



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

**MORNING SESSION: 9.20 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.**

**Gibraltar, Thursday, 20th March 2014**

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<i>The House recessed at 1.00 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 3.05 p.m. ....</i>	<i>55</i>

# The Gibraltar Parliament

*The Parliament met at 9.20 a.m.*

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

[ACTING CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENT: P E Martinez Esq *in attendance*]

**PRAYER**  
*Mr Speaker*

## Order of the Day

**Acting Clerk:** (i) Oath of Allegiance.

5

### CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

(ii) Confirmation of Minutes – the Minutes of the last meeting of Parliament, which was held on 20th and 21st February 2014.

10

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

*Mr Speaker signed the Minutes.*

### COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

15

**Acting Clerk:** (iii) Communications from the Chair.

**Mr Speaker:** As hon. Members are aware, it is a requirement, under I think it is section 69 of the Constitution, that the Estimates of Expenditure for the next financial year should be tabled in the House before 30th April. Since the House is not due to meet next month, and in any case following the precedent of last year, when we did not meet in any case for a couple of months because of the refurbishment of the House, I then ruled and I think I should rule now, that the provisions of the Constitution will have been deemed to have been met if the Estimates are circulated to hon. Members before the end of April. Is that agreed?

25

*It was agreed.*

**Acting Clerk:** (iv) Petitions; (v) Announcements; (vi) Papers to be laid; (vii) Reports of Committees.

30

## Questions for Oral Answer

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

#### Q229-230/2014

#### Miami Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention – Gibraltar delegation and costs

**Acting Clerk:** (viii) Answers to Oral Questions. Question 229/2014, the Hon. D J Bossino.

35 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism state, who formed part of the Gibraltar delegation to the Miami Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention?

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

40 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this question together with Question 230.

**Acting Clerk:** Question 230/2014, the Hon. D J Bossino.

45 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism state what the cost of attendance at the Miami Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention was, to include the costs of setting up of the stand if one was set up, and travel – I think there is a word missing there – expenses, broken down into air fares and hotels?

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

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, Gibraltar did not exhibit at the Miami Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention this year. Therefore there was no delegation and no costs.

55 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

#### Q231/2014

#### Cruise companies coming to Gibraltar – Invitations due to Miami Cruise Shipping Convention

**Acting Clerk:** Question 231, the Hon. D J Bossino.

60 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism state how many senior executives from cruise companies have come to Gibraltar since he took office and who these are, together with how many he has invited with their identity following the Miami Cruise Shipping Convention?

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

65 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, since I took Office nine senior executives from cruise companies have come to Gibraltar and they are: Giora Israel, Senior Vice President, Port and Destination Development and Michel Nestour, Vice President, Global Port and Destination Development, EuroMed Region, Carnival Corporation; Emilio Freeman, Director Brand Operations & Destination Delivery, Global Tour Operations for Azamara Club Cruises; Emilio Lopez Puertas, Vice President of Land Operations and On Board Revenue of Pullmantur Cruises; Steven Young, Head of Port Operations & Services Carnival UK; Sara Ciliberto, Shore Excursion Executive, Fleet Operations, Carnival UK; Neil Duncan, General Manager, Marketing & Planning, Thomson and Island Cruises; Jacqui Nobile, Port and Shore Excursions Operations Manager, Thomson & Island Cruises; Matt Grimes, Viking Ocean Cruises; James Buchanan, Manager Shore Excursion, Saga Cruises.

Mr Speaker, since Gibraltar has not attended the Miami Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention, no cruise executives have been invited from this Convention.

80 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I may have misread the Press Release which he issued on 3rd March 2012 – in fact, I was reading it whilst he has been answering the question. The way I interpreted it was that there had been an attendance by the Minister with a delegation and therefore, as he will realise, that has been the premise of the questions which I have posed.

85 But I have re-read it and it appears that what there was, was a prior visit to the Convention but no participation directly by the Government in the Convention – is that the correct understanding, can he confirm that?

90 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker. As the Press Release that was issued on 3rd March makes clear and as the hon. Gentleman has just said now, senior officials and myself went to Miami ahead of the Cruise Shipping Convention for a series of meetings with the cruise company executives.

95 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, the last question which I posed in relation to the Miami Seatrade Cruise Convention related to executives that he has invited. In the Press Release, he also said that he planned to invite senior executives but I think in the answer that he has given is that he has not invited any executives, can he shed some light in relation to that?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, as I said in the original answer to the original question, we have invited since taking office, nine senior executives. As the hon. Gentleman knows, Giora Israel is the top, top in terms of executives of the cruise line world.

100 We have also, as he knows, gone to the UK in addition to Miami to hold meetings with cruise line executives. From the list that I have before me, between 2012 and 2014, together with the Chief Executive of the Tourist Board and Peter Canessa of Gibraltar House and myself, either together or separately, we have held around 33 meetings, and that is apart from the nine executives that have been invited to come to Gibraltar.

**Q232/2014**  
**ITB Travel Fair in Berlin –**  
**Gibraltar delegation and costs**

105 **Acting Clerk:** Question 232, the Hon. D J Bossino.

**Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism state who formed part of the Gibraltar delegation to the ITB Travel Fair in Berlin, together with what the cost of attendance was, to include travel and hotel cost and the cost of the stand, if one was set up?

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

115 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, Tracey Poggio, UK Marketing and Communications for the GTB in London; Stuart Finlayson, Consultant Airline Business Development for the Gibraltar Tourist Board; and Gail Francis-Tiron, Information Manager for the GTB, formed part of the delegation to the ITB Trade Fair in Berlin.

120 The costs of the attendance were as follows: flights – £1,150; hotel – £2,114.28; subsistence – £313.32; travel expenses £272.97; stand space and build cost – £17,101.89; miscellaneous expenses – £667.45; less the participation fees from the co-exhibitors which amounted to £7,500.

Ordinarily I would have handed the hon. Gentleman a schedule. I do not know why they have given it to me in this way, but if he has not had a chance to make a note in writing, I will ask the hon. Lady to make a photocopy for him.

Flights	1150.00
Hotel	2114.28
Subsistence	313.32
Travel Expenses	272.97
Stand Space & Build Costs	17111.89
Miscellaneous Expenses	667.45
Less Participation fees from Co-Exhibitors	-7500.00

125 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Yes, I am grateful for that and I am conscious of the hon. Member's practice and I would welcome a copy of that in schedule format.

Mr Speaker, again I am referring to his Press Release, to another Press Release in relation to this matter, of 5th March where he identifies the ITB Berlin Fair as one which can provide great potential for growth in tourism for Gibraltar, then in the final paragraph he gives the public some statistics, which on the face of it would support that assertion, given the number of attendees.

130 In fact, can I ask him to confirm whether the basis of the assertion is on the grounds of these figures which he has provided in a Press Release and secondly, how in coming to that judgement he compares the ITB Berlin Fair with other potential fairs which could also be providers of potential growth in this area to Gibraltar?

135 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in answer to the hon. Gentleman, to confirm that the figures given in the Press Release did of course show the value of attendance at the Trade Fair. As the Press Release notes, there were more than 174,000 visitors, among these 114,000 are trade visitors and 11,000 are represented companies from 189 countries, so that it is considered to be the leading B2B platform of tourism industry offers.

140 Following the events, I was debriefed on the series of meetings and the contacts that were made. As the hon. Gentleman knows, the main source market continues to be the UK and of course Spain, but there is also tourism that comes from Germany by way of cruise passengers and also from people that are in the Costa del Sol and do come to Gibraltar for the day. So there is great potential in being able to deal directly with those people that instead of coming to the Costa may consider coming directly to Gibraltar and spend more time here and that is the angle that we are considering, which is more a leisure market angle to stay longer in Gibraltar and therefore increase hotel occupancy.

145 But the strategy if you like is more leisure visitors to come to Gibraltar and stay in Gibraltar, rather than come to the Costa del Sol and just come to Gibraltar for the day.

150 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, he has identified the German markets, which is obvious given the location of the fair, but why particularly the German market? I mean we get for example other... Immediately I can think of other northern European visitors who come to Gibraltar and who do visit the Costa del Sol. Is there any sort of empirical statistical evidence that he can provide which would support the conclusion which clearly he has come to in terms of targeting Germany as a particular jurisdiction?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Well, Mr Speaker, two things. In the first place, the reason why I mentioned Germany particularly, one is because it is a particularly important European country, as the hon. Gentleman knows, and it is one of the countries that continue to have disposable income for tourism.

160 Secondly, the fair is held in Germany, so that it is the headquarters of what, I said before, is considered to be, apart from the World Travel Market, the most important trade fair in Europe and that is why I mentioned Germany in particular. Had it been set in France, then I would have mentioned France, but it brings into play, as I said before, the numbers that I was reading out to him, the 114,000 trade visitors from around Europe and the way that the ITB structure allows tourist boards and other companies to be able to meet up with the tour operators, ground handlers, travel agencies and the trade visitors, to be able to start to first create networking opportunities, once you establish those of course, to pursue them.

165 **Hon. D J Bossino:** So in other words, Mr Speaker, it is not that necessarily the German market is being identified; it is just that the location of the fair is in Germany and it attracts individuals from other nations, presumably northern Europe – or as I said, in other words, the 170,000-odd visitors to the trade fair are not exclusively going to be German clearly.

170 So I just wanted to establish that, it is not that the Ministry, his Ministry has identified the Germany market in particular; it just so happens that the location is in Germany and it encompasses other European... I would have thought European nation states.

175 **Hon. N F Costa:** Well, Mr Speaker, just to be clear on my side, it is what I said in the second answer to his... or his first answer to his second supplementary, that Germany is considered to be an important market, but for instance we go to FITUR in Madrid and the World Travel Market in the UK, whereas the main business happens to be either UK based or Spanish based. The reality is that once we are there we do conduct business with – for example, I remember in the World Travel Market in FITUR, we established contact with an Israeli travel company.

180 So like he rightly says, we do meet and seek interest from other European countries, but undoubtedly Germany is an important catchment market because for the reason as I have said before, many do disembark from cruise liner companies, some are in the Costa del Sol and they do travel to Gibraltar for day

185 trips and there is no reason why we cannot sell Gibraltar by itself, as a unique tourist leisure destination and they should consider it separately, and not just as part of a Costa del Sol tour.

**Hon. D J Bossino:** But Mr Speaker, he will recall in answers to the questions he gave me at the initial stages of this Parliament, when he explained the policy of the Government, which was really to carry out a review of the various attendances at these fairs and to see whether it was value for money in effect. And of course, there is a considerable expenditure in relation to this particular fair, for example the stand alone is £17,000 odd, and then there are obviously other expenses.

190 Is that analysis being made by his Ministry as to what the returns are, if any, that they are getting in relation to this? Is there a system, a mechanism in place in order to establish whether it is in fact worthwhile or not?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Well, Mr Speaker, I know that the hon. Gentleman is quite fond of reading my Press Releases, so he will know that the GTB (*Laughter*) has not attended – at least there is one person that is fond of reading them regularly – the GTB has not attended the ITB Berlin Fair since 1992, so we took the decision to start attending that fair again.

200 But he would also recall that during the course of this year, he asked me whether we had attended the London Boat Show and I said that we had not attended, so there was one saving there.

I have also told him today that we did not attend the Seatrade Convention, so there was another saving and we thought that that money could be diverted – I mean, not that money specifically, but because we were making savings in other areas which we did not think were producing any tangible results, we thought that we should now try to spend time in this particular market, to see whether there was any attraction in bringing over German and, as he rightly said before, northern European tourists to Gibraltar. So in other words, what we are saving in one way, we are able to spend in another.

210 **Hon. D J Bossino:** And presumably, Mr Speaker, his Ministry has not reached the conclusion as to whether the ITB Berlin Fair is worth it? In fact, in other words whether it will provide a return in investment, it is still early stages, is that correct?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Yes Mr Speaker, that is exactly correct. From the contacts that were made in ITB, there has already been a delegation that did come from, as a direct result of contacts and meetings being held in Germany. This was only held last month so like he rightly says, it is far too soon to be able to make a cogent analysis of whether we are obtaining any results from the attendants, but that would be something of course that we will be able to evaluate during the course of the year as matters progress.

220 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, one final supplementary. In relation to the attendees, as far as I can see the Minister himself, the hon. Member did not attend. I know that he lays a lot of store in the fact that... in fact, he mentioned in the other Press Release which I have quoted this morning in relation to personal contacts – can he explain why he decided it was not worthwhile he himself attending this fair?

225 **Hon. N F Costa:** Well, because I had been in Miami the week before and I thought that my Gibraltar domestic affairs required some attention.

**Q233/2014**  
**Captain of the Port –**  
**Recruitment progress**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 233, the Hon. D J Bossino.

230 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism state what progress, if any, has been made in connection with the recruitment of the Captain of the Port?

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

235 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Yes Mr Speaker, I am pleased to report that advertisements for the Captain of the Port's position have appeared in two high-profile on-line marine-related recruitment sites.

240 The advertisements closed on 18th March and so far there have been 33 applications. I have a post  
that says that actually since drafting the answer, there are now 36 applications received in total, a large  
proportion of them from applicants which satisfy the advertised personal specification requirements. The  
first tranche of interviews are scheduled to take place in London on 27th and 28th of this month.

245 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, is the Minister able to shed any light as to whether there is any  
possibility of this position being filled by somebody currently locally? Is it possible? I am not sure because  
there may be qualification, I understand that maybe there is discomfort given his expression, but in other  
words, can he state objectively whether there is anybody who is currently locally employed in the Port  
Department who would be unable to apply because of – ? (*Interjections*) Sorry, I know he –

250 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Just sit down and wait until they finish.

**Hon. D J Bossino:** In other words, that there would be a bar because of qualifications is really my  
question that is really an objective question.

255 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman will recall that I think it was in 2012, we had  
discussions as to the qualifications required for Captain of the Port and Marine Officer, and the hon.  
Gentleman is correct in saying that there is a qualification necessary to become a Captain of the Port and  
that would be a Harbour Master. So in that respect, any person who wishes to become the Captain of the  
Gibraltar Port would be required to have that qualification and... Sorry, being a Master Mariner, not a  
Harbour Master, that is the title of the current Captain who was the Harbour Master of the lower Thames in  
260 London before he came to Gibraltar. He would have to be a qualified Master Mariner.

Currently the selection process is being conducted by the Captain of the Port and as such, given that it is  
being conducted by him, and until as he knows, I receive a recommendation on my desk as to the  
recommendation of the Board, I prefer not to make any comment. Save to say that there are minimum  
requirements that have to be met and clearly the Captain would sift out those who do not have them.

265

**Hon. D A Feetham:** As far as he knows, no?

270 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, does he have the information available – if he does not, then that is fine  
but does he know – whether there is anybody locally who meets those requirements? Is he able to answer  
that question?

275 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I may say so, with respect to the hon. Gentleman,  
we are here to answer questions in our capacity as Ministers, of what we know as Ministers. The hon.  
Gentleman's question as to what in your knowledge are the qualifications that individuals in Gibraltar may  
have, I say, with respect to him, is not one that he can reasonably expect us to answer. There may be  
somebody sitting at home somewhere that has never worked in the Port in Gibraltar who may have all the  
qualifications requested in the advertisement and more.

280 Mr Speaker, the Hon. Minister may be able to get up and say, 'Well, I do not know of anyone', or 'I do  
know of some', but that is to try to corral us into an answer which is not something that we are expected to  
know in our capacity as Minister.

So I put it to him that he should simply allow the process of the recruitment of the Captain of the Port to  
run its course. If he finds that there is something that he wishes to criticise at the end of that process, then so  
be it, he can bring it to this House and ask such questions as he may wish to in order to achieve that.

285 But to ask us generally that question is almost to ask us as if to say is there somebody in Gibraltar who  
has the qualifications to be Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom? You know, there might be – there may  
be somebody who has retired to Gibraltar sitting in a sumptuous flat at Queensway Quay who has all those  
qualifications, but it may not be within our knowledge. If it is within our knowledge, what relevance is it if  
the person may or may not apply?

290 The process which Government is responsible for is the application process and he should simply allow  
that to run its course.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I think a lot of what he said, with respect to him, is nonsensical. He  
has not been asked... He has not been asked a question with reference to the population at large. He has  
been asked the question in relation to whether there are applicants within the Port Department, who meet  
295 the requirements... *local* applicants within the Port Department that meet the requirements for this  
particular job. That is all he is asked.

Now, he has also prefixed the question by saying, 'Well, do you know? If you do not know of course,  
then you cannot answer the question', but surely if you... Well, it appears to me that if you have... He has



mentioned 27, I think – (A Member: Thirty-six.) 36, I beg your pardon. If he has 36 applicants, at the very  
300 least he should be able to say whether any of those 36 applicants are local and whether they meet the  
requirements within the advert.

He is shaking his head. Look, in fairness to him, I will wait for his answer. I do not want to make this  
controversial. It is just that the Chief Minister has made some sweeping statements which has forced me to  
stand up, because I just really cannot agree with the way that he has characterised the question of my hon.  
305 Friend, Mr Bossino.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman might like to learn something from the  
Hon. the Chief Minister, namely that the Hon. the Chief Minister has said to his colleague, with respect...  
310 And he has got up trying not to make something controversial and started by saying that everything I have  
said is nonsense. Well, Mr Speaker, that is the sort of behaviour that brings Parliament down to the standard  
of Punch and Judy shows that people frankly feel alienated by and I will not pursue it further.

What we are saying Mr Speaker, is that there is an arm's length process ongoing where people are  
applying for jobs. The hon. Member has told Members opposite, and it appears that despite wanting to  
describe things as nonsense or otherwise, the hon. Gentleman does not actually listen to much, because he  
315 could not even get the figure right – the hon. Gentleman told us there were 36 applicants not 27, he has not  
told us whether any are from within the Department or not from within the Department, and I do not know  
whether his practice when he was a Minister was to be receiving applications as they came in, opening them  
up and start making up his mind for himself as to whether people were qualified or not.

That is not the practise of this Government, Mr Speaker, and therefore if we simply allow the process to  
320 run its course, we will have an objectively dealt with process that the people of this community can have  
faith in, and has been discharged in the appropriate way. (*Banging on desks*)

**Mr Speaker:** I would say that it is perfectly in order for the Minister to be asked whether there are any  
local applicants. Whether they meet the requirements of the advertisement might be much more difficult,  
325 because sometimes people apply and they have got qualifications even from different parts of the world and  
those qualifications have to be examined very, very carefully. With a closing date of 18th March, which  
was only two days ago, the Minister would not be in a position to be able to say categorically that all the  
applicants meet the requirements.

What is proper, however, and I think the Minister if he has the information would be expected to tell  
330 Parliament, is of those, how many are locals – not just Gibraltarians, but how many have applied from  
Gibraltar?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in terms of recruitment process, as I am sure that the House can imagine,  
is always a very sensitive issue. As a result of that, I have very robust systems in place, where the Principal  
335 Secretary or the Chief Executive of the Tourist Board, or in this case the Captain of the Port, deals with the  
selection process at arm's length, and they tell me who they will interview and when, and then I receive a  
page on my desk that tells me who the recommended person to be put in post will be.

Therefore, I really do try to stay as much on the margins of that process as I possibly can, unless a query  
is given to me for whatever reason. But my Principal Secretary came to me yesterday with a list of people  
340 that they are thinking about interviewing on the dates that I gave them in London. I cannot remember the  
number, I think there was a Gibraltarian living in London if I recall correctly, but as I say I will let them  
carry out the process and once they do make their selection, I will receive it in writing from them, from the  
entire Board.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Well, Mr Speaker, thank you very much for that helpful answer. I have to say that  
345 Judy is not a name that particularly suits me very much and quite frankly, I would rather not be called  
Punch.

But Mr Speaker, may I ask the Hon. Minister whether he would be so kind – and I know that he is trying  
to keep the process at an arm's length, I am not asking him to make enquiries in relation to specific names –  
350 but would he be so kind as to go back to his officials and ask his officials, out of the 36 applicants, and out  
of those 36 that meet the requirements – because I understand it, he said as most of them, he did not say all  
of them he said most of them – how many of those are local applicants?

That is the information that quite frankly he has at his disposal and as Mr Speaker has pointed out, it is  
information that we quite properly ask, and would he be so kind as to provide that information by  
355 correspondence by to my hon. Friend Mr Bossino?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, if I understood the request correctly, the hon. Gentleman is asking me for  
the number of applicants who are local. Yes, I will be able to provide that information.

360 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q234/2014**  
**Port and adjacent area –**  
**Holistic management plan**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 234, the Hon. J J Netto.

365

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, does the Government agree with the recent ESG – that is the Environmental Safety Group – statement that the Government needs a holistic management plan to cater for all the new industrial, leisure and housing developments in the Port and its adjacent area, and can the Government state whether they already have one or if they intend to create one?

370

**Acting 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):** Mr Speaker, Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar does agree that in an ideal world not only is a holistic management plan for the Port and the surrounding area desirable, it is essential.

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The sad fact of life, however, is that the previous Administration committed vast areas of the Port estate to non-Port related activity, making a cohesive Port-relevant strategy for the entire area difficult to fulfil. We are of course seeking to ensure a more rational use of the area.

380

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, could I ask the Hon. Minister whether that means that they intend to provide a more holistic plan in relation to either the existing or future industrial activities in the Port area?

385

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, what I mean is that given the previous Administration carved up parts of the Port estate, it is impossible to provide a holistic plan because some parts of the Port estate are not used for Port-related activities.

**SPORTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE AND YOUTH**

**Q235/2014**  
**New fire station –**  
**Commencement of work and location**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 235, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with the responsibility for the City Fire Brigade state when the Government will be starting work on the new fire station and where it will be located?

390

**Acting 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, works for the new fire station will commence as soon as a suitable location is found. We are still in the process of deciding which location best suits the needs of the City Fire Brigade.

395

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister state which are the possible locations the Government is looking at?

400

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, there are about six or seven of them in different places, but we would not like to state which ones they are at this moment in time but we are looking at about six different places and it is to do with the consultation process that we are engaging with the City Fire Brigade itself because we might have six places, but out of the six there might be five that are not suitable.

405

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, will the new fire station be a new build or a refurbishment of an existing building?

410 **Hon. S E Linares:** Again, Mr Speaker, I would prefer a new build, because converting a building into a fire station would be very problematic – but I would not like to be held down to that. But I can say that a new build is definitely preferable.

**Q236/2014**  
**City Fire Brigade audit –**  
**Findings and publication**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 236, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

415 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for the City Fire Brigade, inform this House on the findings of the City Fire Brigade audit and when the report will be published?

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

420 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the answer to this question remains as that of October's Parliament, Question 559/2013.

425 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, yes in Question 559 the Hon. Minister said that the Government had not finished the strategy of implementation of the report's relevant recommendations. What stage is the Government at in relation to formulating this strategy in conjunction with the union? Is it nearly finished? Will we be hearing of the conclusions of the audit within a few weeks, within a few months because the audit was completed over a year ago?

430 **Hon. S E Linares:** Yes, Mr Speaker, and discussions are not only with the union; discussions for obvious reasons have to be with the management as well. Therefore the union and the management have got together and I am not going to be pressurising them as to the timescale in which they finish their strategy. It is up to the professionals and the union itself to decide and it is an ongoing thing. That means they sit down, there is a committee already sitting down together to discuss these issues and they are  
435 working at it and I meet them every one or two months if necessary, to see the progress. Therefore it is not up to me or anyone, to ascertain a timescale as to when these are to be implemented.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, the Minister mentioned progress reports. So where is progress, are they nearly finished?

440 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Lady is pressurising me as to say if it is nearly finished or not. I have just answered her that question, which is simply, I am not going to pressurise them into how long their implementation of different recommendations are going to be. Therefore there might, when I have... It is not a progress report, it is actually meetings, I sit down with them and I ask them 'How are you getting  
445 on? Do you need any support?' It is a supportive and facilitating role that I am putting into the committee, so that is where we are at the present.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** So Mr Speaker, how are they getting on and what support are you providing them with?

450 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I not only provide them with moral and encouraging support and all the other support that needs to be given, if they come to me (*Laughter*) and ask me 'Minister, this is going to need certain things', I will say 'Okay, if you need those things I will see how I can obtain those things for you.' I think it is pretty logical as to how I support them and how I am a facilitator to them in order for them  
455 to fulfil the recommendations.

**Q237/2014**

**John Mackintosh Hall caretaker and night receptionist –  
Advertising and filling posts**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 237, the Hon. E J Reyes.

460 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, further to Question Nos. 135/2014 and 136/2014, is the Minister for Culture now able to say when the positions of caretaker and night receptionist at John Mackintosh Hall will be advertised and by when it is expected that these posts will be filled?

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

465 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the answer to these questions remains as that of February's Parliament, Questions 135/2014 and 136/2014.

470 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, in a previous answer, the Minister had informed me that he hoped that this might be tabled for the Board meeting of March or April and given that we are in the second half of March, can he confirm to me that it is going to be tabled in the meeting and when it will be held? Will it be either March or April?

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, the date for the Board meeting has not been ascertained yet, but I am hoping that it will be before the end of April.

**Q238/2014**

**Heritage sites –  
Works and costs**

475 **Acting Clerk:** Question 238, the Hon. E J Reyes.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Heritage provide details of all works together with respective costs undertaken at any Heritage related site since the answer to Question 138/2014, stating by whom these works were carried out?

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

485 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, further to the answer to Question 138/2014, I now hand over to the hon. Member opposite, the information requested.

**Mr Speaker:** The schedule is fairly long. Would the Hon. Mr Reyes like to ask the next question, please?

**Answer to Question No 238**

Further works undertaken at Heritage sites inclusive of costs and works carried out.

- a) **Site:** South Port Gates/Charles V Wall  
**Works:** Erection of Heras Fencing, pedestrian protection, scaffold and continuous conservation works.  
**Contractor:** GJBS  
**Total Amount:** £ 18,184.17
- b) **Site:** South Port Gates/Charles V Wall  
**Works:** Skip Rental  
**Contractor:** Fill – A - Skip  
**Total Amount:** £ 60.00
- c) **Site:** Palace Gully  
**Works:** Cleaning of the Interior Chamber and fitting of metal gate covering with lock.  
**Contractor:** Environmental Support Services.  
**Total Amount:** £1,400.00
- d) **Site:** South Port Gates/Charles V Wall  
**Works:** Purchase of liquid materials for conservation works.  
**Contractor:** CTS España – Productos y Equipos para la Restauración  
**Total Amount:** EUROS 5553.07
- e) **Site:** South Port Gates/Charles V Wall  
**Works:** Purchase of sand bags  
**Contractor:** Gaggero Cemats  
**Total Amount:** £ 60.00
- f) **Site:** Giralda Gardens  
**Works:** Demolition of hard lime boulder wall, removal of flooring, hiring of equipment.  
**Contractor:** Construction and Maintenance Limited  
**Total Amount:** £ 1892.00

**Q239/2014**

**Europa Sports Grounds –  
Refurbishment for use by Gibraltar Cricket Association in 2014**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 239, the Hon. E J Reyes.

490

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, further to the answer provided to Question 139/2014, can the Minister for Sports and Leisure provide details of what refurbishment works, inclusive of estimated cost, are planned to be carried out at Europa Sports Grounds in order for the Gibraltar Cricket Association to use this facility during their 2014 season?

495

**Acting 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, none. The Gibraltar Cricket Association will be using the same facilities as has been the case for as many years as I can recollect.

500

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, I pose this question because last year the Minister provided this House with information on some works that had been done to help to make better... shall we call it, the actual pitch playing area and also the transfer of some left over artificial turf that they had from the stadium and so on.

505 Given that preparation for the season... Normally associations, and cricket being no exception, would probably ask the Sports and Leisure Authority, 'Can I have this maintenance carried out?' or whatever improvement. I think that the Minister might need to confirm, to avoid any doubt, that there will be no need to carry out any work whatsoever, in fact that the pitch is ready to start to play next week if need be.

510 **Hon. S E Linares:** Well, Mr Speaker, as the hon. Member rightly said, we did do some works there which included doing the crease and therefore there is no need now to do anything else. Not only that, the Cricket Association has not come to the Sports Authority to ask for any repairs or anything. They were quite keen for them to be able to use the pitch which is exactly what we are now saying that they can do. So there is no need for any refurbishment because it was already done.

515 **Hon. E J Reyes:** So Mr Speaker, the Cricket Association has not asked for anything to be carried out and so on. Can the Minister confirm that someone from the Sports and Leisure Authority has actually gone to check that the pitch still remains in a playable condition as at the close of last season, despite the non-use for a few months during the winter season?

520 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, as part of the responsibility of the Sports and Leisure Authority, I would presume and hope that they regularly go up there and have checks like they should do. But I am not privy to whether they have, how many times they have gone or anything like that. The fact is that the Cricket Association, who are the people who have been using it, they have got their pavilion there, they go there regularly and I am very sure that, should there have been any problem, they would have informed the Sports and Leisure Authority if they had not already gone up there to see.

525

**Q238/2014 continued**  
**Heritage sites –**  
**Works and Costs Supplementary questions**

**Mr Speaker:** Does the hon. Member have any supplementary arising from the schedule that was circulated to him before we go on to the next question?

530 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, thank you, Mr Speaker, just a very quick one here. The Minister has provided me the list and the cost. I note that on point d), that particular amount paid is quoted in Euros as opposed to sterling. Probably there is a very logical explanation why, but can I have the reason why, Mr Speaker?

535 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, as I see the item, I know what they used the item for, it was to do with special liquid materials for conservation works which is to do with the St Jago's Arch and therefore they have put it there in Euros. Somebody could have done the conversion but I am sure we got the invoice in Euros and the person who has put it down has put it in Euros. But that is liquid material, it was special material in order to conserve better and work at what is the St Jago's Arch.

540

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, I saw from the site and so on, but my question was because in actually accounting for the estimates, it is all done in sterling and we hope that forever and ever it will always remain in sterling! Although the invoice may have come in Euros for the Treasury Department, I do not think they actually account for it in Euros. Euros must have been bought from sterling and it could make a difference if the exchange rate at the time was purchased at say 1.10 as opposed to 1.20, like we all do when we want to buy Euros for anywhere we may go on holiday in Europe. We take advantage when the rate is good. So perhaps if he does not have it now, at some stage he could sort of give us an approximate sterling conversion to help tally up all the figures.

550 **Hon. S E Linares:** I will do Mr Speaker.

**Q240/2014**  
**New power station –**  
**Four reports**

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

555

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, further to the oral Question 573/2013, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities please provide Parliament with copies of the four reports stated in his answer in relation to the new power station?

560

**Acting 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 four reports which I mentioned in my answer to Question 573/2013 are part and parcel of the tender process which we are still engaged in.

565

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, could the Hon. Minister perhaps remind me when the tender process will finish. I think it finishes this month, I believe it is?

570

**Hon. S E Linares:** Towards the end of April.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Acting Clerk:** Question 241 –

575

**Hon. J J Netto:** May I ask another question?

**Mr Speaker:** A further supplementary? Yes.

580

**Hon. J J Netto:** Is there some particular reason in which one of the reports in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessment that needs to wait until the end of the tender process, or is it one particular report that does not have any impact shall we say, to the tender process itself and therefore the Hon. Minister could perhaps provide me with a copy?

585

**Hon. S E Linares:** The simple answer to that is no, Mr Speaker, because all these reports are part of the tender process and therefore we are not in a position... You are stating that it might be different. No, it is not different. They all go together.

590

**Hon. J J Netto:** Yes, I understand what the Hon. Minister is saying, that they are all together, but is there any particular reason why the Environmental Impact Assessment Report has to be tied in with the other reports, or is it one particular report that can be disentangled between the four and provided to Parliament?

If there is a good reason why it should not be given to Parliament, then fine, but I just do not understand the logic behind why this particular single report, among the four, cannot be provided to Parliament.

595

**Hon. S E Linares:** Well, Mr Speaker, an Environmental Impact Assessment is assessing what is the impact to the environment of the power station that we might be putting in place. Since we do not know which is the one that we are putting in place, pure logic says that we cannot at this stage assess what is the impact to the environment of whatever power station we are putting in place.

600

So trying to make an Environmental Impact Assessment on something that we do not really know yet what we are putting in place because it is going through the tender process, would be something that – I do not know, it is one of those things that the professionals would not advise.

605

**Hon. J J Netto:** So basically what the Hon. Minister is saying is that once a particular company has been successful for the tender, in accordance with the description of the works being carried out, the company will have an Environmental Impact Assessment in relation to the work that they are going to carry out.

Perhaps, Mr Speaker, I could drop it here, because the following question is a similar question but on a different tangent, and perhaps we can make progress in that particular way.

610

**Q241/2014**

**New power station –  
Commencement of works for reclaimed site**

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

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, further to the oral Question 574/2013, can the Hon. Minister with responsibility for Utilities please advise if commencement of the works for the reclaimed site for the new power station has taken place, and if so, when it is envisaged that such works will be finalised?  
615

**Acting 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 answer to this question remains the same as that of my answer to Question 574/2013.  
620

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, in the last answer that the Hon. Minister provided, basically what he said was that the work had not yet started. Is there a particular reason why the work has not started or does the Hon. Minister have a date in mind which he is aware of, when the work will commence?  
625

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

**Hon. J J Netto:** Am I right in saying that the Hon. Minister does not know, has had no discussions with his officials, as to the particular time line of this particular project in which they would have made the Minister aware of when this particular aspect is going to start?  
630

**Hon. S E Linares:** Well, Mr Speaker, as to when it is going to start, it definitely has to start and finish before we procure the power station, or if the power station is going to be there. So I can tell him that officials have come to me giving me sort of like, not specific dates, but sort of a programme – it is not a time-line; it is ‘this has to come first, this goes second, this goes third’, in that manner.  
635

But a time-line is very difficult because it is a very, very big project and if officials committed themselves to a date, then it would be not only the hon. Member who would be pressurising me, but it would be me pressurising them to get on with the work. So I think it would be prudent to say... and that is why I said no, sir, because it would be prudent not to say in this case, how we are getting on because we would also impinge on what is the tender process.  
640

Companies might come and say, ‘we can deliver the power station in 18 months’, ‘we can deliver the power in 24 months’ or ‘we can deliver the power station in 36 months’, so we are not at that stage yet and therefore things are progressing, just all reliant maybe on the tender system.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Member seems to be worried too much about pressure. I think pressure is a good thing. It is good that the Opposition pressures the Government, and it is good that the Minister in turn pressurises officials to get what is indeed a very important project off the ground.  
645

Now the question remains... Whether you want to call it a programme or whether you want to call it a time-line, whatever route you choose to take has dates incorporated into every single milestone either in a programme or in a time-line. The question is, if at the end of the day the Government is going to continue with the reclaimed site, surely both he and the official know what the date is, even if it is an approximate date. What he cannot simply do is stand up here in Parliament and say he has no clue as to when they are going to start the reclamation. Either he does know, or he does not know. What is it?  
650

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I did not say I did not have a clue – that is his words. If he looks at *Hansard*, I never said... I said no, sir, when he asked me whether there was a time-line. The fact is that the time-line will be once the tender has been awarded and that is the time-line. Therefore, once the tender is awarded, it will be up to the company to ascertain how long their machine, whether it is a machine or a generator or whatever it is, they will come to us and say, ‘Right, I am going to put you this type of engine and it will take so much time.’  
660

Therefore what I can say to the hon. Member is that the reclamation has to be ready before that, so this is the time-line that he is asking me. So if he wants a time-line or whatever he wants to call it, like he said, fine okay. It needs to be done right, before the power station, and there is a tender which I have just said that will end at the end of April and that is the time-line. That means, at the end of April, we will get the people and we will have assessed, or at least the technicians will have assessed – not myself, the technicians will have assessed – what type of generating, power generators we are going to put.  
665



At that time then, we will say 'Okay, we need the reclamation – right, let's get on with it.' The reclamation, the type of reclamation is also in the pot. That means do we do so much reclamation, do we do more or less? That is where we are.

670 I am afraid the hon. Member, he can press me as much as he wants, but that is the reality of life, of the tender.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, is it not a fact that regardless who the successful contractor is, at the end of the day there will still be a need to have a reclaimed site? Yes or no?

675 **Hon. S E Linares:** Yes, but it depends on the type.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Fine, let us leave type to one side. Given that I am only asking him a start date and not when or how, does he know when as to the start date?

680 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I might just assist the hon. Gentleman by reminding him of that Shakespearean phrase that there are many more things thought of in philosophies than some things in people's imaginations.

685 The type of reclamation may differ based on the choice of tender. Therefore, one cannot start on a reclamation which may not be the reclamation relevant to the final choice made by the Board that is going to award the tender. Hence why there is no start date for a particular type of reclamation, because the particular type of reclamation is linked to the choice made by the Board.

I hope that assists him in not having to go round in circles anymore.

**Q242/2014**  
**New power station –**  
**Preliminary assessments**

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

690 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, further to Oral Question 575/2013, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities please provide Parliament with copies of preliminary assessments made by the Town Planner prior to the commencement of the EIA, and the detailed assessment carried out by the successful tenderer as stated by the Hon. Minister in his answer?

695 **Acting 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 EIA process has been initiated in respect of the proposal to carry out land reclamation to create the land mass on which it is intended to construct the power station.

700 In respect of the EIA for the land reclamation, the Town Planner has drafted a Scoping Opinion which identifies the matters that need to be assessed as part of the EIA.

705 **Hon. J J Netto:** Yes, Mr Speaker, obviously I agree with the terms of the answer given by the Hon. Minister in terms of what the scope of the Town Planner is. What I am asking him basically is: does Parliament get a copy of this Scoping report?

710 **Hon. S E Linares:** No, Minister... No, Mr Speaker, sorry! No, Mr Speaker, because this is an internal process that the Town Planner does. He is drafting all the things that need to be done within the EIA and that is his remit and we do not... It is not a copy that is a public document or anything like that. It is done within the Planning Department and therefore it is one of the things that is only appertaining to the Planning Department.

715 **Hon. J J Netto:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I agree. It is an internal departmental report and is part of the commencement of the process so that later on it can be developed further. Although it is not a public document *per se*, that does not mean necessarily that Parliament should not be aware of the report if a particular Member of Parliament, of the Opposition asks for it.

720 I just do not see why, despite the fact that it is a departmental report, despite the fact that it is an initial kind of scoping report, that does not preclude *per se* that Parliament should not have a copy of it if a Member of the Opposition asks for it.

**Hon. S E Linares:** No, that is not the case, because once it comes to Parliament, it is a public document and therefore I am not going to go and ask the Town Planner what is his draft Scoping Opinion. This is a professional thing that he does and neither I or anybody gets involved in that. This is the Town Planner's work and therefore I am not in a position to give a copy to anyone of what the Town Planner does.

725

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, this is not a draft; this is basically a Town Planner sitting in front of a particular application, a development which is a Government project – it is not a private sector project – in which he puts forward what are the parameters in which thereafter, following the scoping report, the tenderer has to provide a full EIA report.

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In other words, so we have... not a draft, but setting out what are the parameters for the full EIA report later on. It is a Government project. Therefore, I do not just see why the Government needs to keep the Opposition un-informed of what is basically something of public interest basically.

735

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, the answer to that question is similar to the one I have been telling him previously. The Town Planner does not know yet which type of power station we are going to procure. What he is doing now is scoping, scoping an opinion –

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**Mr Speaker:** Will the Hon. Minister elucidate what is the meaning of the word 'scoping' in this context?

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**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, as I understand, it is that what the Town Planner does: he lists all the issues that need to be looked at once the EIA assessment has to be done. So the way I understand it is that if a successful company says, 'This is the type of power generation that I am going to put in place', the Town Planner then passes...

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Well, you have to fulfil all these requirements which he has already listed, which I am sure he looks at the law, the environment, looks at all planning aspects, all the aspects in order to see what impact the power station that is going to be put in place will have.

755

So like I said, it goes back to, because there are many tenderers out there, we do not know and all he is doing at this stage is doing a list, he is putting down a whole lot of list, a general list, probably covering the scope of all the tenders. So that is the process.

**Mr Speaker:** I am grateful for that.

760

**Hon. S E Linares:** Okay.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** But Mr Speaker, my understanding – and if I am wrong, I am wrong – is precisely in part, not in whole, what the Hon. Minister has said, which is to set out the details or the requirement, be it for an environmental point of view, from a legal point of view, setting out to all the contractors what they have to, they themselves later provide for within their own bids. So that sets the basis and the parameters in which the contractors have to then develop their own full EIA report. This is why I am asking for the scoping report because I would like to know what is that the Town Planning Department sets out in terms of the basis, the details and the legality for contractors to be able to then develop that into their own proposals.

770

**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, it is a very difficult thing for the Town Planner to look forward and think which is the power station, because there are loads of different permutations as to which type of power station you are going to put the generation, there are many types. So therefore it is not a question of me giving him a little list and say look, they have to fulfil this. He will now have to look at what are we talking about, where is it going to be, what type, but then on the basis of that, you have to look specifically at which is the power station.

775

On the basis of that, so I am not in a position to say to the Town Planner, 'Can you give me a list of your Scoping Opinion?' He will say, 'Well, hold on, all I am doing is just preparing a little list so that when it comes, I have already got a little list here but then I have to see which is the type of generating station that we are going to put.' On the basis of that, then he goes on and asks more questions in order for the EIA to be written.

780

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, my understanding is that the Town Planner certainly does not get involved in telling prospective contractors what type of power stations they will subsequently put in their own proposals. That is much later on, something that the Town Planners do not get involved in. What they do get involved in, the Town Planners at the very initial commencement of the process, is to say, 'Here is a tender: whoever wants to apply for it, which is your prerogative, you have got to abide by all these, which are the requirements both from an environmental, from a legal, from a contractual.'

Whatever type of generator is nothing to do with the Town Planner; it is to do with the contractors. So he sets the scenes, then whoever is the successful contractor at the tender stage will then have to provide a full environmental impact assessment which is a different thing to what we are talking about now.

785 So therefore I think if I understood the Hon. Minister, he is confusing the issue about setting out, he is confusing the issue of setting out what are the legal requirements, the departmental requirements against what tenderers have to beforehand tell them what type of power generation it is going to be. A separate issue altogether, I am not even reaching that far. I am just staying right at the beginning which is the scoping report, not what he is saying; this is why I am insisting on that.

790 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I may just assist the hon. Gentleman, because there is confusion creeping in and I do not think it is in the answers, I think it is in the questions.

795 The scoping assessment will be different, based on the result of the tender, because the technology that is proposed may result in different things being – let me use the word so he understands what I mean – different things being in scope.

So, the Town Planners will look at what is proposed when it is proposed, and say with this type of proposal, your EIA... and he says there has to be a full EIA whatever happens. Well, of course there has to be an EIA, but it is the scope of the EIA that the scoping assessment determines.

800 So with a particular type of technology, the scope may lead in one direction and require certain things and with another type of technology, regardless of the fuel being the same perhaps, it may go in another direction. With a type of size, it may go in one direction and with another type of size it may go in another direction.

805 So of course, if you were to say to a Town Planner, 'I am going to have a new power station. Simpliciter. Give me the scoping assessment for this, which will lead to an EIA', the answer is very simple: a full EIA covering every possible type of fuel, every possible type of pollution that may be produced, and every possible permutation for the size of the facility. That I put it to him, Mr Speaker, would not be of any use to the community or to the Parliament.

810 Of course therefore what is happening, and I can now take him to a different type of language so that perhaps he understands it in this way, what is happening is a distillation of the requirements of the EIA once the technology, shape and size of the facility is determined by the Board that is choosing out of all of the tenderers.

815 So therefore, Mr Speaker, he would be in a much better position to ask us about the scoping, post a decision on what type of technology there will be. Then scoping assessment and EIA will be two things that follow very quickly, the scope of the EIA having been determined by that assessment to be done by the Town Planners, after the Board has made a determination of who is the successful tenderer and therefore what technology is to be employed and what shape it is proposed that the new facility will have.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

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**Q243-258/2014**  
**Liquid natural gas (LNG) –**  
**Transportation and storage at Detached Mole; risks to surrounding area**

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

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**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Port state how will the liquid natural gas (LNG) be transported to the Detached Mole?

**Acting 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, I will answer this question together with Questions 244 to 258.

**Acting Clerk:** Question 244, the Hon. J J Netto.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Port state if the LNG is going to be stored in tanks at the Detached Mole, where will the LNG power generators to convert the liquid to gas be located?

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

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state how will the LNG be transported from the storage area at the Detached Mole to the location of the new permanent power station?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 246, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state how much will a pipeline across the North Entry of the Port, for the purpose of transporting the fuel from the Detached Mole to the new permanent Power station, cost?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 247, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state what navigational hazards to the movement of cruise liners arising from the laying of a LNG pipeline across the north entry of the Port have been identified, and by whom?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 248, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state what navigational hazards to the movement of vessels that are not cruise liners into and out of the Port, arising from the laying of an LNG pipeline across the north entry of the Port have been identified and by whom?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 249, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state what, if any, financial impact will result from the anticipated new navigational controls to be introduced on vessels entering the Port of Gibraltar due to the laying of a pipeline from the Detached Mole to the new permanent Power Station and who will absorb such financial burden?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 250, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state how often will the Storage Facility at the Detached Mole require replenishing of LNG due to the expected monthly consumption of the new permanent Power Station?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 251, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state to whom it intends to contract a LNG tanker specifically to meet the needs of replenishing the Storage tanks at the Detached Mole for the needs of the new permanent power station?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 252, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state what will be the 'all in rate' cost to the Government as a result of transporting the LNG to Gibraltar and its further transportation to the new power station, inclusive but not limited to, contract/s, fuel, shipping fees etc, both for the duration of the contract/s and on a monthly basis?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 253, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state from where is the Government of Gibraltar intending to source the LNG requirements to power the new permanent power station?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 254, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state how reliable is our source of LNG and is there a contingency plan if our primary source fails to deliver?

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**Acting Clerk:** Question 255, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Port state whether any risk assessment has been conducted with respect to the impact of a pipeline across the north entry of the port, who conducted that risk

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assessment, what mitigations are required by the risk assessment, what impact such mitigation would have on Port operations and will the Hon. Minister provide Parliament with a copy of such report?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 256, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Government state which industrial entities it envisages operating in the Detached Mole in the next two years, specifying what type of industries they are and who the owners of such entities are?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 257, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Government say if any reports have been carried out to determine the potential risks to developments, housing estates and the Airport runway, due to the proposed new permanent power station and if so, could the Government provide Parliament with all documents in relation to this matter?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 258, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Government state what Environmental, Health and Safety and Fire Prevention measures are being put in place at the Detached Mole in order to guarantee that no accidents are likely to happen by the various industrial activities that currently operate within their own zone boundaries, or from any other activity likely to start in the next two years, and provide Parliament with all relevant reports in this matter?

**Acting 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, all the questions asked by the hon. Member are hypothetical and made as assumptions. Her Majesty's Government is at present in the process of a PIN, which is Priority Information Notice, which will determine how gas supply to the power station will be conducted.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I do not understand how that could possibly be the case. May I refer the hon. Gentleman to Question 257? And the question, of course, the hon. Gentleman has bunched up about 20 questions, giving us the laconic answer that he has given. But Question 257 says 'can the Government say if any reports have been carried out to determine the potential risk to developments, housing estates and the Airport runway, due to the proposed new permanent power station?' That is not hypothetical; it is asking whether any reports have been carried out. Now, the answer must be either yes or no and then obviously, there might be an exchange as to whether it is disclosable or it is not disclosable.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, I think it may have escaped the notice of the Minister that whilst the vast majority of all these questions deal with the LNG supply, Question 257 at first sight does not appear to be the case.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Well, Mr Speaker, you are absolutely right, it does not, but it does deal with a power station which is at the moment not of determinable type and that is the issue. I think the hon. Gentleman is right to ask are there reports etc, but the answer is at the moment, they would be hypothetical reports based on a type of power station that is not yet determined. It is for that reason that I think the hon. Gentleman has given the answer.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, just in relation to that, obviously the Government must have an idea of the type of power station that it envisages will be constructed on this particular site and in relation to those, is there a report or is there not? I mean, we are not seeking to go further at this stage. Are there reports in relation to the safety issues that my hon. Friend Mr Netto has highlighted or are there no reports?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, there are of course a number of reports and the hon. Gentleman will know that there are reports even from the time that they were in office, but not in relation to – and this is the key – the proposed new permanent power station. At the moment, Mr Speaker, the type of power station is not determined and therefore it cannot be about the proposed power station. It can be about many other aspects of siting a power station there that there might be a report, but not about the proposed power station, because at present the power station that will be sited there has not yet been determined, as we have ventilated frequently this morning.

960 **Hon. D A Feetham:** But Mr Speaker, so early in the morning, I really do not want there to be controversy on something where there ought not to be controversy. But he is not answering, he is really not answering with a straight bat, with respect to the Hon. the Chief Minister, because even if you take what he says at its logical conclusion and also at face value, the Government has not yet determined what type, 100% determined what type of power station it is going to build, but it must have an idea of the types of power station that it proposes to build. And in relation to the types, one would have expected a prudent  
965 Government to have conducted reports of this type and it is in relation to the types of proposed power stations, even giving him the latitude that I am prepared to give so late in the lifespan of this particular project it has to be said, are there reports dealing with these particular issues that my hon. Friend Mr Netto highlights?

970 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Ah Mr Speaker, so he now changes his question. He has understood my answer and of course he has understood my answer but he has to clothe everything that he says in aggressive terms and suggests that I am not answering with a straight bat. Mr Speaker, he says he does not like to be called Judy, he does not like to be called Punch, but he keeps shadow boxing. The problem is that he never hits the target. *(Laughter)*

975 The thing is, Mr Speaker, that the question as changed now is capable of a different answer, but we are dealing with the question as it was on the Order Paper. Of the types of power stations that there might be generally as to fuel types etc, are there reports? Well, Mr Speaker, the answer would have been different. The answer that has been given and is correct is about the proposed power station because there is not a proposed power station yet. There will be as soon as the tender is achieved and that is why the answer that  
980 the hon. Gentleman gave was correct.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** He has not answered the question. Are there reports – ?

985 **Mr Speaker:** I wonder if for the future, when Ministers are answering questions and grouping a number of them together, to exercise great care because this particular one, Question 257 could have been answered by the Minister together with the previous ones that he has dealt with this morning on the power station. It might have been more appropriate to have done that. So perhaps they would keep that point in mind and take extra care within the time limitations that they have when grouping answers together.

990 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, may I just say that he has already asked the question and it was in Question 240 where he said ‘further to oral Question 573, can the Minister with responsibility for Utilities please provide the Parliament with copies of the four reports’, so there is already indication that there are four reports. So that is why I put them altogether because the question was answered.

995 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, thank you. I think that illustrates... I think the point that the Hon. the Minister has made now actually confirms the point you have made and that this question might have been better grouped with 240.

1000 **Hon. Sir P R Caruana:** Mr Speaker, understanding that the hon. Members opposite have not yet decided the type of power station that they wish to commission, nevertheless in their deliberations as policy makers and people that have to make this decision in due course, can the hon. Member say whether – I direct the question at the Hon. Minister, can the Hon. Minister say whether – he or the Government or its technical advisors have expressed any concern about – and therefore whether they have or have considered but rejected – the need to have any concern about choosing a gas fired power station on the grounds that, in  
1005 a small enclosed area like Gibraltar, gas may be a more potentially dangerous fuel to store than diesel?

Now the answer to that question may be that is Luddite scientifically, there is no reason to believe that gas is more dangerous than diesel or yes, it has been considered and we think it can be safely accommodated, notwithstanding those dangers. My question is: is somebody addressing the question whether gas is intrinsically unsuitable for a small enclosed locality like Gibraltar or not?

1010 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, if I may say so, that is a very sensible question and of course it is right that there has to be an analysis of those issues and there have been analyses of those issues – not just in relation to North Mole but to other areas as well, because of the volatility of any fuel, and the hon. Gentleman uses the word ‘Luddite’. I think all of us, Luddite or not, have concerns about gas. It is the sort  
1015 of product that one can imagine being explosive in certain circumstances and what are the consequences of that?

Therefore the Government, before embarking on the process of tender, analysed whether or not it was possible to have gas in Gibraltar – and the hon. Member will not recall, he is not old enough and neither am

1020 I, but gas was present in Gibraltar in the past as a fuel used in kitchens and for heating, before we were able to rely on electricity as reliably as it is now possible to rely on electricity.

1025 The Government is satisfied that it is possible to have a gas fired station in Gibraltar, but there are – and this is why type or types is an issue – there are different types of technology that burn gas. You have dual fired engines that can also burn diesel and if you ever burn diesel in those engines then you have got different types of emission concerns and you need different types of flues and chimneys of different heights, which might not be appropriate close to an airport and you have got some that just burn gas and you have got different types of gas burners. He will recall from his time as Chief Minister, that these things required something called HAZOPs – this type of issue requires something called HAZOPs – and the Government has had HAZOPs about the possibilities of using gas and it is satisfied that we can progress down this road.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, if I may come back to the answer given by the Hon. Minister, I think I understood right that they are doing some kind of a PIN report, which he actually went on to describe what the initials stand for, and he then went on to say that report will determine how the gas is transported or how the gas will be implemented or how it will be transported. Can he perhaps elaborate on the kind of report that he was talking about?

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**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, it is not a report. What it is, is that it is called a Priority Information Notice and what it does, it puts out a notice to all out there who are in the gas business, to put in their proposals. That means that you ask all the companies who supply gas, ‘We need gas and therefore can you please tell us how, where and all these issues, can you supply gas to us?’ so that is called a PIN, which is Priority Information Notice. It is not a report.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** But am I right in saying at the end of the day, whatever method is selected as a result of this particular notice, it can only either be transported through the land frontier or through a tanker, there is no other alternative way. Is that correct?

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**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, can I just clarify for the hon. Gentleman, the PIN does not necessarily lead to a selection, right? There may be an intervening process between the PIN and the selection which may be a tender. So he should not jump to that conclusion.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** Fine, I am grateful to the Hon. Chief Minister, but what I am trying to get at is that we are proceeding on the basis that gas, whether it is in liquid form or in gas form, natural gas will be imported into Gibraltar which can either be through a LNG tanker or through the land frontier. Is that correct?

1055 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, without getting in to what will happen, the hon. Gentleman is asking, I dare say hypothetically but for reasons which I can understand, how could it happen. I think it could happen in a number of different ways. It could come in as liquefied natural gas in a bowser by road; it could come in as liquefied natural gas in a tanker by sea; or could come in by pipeline. The pipeline could come from Spain or it could come from North Africa. That is in terms of possibility.

1060 Now in terms of economically viable mechanism, I make no comment until we have received PIN and had an opportunity to consider; but in terms of possibility, those are the possibilities.

And dare I say, Mr Speaker, just for the sake of the record, if we are talking about possibilities, as I was saying earlier, I understand that there is natural gas under the dockyard and therefore it could also be sourced in Gibraltar, but obviously the Government is not looking at fracking in the area of the South District.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, could I ask either the Minister or the Chief Minister as to when is it expected that this particular notice will terminate, in order so that the Government could then assess the different bits being supplied to the Government?

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**Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, the Priority Information Notice is to do with... I think it has got to be by a certain date, 30, 50 days which they give companies to apply in and then after that date they just put in an interest, so it does not need to be all specific details on how and where it is coming from or whatever.

1075 What they do is they say, ‘Hold on, I can bring you gas. I will put my name down’, and then the process from then starts. So it is not... Like the Hon. the Chief Minister has just said, this is like an information notice, let us see out there who can bring gas. Then on the basis of who and how we are going to bring it, there could well be a tender process after that. There could well be.

1080 **Hon. J J Netto:** It does not follow then that there will be a tender process. In other words, if the bids by a number of suppliers provide something which is attractive to the Government in terms of the service, in terms of the cost, etc, does it mean that the Government can then award a particular contractor on the basis of that information?

1085 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, to a great extent, the PINs are in the air now because the power station is not yet selected. So many will be saying, 'Well, we could offer this type, or this type of contract', but of course until we know what you are going to select, we are not able to firm up what we are going to offer you. Electricity is an area where European rules give an element of leeway to Governments, not to go to tenders, even if the usual EU thresholds are met. But a competitor process is one that usually produces a better result in terms of pricing. So if you go to competition, even if you do not have to go to competition, you may get a better price, unless what you are offered directly is so attractive that you wish to take it, and you are within the leeways that are allowed by EU rules, given that this is for the purposes of generating electricity.

1090 And there are a lot of permutations here, so it is not impossible to see that somebody could put a hugely attractive offer but there are many considerations when making a choice in relation to gas, not just price and there is also the possibility if not necessarily the requirement, subject to advice on EU law, of wanting to or having to go to tender. So it is not an area which is as straightforward as others, where you simply say, 'Well, the contract is going to award us so much.' You have got to go to tender.

## HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Q259-261/2014

### Conservation areas – Clearance of vegetation; importation of Partridges

**Acting Clerk:** Question 259, the Hon. J J Netto.

1100 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment please provide a statement to Parliament stating all the areas both in the Upper Rock Nature Reserve, and in all designated European Special Areas of conservations in Gibraltar which, since December 2011, have been subjected to clearance of vegetation, shrubs and bushes which are endemic in this region, providing the dates and places throughout?

1105 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this question together with Questions 260 and 261.

1110 **Acting Clerk:** Question 260, the Hon. J J Netto.

1115 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment please state whether all areas subjected to clearance of vegetation, shrubs and bushes, since December 2011 were, prior to such clearance, the object of an assessment as to the environmental impact such exercise would cause and if so, will the Hon. Minister provide Parliament with all relevant reports?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 261, the Hon. J J Netto.

1120 **Hon. J J Netto:** Can the Minister for the Environment please provide Parliament with all relevant environmental reports in relation to the designated area for the incoming importation of Partridges from Morocco?

1125 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, no areas containing endemic species have been cleared.

The 2005 Upper Rock Nature Reserve Management and Action Plan, together with the 2006 Biodiversity Action Plan, accurately mapped and assessed the vegetation of the Upper Rock and other sites of European importance in Gibraltar.



1130 These reports, which were not heeded by the former Administration, made recommendations for the management of different habitats which included among other measures that are currently being implemented, some clearing and thinning of habitats dominated by maquis. The objectives of clearing areas of maquis are to improve floral diversity and also to provide more open spaces for species such as the Barbary Macaque, the Barbary Partridge and the European Rabbit. The clearance of maquis has been a  
1135 gradual exercise. It should be noted that maquis habitat is not endemic to the region and therefore there has been no removal of endemic habitats in Gibraltar.

To date, clearances carried out after December 2011 have been done so in close consultation with local botanical experts who have carefully assessed the ecological condition of each site prior to any clearance works. All of the cleared areas are potential sites for the release of imported Barbary Partridge, although no  
1140 specific sites have been designated for this purpose to date.

Sites where habitat clearance activities have taken place include Lower and Upper Queen's Road, Governor's Lookout, Bruce's Farm, including the fire break, Jacob's Ladder, the City under Siege area, Hayes Level and Windmill Hill.

1145 **Hon. J J Netto:** I am grateful, Mr Speaker, to the Hon. Minister. I think he said that he had consulted, or at least the Department had consulted with experts in the Botanical Gardens, but can I ask him whether this discussion has also taken place in the Nature Conservancy Council as well?

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I said botanical experts; I did not say the Botanical Gardens. All matters in relation to vegetation and the management of natural areas are discussed with the Nature  
1150 Conservancy Council, either at formal meetings in formal discussions, or in exchange of correspondence, and that includes this, yes.

**Q262/2014**  
**Commonwealth Park –**  
**Costs of creation**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 262, the Hon. J J Netto.

1155 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Environment state what is the current cost of expenditure for the creation of the Commonwealth Park and what will be the expected cost once the park is finished?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1160 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the expenditure at Commonwealth Park will, as we have heard before, be made public on completion of the project.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Is there any particular reason why the Government cannot give what is the actual cost now. Is it a particular administrative problem in being able to ask the officials say, 'Well, so far, on the date  
1165 of today, we have spent so much money'? Is that a problem?

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, the issue has been discussed *ad nauseam* in previous meetings of Parliament. I have nothing further to add to the various explanations that were given by the Chief Minister  
1170 at the time.

**Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, what has been discussed *ad nauseam* in this House was the hon. Member's refusal to provide us with estimates and not ongoing cost. You see, a few months ago, I asked a question in this House in relation to ongoing costs as at the date of that particular question and I had the  
1175 answer given to me.

A couple of months ago I asked a written question because I was not going to be present in the House and the question was further to the original one, what the ongoing costs were as at that date. It was a written question and I had no opportunity to pose a supplementary, but the hon. Member's reply was, 'We will give you all the figures at the end of the process.'

1180 So that is what has been discussed *ad nauseam* – the estimates, not the ongoing costs. There is not, to our minds certainly, any valid reason why the Government cannot provide us with an ongoing tally of the costs being incurred. The only reason we suspect is because they are quite embarrassed how expensive it is going to turn out.

1185 However, that being the case, could the hon. Member please tell this House, why it is, because we have not visited this point yet, why it is that he is not giving us a current tally of the costs of Commonwealth Park?

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I think the two different aspects are actually quite closely related and I think they were discussed at the time.

1190 The information that was given was that in fact, the question related to estimates – I am using my memory now, but the information given was that the costs would be given at the time of completion of the project. At the time of completion of the project they could no longer be estimates. So I think that the two subjects are related.

1195 There is no embarrassment, Mr Speaker, as to the costs of this marvellous project and there will be no embarrassment once the costs are revealed. There are aspects which include the amount of funds that would be provided by a number of bodies which are not Government bodies, which will have a bearing on the final costs and that has not as yet been determined.

1200 **Hon. S M Figueras:** With respect to the Hon. Minister, my recollection tells me that we had the debate in relation to... the discussion rather, in Question Time, in relation to the estimates and the hon. Member's position was that they would not provide us with any estimates.

The month following that, I asked about the ongoing costs and received an answer, Mr Speaker. It was only in a subsequent written question, in a subsequent session, that I was then told that I would be given all the costs at the end of the process. They are two distinct issues.

1205 In relation to the ongoing costs, I acknowledge and recognise that there will be contributions from third parties to the cost of the park, but with respect I suspect my hon. Friend, Mr Netto has asked in the original question is for the ongoing cost of producing the park, not the ongoing cost to the taxpayer once we deduct whatever contributions these third parties may make. Now on that basis, can the Hon. Minister for the Environment tell us what the current cost so far of this project is?

1210 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, the expenditure of Commonwealth Park will be made public on completion of the project.

1215 **Hon. J J Netto:** Can I just ask one more question? Does the Hon. Minister not recognise that what the Opposition is asking is something which can very reasonably be provided by the administration of his Department, if he were to allow them to answer the question?

1220 In other words, you are only not providing us because it is a political decision that you do not want Parliament or the Opposition to know what the current cost is. But it is not on the basis that the administration department cannot produce the figure, because they can. It is just that the Minister has politically told them 'We will not inform the Opposition of what the current cost is.' Is that not true?

1225 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, clearly if a project is ongoing, the civil servants have figures available. I am not denying that, Mr Speaker, what I am saying is that I am not... What I said in my original answer, the costs will be made public on completion of the project and perhaps at that time, the people who will be embarrassed for having asked so repeatedly will in fact be the Opposition and not the Government.

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q263-264/2014**  
**New Harbour Views Bathing Pavilion –**  
**Water quality**

1230 **Acting Clerk:** Question 263, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment state if the quality of the water around the new Harbour Views Bathing Pavilion to be constructed is adequate for bathing and if not, why not?

1235 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, I would have said in jest, not right now because it is probably too cold, but I will refrain from that.

1240 I will answer this question together with Question 264.

**Acting Clerk:** Question 264, the Hon. J J Netto.

1245 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment state if the water around the new Harbour Views Bathing Pavilion to be constructed meets the quality Mandatory Values as set out by the Environment (Quality of Bathing Water) Regulations 2009?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1250 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the Environmental Agency has been monitoring the bathing water quality around the proposed Harbour Views Bathing Pavilion since January 2012. The water has been found adequate for bathing under the Public Health (Quality of Bathing Water) Rules 1992 and the Environment (Quality of Bathing Water) Regulations.

1255 The bathing water quality meets both the mandatory and the stricter guide values cited under the Public Health (Quality of Bathing Water) Rules 1992 and the Annexe of Directive 76/160 concerning the quality of bathing water.

1260 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. Minister confirm whether it is right for us to assume that the waters have complied with all that list of requirements consistently and without fail, for the whole period during which they have been under survey?

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I have no information to the contrary. The information that has been provided to me is that they meet the conditions of the Directive and of local legislation, so I have no reason to doubt that at all.

1265 And we have been monitoring since January 2012 predicting the Government's intention of making it a bathing area, so that we had the information before we committed to so doing. We have been monitoring for two years and we would not have gone down that avenue – it would have been irresponsible for us to go down that avenue – if the water had not been of the correct quality, and therefore we have been monitoring for two years before we opened the bathing pavilion.

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**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, could I ask the Hon. Minister a question, because what I understood from him was that the mandatory values have been met under the conditions of the European Directive. Now, my understanding is that the mandatory values as set out by the Directive have changed very recently, probably in the last couple of months, and could I therefore ask the Minister whether, when he said that we have met the mandatory values, he is speaking in relation to the existing one as seen in our legislation here in Gibraltar, or is he saying the new European mandatory values which perhaps may not have been incorporated within our own local legislation?

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**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Yes, Mr Speaker.

1280 The present waters meet the current regulations which are based on the European Directive and meet both the mandatory and the guide, so they meet both, they tick both boxes. But we have analysed that in relation to how the regulations are going to change for next year, for 2015 and using the figures that we have, they would qualify as 'good', and therefore they do meet the future requirements of the European legislation.

**Q265/2014  
Trees in Gibraltar –  
Number cut or uprooted since December 2011**

1285 **Acting Clerk:** Question 265, the Hon. J J Netto.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment state the number of trees cut or uprooted throughout Gibraltar since December 2011 on a monthly basis, stating both the place and the type of trees?

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**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, other than dead trees, mainly palms affected by the red palm weevil and trees replaced due, for example, to danger caused, a total of 16 trees have been removed. All were properly assessed by experts prior to removal.

1295 During the same period, a total of 303 trees have been planted, not including approximately 140 at Commonwealth Park, making a total of approximately 443 trees planted since December 2011. This represents a net gain, excluding palm trees, of 427 more trees in Gibraltar since December 2011.

Details are provided in the schedule which I now hand over. *(Applause and banging on desks)*

1300 Mr Speaker, the schedule provides I think quite a lot of information which I am sure the Members opposite will find of interest. It lists those trees and it gives a reason for which they have been removed, be they dead or be they had been vandalised, another one was dangerous and so on. So I think it gives quite a lot of information which I am sure the Members opposite will find interesting.

**Answer to Question 265**

This list of cut and uprooted trees has been compiled from work carried out on behalf of the Department of the Environment from December 2011 onwards.

DATE	LOCATION AND TYPE OF TREE(S)	Column1	Column2	Column3
Jan-12	Removal of Eucalyptus Tree at Governors Parade			
Jan-12	Removal of dead Palm Tree adjacent to Admiral's Place entrance gate			
Feb-12	Removal of dead Palm Tree at 12 Scud Hill			
Mar-12	Removal of dead Palm Tree at Bruces Farm			
Apr-12	Removal of dead Palm Tree at Youth Club (What Club?)			
Feb-13	Palm Tree in planter next to No6 Guard House felled by MOD due to infestation of the Red Palm Weevil			
Mar-13	Schinus molle damaged by Vehicle was uprooted and replaced by tree of same species			
Mar-13	Citrus aurantiacum which was vandalized at Main Street was uprooted and replaced by a tree of the same species			
Mar-13	2 Platanus orientalis lost through fungus at Main Street were removed and replaced by trees of the same species			
Mar-13	9 dead Cupressocyparis leylandi at Glacis Estate removed and replaced by trees of the same species			
Mar-13	3 Metrosideros broken by a storm at Eastern Beach were replaced by trees of the same species			
Apr-13	8 dead Canary Palms felled within The Mount gardens			
Apr-13	Dead Canary Palm felled at Paradise Ramp			
Apr-13	Dead Canary Palm felled at Transport Lane			
May-13	Dead Canary Palm felled at Mother Goose Nursery, Queensway Rd			
May-13	Lagunaria in St Paul's School internal patio felled			
Jun-13	Eucalyptus Tree at Landport Ditch felled due to danger of collapsing			
Jul-13	Felling of 2 dead Canary Palms at The Mount			
Sep-13	Removal of 10 small infected Canary Palms at Waterport Terraces promenade which were replaced by shrubs			
Sep-13	Olive tree at The Mount felled as found hazardous. Semi mature Quercus planted			
Oct-13	4 dead Robinia Trees in green area adjacent to Harrington Building removed. 4 Quercus planted			
Nov-13	damaged citrus aurantium at Main Street removed and replaced with same species			
Dec-13	Dead Canary Palm at Central Hall parking area removed			
Feb-14	2 Ceiba speciosa and 1 Arecastrum Palm removed from GASA planter and replanted at Mid Harbours Estate due to works			
Feb-14	2 dead Canary Palms at Sacred Heart School removed			
Feb-14	4 Yuccas, 4 Pepper trees, 1 Ficus Elastica removed at the Coach Park			
Jan/Feb-14	4 pepper trees at No 6 Convent Place felled			

1305 **Mr Speaker:** I suggest we go on with the next question and we will come back to the schedule if the hon. Member feels it necessary?

**Hon. J J Netto:** May I ask a question?

1310 **Mr Speaker:** Yes, by all means.

1315 **Hon. J J Netto:** Notwithstanding obviously that I look forward to look at the schedule which will certainly be of interest to me, can I ask in relation to the 16 trees removed, without necessarily looking at the schedule, do those include the ones cut in Jacob's Ladder?

1320 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** No, Mr Speaker, we cannot confuse the removal of trees in urban areas for which there is a process which is now enshrined in the Environmental Protection (Trees) Act, which we passed at the last sitting of Parliament, **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** *(Banging on desks)* and the clearing of vegetation as legitimate management, in order to improve biodiversity.

The fact is that there was no clear distinction between the two formerly, but not being happy with that, this is why the Environmental Protection (Trees) Act now provides for removal of trees within the Nature Reserve and within the Botanic Gardens, provided it is done with the authority of the Government which is an authority that has been vested with the managers of those areas.

1325 Therefore, it is a completely different principle: one thing is specific trees in a largely urban setting and the other one is the management of vegetation which, sadly, because of the lack of management in years gone by, the vegetation of Gibraltar has developed into very thick *matorral* or maquis which has led to the drop in population which so concerns the Members opposite of the Barbary Partridge – so concerns them now, so I am sure that they are very pleased that we have been able to separate the two so that the

1330 management of urban trees in one setting is determined by one set of rules and the management of habitat, so we can improve it for nature, as I know they will welcome, is in another set of rules.

So it does not include those because it is not relevant, Mr Speaker.

1335 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, going back to my question, my question does not separate urban or rural. My question says 'in Gibraltar'. In other words, can I therefore ask whether the actual information answers the question or is he drawing an inference which is not drawn from by the original question?

1340 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** No, Mr Speaker, I am sorry, the Member opposite does not seem to understand the basic principles that I am referring to. If you are managing a wild site in a nature reserve anywhere in the world and you have an onset of scrub vegetation which are not generally trees of a large size, they could be but we are talking about shrubs, and you remove them as part of management, you do not go round counting how many shrubs or small trees you have removed, because you have (a) the scientific basis to do it; (b) the permission to do it and therefore you are actually treating it as one whole area of habitat.

1345 The implication in what the Member opposite is saying is that somehow the Department of the Environment has done wrong in clearing vegetation in order to improve the habitat for the Barbary Partridge. That is the implication in what he is saying.

1350 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, may I read the question to the hon. Gentleman because it is not the question. He said, the question is: 'Can the Minister state the number of trees cut or uprooted throughout Gibraltar since December 2011?' That is the question. You have gone off at a tangent in relation to the Upper Rock and shrubs and shrubbery and what not, but that is not the question. Now, does he have the information to answer that question?

1355 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I am sorry, the Opposition is showing – and if this word is one I cannot use in Parliament, put it down to my relative inexperience, although I have already sat in Parliament many more times than if I had been in four terms in another Administration – (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) (*Banging on desks*)

1360 What the Opposition is demonstrating is an absolute ignorance, I do not know whether I can use that term, of the principles of managing natural habitat. If you clear an area of maquis, you do not go round counting how many constituent trees or shrubs and decide whether if it is this high, (*Interjection*) whether it is a shrub and that high, whether it is a tree. You do not do that. Mr Speaker, you cannot tell! You cannot tell! You cannot tell (*Interjection*) how many shrubs there are in an area of *matorral* – Mr Speaker – (*Interjection*) No, sorry, Mr Speaker, the natural progression, the logical progression (*Interjection*) – of the Members opposite – I am not giving way, Mr Speaker –

1365

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, will the Hon. Minister –

**Hon. D A Feetham:** A point or order.

1370 **Mr Speaker:** Now, what is the Standing Order that you are referring to?

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I am referring to the Standing Order that says that Government Ministers ought to answer the question that is asked, not a different question. Now that must be within the rules of Parliament – otherwise, Mr Speaker, there would not be any point in questions and answers.

1375 The question relates to – and there may be a confusion here, it does not relate to shrubbery, it does not relate to management of the Upper Rock, or anything of the sort. Look, the question is very clear, 'Can the Minister state the number of trees cut or uprooted throughout Gibraltar, since December 2011, on a monthly basis, stating the place and type of trees?'

1380 **Mr Speaker:** You have got the schedule: the information is contained in the schedule. (**Hon. J J Netto:** No –) It is not in the schedule?

**Hon. J J Netto:** No, Mr Speaker, I have asked. (*Interjections*) I asked the Hon. Minister in a supplementary question –

1385

**Mr Speaker:** One at a time –

**Hon. J J Netto:** Sorry?

1390 **Mr Speaker:** The Minister had the floor when –

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, on the Point of Order, the question has been answered. The Opposition has not understood the answer or my explanation given in regard to the supplementary (*Interjection*) and by pressing that point, all they are showing is their absolute lack of knowledge on the management of natural habitats and I am absolutely, absolutely scared, just to realise that there are people who were Ministers of the Environment, who do not understand the basic difference between urban trees and the criteria one uses to manage urban trees, which is the answer I have given and the management of habitat, an area of vegetation where you do not go round counting the number of trees deciding whether one is a tree or a shrub because it is a bit bigger or a bit wider.

Mr Speaker, if you were to take what they are saying to the logical extent, you would require, before you cleared any area for their now beloved Barbary Partridge, to go round counting every single shrub or tree, determining whether it was this high, this high or that high, is this a tree or not a tree, well, by the time you get that done, those alleged seven Barbary Partridges, which clearly there are more, would be gone, done and dusted.

Mr Speaker, it is a ridiculous line of argument, absolutely ridiculous with no scientific basis and it is terrifying to see the calibre of environmental knowledge the Opposition has. (*Banging on desks*)

**Mr Speaker:** The Hon. Mr Netto. (*Interjections*) The Hon. Mr Netto had the floor and he wanted to ask a supplementary – may I?

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, I will allow the hon. –

**Mr Speaker:** Very well.

**Hon. Sir P R Caruana:** Mr Speaker, I wonder if the Hon. Minister will just humour me for a while.

I have no difficulty, there is no need for him to accuse me of being ignorant about the management of urban and that, because I plead, I admit it openly it is not something that I have ever dedicated myself to.

But does the hon. Member not accept from me that – the question was ‘the number of trees that have been cut down in Gibraltar’ – somebody might be interested in knowing that, regardless of the fact that he was completely ignorant about the difference between the criteria that should properly be applied in chopping down trees in an urban environment and the quite different criteria which he is now alluding to, that would inform exactly the same practice in the management of the environmental vegetation, the flora in the upper town ridge? I have no difficulty accepting that.

All of this, it seems to me, if the hon. Member does not mind me asking him, derives from the fact that the supplementary that my learned friend Mr Netto asked him was, given that the distinction that he was pointing out to the House about the difference in criteria – which I have no doubt is very sensible – between the criteria to be applied in chopping down a tree in Main Street or even in the back yard of No. 6 Convent Place, and the criteria to be applied in chopping down a tree in the Upper Rock, whether in giving a list of the trees that had been cut down in Gibraltar, which is set out in the schedule, that includes trees both in the Upper Town in the urban environment and in the non-urban environment, regardless of the fact that both those things may well be driven by different criteria.

The answer is no, the trees in the Upper Rock are not included there because they are driven by another criteria, or yes despite the fact that they are driven by another criteria, the list does contain the Upper Rock. I mean, it is evident from the list that there are no trees in the Upper Rock, they are all in the urban environment, but of course that still leaves open the possibility that no trees may have been cut in the Upper Rock.

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** I am grateful to the hon. Member for those comments and in fact for referring to those rotten trees in No. 6 which he will recall he had made several requests during his time as Chief Minister to have them removed and they were only removed very recently. So thank you for giving me that opportunity to point that out.

The trees within the nature reserve are not specifically counted because it is very hard to determine whether we are talking about trees or shrubs and it is not relevant whether they are or not.

**Hon. Sir P R Caruana:** So, that is clear now then. There may be trees that have been cut down, there may or may not be trees that have been cut down in the Upper Rock, but they are not counted in this list, or anywhere else, because they are difficult to distinguish from shrubs.

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** And Mr Speaker, the argument is not relevant in the context that a tree in an urban area is.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q266-269/2014**

**Barbary Macaques –**

**Number confined prior to export; number of packs; noise makers**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 266, the Hon. J J Netto.

1455 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment state how many Barbary Macaques have now been held in confinement prior to being exported to another country?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1460 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this question together with Questions 267, 268 and 269.

**Acting Clerk:** Question 267, the Hon. J J Netto.

1465 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment state which country will receive the Barbary Macaques which are being held in confinement and when this is scheduled to happen?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 268, the Hon. J J Netto.

1470 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment state how many packs of Barbary Macaque exist at the moment, stating the numbers per pack and location of their habitats?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 269, the Hon. J J Netto.

1475 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. the Minister for the Environment provide a definitive answer in relation to the noise makers bought in Spain, for the purpose of frightening the Barbary Macaques up to the Nature Reserve, as to whether they abide by European Legislation?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1480 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, no Barbary Macaques are being held in confinement for purposes of exportation. There is an agreement with the receiving organisation that their identity will not be revealed until the receiving facilities are completed. A date has not yet been set.

Details with reference to Question 268 are provided in the schedule that I now hand over.

1485 Approximate numbers are given in the schedule provided. These are now being reviewed on a continuous basis, in order to obtain more accurate figures. It is always difficult to estimate the population of wild animals, especially when they frequent inaccessible areas, so that there is a margin of error which may be – and I am not committing to this number exactly – 25.

1490 Additional human resources now mean that more accurate figures will be collected in the future. It is planned to have the first full census in many years, this summer with the support of researchers from Notre Dame University.

1495 Regarding the fire crackers, I wrote to the hon. Member opposite on 18th February 2014 on this matter. The suppliers have informed the Department of the Environment that the noise makers which were bought from an authorised pyrotechnic vendor conform to EU standards and, as I explained in the letter, we are seeking independent verification.

**ANSWER TO QUESTION 269**

**Answer to Question 268**

There are five source groups of Barbary Macaques some of which are subdivided with more or less contact with the original site.

Approx Number of Barbary Macaques in each pack	Locations
1. 35	1 Royal Anglian Way – St Michaels, Jew's Gate, Mount Area, Loreto School, Short Horn, Europa Advance.
2. 67	2 Prince Philip's Arch, Cable Car.
3. 54	3 Middle Hill, MOD Rock Gun area, Galleries, Caleta village, Devils Tower Road, Laguna Estate, the jungle, Casemates, Emil's Hostel, Line Wall Road, Regal House, Turnbull's Lane & Moorish Castle Estate.
4. 35	4 Apes' Den, Devil's Gap, Trafalgar & Southern Main Street.
5. 12	5 Farringdon's, Tower of Homage & Moorish Castle.

1500 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, in relation to the first answer provided by the Hon. Minister, Question 265... No, sorry, I beg your pardon Question 266, perhaps the word 'confinement' may have led the Minister to respond in his answer to say there is no confinement. Now I understood from this particular issue, from a statement made by the Hon. Minister in the past in Parliament, that a group of Macaques were going to be sort of placed in some kind of... I do not know, caged or words to that effect, so perhaps the word 'confined' may have... the use of that word may have drafted an answer. So perhaps if he could explain to the House whether there is in fact some particular Macaques who are already in cages or whatever.

1510 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** No Mr Speaker, I took it in the spirit that it was meant and I have answered without hiding anything. There are no Macaques that are currently being held in any way in captivity which are due to go to an external location. We have to start doing it with enough time before the exportation, but not with too much time, so we are still playing with exact dates. But at the moment, there are none in captivity for that purpose.

1515 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, in terms of exportation, I know the Minister does not want to get into the details of the particular country, that is fine we can leave it to one side, but can I ask the Hon. Minister whether the agreement that surely the Department will be signing on with the relevant authorities in that particular country, does it take it so far as to having a settlement programme for the Macaques in that particular country long after the leaving of the Macaques in that particular region?

1520 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** The Macaques will pass into the responsibility of the receiving organisation once they are handed over on their home ground, but members of the Department of the Environment will be travelling to the site both before and after, in order to ensure that all is well.

1525 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, moving on to the last answer provided by the Hon. Minister, which is Question 269, it is correct that he did write to me to state that the supplier of the fire crackers have stated that they do conform to the EU legislation. However, as he rightly pointed out now, the Department is seeking independent verification. Is that independent verification based on advice from the AG's Chamber?

1530 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, we are seeking legal advice to ensure that the noise makers, as specified by the supplier, do in fact conform with our initial information which I gave when I was asked previously was that it did but the question was raised and we sought more details from the supplier, and we are now seeking independent legal verification that it is correct.

In the meantime Mr Speaker, we are not currently using those noise makers.



1535 **Hon. J J Netto:** Would it be possible... Can I ask the Minister, will it be possible to share that information with the Opposition?

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I have no problem whatsoever with that.

1540 **Hon. E J Reyes:** May I, Mr Speaker, ask the Minister – he might be able to enlighten me – in the schedule he has given in respect of the answer to Question 268, I have been trying to see... I declare a vested interest, Mr Speaker, I have had very close family members being personally attacked by the Macaques along Gardener's Road, especially when it comes to my granddaughters who have had the shock of their lives, having had simple items they were carrying in their hands and so on, snatched out of them. I  
1545 am trying to find out from this schedule where those apes, or those Macaques probably come from and I am divided whether they pertain to those under number 1, because it seems they could either come down from the Shorthorn area or are they those from number 4, the Trafalgar and Southern End, because the Rock Hotel and Gardiner's Road is a well-known area for these Macaques, especially, they have got some young ones now and at times it is quite scary. I have personally been sat in that car for over half an hour, trying to  
1550 see if they will go away and without much assistance from the authorities when I have tried to contact someone to help me get home with my granddaughters.

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity once again being given to me by the Opposition and I know that the hon. Member opposite has a long history of being accosted by Macaques, because I remember he used to call me years ago when he was accessing his office in the Ministry for  
1555 Culture, telling me that there were monkeys there and this was well before I ever even dreamt of becoming a Minister, so clearly it is a long-standing problem. I remember clearly.

I am glad to say that we have now put more resources and that we now have more people on the ground to be able to respond to calls. We have an extra five people dedicated full-time to tracking the Macaques and to keeping them away from urban areas. We are trying hard.  
1560

But to answer the actual supplementary, the group that he is referring to, obviously we have not put in every single sheet but they are number four. They are the ones from Apes' Den who, on their way to Trafalgar and Southern Main Street, would chance by Gardiner's Road.

1565 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, if I may ask one final supplementary question in relation to the schedule, to the answer to Question 268. According to the information here, we have five packs and then we have the approximate numbers within each particular pack. Are we saying that those are the only existing packs?

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, as I explained in the two lines above the schedule, there are five source groups, some of which are sub-divided with more or less contact with the original site. When you have a group of Macaques and they are starting to fission you get certain smaller sub-groups normally led by an adult female, who starts to move away and will come back to the source group with more or less frequency.  
1570

Therefore for example, if I can use the example of the number four, the Apes' Den group, where you can have numbers, the source group is still the Apes' Den, but if you get a group that is frequenting the Trafalgar Cemetery and there is plenty of food in that area, then they might not go back every day and eventually, they will lose a link and then they will become a different group, for want of a better word.  
1575

So there are five source groups which feed these different areas. This is different from what happens for example in the Laguna and Caleta area, in that it is one group that is moving around and we know that from GPS tracking. So there are five source groups, from them there will be sub-groups that will use different areas with more or less frequency.  
1580

But the thing is, that this is a dynamic thing and it keeps on changing all the time, so if I say, five plus three is eight, then tomorrow or the day after, there might be seven or there might be nine and it really depends. In nature it is always in a state of flux.

1585 So it is more accurate to refer to the source groups which they all originated from. Many years ago there were two, but if I go into the history, I would keep you here forever.

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment confirm or deny the story which seems to have gone on in Facebook in the last couple of days, where Macaques have been culled by the usage of a BB gun?  
1590

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, clearly not a legitimate supplementary. We can talk about monkeys, we can then talk about biodiversity and next time I tell you I will bring a power point presentation because I am sure we would all enjoy, but I can deny, there are no Macaques that have been shot by BB guns.

1595 Absolutely not. Well, Mr Speaker, certainly not legally by the Government – (*Laughter*) Other people, you know, I cannot respond. (*Laughter*)

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q270/2014**  
**Gibraltar Nature Conservancy Council –**  
**Legal advice re request for minutes**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 270, the Hon. J J Netto.

1600

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, further to the answer to Written Question 91/2013, can the Government provide an answer in the terms set out by the Hon. Speaker in line 980 of the Question 460/2013 which states:

‘They will provide the basis of what the legal advice is, but the actual legal advice cannot be made available, it is a confidential document.’,

as this is not provided in answer to Written Question 91/2013?

1605

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the basis of the legal advice is that the request involved the disclosure of internal communications, which is one of the conditions by which such information may be withheld.

1610

**Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, I was not asking for the actual report itself. Could I ask who provided such a report to the Minister?

1615

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, the Government’s legal advisers.

**Hon. J J Netto:** The AG’s Chamber, no?

1620

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** I am not going to name the individual concerned, but it was within the Government’s legal advisers.

**Q271/2014**  
**Cancer nurses –**  
**Administrative support**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 271, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health advise if the Cancer Nurse specialists are receiving their own administrative support and if not, when will this happen?

1625

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, when this service was introduced, no provision was made for administrative support. However, administrative support is now provided from nurse management’s administrative pool.

1630

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, is this the same administrative support that was in place a year and a half ago?

1635

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I cannot answer that question. I know that there is... The information provided to me by the relevant members of staff is that there is administrative support provided from the nursing pool. Whether it has been in place for a year and a half more or less, I would need to go back and

1640 find out. What I do know is that if there are any particular pressures, then as it is a pooled resource, then the support can be increased in number of hours and so on, but I do not really have the information tuned so finely.

1645 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, the reason I ask is because last year, about a year and a half ago I asked this same question because a concern was raised by the Director of Nursing at a GHA Board meeting and the answer the Hon. Minister gave at the time was that administrative support for the Cancer Nurse specialist is being considered in the context of the overall need to boost specialist services.

So I am just asking if that exercise has been completed and what has been the outcome and if, as a result, the need for more administrative support has been identified, as was raised by the Director for Nursing at the time.

1650 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I thank the Member opposite for reminding me of that question. I did not recall now when she asked the supplementary. I can only assume and for me it is very gratifying to know that I say things in Parliament and then the staff take it on board and provide the things that I have done. So I can only assume then that it is as a result of that process but in any case, I will certainly find out, out of my own personal interest if nothing else.

1655 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** And just, finally Mr Speaker, would the Hon. Minister inform me if that is the case by e-mail?

1660 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** No problem, Mr Speaker. Perhaps the hon. Member may wish to remind me if she has not received it within a reasonable period of time.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

1665

**Q272/2014  
Diabetes Strategy –  
Implementation**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 272, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1670 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health say what the new Diabetes Strategy is and when it will be fully implemented as laid out in the Government's manifesto?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1675 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the Government has a GHA Team with key professionals developing the strategy. The work is currently ongoing.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. Minister say when a full-time diabetes consultant will be employed and whether he is considering free prescriptions for insulin and other diabetic equipment?

1680 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, all these will be considerations that will be included in the strategy that is being developed.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, so the Hon. Minister does not have a road map for this yet?

1685 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** No, Mr Speaker.

**Q273/2014  
A&E Department –  
New doctor**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 273, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health say when the new doctor for the A&E Department will be employed and whether it will be a consultant or an NCHD?

1690

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the recruitment process is about to commence and that is imminent – it may even have commenced since this was drafted – for an Associate Specialist in A&E.

1695

**Q274/2014**  
**St Bernard's Hospital –**  
**Creating single-sex wards**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 274, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health say when will the wards at St Bernard's Hospital become male or female only, as per the Government's manifesto?

1700

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, this is planned but there is no date set yet.

1705

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. Minister say if this will happen after the new Elderly Care and Alzheimer/Dementia facilities are opened?

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Yes Mr Speaker, the joint use of wards by different sexes, although we try to manage it with cubicles and so on, is difficult with the kind of pressure that St Bernard's Hospital has been under for quite a number of years now.

1710

As we roll out the facilities for the elderly elsewhere, this we are very hopeful will provide us with the ability to be able to divide the wards up as we propose to do. So I am looking forward to that happening so that we can actually take this additional step.

**Q275/2014**  
**St Bernard's Hospital –**  
**New Stroke Unit**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 275 the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health say when the Stroke Unit will be set up at St Bernard's Hospital, as per the Government's manifesto?

1720

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, once again a working group of key professionals has been set up and is looking at the commissioning of the Stroke Unit at St Bernard's Hospital.

1725

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, in October of last year, the Minister said in Parliament that an expert in stroke management was visiting the GHA, in fact that very same month. Can the Minister say whether the timetable for the implementation of the Stroke Unit has been prepared as per the recommendations of this expert?

1730

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, the expert came and we are still in communication with him on a regular basis. He will be back, I think it is in June – it may be July, but I think it is in June – and in the meantime, the group is now looking at how the GHA can carry out his recommendations in advance of the

1735 next visit, which will include some training of the key professionals. So it is ongoing but we are moving along as recommended by this expert, yes.

**Q276/2014**  
**GHA Review –**  
**Publication of document**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 276, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1740 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health say, seeing that the new GHA management structure is in place, when the GHA Review document will be published?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1745 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the new GHA management structure is not fully in place, as a selection for some of the posts has not yet been completed. As I have stated before, the Review document will be published once the process is complete.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, once the new management structure process is complete, or are there any other issues that need to be tackled before it is published?

1750 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** The report requires a lot of aspects to be tackled, but the commitment I believe I gave to Parliament is once the management structure is complete and that is the intention.

1755 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister say when the management structure, the new management structure implementation, will be complete?

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** We expect this to be quite soon. There is one particular post whose filling has been delayed due to health matters in relation to one of the applicants and we are just hanging on a little bit more but this should not take very long now.

**Q277/2014**  
**Medical Advisory Committee –**  
**Setting up**

1760 **Acting Clerk:** Question 277, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health say when the Medical Advisory Committee, as per the Medical (Gibraltar Health Authority) Act 1987, will be set up?

1765 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, this has already been set up. The first meeting was held some weeks ago and the terms of reference are being determined.

1770 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister say who forms part of the Medical Advisory Committee? Are all the doctors eligible to form part of this?

1775 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Yes Mr Speaker, all doctors and dentists employed by the Gibraltar Health Authority are eligible and in fact, will be members of the Medical Advisory Committee. They are getting together terms of reference and the constitution and getting their committee organised. But yes, it is open to membership to all medical and dental members of the GHA.

**Q278/2014**  
**GHA Annual Reports –**  
**Publication for last three years**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 278, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1780 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health say when the 2011-12, 2012-13 and the 2013-14 Annual Reports of the GHA will be published?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1785 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the annual report covering 2011 has already been published. A report covering the period 2012 to 2013 is at present being prepared and will be published in autumn 2014.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q279/2014**  
**Personal chemotherapy infusions –**  
**Removal by GHA health professionals**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 279 the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1790

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health say if personal chemotherapy infusions can be removed at the GHA by GHA health professionals, whether they are being removed by them, and if not, why not?

1795

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

**Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the removal of personal chemotherapy infusions is not an established service. They have been removed on a few occasions when there has been a problem with the patient travelling back to Spain for this service.

1800

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, does the Minister have plans to ensure that this does become an established service within the GHA?

1805

**Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, this has never been a service provided. It is normally provided by the clinic where the patient has the chemotherapy. We are looking at the possibility of bringing to Gibraltar a lot of the processes that are now done externally and this is one of the ones that is being considered as a possibility for the future.

**Q280/2014**  
**GHA statistical data –**  
**Website updates**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 280, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1810

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health explain why the GHA statistical data on the Government website has not been updated regularly and provide:

(a) an update of document GHA 16 which has not been updated since June 2012;

(b) an update of document GHA 11 which has not been updated since October 2012;

1815 (c) an update of documents GHA 1, 5, 6, 8, 14, 15, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 which have not been updated since June 2013;

(d) an update of document GHA 23 which has not been updated since July 2013;

(e) an update of documents GHA 12 and 13 which have not been updated since September 2013;

(f) an update of documents GHA 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24 which have not been updated since December 2013; and

1820 (g) why the figures for ‘Children placed on the GHA dental waiting list’, document GHA 17, is not available?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1825 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the website had not been updated due to administrative delays. It is now up to date with the exception of the figures for children on the dental waiting list, as there is no longer a waiting list for this. The hon. Lady will no doubt wish to congratulate the Government for being able to maintain this.

1830 **Several Members:** Hear, hear. (*Banging on desks*)

## EQUALITY, SOCIAL SERVICES AND THE ELDERLY

### Q281/2014

#### Care Agency independent review – Progress update

**Acting Clerk:** Question 281, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services update this House on progress of the Government’s manifesto commitment to conduct:

‘a complete and independent review of the workings of the Care Agency’?

1835 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, a review is ongoing. This is not a timed manifesto commitment and will be delivered during the course of this Parliament.

1840

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister say which is the independent body that is conducting the review as highlighted in their manifesto commitment?

1845 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, I have said that a review is ongoing; the independent review has not yet commenced. The way that we have decided to do it is first of all to review the service and then once that review is completed, we will undertake a further review independently.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister explain why a review of a review?

1850

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Okay, I shall explain, Mr Speaker.

When I first started, Mr Speaker, in the first week in my office, I sat down with the Head of Social Services and I suggested that we engage the services of an independent review in the UK. The answer, Mr Speaker, was, ‘Please, Minister, do not do that because it is so bad, *so bad*, that the morale of Social Services would be very low when the outcome of the independent review would be so disastrous.’

1855

That is the reason why we are doing it in a two-pronged manner, Mr Speaker. First of all, the reason, Mr Speaker, is because the people within Social Services know what was wrong with Social Services, and I am working very closely with the team leaders in each department, in order to bring it up to speed as it should be – as they think it should be, as they thought it should not be as it was before.

Mr Speaker, once that is complete, then we will go externally.

1860

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** So Mr Speaker, if Social Services was so wrong and a review is being conducted and it will be fixed, then what is the need for spending money on an independent external review?

1865

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, it may be that at that stage an independent review is not necessary. Because it is a commitment, we will consider it at the appropriate time.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** If we have done such an excellent job by then [*inaudible*].

1870 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Yes, Mr Speaker, and the key here is how closely I personally am working with each individual team leader of each team within Social Services.

Anyway, Mr Speaker, in any event, this is a manifesto commitment which is not timed and something which we still have another two years to do, but I am pleased to say of the progress that has been made in Social Services.

1875 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, the Minister says that there is a possibility that she will be going back on the manifesto commitment of an independent review.

1880 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the manifesto commitments that we are delivering on, whether in relation to Social Services or elsewhere, are in the view of this party exactly that: commitments. Something which I commend to Members opposite they should understand, because their record of observing the commitments that they entered into in their manifesto is not so great.

1885 Now what the Hon. Minister has said is that once we have done our own internal review, it may be that there is not such a great need for an independent review. But Mr Speaker, the Cabinet will very likely insist that there is an independent review, given that we have already got a manifesto commitment in that respect. Even if the independent review then simply tells us that our own audit and changes in the Care Agency now deliver a service that is at last fit for purpose.

1890 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, for the sake of clarification, who is conducting the internal review? Is it the Chief Secretary or is it the members of staff within Social Services?

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, I fail to see why the Chief Secretary would have any involvement whatsoever with the Care Agency which is an independent statutory body. The internal review is undertaken internally by management.

1895

**Q282/2014**  
**Care Agency –**  
**Plans for caseload database and paperless system**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 282, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1900 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say when a database for caseloads and a paperless system will be introduced to the Care Agency?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

1905 **Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, Social Services already has a database for caseloads and are not planning to introduce a paperless system.

**Q283/2014**  
**Care Agency –**  
**Social worker caseloads**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 283, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1910 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say what the present caseload per social worker is, broken down by Team – that is, Adult and the Children & Families?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

1915 **Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, the caseload is as follows: Children and Families Team – Senior Social Worker, 23 and by Social Workers it is as follows: 17, 13, 15, 13, 6, 23 and 25.

In the Adult Team, the Team Leader has 25, the Senior Social Worker 28 and the Social Workers have 16, 28, 30 and 34.



**Q284, Q288, Q290, Q297/2014**  
**Social workers –**  
**Vacancies and recruitment**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 284, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1920 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say how many Care Agency vacancies there are for Social Workers, broken down by grade and Team (Adult and Children & Families) and say how such vacancies arose from the previous post-holders, be it through resignation, retirement or transfer?

1925 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this together with Questions 285 to 288, 290 and 297.

1930 **Acting Clerk:** Question 285, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1935 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say when the vacant Children and Families Team positions will be filled, where they will be recruited from, how much locum cover has already been paid since April 2013 and how much will this expenditure accrue for locum cover for social workers on a monthly basis, until outstanding vacancies are filled?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 286, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1940 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say, as quoted in the Government Press Release 84/2014, which is the dedicated recruitment agency the Care Agency has engaged, in order for it:

‘to work alongside the vacancies advertised locally’?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 287, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1945 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say if, when recruiting social workers from outside Gibraltar to fill any shortfall of skills in Gibraltar, the policy to live outside of Gibraltar will be relaxed?

**Acting Clerk:** Question 288, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1950 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say whether the Residential Teacher Services is still on offer at Tangier Views and if not, when did this service stop and what has replaced it?

1955 **Acting Clerk:** Question 290, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say how many social workers are working in the Court Welfare Team?

1960 **Acting Clerk:** Question 297, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

1965 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say what vetting and criminal records checks are made of supply and locum workers hired by the Care Agency from private care providers, who undertake temporary cover work for staff within the Care Agency, but who are not Gibraltarian and have lived or live outside of Gibraltar?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

1970 **Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, there is currently one vacancy for the Team Leader for the Children and Families, a team which is being covered by substitution. The previous Team Leader resigned.

Additionally there is a vacancy for Team Leader in the Disability Service, but this position is under review since it has been identified that it does not necessarily need to be held by a social worker. This position is currently being covered by substitution and the previous Team Leader retired.

1975 There is also a vacancy for a new Social Worker that has been temporarily upgraded to Senior Social Worker, in order to carry out specific tasks in the Adult Team.

I can confirm that vacant Children and Families Team positions have already have been filled, save for the Team Leader post, which is being covered by substitution. These have been recruited through a UK-based recruitment company which specialises in social care professionals and qualified social workers, called Caritas Limited. Social Services does not use locum workers to undertake temporary cover.

1980 The requirement that social workers recruited from outside be required to live in Gibraltar was already relaxed by the previous administration, as many social workers lived in Spain prior to December 2011.

I can confirm that the post of teacher in Residential Services is a complement post, albeit the possibility of revising the position to make best use of this resource is being considered.

There is one social worker in the Court Welfare Team.

1985

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, and the response to Question 297, I believe that was asked.

1990 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Yes Mr Speaker, sorry. In relation to the first part, we do not use locum workers but in relation to supply staff that may be engaged, I can confirm that following vetting and criminal record checks are carried out for all private care providers who may undertake any temporary work in the Care Agency. What we do is we request a *Certificado Penal* if they come from Spain, or CRB or DBS checks in the UK or elsewhere.

1995 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, in relation to Question 290, the Hon. Minister said there was one social worker working in the Court Welfare Team. Is this enough to satisfy the Government's manifesto commitment of ensuring that the Social Services Court Team are sufficiently resourced to be able to work within the framework of the Children Act?

2000 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, there are times when perhaps the overload of requests from court for Court Welfare Reports increase and it varies from time to time. In cases where we may perhaps get more referrals in a particular month, what we do is other social workers may assist the social worker who is currently working in the Court Welfare Team preparing those reports or there are circumstances where this is covered by overtime.

2005 But in any event, if at any particular circumstances, there would be a particular increase in caseload as a result of the Children Act and the requirement that came into the Children Act, then that would be dealt with accordingly.

2010 I remind the hon. Lady that the Children Act came into force in 2011 but there was no increase in complement in Social Services to be able to deal with this, but we have actually increased the complement of social workers in order to alleviate the statutory requirements within the Act.

2015 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** So the Minister is happy that – because I believe this person is employed on a part-time basis – that despite it having been introduced in 2011, that it is enough to cover this service. And, if I may as I am on my feet, we understand this person will be retiring soon: is someone already being trained to replace the person in this role?

2020 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** First of all, Mr Speaker, while the person works part-time as I have just said, as and when necessary this person works full-time and at present she is working full-time. Now the fact that this person, whether this person is retiring or not is, Mr Speaker, quite frankly news to me. Clearly the hon. Lady has more information than I have. I do not know whether it is direct or whether this is speculation, (**A Member:** Or it is accurate.) or whether it is accurate at all, Mr Speaker. I certainly have had no indication and it surprises me, Mr Speaker, because I have quite a close working relationship with my staff and I do have regular management meetings with my staff and this has never been raised.

2025 Having said that, Mr Speaker, I am sure that if this were to be the case, it would be raised at the relevant time and if it were, then of course we would have planning progression in place, as we already do, which is something that we have very recently introduced in Social Services.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

2030 **Acting Clerk:** Question 289

**Mr Speaker:** Do you have a supplementary?

2035 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Yes Mr Speaker, in relation to the teaching post at Tangier Views, how long has Tangier Views been without this teacher?

2040 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, I do not have that information before me but the person who previously held this post resigned but this post has been covered by another person within the Care Agency who did have a teaching qualification, so that person was acting in that post and in addition, we have been receiving a lot of assistance from the Department of Education, because we have had retired teachers assisting as well. So there has actually not been any impact since the person who was in this substantive post left.

2045 **Acting Clerk:** Question 289, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, I am loathe to interrupt but I have just had a message from my staff, that I am told by management that the Court Welfare Officer has no intention of retiring. I just thought I would bring it to the attention of this House. *(Laughter and banging on desks)*  
2050 Perhaps the hon. Lady should not listen to all the gossip that she hears and all the rumours. Perhaps that would be a more responsible way before she starts scaremongering.

**Q289/2014**  
**Care Agency –**  
**Legal work**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 289, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2055 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, I do not think it is scaremongering that I should raise concerns, very serious concerns that have been brought to me and issues that people want me to raise, as it is my duty to ask questions in this House. *(Interjection)*

Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say who is undertaking the legal work on behalf of the Care Agency, broken down by the firm and how much has been paid during this 2013-14 financial year so far?

2060 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, the majority of the Care Agency's legal work is undertaken by the Attorney General's Chambers. However, there are occasions where external counsel is sought.

2065 Legal work on behalf of the Care Agency during 2013 and 2014 have been carried out as follows: Hassans £39,931.15; Stowe Family Law £13,691.25; and Isolas £1,500.

**Q291/2014**  
**Adoption and Fostering Service –**  
**Review**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 291, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2070 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say if the Adoption and Fostering Service will be reviewed and if so, when?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

2075 **Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, the Adoption and Fostering Service is already under review.

**Q292/2014**  
**Child Protection Team –**  
**Resourcing to protect vulnerable children**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 292, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2080 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say when Government will be fulfilling its manifesto commitment to ensure the Child Protection Team will be sufficiently resourced to effectively protect vulnerable children and that there is a proper follow-up system to ensure long-term protection?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

2085 **Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, Government commenced its manifesto commitment to ensure the Child Protection team will be sufficiently resourced to effectively protect vulnerable children, and that there is a follow-up system to ensure long-term protection, since we commenced this term of office.

2090 Already there have been a number of growth posts and additional staff to the Children and Families team so as to ensure this. These are listed as follows: two social worker growth posts; one assistant social worker; four administrative workers; and two newly qualified social workers engaged under the GRAD scheme.

2095 There is now an established reviewing system whereby a Reviewing Officer reviews children on Child Protection Plans as well as 'Looked After Children'.

**Q293-294/2014**  
**Hogar Betania, La Linea –**  
**Homeless shelter care for Gibraltar men**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 293, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2100 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say if there are any local men being looked after at the homeless shelter in La Linea, Hogar Betania and if so, are there plans for the Care Agency to provide halfway accommodation for them in Gibraltar?

2105 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this together with Question 294.

2110 **Acting Clerk:** Question 294, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say if she has met with the Management of Hogar Betania in La Linea and if so, provide Parliament with the number of times and dates of such meetings?

2115 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, the Government of Gibraltar or the Care Agency do not run or operate the homeless shelter in La Linea and as such, I am not aware who uses it or not. In fact the Care Agency does not run the homeless shelter in Gibraltar either.

2120 The Care Agency is not aware of any person currently being looked after in La Linea. No referral has been made to Adult Services or the Care Agency in respect of any person who is staying in a shelter, needing accommodation in Gibraltar.

I have not met, nor have I nor the Care Agency, ever been contacted by management in Hogar Betania.

2125 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

Q295-296/2014

**Alzheimer's and dementia care –  
New facility and Dementia Day Care Centre**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 295, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2130 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say when the new Alzheimer and Dementia facility and the Dementia Day Care Centre, both at the former RNH site, will open?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

2135 **Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this question together with 296.

**Acting Clerk:** Question 296, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2140 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Social Services say when the vacancies for the new Alzheimer and Dementia Facility workforce at the former RNH site will be advertised and what will be the composition and skill mix?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

2145 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, the Alzheimer and Dementia Residential Facility and the Dementia Day Centre at the former RNH site, are envisaged for completion in July 2014.

Staff vacancies in relation to the residential facility will be advertised when ready to do so, in conjunction with the planned opening.

2150 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, last October the Minister said in Parliament that the residential facility would open at the beginning of this year. Why the delay to July of this year?

2155 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, unfortunately we are only as good as the deadlines that are given to us by the contractors, and while of course the Government imposes deadlines, sometimes there are reasons why the contractors cannot keep to them. As far as I am concerned, this should have been ready earlier and if I could, Mr Speaker, I would get a roller and the paint and do it myself if that meant it would make it quicker. But there is nothing further that I can do, Mr Speaker, other than ask the contractors to ensure that the deadlines are kept to.

2160 It is important for this administration to make sure that both these facilities, which are very essential facilities to the community, be completed as soon as possible. Having said that, Mr Speaker, in the meantime we have to be mindful of course that this Government has increased the budget in relation to domiciliary care made available to people at home and this has a very significant impact on people who are sufferers from dementia.

2165 So while we are conscious on the one hand that the facility has not been opened in the timescale that the Government desires it to be, we are addressing it on the other hand by offering domiciliary care to people at home.

2170 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, has the decision not yet been taken on the composition and skill mix for the workforce for the facility seeing that the facility is imminent to open within four months' time. A recruitment process will need to take place and potential employees perhaps to give notice elsewhere. So where is the Care Agency in relation to a decision on the composition and the skill mix for this new facility?

2175 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, I have answered this question before in relation to composition and skill mix and as I have explained to the hon. Member in the past, it is pretty much a formulaic decision and it is a ratio of staff to the number of beds that we have.

But that is not the issue, Mr Speaker. The issue is to ensure that we have competent and qualified workforce available in Gibraltar and not to fall into the same trap that unfortunately the GSD did when it expanded the elderly residential beds in Mount Alvernia, where they found that there was no skilled workforce in Gibraltar.

2180 So let me tell the hon. Lady what we are doing. Because we know that we are opening these facilities, and because we know that we will need staff and because we know that historically people do not

necessarily have experience in working in elderly care, we have through the Employment Service started providing courses for people who wish to work in elderly care, thereby giving them, assisting them to acquire requisite skills and experience to work in this field. Because we are doing exactly what we need to do; we are forward planning and making sure that we have the workforce available and ready for when this place is ready to open, Mr Speaker. (*Banging on desks*)

2185  
2190 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister give more information as to these courses. How long the courses are, who the accrediting body is, what the qualification is that they will receive?

2195 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, it is an induction course into elderly care. I think that the course takes about five weeks. It is run pretty much by people from the Care Agency, there are some people who may be sub-contracted for particular modules but it is pretty much... it mirrors the induction training that someone would receive when starting work at the Care Agency.

2200 So what we are doing is we are training people head on. So instead of waiting to open the facility and train everybody at the same time when we open, what we are doing is that we are running this course every month, or almost every month, so that we can start training people and start to make sure that they have the skill mix. Of course, these people can also be available should vacancies arise elsewhere before the facilities are open. We have been running these courses, we have run a couple of these courses already so we have already started training people.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** So Mr Speaker, what is the qualification?

2205 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** It is not a qualification as such, Mr Speaker; it is a certificate, and it is an accreditation by the Care Agency that people have undergone training into elderly care. People at the end of it will get certificates if....

2210 Let us say, for example, part of this course will require people to undertake a course in first aid. At the end of the first aid course, they will have a certificate confirming that they have attended the course in first aid. If they then undertake a course in manual handling, then they will have some kind of accreditation that they have been through that. They will get a generic sort of certificate from the ETB confirming every single module that they have undertaken. But because some modules are sub-contracted, I think that the first aid course is one of them, and then the provider will provide a confirmation of certification of the successful completion of that module.

2215 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** So Mr Speaker, is the Minister saying that up until these courses started, none of the people working within the Elderly Care Agency were qualified?

2220 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** No, Mr Speaker. Perhaps if the hon. Lady were to listen to what I am saying, she would have said that I have just said the contrary to what she has just said.

2225 What I am saying is, when people start working for the Care Agency, before they start working, they undertake the generic core training. That is something that we do now and that is something that was undertaken before. People do not apply for a job and if you have got no experience, off you go in Mount Alvernia and do what you like. You know, you go and you have your training.

Our generic core training that is delivered in Mount Alvernia now is different to what it was before because we have enhanced it some more and that is just a sort of a general review of the service and the progress.

2230 What I am saying is that training, that is delivered to people who work for the Care Agency – i.e. there is a vacancy in the Care Agency, you apply for a job, you do the training and you go and work if you are successful in the completion of the training – is being offered before the other facility is open. So that by the time that the other facility is open, we do not have to worry about starting the training again for everybody, we will have people who have already done the training and people who are ready to go in. Maybe at the time what we will do is we may have to have a refresher or something like that, but at least the bulk of the training will be there.

2235 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, then can the Minister confirm that all the existing care workers that worked with the elderly, were they trained and are they properly trained? Not new ones coming in to the system, but all the existing ones that were inherited from the time when my hon. Friend was the Minister for Social Services.

2240 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, honestly, talk about own goals! I can for sure confirm that every single entrant into the Care Agency after December 2011 have undergone Care Agency core training.

2245 I would sincerely hope that everybody had undergone the core training before they started in Mount Alvernia when the hon. Gentleman was the Chairman of the Care Agency. I have no reason to doubt that he would not have insisted on these standards in the same way that I do now.

2250 But, Mr Speaker, because I always had that little bit of a fear that maybe everybody had not gone through the core training, I asked my training team to go through every single member of staff, to ensure that they had undertaken the core training and lo and behold, there were people who had not undertaken the core training before December 2011. So what the hon. Gentleman missed, gladly I have picked up and that failure has been addressed. So I am grateful to the hon. Lady opposite for pointing that out.

I am sure it was not intentional on the part of the hon. Gentleman, but I can certainly confirm that everybody who today works in the Care Agency is properly and sufficiently trained – not only in the generic core training, which of course is essential, but of course we do take other training over and above.

2255 **A Member:** Hear, hear. (*Banging on desks*)

2260 **Hon. J J Netto:** Mr Speaker, with your indulgence, would it be possible if I could go back to Question 294, this is the one that relates to the management of Hogar Betania, because if I understood the hon. Lady, she gave a categorical statement to the effect that she has never had any meetings whatsoever with Hogar Betania.

2265 Given that my understanding is that she did have a meeting which was over a year ago and she had a meeting with the Director of Hogar Betania, the lady Mrs Begonia Araña, but given that this was a year ago, will she not try and cast her mind over a year ago, to confirm or deny that she has had, or had not had a meeting with this lady?

2270 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, I actually pride myself in having a very good memory. I think that if I had had a meeting with someone from a homeless shelter a year ago, I would remember. I confess that of course I may be mistaken, but I certainly do not recall having ever met anybody from a homeless shelter in La Linea ever.

2275 The hon. Gentleman has just mentioned a name, the name does not sound familiar to me at all. It may be that I have spoken to someone from La Linea, that person from La Linea but if that person did not tell me that they were management of the homeless shelter, then I am none the wiser.

Mr Speaker, it is not my intention to mislead this Parliament at all –

2280 **Hon. F R Picardo:** But why would you deny it?

2285 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** But why would I deny it? Mr Speaker, I have never had a meeting, whether formal or informal, with anyone from a homeless shelter in La Linea in their capacity as management from the homeless shelter in La Linea, to my knowledge. Maybe that... I go to many places, I meet many people on social occasions. That person may have come to me and said hello – and may just have said hello and goodbye, without me knowing who that person was. (*Laughter and interjections*) I genuinely do not recall ever having met that person nor is there any record of me meeting anybody in my office. But maybe the hon. Gentleman and I can have a chat later on and he can enlighten me, because there may be, you know –

2290 **Hon. Dr J E Cortes:** No, he will tweet it now! (*Laughter*)

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q298/2014**  
**Monument to women of Gibraltar –**  
**Details of sculpting and erection**

2290 **Acting Clerk:** Question 298 the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Equality say when the winning design of Ruth Macias Greenburg, selected in March 2013 for a monument to the women of Gibraltar, will be sculpted and erected in a prominent place in Gibraltar and where it will be erected?

2295 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, Government is in the process of identifying a suitable location. Once the location is identified, we will then commission for the sculpting and erection of the monument.

2300

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister say when the monument will be sculpted and erected? Is it within months or within a year?

2305

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, as I said when we find the suitable location, because it will all depend on the location.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q299/2014**  
**Domestic Violence Forum –**  
**Meetings and strategic plan**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 299, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2310

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Equality say if the new Domestic Violence Forum as outlined in Question 790/2013 has officially met, giving the date or dates of meetings and what strategic plan to eliminate domestic violence in Gibraltar has been decided on?

2315

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, the parties have not met formally as a forum, but I continue to work with individual parties in the meantime.

2320

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, last December in Parliament, the Hon. Minister said the forum would formally meet in the New Year. Can the Minister say when will that be?

2325

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, the forum will meet when the forum is ready to meet. This is something, Mr Speaker, that is – the hon. Lady can laugh, you know, but the hon. Lady may want to recast her mind back to prior to December 2011, when there was never an intention to have a Domestic Violence Strategy so actually, the hon. Lady should be grateful of the initiatives that we are now having, to make sure that we have strategies and policies in place – things that happen all over the world, but we were operating in a vacuum in Gibraltar.

2330

This is certainly a very, very important policy and because I recognise the importance of this policy, I am working very closely with all the parties involved. Let me explain, for example, Mr Speaker, we have got the halfway house and the homeless shelter for women which is primarily funded by Government, but there was never even any instrument regulating how that works. That is one of the things that I have had to deal with. There are so many things, so many gaps, so many holes there, so many things that I have to deal with, that my strategy is that, before we all meet as a forum, to make sure that every single party who is going to form part of the forum have their own ducks in order.

2335

But Mr Speaker, the hon. Lady can rest assured that this is a strategy that is very important to me and a strategy that will succeed. (*Banging on desks*)

2340

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, I only asked the question because she did say last December that they would formally meet in the new year and we are already nearly four months into the new year. Mr Speaker, the Minister mentioned that there was no instrument regulating the Women In Need shelter in place. Can she then say what the instrument that has been devised by the Minister, what instrument has been put in place by her?

2345

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Well, the Minister and her office are in the process of devising an instrument. Mr Speaker, yes, because I think it is very important when a substantial amount of taxpayers' money is passed over to this organisation, which of course is an important and a valuable organisation and it fits into the puzzle of dealing with domestic violence, I think it is very important that we need to have a *modus operandi* in order so that... you know, things need to be regulated and things need to be above board.



**Q300/2014**  
**Women in the workplace –**  
**Collection of data**

2350 **Acting Clerk:** Question 300, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, as per the Minister for Equality's statement in the *Chronicle* on International Women's Day, can the Minister give further details on the statistics that are being collected on women in the workplace in different sectors of the economy by (a) who is collecting the data; (b) how is the data being collected; (c) how large is the sampling frame, i.e. number of women and number of workplaces surveyed; (d) which sectors of the economy are being surveyed; (e) who will be analysing the data to highlight any trends in earnings; and (f) when the data will be ready for inspection?

2360 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, this is a study that is in process. A preliminary collation of information is being undertaken by researchers employed by the Graduate Research and Development Company.

2365 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister say whether this pilot study has been completed by the graduates?

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** No Mr Speaker. It was started some months ago and it is still, as I have said in my first answer, it is in the process of...

2370 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** And Mr Speaker, does the Minister have any idea after this pilot study has been looked at, how it will be rolled out to the wider economy?

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Not until I know what the study says. I will consider it at that stage.

**Q301/2014**  
**Empowering women and girls –**  
**Further details**

2375 **Acting Clerk:** Question 301, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, as per the Minister for Equality's statement in the *Chronicle* on International Women's Day, can the Minister give further details on how, through Social Services, 'young girls and women will be empowered'?

2380 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, the article actually states:

'Through Social Services we are looking at empowering young girls and women in different ways.'

2385 Therefore what I mean is exactly that, that we are looking at initiatives that we can draw on so as to empower young women. As these initiatives are undertaken, they will be announced as and when appropriate.

2390 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. Minister say what initiatives are being looked at?

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, Social Services are looking through a wide range of services that can be made available, for example to girls through the Department of Education. One of the things that we are looking at, for example, at the moment is to do with eating disorders. As I said, this is a work in progress. Again, going back to the similar answer to my Domestic Violence Strategy, it is about having strategies – strategies that never existed, strategies that were never there and it is strategies that we are starting from the drawing board.

2400 Now because we are starting from scratch, these are things that we are looking at, we are looking to see what the needs are and that is then when we will look and see how we will prioritise the different initiatives that we are doing. We have identified a couple of initiatives that we need and what we are doing is now we are in the process of... well, we already have met with the Department of Education and the Health Authority to see how together, where necessary and where appropriate, we deliver these strategies.

**Q302/2014**

**Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women –  
Extension to Gibraltar**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 302, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2405 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, as per the Minister for Equality's statement in the *Chronicle* on International Women's Day, can the Minister give further details on the practical applications of the Government's formal request for extension of the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women to Gibraltar?

2410 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

**Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, the Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has been described as an international bill of rights for women, as it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and it sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

2415 By requesting the extension of the UK's ratification of the Convention to Gibraltar, Her Majesty's Government commit themselves to undertaking a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms.

2420 The aim of the Convention is to provide equality between men and women through ensuring women's equal access to and equal opportunities in political and public life and education, health and employment – sorry, Mr Speaker, I think I am reading from the wrong paper. Sorry yes, under the Convention, national reports are required to be submitted on measures that State Parties have to take to comply with their treaty obligations. Reports are submitted at least every four years and Her Majesty's Government shall on extension have a reporting obligation.

2425 Sufficient laws and policies are in place in Gibraltar for the purposes of implementing and complying with the Convention obligations.

**Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister clarify what exactly the Government will be reporting on?

2430 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, as I said the report is in relation to compliance with Treaty obligations.

2435 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, which are exactly what?

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, the Treaty obligations are all outlined in the Convention. The hon. Lady is free to read them at her leisure. It is a public document, Mr Speaker.

**Q303/2014**

**Dr Giraldi inquiry –  
Costs so far**

**Acting Clerk:** Question 303, the Hon. D A Feetham.

2440 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, can the Government please state what has been the cost to the Taxpayer so far of the Dr Giraldi enquiry?

**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly.

2445 **Minister for Equality, Social Services and the Elderly (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, given that the inquiry remains ongoing, the Government does not feel it appropriate to comment on anything in relation to the inquiry at this stage.

2450 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I am not asking the hon. Lady or the Government to comment on the substance of the inquiry or anything that could possibly impact on the inquiry or that could possibly cause any kind of prejudice to the inquiry. I am just simply asking what the cost to the taxpayer has been so far of the Dr Giraldi inquiry. Now, is there a reason in principle why you ought not to provide that information which cannot possibly impact on the inquiry?

2455 **Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, my answer was very clear. This forms part of the inquiry. The inquiry is not over and the position of the Government is that the information will not be provided until the inquiry is over.

2460 Quite frankly, Mr Speaker, I am surprised at the inconsistent approach taken by the Opposition, because this is the third time that this question has been asked, but on the two previous occasions when I gave the same explanation as to why I did not think it appropriate that the information be given at this stage, the question was withdrawn.

The same question was put to me last month and only last month it was withdrawn. There have been no changes from last month to this month; therefore I do not understand this question.

2465 Furthermore Mr Speaker, the answer to this question will not change at the end of the inquiry. This answer can perfectly be provided when the inquiry finishes, Mr Speaker.

2470 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Well, Mr Speaker, whether a colleague of mine has decided to ask and then withdraw this question on the basis of some conversation that he has had or she has had with the hon. Lady, is, I think, neither here nor there. I have made the decision that I believe that this is an appropriate question at this stage and I am asking it.

2475 With respect to the hon. Lady, she is not answering my question. Why does the cost...? Why does the cost or the Government providing me with the cost so far of the inquiry have any impact at all on the inquiry, prejudice the inquiry? What reason in principle is there for the Government not to provide this information, other than the Government says well, I am not providing it to you now, I am going to provide it to you at the end?

2480 **Hon. G H Licudi:** Mr Speaker, the answer has clearly been given and it is reflected in the last comment by the hon. Member. The information will be given at the end of the inquiry. This is an inquiry which is ongoing. It has not finished. It is not appropriate to engage in public debate or discussion on any matter concerning the inquiry, either on the floor of this House or through the media or outside or anywhere. It is in the hands of the Chairman who has been appointed. He still has to give a decision. Nothing has changed since last month when the same question was asked and withdrawn quite properly.

2485 The fact that the hon. Member does not speak to other Members and does not know apparently that another question was asked and withdrawn, the same question asked and withdrawn, the hon. Member says is neither here nor there. Well, it is very relevant because the hon. Member to his side recognised last month that it was appropriate to withdraw and nothing has happened at all since last month because we are still awaiting the Chairman's report.

2490 So for those reasons it is entirely inappropriate to engage in any kind of public discussion or debate on any aspect of the inquiry and for those reasons the costs which exist today and which may exist next month, will be given at the end of the inquiry and not now.

2495 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Well, Mr Speaker, I have spoken to my hon. Friend. He took a decision last month to withdraw this particular question after a conversation, I cannot remember whether he said it was with the hon. Gentleman or with the hon. Lady, I think it was the hon. Gentleman. I have since reviewed the situation. I do not believe there is any substance at all in the argument that providing me or the Opposition with the cost to the taxpayer of what this inquiry is costing, that that can possibly prejudice, have any impact at all on the inquiry or that it impacts or infringes the *sub judice* rule and clearly, what the Government are doing is not in relation to this case only, it is in relation to other areas where we have asked questions of a similar nature, is using and abusing the *sub judice* rule in order to prevent the Opposition from obtaining information to which the Opposition is perfectly entitled.

2500 So really the answer in a nutshell, Mr Speaker, is and I ask the hon. Gentleman, is that the Government just simply does not... there is no really cogent reason why this ought not to be provided and the Government just simply says no to the Opposition, 'we will provide it to you at the very end of this inquiry'. That is the long and short of it, is it not?

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**Hon. G H Licudi:** Well, Mr Speaker, the hon. Member has either not heard or understood the answer that I have given and he says that the answer I have given has no substance, there is no basis for it. Well, the hon. Member to his right accepted that there was substance in that answer last month and withdrew the question (*Interjection*) on two occasions and now the same question is asked.

2510 All I can do is repeat what I have already said, that we consider it is entirely inappropriate to engage in any public discussion or debate on any aspect –

**Hon. D A Feetham:** I am not asking you to –

2515 **Hon. G H Licudi:** On any aspect, including the issue of cost, on any aspect of the inquiry until the inquiry is over. And it is not as if the costs are going to be hidden anywhere or going to disappear. The costs which exist today are going to be the same costs as of today that will be given to the hon. Member and to the public at large, whenever the inquiry comes to an end. That is the decision that the Government has taken. It is the right decision and it is entirely appropriate. The hon. Member may not be satisfied but that does not mean that he has not been given an answer or the reason (*Interjection*) or that there is any abuse. What is the question of abuse, the Government considers it inappropriate, it is our view. We are the Government, we have taken that view, but the information will be given. So it is not a question of the Government refusing to give information; the information will be given at the appropriate time.

2525 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, if I may just by way of clarification, I spoke to the Hon. Minister at the time when I had filed the question and during that conversation it was one single conversation over the telephone and I certainly I gave the Minister the benefit of the time to discuss the matter. My initial view at the time was indeed that it was not entirely inappropriate for me to withdraw the question in the circumstances but, following further discussions with my Hon. and Learned Friend, the Leader of the Opposition, that view has changed, Mr Speaker, and I just thought it was necessary to make that position clear.

2530

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

## TRAFFIC, HOUSING AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

### Q304/2014

#### Government rental homes – Unpaid rents written off 2013-14

**Acting Clerk:** Question 304, the Hon. E J Reyes.

2535

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing provide details of how much has been written off in respect of unpaid rents pertaining to Government rental homes during the financial year 2013-14?

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**Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Housing and Technical Services.

**Minister for Traffic, Housing and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, during the financial year 2013-14, a total of £41,708.46 has been written off.

2545

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, does the Minister have any details available? Have they been written off because of time expired debts or is it due to other reasons that perhaps he can furnish us with the information?

2550

**Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, there are a number of write-offs and just to give by way of example, in one case there was a tenant who, due to unhygienic conditions of the tenant living directly above that person, a complaint was lodged that there was damage created to his flat due to the amount of animals living upstairs. Hence this gentleman refused to pay his rent, he was moved out, he was decanted from his flat and the Financial Secretary saw that this was a legitimate claim. That is one of the examples.

2555

Another example dates back to the times of the prefabs, and certain individuals who refused to pay rent due to the conditions which they felt were practically uninhabitable. There are other cases as well of other persons who have suffered things like water ingress and severe dampness who refused and these were all taken up and their cases agreed.

2560 There is also, the vast majority of this money comes from tenants who were admitted to places like the Elderly Care Agency, Jewish Home or King George and then the rent was unrecoverable because family members decided that they were not liable to the Council. There are a number of reasons for the amount that has been written off.

2565 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I can start to understand that there are a variety of reasons and therefore not a simple clear cut answer. Given that I believe that the House will not be meeting next month, can I, in a gentleman's understanding, leave it in the hands of the Minister perhaps when he can forward me like a little schedule with some sort of breakdown similar to what he has now been trying to explain? Or Mr Speaker, if he so wishes, would he rather that I pose it into a formal question, perhaps even as a written question next time round? Whichever he prefers, so that it is not just information one wants now but rather something that we can monitor and work together in the future. He knows that at the end of the day, we  
2570 both have the same vested interests and so on. So can I have some indication from him how he would rather work this one.

I know I am placing a workload on him and his Ministry, but let us be co-operative so I get the information and make the task as easy as possible for him and therefore more efficient for my reception.

2575 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, if I might just be of assistance, I think it is absolutely right that this information should be public and I think what we can do is put this information on the website also, anonymised. For example, the hon. Gentleman actually has the names of the individuals he is dealing with, but it would be inappropriate to share them. It should be on the website. There is another question on the Order Paper about the exercise in respect of the historic arrears to the Government. This is not that type of write-off that we are looking at. These are almost, if the hon. Gentleman will share my view  
2580 of how this has been done, it is as a landlord dealing with arrears and there are many good reasons why tenants may sometimes, under the contract, have a good reason to say, 'Look, you are not keeping to your side of the bargain, there is this problem and I am withholding rent for a particular purpose.' That is an area of the law which is very defined, it has to be just the right sort of claim. There are some times when individuals have claims against the Government and they think that they can set off their rent in respect of  
2585 those claims and their claims have nothing to do with tenancies, for example. Therefore, it is inappropriate and you have to take a completely different attitude to those.

But I am quite happy that we should all, as a community, see what is going on in respect of these issues and therefore I am quite happy to ask the hon. Gentleman to ensure that these things are put up on the website and that the hon. Member should have notice of when they are going up in an anonymised form, in other words in 'a tenant' form, rather than with the name or address provided.  
2590

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, in fact I take the opportunity, I thank the Chief Minister. He did commit himself in the previous parliamentary session that the question of unpaid outstanding rent would actually be put up on the website and with the assistance of the Clerk, we found it, so I did not need to pose that question.  
2595

What I want the Chief Minister, and the Minister for Housing as well, to understand is that as an amateur, one can look at statistics and say, 'Ah well, compared to the previous month, there has been an addition of £50,000 more in outstanding unpaid rents.' But that figure £50,000 is only conditional. You have got to add into that how much has been written off or not. So in order to get a more complete and accurate picture, I think the Chief Minister is starting to understand why we need to have these figures, so that together we can both work and make sure that those tenants who for unjustified reasons are withholding payments of rent, that they pay up, because it is only fair on those law abiding citizens that everyone be treated equally.  
2600

2605 So I look forward to co-operating with the Minister for Housing in the future in that respect.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I could not agree more. I could not agree more and I am not going to get into the political ding-dong of how the arrears have risen in the time that they were in administration. We had that ding-dong last time. But I want him to understand that the figure fluctuates for many reasons and I cannot recall if the hon. Gentleman has ever held the portfolio of Housing but just so he understands, given that he indicates that he did not, the figure fluctuates both in terms of this sort of write-off, and these are not common write-offs – in other words, he has asked for the year 2013-14, I think there are four individual cases and then the rump relate to cases involving, as the hon. Gentleman has told him, admissions to Mount Alvernia and admissions to KGV. Really, we are talking about difficult cases in those instances.  
2610

2615 So it is not that he is going to have to be reconciling monthly this type of write-off. This is an infrequent type of write-off. The management list of the arrears in relation to rent works in different ways. For example, you may have some people – I confess I do not know what has been put on the website and how

2620 the calculation has been done – but there are some people who pay quarterly, there are some people who  
2625 pay monthly, the amounts go up weekly in some estates, they go monthly in other estates, so the list is  
sometimes not moving in terms of debt as it is in terms of credit. So you have got to look at almost each  
individual account in order to be able to do a reasonably accurate reconciliation.

2630 So what he will have to understand from what is going to be published, he will be able to see a trend,  
right, but he may not be able to reconcile one against the other in some instances.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes Mr Speaker, I am very grateful for that, I will be able to see the trend and then if  
2630 need be, one can then home in with the Minister for any particular clarification. I think we are both singing  
now from the same hymn sheet.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q305-306/2014**  
**Mid-Harbour Estate –**  
**Update on works to be completed**

2635 **Clerk:** Question 305, the Hon. E J Reyes.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to the answer to Question 170/2014, can the Minister for Housing provide  
updated details, together with estimated completion dates in respect of works still to be completed at Mid-  
Harbour Estate?

2640 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Housing and Technical Services.

**Minister for Traffic, Housing and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, I will answer  
this question together with Question 306.

2645 **Clerk:** Question 306, the Hon. E J Reyes.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to the answer to Question 171/2014, can the Minister for Housing provide  
2650 details of what further actions are being considered in order to curtail non-compliance of house rules at  
Mid-Harbour Estate?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Housing and Technical Services.

**Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, further to the answer given to Question 170/2014, it is envisaged that  
2655 infrastructure works to allow installation of the remaining cameras on the podium and promenade levels are  
expected to be completed by the end of this month.

The integration of podium and promenade level cameras to the existing public CCTV system and RGP  
control room at New Mole House are expected to be completed shortly, after which the system will be  
tested and commissioned.

2660 As previously advised, it is expected that with the measures being taken, the incidents relating to anti-  
social behaviour will minimise. We will continue liaising closely with the RGP as we take incidents of anti-  
social behaviour very seriously.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, thank you, Mr Speaker.

2665 So the Minister has given me an update of what he has mentioned before about the cameras, the  
completion and so on. More specifically in Question 306, I was re-asking because I think I have asked in  
the past, does he have any further actions planned? Because although I accept that certain things he may not  
be able to finalise until the cameras are in operation and so on, I believe he has had meetings with the  
Tenants' Association or whatever from the Estate and they may have put ideas forward.

2670 So is he in a position to be able to enlighten us in sort of saying which ones are being considered? I use  
the words 'being considered' rather than a firm commitment. Is there anything in particular that is being  
considered and that way we even help to have a more cross floor approach to resolving this problem which  
again is something that both sides seem to be sharing as a grave concern?

2675 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, I have had meetings and continue to have meetings with the Tenants Association of Mid-Harbours and their concerns have been taken on board and we will obviously, we do believe that with the installation of CCTV cameras, a lot of the anti-social behaviour that they complain about will actually be targeted.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q307/2014**  
**Making empty homes suitable for reallocation –**  
**Update details**

2680

**Clerk:** Question 307 the Hon. E J Reyes.

2685 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Housing provide updated details in respect of all expenditure incurred since the answer to Question 172/2014 in respect of contracts awarded for making empty homes suitable for reallocation stating to whom payments were made, how much has been paid, the number of residential homes pertaining to each payment as well as indicating if the services contracted were for either repair works or cleaning services?

2690 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Housing and Technical Services.

**Minister for Traffic, Housing and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, I will now hand the hon. Member a schedule containing the information requested.

**Answer to Question 307**

Contractors	No. of Properties	Cost
CEPRANO LTD	1	£3,000.00
CIAP CONSTRUCTION	1	£8,860.00
RIBEIRO	1	£3,565.00
AVANTI	1	£2,500.00

ALL SERVICES CONTRACTED WERE FOR REPAIRS  
NONE WERE FOR CLEANING

2695

**Mr Speaker:** This is a short schedule, I will allow the hon. Member to have a quick look at it and if he does not have any supplementaries, perhaps if the Leader of the House is happy, this might be a convenient point at which to recess to this afternoon at 3.00 p.m.

2700

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Yes, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

2705 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, the only one I think I normally ask every month: there is a full list of companies referring to four properties. Can I double check that these are four completely separate properties and not that two companies worked on the same one property? Am I correct in that assumption again?

2710 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, yes there are four separate properties and the other thing which I forgot to mention is that all services contracted were for repairs and none were for cleaning, as per every other month.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, thank you, Mr Speaker. Although the Minister may not have said it verbally it is written in the schedule that they were all for repairs, so I am grateful for the updated information Mr Speaker.

2715

**Mr Speaker:** The House will now recess to this afternoon at 3.00 p.m., when we shall be dealing with Chief Minister's Questions.

*The House recessed at 1.00 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 3.05 p.m.*