in the context of, *yes*, the excellent work that the Minister's staff and the rest of this particular company has done on the inside. I was not criticising the work on the inside and I have no hesitation in saying that there has been an improvement to the inside, in the same way as every Government in the history of Gibraltar always improves aspects of our tourist product and I have no hesitation in commending that.

1610 But, the question was, does he, in the light of the fact that he has seen this frontage and that, really, he agrees with me that it is not the frontage he would have chosen, that perhaps he might not go back to GJBS, or whoever it is that is in charge of this, in order to change that frontage because, in my view – and certainly it appears to be his view – it is letting down the rest of the excellent work that the Government has done in relation to this particular site?

1615 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in the first place, simply to say that I welcome the fact that the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition accepts that it is excellent work because it is, in fact, excellent work.

1620 In taking the points that he makes in preface to the supplementary to the question, which I believe is a repetition of the first supplementary, he and I both know that the comments on Facebook were completely partisan. I can remember the names of GSD Executive members who were castigating me personally by name for having allowed that particular atrocity. Yes, if he goes to Gibraltar Politics he will see that there... and it was referred to me and printed for me and, of course, I immediately circulated it to the GTB so that they could see the sort of comments that were being made.

1625 Mr Speaker, if the hon. Gentleman wants me to believe that he was only criticising the frontage but that he thought the works were excellent, he would have prefaced his supplementary by saying 'notwithstanding the excellent work, the frontage is horrible'. But he did not say that, he just said 'the frontage is horrible: are you thinking of doing something about it?' So I cannot accept that as being an *honest* part of his answer and for his comments, which I am afraid I must take issue with, when he said that *all* previous Governments have done work on the Upper Rock, he knows that is a big, big lie.

1630 Let me tell him why it is not true to say –

**Mr Speaker:** On a Point of Order, would he withdraw the word 'lie', please.

**Hon. N F Costa:** I will withdraw the word 'lie', to say that it is not true.

1635 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, there is –

**Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, I withdraw it and I will tell him why –

1640 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, may I, just as a Point of Order –

**Mr Speaker:** Will both Members sit down: both Members sit down.  
Now, on a Point of Order, I categorically ask the Minister to withdraw the word 'lie'.

1645 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, I have done it.

**Mr Speaker:** Then, when he has done that, he is going to continue to answer the supplementary question. So therefore the Leader of the Opposition does not have the floor. Is that clear? The Leader of the Opposition does not have the floor.

1650 The Hon. Minister is going to withdraw the unparliamentary language and then he is going to get on with answering the supplementary, which is the subject at the moment.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I had a Point of Order. If you do not want to listen –

1655 **Mr Speaker:** Do you have a different Point of Order to the question of a 'lie'?

**Hon. D A Feetham:** It is a slightly different Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker:** Okay, what is your Point of Order?

1660 **Hon. D A Feetham:** I did not mention the Upper Rock. I mentioned the 'tourist product', not the Upper Rock. Now, you know, it may assist the hon. Member to recognise –

1665 **Mr Speaker:** Just a moment. That is not a Point of Order, it is a point of fact. It is nothing to do with Standing Orders, it is a point of fact and there are different opinions about fact.  
It is not a Point of Order, so the Hon. the Minister.

1670 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker, if the hon. Gentleman did say the tourist product the point that I was going to make remains exactly the same, which is as follows. He said that all past Governments have improved the tourist product. I will tell him why this is not the case.

If we go back just five financial years, over five financial years there was an allocation of funds of £925,000. We allocated, in one financial year, £1 million and we spent in one financial year almost that £1 million. So it cannot be true to say, Mr Speaker, that his Government, when they were in post, did in fact do a lot to improve the tourist product, when the figures speak for themselves.

1675 And, in order... (*Interjection*) Well, he did ask the supplementary in preference to the... (*Interjection*)

**Mr Speaker:** Minister, may I draw your attention – in my view, the word ‘true’ is also unparliamentary. It may not be... You can use a word like ‘correct’: it may not be ‘accurate’ to say: right... but not ‘true’ or ‘untrue’.

1680 **Hon. N F Costa:** Accurate. And to answer the supplementary question, the matter has been considered at meetings.

1685 **Mr Speaker:** We are going to move on to the next Question, because being the excellent lawyers that they are, they have just been scoring debating points and we are going to get on with the business.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker I have a supplementary that is relevant to the information that the Hon. Minister has, if I may. Thank you.

1690 Mr Speaker, the Hon. Minister mentioned the increase in auditorium capacity. Has there also been an increase in toilet facilities to cater for this?

**Hon. N F Costa:** I do not know the answer to hand, but I can certainly tell the hon. Lady that the toilets are now fit for purpose and before they were not.

1695 **Mr Speaker:** Next Question.

**Clerk:** Question 204, the Hon. D J Bossino.

1700 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism provide details of the Government’s cost of its recent attendance at the FIA WTCC in Morocco?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

1705 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I am slightly confused (*Laughter*) and would request your assistance. I was happy not to ask any supplementaries in relation to Question 202 and then we moved on to 203 when I put the Question, but then I do not think I have been given the opportunity to ask supplementaries in relation to that Question and that is where the confusion lies.

1710 **Mr Speaker:** Yes, yes, so the hon. Member now wishes to ask a supplementary to Question?

**Hon. D J Bossino:** 203 –

**Mr Speaker:** 203. Very well, I will allow that.

1715 **Hon. D J Bossino:** – in respect of which the Hon. Minister handed over a schedule to me.

1720 I note, Mr Speaker, that there was only one attendee, a Miss Edwina O’Mahony of Gibraltar House in London. Is there any reason why the Minister himself did not attend? I understand, Mr Speaker, that the practice, when we were in office, was that the Minister would attend these conferences. I am not sure, I think he did attend the last Miami conference last year when he was already in office and the question to the Minister is simply to ask why it is that he decided not to attend. Was it cost-related or particularly, Mr Speaker, because of the emphasis that he has publicly laid on personal contacts and how he claims that this is bearing fruit?

1725 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I am only surprised that the hon. Gentleman should have asked me the question because he was gracious and generous to come to see me in hospital at the time and he knows that I was unable to fly to Miami. But I will, of course, forgive the question because, as I say, he was very kind to have visited me at the time and I was in fact very touched by the gesture.

1730 As I have said in previous answers, it is not the objective of the Government to attend the event for the very simple reason that business is not conducted during the course of the event and what happens is that Government officials attend the week before, which allows the Government the opportunity to meet face to face with the top executives. Because, on this occasion, I was unable to attend, Mr Nicky Guerrero, the Chief Executive of the GTB and Mr Peter Canessa of Gibraltar House attended on my behalf and visited the very same people that I would have met, had I been able to attend – but that was before the convention, not during.

1735 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I did not forget that... I did not forget that he was, in fact, in hospital but I was not conscious of the dates, to be honest. But I suppose the question which arises is a question of Government policy: maybe he can confirm, and I can glean from his answer, that this is the case, that it is Government policy for the Minister to attend these pre-convention meetings in the future.

1740 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker.

1745 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, obviously the pre-convention meetings will carry a cost. I appreciate perhaps that the question would have to be slightly amended to take account of that cost so that the Minister can provide this answer to the House. I assume that the Minister would have no difficulty in providing that information to the House but is it the case that he has not provided this information because he has specifically answered the question, as specifically posed?

1750 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman is correct.  
The reason for handing him over the schedule that I did, with the cost that I did, was because the Question related on the attendance of the Government to the event. I will have, of course, no difficulty whatsoever in handing over to the hon. Gentleman the costs, if he were to write to me, I will provide it to him immediately.

1755 I would avoid using the phrase ‘pre-convention meetings’. It is not as if there is a convention and there is a format whereby top cruise executives are available to meet. The way it works is that, six months before, we liaise with the top executives and the different cruise companies and therefore make our own personal arrangements in order to be able to meet with them. Everyone always agrees that the best time to go and talk to them is before the convention because, once the convention starts, in fact they go elsewhere because there really is no time to be able to conduct business during the event.

1760

#### **FIA WTCC in Morocco Cost of attendance**

1765

**Clerk:** Question 204, the Hon. D J Bossino.

1770 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism – oh, yes I have posed that question already, yes – provide details of – it was not particularly well phrased – the Government’s costs of its recent attendance at the FIA WTCC in Morocco?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

1775 **Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I now hand over to the hon. Gentleman a schedule with the information requested.



**SCHEDULE TO QUESTION NO 204/2013**

MARRAKECH	£
SUBSISTENCE	1,345.02
HOTEL ACCOMMODATION	2,450.00
TRAVEL EXPENSES	1,970.00
RECEPTION ON STAND	391.00
MISCELLANEOUS	416.35
COURIER COSTS	2,519.28

Further costs detail, in relation to the Chief Minister and his party to this event, are already available on the Government's website.

1780 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I take it from the endorsement at the bottom of the table, where it reads 'Further costs detail, in relation to the Chief Minister and his party to this event, are already available on the Government's website', that what I have been provided does not provide the totality of the Government's cost of attendance at this event and what I would need to do is marry this information with the information which is provided on the website. Is that correct?

1785 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, to clarify, the information that I have provided to the hon. Gentleman relates to *my* party, that is to say myself and the persons from the Tourist Board who attended. The information in respect of the Chief Minister and *his* party are on the Government website.

1790 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Of course Mr Speaker, just as a point of clarification, the Question actually related to the Government's costs, not only in relation to the Hon. Minister's Department. But certainly, as a matter of practice, I do appreciate that there is a Standing Order in place that states that if there is information that is publicly available it is not necessarily to be provided in this House. But I think that the Speaker has said in the past that it would be helpful for Ministers to provide this information in a schedule so that one can have the totality of the information, the instant that I seek it from the hon. Member.

1795 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I think what you have said – and you said it in a manner that the Government has said that it agrees entirely – is that if something is *not* available on the Government website at the time that Questions are being asked then it should be provided here even if subsequently it has been put up on the Government website. But this is information which relates to something that happened some weeks ago and therefore would have been up on the Government website, I assume, for some weeks – and, in fact, it was confirmed to me by the hon. Gentleman that it was – so really it is a question of that being published information which he needs to marry to the information he has been given today.

1800 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, two supplementaries from me in relation to the data that is available on the Government's website. The first is to ask the Hon. Minister whether it is expected that we will go through the list of each individual Minister's expenses to understand who attended the event and therefore what the global cost of the Government's attendance at an event was.

1805 **Hon. Chief Minister:** In answer to the first supplementary, Mr Speaker, the Hon. Minister said who it was who attended apart from him. It was the Chief Minister who attended, apart from him, and he will see there was a public statement at the time, saying that it was his Ministry and me that attended.

1810 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I see and I am grateful. I merely pointed it out because it strikes me that it would perhaps be more useful, if at all possible or practical, if the information in relation to the cost of an event globally were published on the website. I merely say it by way of suggestion as something that the Government may want to consider, moving forward.

1815 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I see and I am grateful. I merely pointed it out because it strikes me that it would perhaps be more useful, if at all possible or practical, if the information in relation to the cost of an event globally were published on the website. I merely say it by way of suggestion as something that the Government may want to consider, moving forward.

1820 However, having had an opportunity to quickly look at the travelling expenses of the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, as published on the website, there seems to be an inconsistency which perhaps he can address for me in that there is a trip to Marrakesh listed as at 4th to 8th April. Are these the same

dates? Is this the same event? Before I proceed, obviously, can the Minister confirm whether this is in respect of the same trip?

1825

**Hon. N F Costa:** Yes.

**Hon. S M Figueras:** Yes, great. Well, in that case, I am merely highlighting the anomaly that the accommodation in the schedule to the answer that the Hon. Minister has very helpfully provided this afternoon, this hotel accommodation is £2,450 and the published information online says that the accommodation is just £400, so there is a slight inconsistency there and there is also an inconsistency in respect of the subsistence as well. Perhaps he could just provide some further details on this.

1830

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, that is because that is the cost of *my* accommodation, the Minister's accommodation.

1835

The schedule that I handed over to the hon. Gentleman, as in the past always, that I have passed over information to the hon. Gentleman, relates to the Minister and his party but on the website, if you read it actually states, cites the Minister, so it is the cost of my accommodation.

1840

**Mr Speaker:** Does the hon. Member... Is that the two supplementaries you have asked?  
The Hon. Mr Bossino...

**Hon. D J Bossino:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I am grateful.

Mr Speaker, if I can quote I think it is the Chief Minister in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* article of 11th April, which reported on this. He said: 'I believe we have reached a very wide audience indeed and that we will see real interest emerging from Morocco in Gibraltar's potential as a tourist, shopping and commercial destination.'

1845

In these circumstances although I appreciate it has only just gone one month I think since the Government attendance, has there been any such expression of interest, given my own area of responsibility and given that I am quoting that particular quote in the tourism sphere following that attendance?

1850

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I am delighted to inform the House that, last week, we received the 1,000th visitor from Morocco availing themselves of the visa waiver programme coming through the land frontier. I think that demonstrates that, in the six to eight weeks that this visa programme – (*Applause*) Thank you – the six to eight weeks that the visa programme has been in place, we have received 1,000 visitors that we would not otherwise have received. In particular, I think that we have not yet started the programme of advertising and promoting Gibraltar to the maximum possible extent, although the attendance at that particular event, which is a very high profile social event in Marrakesh, was one of the things that we have been advised we should be doing and I think is now reaping rewards.

1855

In fact, I am told by the Hon. the Minister for Tourism that, as at midnight last night, we had received 1,144 visitors from the Kingdom of Morocco, availing themselves of the visa waiver programme facilities. I think that, Mr Speaker, demonstrates an extraordinary success on the part of the Minister for Tourism in respect of this particular policy, one which I am delighted hon. Members opposite welcomed at the time that it was introduced by us.

1860

1865

#### **Tourism Fair in China Government attendance**

1870

**Clerk:** Question 205, the Hon. D J Bossino.

**Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism confirm whether the Gibraltar Government attended a tourism or any fair related to any of his other portfolios in China and, if so, who attended together with the costs of such attendance?

1875

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

1880

**Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Yes, Mr Speaker, I am very pleased to confirm that the Chief Executive of the Gibraltar Tourist Board and the Director of Gibraltar House in London very ably represented Gibraltar at the World Travel Market Vision Conference China and the China Outbound Travel and Tourism Market from 8th to 11th

1885 April. I myself was looking forward to attending again. Unfortunately, I was unable to do so but I take the opportunity, once again, to thank the hon. Gentleman for visiting me: I seriously was very touched!

The WTM Vision Conference brought together senior tourism officials and travel professionals from all around China and other parts of the World. The event included a VIP workshop and presentation.

1890 The China Outbound Travel and Tourism Market is the only travel trade B2B event dedicated to outbound travel from China. Many outbound tour operators and corporate travel organisers from China attended, with the Gibraltar stand receiving nearly 300 enquiries at the three-day event. Gibraltar featured in the event's daily newspaper and Nicky Guerrero carried out a short introduction to the destination for Chinese Television.

1895 Gibraltar had its own stand, featuring images of Gibraltar, noting the key attractions. These were written in Chinese, 1,000 brochures were printed for the event, with over 700 distributed. In addition, both delegates had bi-lingual business cards printed. The Visit Gibraltar website continues to be available also in Chinese.

1900 The feedback is that interest in Gibraltar was very strong, as Chinese tourists are seeking new destinations to explore whilst in Europe. Chinese visitors are not looking for beach destinations but require history, heritage and, as a list topper, a quality shopping experience – things, Mr Speaker, that Gibraltar rightly boasts of in abundance.

Much of the outbound tourism market from China remains in the luxury bracket, with most tourists having high levels of disposable income. Gibraltar's product makes it ideal for this market and can be sold as the perfect add-on to a trip to Europe.

1905 The costs for the event are detailed in the schedule that I now hand over to the hon. Gentleman.

**SCHEDULE TO QUESTION NO 205/2013**

**WTM VISION CONFERENCE AND COTTM CHINA - COSTS**

	£
SUBSISTENCE	737.57
HOTEL ACCOMMODATION	2,400.00
FLIGHTS	5,052.00
STAND/SPACE RENTAL	3,145.10
MISCELLANEOUS	862.00

1910 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, just by way of confirmation, can the Minister confirm... I would ask him to confirm that there were two attendees at this event. Is that correct?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker.

1915 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I appreciate that the Minister did not attend personally, although he would have loved to: I am sure that is the case. But, the reports that he has received from these two gentlemen who did attend, are they positive enough to suggest that he will be attending next year? I assume this is an annual event and what is the Government's intention in relation to this event, whether it intends to attend on a future occasion?

1920 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker, the importance of this event was, of course, to start breaking into the Chinese market. We have just spoken across the floor of this House about breaking into the Moroccan market and how we have been able to bring a certain number of visitors to Gibraltar. It will not be as easy to do that with China, of course, not merely because of the length and distance between Gibraltar and China but the reports have been very encouraging so far.

1925 As I said in the answer to the Question, the criteria for Chinese tourists seem to be quality, heritage, history and what they call the 'bragging effect', to be able to say: 'We have been to Europe, but you have not been to Gibraltar. We have!' Also luxury shopping which, again, plenty of that experience in our Main Street. We have been able to establish good contacts already.

1930 Had I been able to attend, I would have, of course, had the chance to perhaps have made some diplomatic contact then. I was unable to do so, but the tourist contacts that have been established, to my mind are good stepping stones, whereas it is the intention, to answer the question of the hon. Gentleman, to attend next year. The point now, and the objective now, is to work on these contacts to see how we can market Gibraltar effectively in a cost effective way and where in China we should be marketing – of

1935 course, given the size of the country – and how, in other words building a marketing strategy to be able to do so and bring Chinese tourists over.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, any...

1940 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Tourism also say whether there is any communication between his Department – certainly himself and other Government Ministers – because it strikes me that China is not only an important market in terms of tourism, but it is obviously an important market in terms of inward investment into Gibraltar in other ways. Can he or somebody on the Opposition benches – sorry, on the Government benches – enlighten us as to whether there is going to be a holistic combined approach to China as a global market of investment to Gibraltar, not necessarily tourism?

1945

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, there is a holistic combined approach to China as a source of investment and tourism on the Government benches.

1950 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Can the Chief Minister perhaps provide us with some further information as to what other areas of investment the Government is looking at in relation to China as a market. We already know that it is being targeted from a tourism point of view. What other areas of investment does the Government hope to attract to Gibraltar from China?

1955

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, it would be premature at this stage to say more but there have been extensive contacts with a number of Chinese entities.

1960

**Tourist sites  
Details of refurbishment programme**

**Clerk:** Question 206, the Hon. D J Bossino.

1965

**Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism advise this House whether the Government intends to continue with its refurbishment programme of tourist sites and if so provide details of what this will comprise?

1970

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port

**Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Yes, Mr Speaker, I can most certainly confirm that the Government intends to continue with its excellent refurbishment programme of tourist sites to make up for the many years in which there have not been.

1975

I will be happy to provide further details (*Applause*) – thank you – once the funding allocation for the proposed improvements has been confirmed after the Budget session.

1980

**Regeneration of Sandy Bay  
Report and tenders for work undertaken**

**Clerk:** Question 207, the Hon. D J Bossino.

1985

**Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism advise whether the works for the regeneration of Sandy Bay went out to tender?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

1990

**Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this Question together with Question 208.

**Clerk:** Question 208, the Hon. J J Netto.

1995 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Government please provide to Parliament a copy of the extensive engineering studies report carried out in relation to the Sandy Bay work, as stated in the Government press release number 291/2013?

2000 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

2005 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the contract for the regeneration works at Sandy Bay has not gone out to tender because of the specialist nature of the works. The project has been awarded to Van Oord (Gibraltar) Limited, who are a major civil engineering contractor with extensive experience in coastal works both locally and internationally.

2010 Following a tender process, the Government engaged a specialist engineering consultant to undertake the necessary engineering studies and provide advice and recommendations on the works required at Sandy Bay up to conceptual design stage. This report has been used by the contractor for the works as the basis for the preparation of the final detailed design. The Government will not provide copies of the highly technical engineering reports as these are for internal use.

2015 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, I do take note of the fact that the Government will not be providing the copy but the reason why I asked my question is that, whilst accepting, on the one hand, that these are, to quote the Government press release, 'extensive engineering studies', it seems to me that those extensive engineering studies will be in line with the environmental issues or environmental information that goes hand in hand in the kind of assessment that the consultant has provided for and my view is that, whilst it contains environmental information, such environmental information should be made public, not just to Members of the Opposition but, indeed, to any member of the public. At the end of the day people – if we follow the European philosophy of providing environmental information – are entitled to find the particular information containing Government contracts or at least where consultants provided these studies for Government. So, in the context of that, I wonder whether the Hon. the Minister will rethink his position and provide a copy to the Opposition?

2025 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in short the answer is that, no, I will not rethink my position, for a very simple reason. The environmental concerns, of course, will be undertaken at the EIA and that is a public document so any environmental concerns he may have would be published in due course so he can take a look at that and then ask any questions he deems appropriate. The engineering studies relating to coastal defences, of course, look at entirely different things.

2030 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I may just make a suggestion to the hon. Gentleman. Can I suggest that he asks Question 209, which deals with a very similar subject, and the information he gets there may assist him in the formulation of further supplementaries on both subjects. I do not know if that is of assistance.

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#### **Works at Sandy Bay Submerged groyne structures**

2040

**Mr Speaker:** Question 209.

**Clerk:** Question 209, the Hon. J J Netto.

2045

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Government say whether the recently announced works to be undertaken at Sandy Bay will include the provision of submerged groyne structures in order to reduce erosion of sand from the beach?

2050 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

2055 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the works at Sandy Bay *will* involve the construction of two curved groynes going out to sea and will be located at each end of the beach. The groynes will be marine structures with a crest height being slightly above mean sea level.

2060 **Hon. J J Netto:** I think, Mr Speaker, that I have seen some sort of visual of these particular groynes actually going out and they are, as I saw them, two sorts of piers which go sort of vertical in this 90 degrees on the edge of the waterfront going out to sea. But my question is a slightly different one to what I was trying to find out from the Minister whether, in addition to those particular two piers going out vertically from the front line of the beach whether there is another submerged groyne lying horizontally towards the edge of the actual beach itself. In other words, what I am trying to find out and perhaps using the opportunity the Chief Minister offered me previously, is whether there is some study being conducted, whether it is being done by the engineers themselves before, or whether it is being done separately, whether there is, sort of, any study being conducted so that, whether they have considered, in addition to those two external piers, a further one lying horizontally submerged in order to avoid the erosion of sand from the beach.

2070 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the question that the hon. Gentleman... is now clear to me. If I read off the advice, the information provided to me by the Technical Services Department, it says that there is the option to construct a submerged break water connecting both ends of the curved groynes to provide greater protection if it is deemed necessary in the future. But their advice to us now is that the curved groynes that are jetting out onto sea will provide sufficient protection.

2075 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. Minister provide that advice to the Opposition?

**Hon. N F Costa:** I just have.

2080 **Hon. J J Netto:** No, no. The advice given to the Government. The full advice?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I have already said in the answer to the first question that he asked me on this subject that it is not appropriate to provide copies of studies. We are just following on the policy that they adopted during the time of the unfortunate rock fall where they said when they sat on this side of the House that to provide copies was not appropriate.

2085 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, I am not asking questions about rock falls. I am talking about questions in relation to the Government project which they have announced. My point of view...

2090 *[Interruption by a mobile phone ringing]*

**A Member of the public:** Sorry.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Shall I sit down and wait for...

2095 **Mr Speaker:** It was a member of the public. I think the mobile phone has been switched off. They have expressed their regrets. Thank you.

2100 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, as I was saying, I am not asking questions about rock falls. I am asking questions about a particular Government project and the point I am trying to labour on is that these are projects which in one way or another impacts on the environment and we are talking about environmental information and I am saying in the context of that, I think that the Opposition and the public in general, are entitled to find out what advice, in terms of studies that have been given to the Government, so that we can make the same assessment or different assessment to the advice that the Government is giving. So my question to him is whether he is willing to provide that advice or not?

2105 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, if I may assist here. The question of what kind of coastal protection is provided in Sandy Bay, I think is certainly being tackled now in a way that was not tackled before. We will recall that about two years ago a considerable amount of sand was placed in Sandy Bay which was washed away the next winter as I had predicted at the time. What is being done now is two groynes, I almost said grains, that is the sand. Mr Speaker, there are two groynes which do not quite go at right angles to the shore. They are actually, in what you describe as a pincer movement and do provide a certain amount of protection from the sea when it comes slightly from the south and slightly from the north. I think what my hon. Friend is saying is that the advice being given is that it may not be necessary to have a submerged groyne but it may become necessary depending on the effect after the first winter or during the first winter and that the option has remained open. So it is not the intention at the moment to do it but depending on the results of the proposals as they are planned at the moment, the decision will be taken as to whether a submerged groyne will be necessary in order to protect the sand further.

2120 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, my question is not what happened two years ago...

**Mr Speaker:** Could I please ask the Hon. Mr Netto. Given that the microphones are directional. I have just noticed that when the Hon. Mr Cortes moved the microphone, the loudness of his voice was considerably enhanced. So would he try to do the same thing. Direct it towards him more closely to see whether it will in fact improve the sound level.

2125 **Hon. J J Netto:** Okay. Thanks very much Mr Speaker. Is that better? Yes. Well Mr Speaker, as I was saying my question is not about what may or may not have happened two years ago. My question is what is happening now. I am talking about an issue where environmental consideration has been taken into account in relation to the project that is going to be undertaken and it may or may not in the future, the Government having to revisit this again to provide a further submerged groyne for avoiding an erosion of sand from the beach. That may not happen. But that has got nothing to do with my question. My question for the fourth, perhaps the fifth time now is, given that we are talking about environmental considerations which are part and parcel of the studies that have been given to the Government, will the Opposition be also entitled to have that environmental information? Yes or no?

2130 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, it is not a question of what may or may not have happened in 2009. It is a question of what did happen then and the sand did go as I predicted, explicitly, in various letters which were not replied to but that is history, Mr Speaker. The question as to whether the environmental information will be provided, I think we are talking about several things. We are talking about a very technical, structural, geological report which my hon. Friend has decided is not appropriate to make public and that is his decision and not mine and the environmental statement which I will be very happy to share with the Opposition. Mr Speaker, it will, in fact, be a public document. So the environmental information can be provided.

2145 **Mr Speaker:** Another supplementary.

**Hon D A Feetham:** Yes. Mr Speaker, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism I think in answer to one of his previous supplementaries or the supplementaries from my colleague Mr Netto, I think said that an EIA had to be conducted. Did I hear that correctly? Does it have to be conducted or has it already been conducted and has been taken into account in the production of a report because it strikes me that if the Government takes a decision to proceed with a particular project, unless...

[*Technical Interruption*]

2155 **Mr Speaker:** We need to stop a moment because there is a technical problem. The most convenient thing I think is to have a short recess. Okay. The House will now recess for a few minutes.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, it is my intention to adjourn the House at 17.55 hrs in any event. We are in the middle of a supplementary. I do not know whether that might make Mr Speaker wish to recess and I can stay until we finish this question even if it is after 6 o'clock, but then I have to leave ...

**Mr Speaker:** So it is your intention to adjourn in a few minutes.

2165 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Exactly. Yes, but I am quite happy to come back if you want to finish with the supplementary ...

**Hon D A Feetham:** I do not mind asking... Well, the problem is Hansard. He understands the question, I do not mind continuing. The problem is of course Hansard. But, I do not mind continuing.

2170 **Mr Speaker:** Since we are very near to this stage when an adjournment was going to be made I now propose that we adjourn to tomorrow at 3.00 p.m. The House will now adjourn to tomorrow at 3.00 p.m.