



PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

AFTERNOON SESSION: 3.00 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.

Gibraltar, Monday, 24th February 2025

Contents

Prayer.....	3
Confirmation of Minutes.....	3
Questions for Oral Answer.....	4
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, CIVIL CONTINGENCIES AND SPORT	4
Q125/2025 Emergency call-outs – Monthly figures	4
Q126/2025 Public toilets – Out of order dates.....	5
Q127/2025 GSLA facilities – Fees paid by users	5
Q128/2025 Ball-stop nets – Outstanding problems	6
EMPLOYMENT, EQUALITY, CULTURE AND TOURISM	7
Q129/2025 Parental bereavement – New provisions	7
Q130/2025 Parental leave – Shared equally amongst parents	7
Q131/2025 Youth Clubs – Usage	10
Q132/2025 GSLA facilities – Fees paid by users	10
Q133/2025 Morocco air links – Proposals	13
Q134/2025 CLIA destination showcase – Business generated/expected to generate	15
Q135-6/2025 NVQ Courses – Details; Qualifications obtained	17
JUSTICE, TRADE AND INDUSTRY	20
Q137/2025 Domestic offences – Breakdown	20
Q138/2025 Domestic Abuse Act 2023 – Remaining provisions.....	23
Q139-41/2025 Discrimination offences or hate crimes – By a person’s: race; religion; sexual orientation	27

Q142/2025 RGP – Designated LGBTQ+ liaison officer	28
Q143/2025 RGP Drug Squad Officers– Redeployment.....	28
Q144/2025 Criminal trials – Support to jurors	31
Q145/2025 Criminal Trials – Support to victims of sexual abuse and witnesses	32
Q146/2025 Sex offenders – Resources to assist in monitoring offenders in the community	33
Q147/2025 Overtime – Outstanding payments	36
Q148/2025 Sex offenders – Resources to assist in monitoring offenders in the community	36
Q149/2025 Taxable profits – Total amounts generated	37
Q150/2025 Income Tax – PAYE levels.....	38
Q151/2025 Income tax – Amount collected.....	40
Q152/2025 Company tax – Amount collected.....	40
Q153/2025 Property, Digital Assets, etc – Possible legislation	43
Q154/2025 European Commission – Removal from list of EU high-risk third countries with strategic deficiencies.....	44
Adjournment	46
<i>The House adjourned at 5.30 p.m.</i>	46

The Gibraltar Parliament

The Parliament met at 3.00 p.m.

[MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Judge K Ramagge GMH in the Chair]

[CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENT: J B Reyes Esq in attendance]

Prayer

Madam Speaker

Confirmation of Minutes

Clerk: Meeting of Parliament, Monday the 24th of February 2025.

Order of proceedings (i) Oath of Allegiance; (ii) Confirmation of minutes - The Minutes of the Thirteenth meeting of the Fifteenth Parliament, which was held on the 22nd and 24th of January, 2025.

Madam Speaker: May I sign the minutes as correct?

Members: Aye.

Madam Speaker signed the Minutes.

Clerk: (iii) Communications from the Chair; (iv) Petitions; (v) announcements; (vi) papers to be laid. The Hon. the Chief Minister.

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the table the Board of the Charity Commission Annual Report 2021, the Board of the Charity Commission Annual Report 2022, the Board of the Annual Charity Commission Report 2023, the Board of the Charity Commission Annual Report 2024, and the Income Tax (Allowances, Deductions and Exemptions) (Amendment) Rules 2025.

Madam Speaker: Order to lie.

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

Questions for Oral Answer

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, CIVIL CONTINGENCIES AND SPORT

Q125/2025 Emergency call-outs – Monthly figures

Clerk: Questions to the Hon. the Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport.
Question 125, the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker, can the Hon. Minister provide statistics as to the monthly emergency call-outs received by the GFRS over the course of the past 12 months, broken down by type of call-out?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport.

Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport (Hon. L M Bruzon): Madam Speaker, the monthly emergency call-out received by the GFRS over the last 12 months is as follows: 2024, January 99, February 76, March 73, April 81, May 90, June 81, July 84, August 81, September 66, October 76, November 60, December 71; 2025, January 65 and February 11. Madam Speaker, the type of emergency call will vary, but we are informed that the majority are lift rescues.

Others include road collisions, fire, flooding, entry into locked premises and assistance to Gibraltar Ambulance Service. Madam Speaker, unfortunately this information, along with a more detailed breakdown, has not been uploaded onto the GFRS website since 2020 due to issues with the website's maintenance provider. The GFRS is now working on a new system and information will be uploaded very shortly.

I am happy to provide the hon. Member with a breakdown for the type of call once I have it available.

Hon. J Ladislaus: I am grateful. We have just heard that there are issues with the provider of the website services. Could the Hon. Minister perhaps clarify what sort of issues have been encountered in that regard and why, of course, they have not been resolved in the past five years?

Hon. L M Bruzon: Madam Speaker, I do not have the exact information. I do know that the GFRS is working with a new database provider in the hope that they can get everything up to date and all statistics onto the website.

Hon. J Ladislaus: I am grateful. Could the Hon. Minister clarify whether the provider was an external provider?

Hon. L M Bruzon: Madam Speaker, I do not have the information.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Just one last question in respect to the original question. Does the Hon. Minister have any information as to whether the GFRS have recently, or in the past six months, submitted any business case requests in respect to further resources, particularly human resources?

Hon. L M Bruzon: Madam Speaker, the GFRS is currently working on a study, so I have not had the results yet.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Just on the previous supplementary, can I just ask for clarification? The hon. Member says he does not have information as to who the provider is, or he does not know who the external provider is? Just for clarification, if it is the former, is the Government the provider of the database?

The GFRS database would not be handled by the Government Service?

Hon. L M Bruzon: Madam Speaker, as far as I am aware it is an external provider, but I do not know who they are.

Q126/2025
Public toilets –
Out of order dates

Clerk: Question 126, the Hon E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Madam Speaker, during which dates in the last 12 months have the toilets for public use at Westview Park been out of order?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport.

Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport (Hon. L M Bruzon): Madam Speaker, the toilets at Westview Park were out of order during the following days in the last 12 months, the reason for each occasion being vandalism. 15th October 2024, between 12th and 15th November 2024, 20th December 2024 and 20th January 2025.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Is there CCTV around the area? If there have been repeated examples of vandalism, is there CCTV to monitor the area? If not, will the Minister perhaps consider whether it would be appropriate to install something like that?

Hon. L M Bruzon: Madam Speaker, I am not sure whether there is or not, but if there isn't, I agree that it would be a good idea to install it.

Q127/2025
GSLA facilities –
Fees paid by users

Clerk: Question 127, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Can Government provide a detailed breakdown in respect of all fees paid by users of any facilities falling under the auspices of the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority during the current financial year, indicating the purpose of their usage?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport.

Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport (Hon. L M Bruzon): Madam Speaker, the breakdown of fees received by the GSLA from users is as follows: Fitness classes room hire, £300; Hire of football pitches at the Basehead Complex for private coaching schools, £1,130;

Rent collected for kitchen hire at the Europa Sports Complex, £8,000; Europa Sports Complex gym membership fees, £72,145.23; Hire of swimming pool facilities, £789; and Hire of sports for private events, £10,976.34.

Hon. E J Reyes: Madam Speaker, in respect of the last item, the £10,976 of the hire, the hire of which premises, because I know my question was sort of a generic of facilities falling under the Sports and Leisure Authority, but in his answers, the Minister was able to pinpoint that the kitchen facilities, for example, were Europa Sports Centre. This hiring of premises is in respect of which premises?

Hon. L M Bruzon: Madam Speaker, on the 23rd and 28th of December 2024, it was the Bayside Sports Complex recreational area. On the 23rd of December 2024 and 2nd of January 2025, it was for the hire of the Europa Sports Complex Hall. 10th of September 2024, it was a National Day event at Bayside Sports Complex recreational area. June 2024 was the hire of the Lathbury pool facilities.

Hon. E J Reyes: Madam Speaker, is the Minister aware, in the hiring of these premises for these events and so on, is a user required to take out a separate entertainment licence or is it covered perhaps by a GSLA entertainment licence which they can then sort of sublet to others?

Hon. L M Bruzon: Madam Speaker, they apply for a separate licence.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q128/2025
Ball-stop nets –
Outstanding problems

Clerk: Question 128, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Can Government update this House in respect of the outstanding problems in providing a permanent solution to the ball-stop nets at Europa Sports grounds?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport.

Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport (Hon. L M Bruzon): Madam Speaker, as the Hon. member is aware, we recently went through the planning process in order to extend the seating capacity at the Europa Sports Complex. Madam Speaker, the current extension is scheduled to commence mid-March, early April and should be completed by mid-June. This development, along with the new lighting and other improvements represents what we refer to as Phase 1 of developing the premises to the full potential.

Madam Speaker, we are hopeful and we are currently working on, what we refer to as Phase 2 and if it does become a reality, it will do away with the need for the ball stop nets.

Hon. E J Reyes: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My understanding had been that the refurbishment and upgrading of the seating areas and so on were towards the west and the southern end of the

sports fields, whereby these ball-stop nets are actually on the eastern side. The idea was to stop the balls interfering with the children's play park and so on.

Given that they are at different locations, how does the Minister envisage that a solution will be found, where in a previous Parliament his predecessor gave us the impression that it was just a question of finalising the net system, that the infrastructure is there, but was somehow or other not quite putting up with the weather, I think it was.

Hon. L M Bruzon: Madam Speaker, as I just said, the current works being carried out is Phase 1. We have very, exciting plans for what will be Phase 2 of the project, and that would mean certain changes which would do away with the need for the ball-stop nets.

Hon. E J Reyes: I am sorry if he has answered before, Madam Speaker, but the Minister refers to Phase 1 and Phase 2. I think the ball-stop nets, hopefully, a solution will be found in Phase 2. Does he have a timescale and estimated dates when that phase is happening because I know this issue, from my notes, I have been asking these types of questions for well over two years now?

Hon. L M Bruzon: Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, I do not have any dates. There are many different entities that encompass Phase 2, and we still have to get everything together.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

EMPLOYMENT, EQUALITY, CULTURE AND TOURISM

Q129/2025

Parental bereavement –

New provisions

Q130/2025

Parental leave –

Shared equally amongst parents

Clerk: Questions to the Hon. Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Clerk: Question 129, the Hon. A Sanchez.

Hon. A Sanchez: Could the Government state what provisions it intends to introduce for parental bereavement leave and when it expects these to be implemented?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture and Tourism (Hon. C P Santos): Madam Speaker, I will answer this question together with Question 130.

Clerk: Question 130, the Hon. A Sanchez.

Hon. A Sanchez: Could the Government state how much longer it expects to take before it is in a position to move legislation that allows parental leave to be shared more equally between parents?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Hon. C P Santos: Madam Speaker, there are many different intricacies surrounding parental leave. We have been through an initial consultation phase with different departments and organisations and are now considering all the viable options that would benefit both employees and businesses in Gibraltar. At this juncture, a specific timeframe cannot be provided, and parental bereavement leave is just one of the complex factors that is being considered within the legislation as a whole.

Hon. A Sanchez: Madam Speaker, I am grateful for that answer. In terms of changes to parental bereavement leave and announcements made by the Government in 2020, could the Hon. Minister confirm whether these changes were ever given effect in legislation or relevant regulations?

Hon. C P Santos: I would need specific notice of this answer. I am aware, though, that the change in what was announced in 2020 was a policy decision within the Civil Service. I notice it changed to two weeks. That was mentioned in the press release. I am not sure if it was changed in the legislation, but it is something that we are looking at within the new parental leave legislation, both in the Employment Act and in the parental leave.

Hon. A Sanchez: I am grateful, Madam Speaker. By way of clarification, the changes in relation to the announcements made by the Government in 2020 were changes that were made in relation to the public sector, but were not changes that were given any effect in legislation that had any effects or changes that were made in relation to the private sector. Is this correct?

Hon. C P Santos: I can confirm that these changes were made within the public sector. I would need to go back and check whether any changes have been added into the legislation for the private sector.

Hon. A Sanchez: Madam Speaker, in February 2023, a motion was brought to this House by our former colleague, Mr Elliot Phillips, specifically in relation to bereavement leave, and specifically the legal right for paid leave for parents who are grieving the loss of pregnancy before 24 weeks. I note the motion was amended, and during the course of the debate there was a mention of the need for consultation of the Bill possibly having to appear as a Command Paper. Would the Hon. Minister be able to provide an update as to the progress of this consultation and when we can expect to see this command paper, if indeed it is still the direction of travel of the Government?

Hon. C P Santos: At the moment, parental bereavement leave is part of one of the many different areas within the parental leave legislation that we are looking at. With regards to the actual command paper. I would need to have further information on this and see where we are at, but I am looking at parental leave legislation as a whole, where parental bereavement leave is actually a part of this. I will look for the specifics of what the hon. Member is asking for, but it is something that she can rest assured is already being considered within the legislation as a whole.

Hon. A Sanchez: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Minister's explanation, but would he not agree that certainly given that the announcements in relation to this were made in 2020 and then it was further mentioned in 2023, that the scope of this was going to be broadened to include those parents grieving the loss of pregnancy before 24 weeks? Indeed, at the time of hearing this, it was personally very welcome news having experienced a traumatic loss of a child in pregnancy before 24 weeks as a woman. Wouldn't the Minister agree that there is a certain expectation from members of the public and a certain need for progress in this regard to be made faster than it is currently being made?

Hon. C P Santos: Madam Speaker, as I have already mentioned, this is part of a bigger picture, so we can look at things and compartmentalise the legislation and different areas of the legislation, but as part of the bigger picture, this is something that we obviously agree with because we have already implemented it within policy for the Public Service. So opening it up in legislation to the private sector needs to be looked at and consulted with, but it is obviously the way that we are looking to travel. It is very difficult when we are looking at legislation as a whole that will affect parental leave for both parents and shared parental leave to compartmentalise different sections as opposed to looking at all of it as a whole and hopefully bring the legislation in one whole piece.

Hon. D J Bossino: Yes, the Hon. Minister, in answer to the first question, said that he was consulting departments and I think the Minister said organisations. May I ask him to be a bit more specific and specify who in fact the Minister is consulting?

Hon. C P Santos: In the first instance, we have consulted with, this was mentioned last July I think in Parliament, with the GFSB, the Chamber of Commerce, we have also been involved with the DSS as well as the Ministry of Equality, the Ministry of Employment as well, because this would affect the employment legislation. I finally received the consultation feedback from the Chamber of Commerce and the GFSB. All of whom have given me their feedback but would like further consultation and as well bearing in mind for them the treaty that is about to happen, this is feedback that they have given to me with pensions and maternity leave and benefits. That is where we are at in our consultation at the moment.

Hon. D J Bossino: Is the Hon. the Minister suggesting that by way of pressing him further in terms of a timeline that we are unlikely to have legislation or anything close to legislation in place until a treaty in relation to Brexit is finalised? Is that the Government's position in relation to this?

Hon. C P Santos: No, that is not the Government's position at all. What we are saying is that because we are consulting, their feedback is to consult further and for them to bear in mind the fact that a treaty has not been reached yet. This is their feedback. We are moving ahead with all the different areas of the legislation. We will consult with them but this is not a legislation that is dependent on the treaty.

Hon. D J Bossino: Is the Hon. the Minister, if I can dig slightly further, able to state, in broad terms at least, he may not have the information in front of him, the two private organisations and it is exclusive to these two, as I understand it from his answer, is the GFSB and the Chamber of Commerce. Can he at least give us a summary of what it is that they have raised as part of the consultation process, which has provoked the answer that he has given in relation to the treaty and the negotiations? We are bemused on this side of the House.

Hon. C P Santos: I do not feel this is anything to be bemused about. It is not my job to summarise what someone has given me as part of the consultation paper. I understand that, as the hon. Member has mentioned from his sedentary position, that he needs to answer questions, and I am here to answer.

There is absolutely no problem on the answer that is asked. Any question that is asked, I will answer as intricately as I possibly can. I am not going to summarise what another organisation has told me. This is an internal consultation. We need to get feedback from the private sector, because we need to change a legislation that is not an easy fix, and there are options that would benefit employees, that could in turn cripple businesses and that is not what we need to do with this legislation.

We need to make sure that this works for employer and employee. So that is why this has become a very extensive consultation, a very extensive, intricate process, in order for us to be able to make the correct choices for both employers and employees.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q131/2025
Youth Clubs –
Usage

Clerk: Question 131, the Hon. G Origo.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, can the Government provide data on how many young people were using youth clubs in 2024, broken down by age and gender?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture and Tourism (Hon. C P Santos): Madam Speaker, the youth club statistics for 2024 are divided into three age ranges: Seven to 11 year olds, male 114, female 97. Age range 12 to 15 years old, male 112, female 88, other nine; Age range 16 to 30 years old, male 42, female 44, other six.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, may I ask the Hon. Minister, given the data provided across the floor of the House, it seems that there is a much bigger uptake with respect to males than females in terms of attendance in youth clubs. Is there a reason that young males seem to prefer or subscribe to youth clubs over the females and whether the Minister is doing anything to address this?

Hon. C P Santos: Madam Speaker, the total of males is 268, females 229. I do not feel that is a huge disparity and I do not think this is something that causes any alarm for me to have to do any extra work to attract more females or whether males are finding different issues. This is a leisure provision, it is informal education and this is not a huge disparity in the numbers for me to even contemplate having to worry about it.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q132/2025
GSLA facilities –
Fees paid by users

Clerk: Question 132, the Hon. G Origo.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, the number of air arrivals from the UK scheduled flights has dropped by roughly 10% from 2023 to 2024, according to recent Government data. In light of this significant drop, what are the Minister's plans to better market Gibraltar to our UK tourist visitors?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture and Tourism (Hon. C P Santos): Madam Speaker, air arrivals from the UK encompass various markets, including tourism, business travel across all

corporate sectors and visitors using Gibraltar as an entry point to nearby regions of southern Spain. The scheduled flights from the UK to Gibraltar and the volume of UK tourist visitors do not necessarily correlate and should be considered separately. A reduction in flight frequencies does not automatically translate to a decrease in tourist numbers.

Gibraltar is still considered a viable destination, as shown by a recent agreement with a partner airline who will be adding an extra flight during the summer season and a whole new flight to Birmingham as from June 2025. Marketing efforts in the UK remain very strong, with our continued participation in trade shows, MICE events and travel industry gatherings. All of which you are aware of, as I am continually questioned on our participation of these in the House.

Collaborations with industry partners, TV advertising, digital campaigns, social media and traditional print marketing in newspapers and trade publications further reinforce Gibraltar's presence in the market.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, whilst I appreciate that the dwindling numbers of people coming to Gibraltar by way of flights may not represent actual tourists and there may be some who come by way of business, it is a hard reality that there is a drop in the number of people coming to Gibraltar. Can I ask the Hon. Minister whether he has a strategy which he is deploying in order to improve the number of visitors from the UK?

I put it in this context. A few years ago we did very well in marketing Gibraltar and had a strategy which encapsulated a Britain in the Sun programme and did very well to market Gibraltar. That boom seems to have fizzled out. Given this fizzling out, is it the Minister's position that we are still marketing towards UK visitors as Gibraltar in the Sun or are we doing much more than just that?

Hon. C P Santos: Madam Speaker, I can only but say please you need to check your numbers and you need to check what is going out there with regards to Gibraltar because visitor numbers in Gibraltar are not dwindling. We are seeing a rise in daytime cruise ship passengers. We are seeing a rise in entry into the Upper Rock Nature Reserve. All these are figures that are already published.

As I already mentioned, people coming to flights are not exclusively tourists. There may be people who, maybe the dwindling numbers are not tourists, are people who are using Gibraltar to cross over the border.

Maybe it is people are not taking as many business trips and are choosing to do meetings via Zoom. Obviously I have absolutely no worry in Gibraltar's progress, especially seeing as BA on Friday published their own report where Gibraltar is in the top five of the rising stars with a 17% increase on searches and bookings. So it is something that neither myself nor EasyJet who has invested into extra flights to Gibraltar or BA are worried about with regards to airline travel.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, may I press the Hon. Minister, can you confirm whether there is a strategy being deployed in order to market ourselves to the UK visitors? (**Hon. C P Santos:** Yes.) Madam Speaker, if I may, I am grateful to the Hon. Minister confirming or bringing up the BA travel report which I think he gave an interview on over this weekend and with respect, I am making reference to that report. It did say, as the Hon. Minister rightly said, that there is a 17% rise in searches for travel destination packages to Gibraltar but I have the statistics here with me and despite there being a 17% increase in searches, the hotel occupancy in Gibraltar in 2024 was down. Upper Rock visits compared to our best years were down. Airline visits are down. The number of cruise visits compared to our best year, 2019, are still down. Can I ask the Hon. Minister, where is the success story here?

Hon. C P Santos: I do not know where you are getting the statistics from and I would like to see your sources. The Upper Rock Nature Reserve visits are not down at all.

Even in our best years, we are 300 people. 300,000 visits over from... I think it was 2019. We are up to nearly... 1,400,000 visitors in the Upper Rock. There is one hotel less. Therefore, we have less rooms to fill. Occupancy in the last year... The 17% in January is, for this year's bookings.

I do not know where we are getting these statistics because, obviously, the ones that I get into my office look very positive but we can discuss at a later time. I do not know where you're getting your statistics from especially the ones from the Upper Rock Nature Reserve are very visible. The ones with cruise liners coming into Gibraltar were already in a record-breaking year with pre-bookings for next year already breaking our own record. I am not quite sure where he is getting the statistics from or how he is twisting them around to make them feel like they are down but this is maybe something to discuss. Maybe our sources are different.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, with respect to the Hon. Minister, I make reference to the number of cruise call visits in Gibraltar and I take the last five years. In 2019, we had 197 cruise calls in Gibraltar. 2022, we had five. 2021, we had 44. 2023, we had 163. In 2024, we had 185. So, what the Minister would like to compare to the previous year, which with all due respect, we might say on this side of the House was not a great year with respect to our best years. We believe on this House that there is still much progress and a way to go.

The data, as far as we are concerned, do not show a vast improvement. Therefore, I respectfully ask the Hon. Minister what he is doing by way of a strategy to improve the numbers of people coming to Gibraltar. Is he saying with a straight face to the business community in Gibraltar that he has done the best that he can because we have 17% increases in searches when the business community here in Gibraltar want more visits, more occupancy, more bookings, and more people spending money in Gibraltar?

Hon. C P Santos: Well, using cruise data from 2021, when there was a world shutdown on cruising, I do not want to be offensive, yes, but I consider it a little bit ridiculous. We had 2019, then 2020 shutdown, there was a short rise, and this is not exclusive to Gibraltar. We had clearly the trends that were going up.

This year, 2025, we seem to have left out of his statistics, of the hon. Member's statistics, that we are on 252, which is higher than we have had in our highest numbers, which were within the GSLP time in Government. Let us not forget that. This is an uphill trend, and I can, with a straight face, tell the business community, who I work with very closely, I meet them very closely, to discuss our strategies.

They have seen our tourism strategy, and I keep on mentioning, as I said here, we have TV advertising, digital campaigns, we have a social media team, we go to conferences, events, we are going to niche market events, we are seeing a rise in everything that we work on like diving is one of the niche markets... we are seeing numbers in weddings rise, we are seeing numbers rise and what I find very bizarre, and very strange, is that someone can stand on the other side of the House with the same straight face they want from me, and tell me that tourism is on its way down. I do not know where we're getting the figures, because we are working very closely with the business community, in order to give them the best products that Gibraltar can offer, and that is why numbers are rising.

Do we have a strategy? Yes! I get questioned about it all the time. Whenever I go somewhere I get questioned about cost and what I could do better. I am going everywhere, the team is going everywhere, we are investing every inch of our energy to get those numbers to go up, so we cannot be selective on the numbers that are convenient to us. I will give you the numbers that are existing, and the ones that are there.

I cannot afford to pick and choose the numbers that work for me, in the same way that the hon. Member opposite chooses the numbers that are convenient for his questions.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, and if I may tell the Hon. Minister that the statistics I get are the ones published on the Government website but taking that to one side, may I just refer back to the

British travel trends report which was mentioned by the Hon. Minister, one of the points which was addressed and I have the report here with me, that many of the tourists who seek a travel destination look for travel experience activities and fine dining experiences. I think he mentioned one of the things that we are trying to improve here is diving, for instance. Have we learnt anything from this report with respect to the areas with respect to activities and fine dining experiences?

Hon. C P Santos: The report was published last week, so I have already read it clearly and worked with the team on what our strategies are moving forward to what the trends are. That is why we go to these conferences and that is why we go to these meetings. For us we have noticed that adventure tourism is something that is obviously a trend that people, there are a lot of independent travellers now as well, so we are looking at how we can focus on independent travel... That is why we have a TV campaign in the UK, that is why we have a radio campaign because we know that the independent traveller is the number that is rising quickest.

I am working with the Catering Association to see how we can offer more gastronomical tours and I am working with the industry and I am telling them this is what we need as a product and we are seeing how we can work together in order for them to give me a product and for us to market it.

Madam Speaker: The Hon. C Sacarello.

Hon. C Sacarello: Thank you very much Madam Speaker and good afternoon to you. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister what the Government's strategy is in regards to cruise calls in specific and the impacts that the addition of Westview Park reclamation will have considering the possibility that the extension jetty would have to be removed and possibly move further down. Will there be an impact on the ability for cruise liners to berth on the inside?

Hon. C P Santos: The movement where the extension jetty is going to go is not something that has anything to do with me but in the initial concept designs it would not affect cruise liner docking in the inside area as far as we are considering.

Hon. C Sacarello: Madam Speaker, I just want to very quickly confirm the fact that the extension jetty is not within your remit but nevertheless the impact it would have on the cruise liners where it to be moved across is. Can the Government state, perhaps one of his fellow Ministers could assist in saying, will there be an impact on that inside berth for the cruise liners?

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Madam Speaker, I do not know where the hon. Gentleman is getting the faintest notion that this could have any effect

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q133/2025
Morocco air links –
Proposals

Clerk: Question 133, the Hon. G Origo.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, can the Government disclose what proposals it has received, if any, for air links to be set up with Morocco?

Clerk: Answer the Hon. Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture and Tourism (Hon. C P Santos): Madam Speaker, we are still in discussions with regards to air links to Morocco and these discussions are commercial in nature.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Hon. D J Bossino: if I may...

Madam Speaker: If any hon. Member wants to ask a question please get my attention otherwise, I have to sit here looking around seeing whether there is anyone who wants to ask a question. So yes, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Thank you. Is the Hon. Minister saying that when he mentions in the second part of his answer that they are commercial in nature. They are bound to be commercial in nature but is he saying that that is what is preventing him from giving us any updates in relation to whether proposals have been received? Is he unable to provide that answer and answer the question that my hon. Friend has posed in this House?

Hon C P Santos: I have already said that we are in discussions so I would take it that the answer is yes.

Hon. D J Bossino: Is he able to say, and if he is able to say can he say, how many airlines, is the Hon. Minister in discussions with?

(Hon. C P Santos: No.) Is the Hon. Minister able to state the destinations within the Kingdom of Morocco that these airlinks are likely to engender links between Gibraltar and those particular airports?

Hon. C P Santos: No.

Hon. D J Bossino: Why are all his answers in the negative? Is it purely because he is relying on the commercial nature of these discussions? Is that it or is there something else?

Hon. C P Santos: It is because we have nothing finalised so I would just be talking about a hypothetical eventuality. It would not be a case of giving you any facts other than I am discussing with different airlines about air links to Morocco and many other places. Nothing is finalised, therefore, I would be giving you an answer that is not based on facts.

Hon. D J Bossino: Is he able to provide at least this particular fact? Is the Hon. Minister able to state when he will be able to make an announcement in relation to these air links?

Hon. C P Santos: Not at this time.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q134/2025

**CLIA destination showcase –
Business generated/expected to generate**

Clerk: Question 134, the Hon. G Origo.

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker, what business has the Minister generated for Gibraltar or expects to generate from having hosted the CLIA destination showcase providing details of destinations and operators where possible?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture and Tourism (Hon. C P Santos): Madam Speaker, the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) event took place in September 2024 offering a valuable opportunity to promote Gibraltar as a destination to UK based travel agents. These agents primarily though not exclusively specialise in selling cruise packages. Our aim is to attract more cruise ships and therefore more cruise passengers that will benefit local businesses including hotels, restaurants, tour operators and retail shops.

Hosting such a high profile event raises Gibraltar's visibility as a destination within the global cruise industry as can be seen by the rising cruise calls expected in 2025 to reach 252 which is a record number and a 37% increase on 2024. We are also seeing pre-booking figures translating to a double digit growth in 2026 versus 2025. In addition, although the question is asking us to provide details of destinations, the CLIA destination showcase as its name implies was to showcase Gibraltar as a destination therefore no other destinations were showcased. The tour operators that participated are as follows: The Travel Nook UK; iTravel by Lorraine; Travel Zoo; Boatree Travel; Arabia Inc; New Hope Travel; Cruise Mummy; Stewart Travel; Destination Direct Travel; Sajan Travel; Travel Low Deal Limited; Hayes Travel; Intelli Travel; Frangipani Holidays; Jamaica Cruising; Cruise Pass by Gold Meadow; Mail Metro Media; Cruise Trade News; World of Cruising; Islands Travel Trade Network ITTN; and Freelance Journalists

Hon. G Origo: Madam Speaker grateful to the Minister for his answer and with respect whilst I note that the question posed details of destinations and operators was talking about the destination to Gibraltar and as he rightly mentioned the destination showcase was a UK based showcase but it still encapsulated agents which had a much wider remit than the UK Can I ask with respect to the 252 cruise calls he projects for 2025 are these projections or are they bookings that we have made for Gibraltar to cruise call for next year?

Hon. C P Santos: These are bookings that you can find in the Gibraltar Port website at the moment confirmed bookings we could get some extra ones from cruise ships that have to detour and come to Gibraltar maybe some may have to cancel due to weather or something but these are the ones that are booked for 2025.

Hon. D J Bossino: Is the Hon. Minister able to state whether this resulted in the incurring of a cost to the Gibraltar Government, the holding of this conference and, if so, can he say how much?

Hon. C P Santos: Yes, any conference that we attend, any conference that we participate we will incur a cost. The cost for this was £22,725 which helps support bringing over 60 people to Gibraltar for this conference

Hon. D J Bossino: I was going to ask the Hon. Minister the precise number because I know that he did say he gave us the groups and the companies that did come and then his last category was freelance journalists is he able to provide a precise number he says over 60 is he able to provide a precise number of delegates that came to Gibraltar for this particular conference.

Hon. C P Santos: At the moment I am not able to I know it was around 60 to 63 but I do not know the exact number but I can find out and let the hon. Member know without a problem.

Hon. D J Bossino: I am grateful. Is the Hon. Minister also able to state what has come from this particular venture and in particular in relation to the freelance journalists has it produced the goods in terms of articles written about Gibraltar and that type of thing does he have a tangible positive effect which has come from this particular venture.

Hon. C P Santos: This was a few months ago so it is very difficult to see when it comes to bookings because usually cruise bookings are well in advance so the tangible proof for me is the fact that we are getting more interest as part of the strategy that we keep being asked about is a whole package of getting passengers and cruise liners and more interest in Gibraltar as a destination so for us it is very difficult to pinpoint oh this one event brought me 10 cruise passengers and this brought me five more cruise ships we have a year long campaign that includes advertising includes different events conferences so the trend from the numbers that we are getting in bookings is that whatever we are doing seems to be working

Hon. D J Bossino: I fully appreciate that and he has not reinvented the wheel this is being done by his predecessors indeed of his Government and previous Governments and there is a two year time lag with these things but is he able to state whether it has specifically, I asked the Hon. Minister specifically, whether it has produced any articles though he mentioned that there were freelance journalists but I do not think he has answered if the answer is no the answer is no. Has it produced any press interest since this happened did he say it was September 2024 I think.

Hon. C P Santos: We have had interest from MailOnMetro group. We have three different journalists that are coming this year to Gibraltar. I think before the summer the three of them will be here by the end of June we will have had three visits from 3 of the different publications from MailOnMetro media.

Hon. D J Bossino: Is he able to state whether it is the Government's intention to have a repeat of this presumably I am assuming perhaps wrongly that this is done in September but is there an intention to have a repeat of this type of thing?

Hon. C P Santos: We look at all different conferences so we will not have a repeat of this one in particular because they like changing destinations so that different destinations are promoted within the circle but we have another one that we just announced about two weeks ago which is the ATO conference which will work similarly and is also this time working with independent travel agents so we will be able to have a different focus for that group of travel agents and hopefully work on a strategy for independent travellers and more leisure travel.

Hon. D J Bossino: This does raise an important point in relation to the strategy that he was answering to my learned hon. Friend in respect of the previous answer that the Minister gave. Is the focus exclusively in relation to the UK this was specifically UK focused markets or other geographical destinations from which he would want to attract cruise lines?

Hon. C P Santos: CLIA is the agency. The cruise liners are not exclusively from the UK. They work with international cruise companies.

We will attract the cruise companies that come to the Mediterranean. We go to Miami and we go to, for example, the head office of the American companies, but all these companies have offices all over the UK as well and Europe, and we cannot forget that for a lot of these markets, not necessarily the cruise liner market, our main feeder market are the UK and across the border in Spain, so that is where a lot of our focus goes with regards to getting people here easier and closer, but with regards to cruise companies, we are reliant on the cruise companies that do come over to Gibraltar and sometimes, or among the Mediterranean, and sometimes the Head Office could be in the UK if it is a British company or it could be in the US with a representation in the UK, which is easy access for us.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q135-6/2025
NVQ Courses –
Details; Qualifications obtained

Clerk: Question 135, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Can Government provide details of all NVQ courses currently being undertaken by trainees at Gibraltar Training Centre, indicating estimated completion dates and qualifications expected to be obtained?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture and Tourism (Hon. C P Santos): Madam Speaker, I will answer this question together with Question 136.

Clerk: Question 136, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Can Government provide details of all NVQ qualifications obtained by trainees, indicating levels obtained and completion dates from September 2024 to date?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Employment, Equality, Culture and Tourism.

Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture and Tourism (Hon. C P Santos): Madam Speaker, the NVQ courses currently being undertaken at the Gibraltar Training Centre with estimated completion dates and qualifications expected to be obtained are as follows: EAL, Performing Engineering Operations, NVQ Level 2 Electrical, estimated completion date is June 2025; EAL, Performing Engineering Operations, NVQ Level 2 Mechanical, estimated completion date June 2025; City and Guilds Plumbing, NVQ Level 2 Diploma in Plumbing, estimated completion dates are August 2025 and June 2026 for two different cohorts; City and Guilds, NVQ Level 2 Diploma in Building Maintenance Operations, estimated completion dates are September 2025 and June 2026 for two different cohorts; From September 2024 to date, the details of NVQ qualifications obtained by trainees with levels obtained and completion dates are EAL; NVQ Level 3 Diploma in Engineering Maintenance, Mechanical Pathway, three apprentices achieved in October 2024; City and Guilds, NVQ Level 2 Diploma in Plumbing, one apprentice achieved in September 2024; and the City and Guilds Level 1 Extended Certificate in Construction Skills, 22 apprentices achieved September 2024.

Hon. E J Reyes: Thank you Madam Speaker. In the list the Minister has kindly provided, other than plumbing, which is a single doubt as a particular individual trade, the next one with expected completion dates are September 2025 and also I think it was June 2026 on building and so on, maintenance work and so on. What trades as such does that cover?

Hon. C P Santos: Madam Speaker, the Building Maintenance Operations, the Level 2 Diploma, covers bricklaying, painting, carpentry, plastering. I think those are the four that they learn as a combination for maintenance.

Hon. E J Reyes: Analysing the statistics, there is no mention of any student either undertaking or having completed any Level 3 qualifications. Have these ceased to be offered at the training centre?

Hon. C P Santos: There is and there is a mention of it in the second part of the answer, where the Level 3 Diploma in Engineering Maintenance, Mechanical Pathways had three apprentices achieve the Level 3 in October 2024. We need to make sure that we go through the different levels before they get to Level 3, but it is offered.

Hon. E J Reyes: Yes, I am careful of that because the Electrical and Mechanical require a Level 3 to be classified as a qualified craftsman. However, in the more traditional, let us call it the Building or Construction trades, those Level 2 offers you or provides you with the qualified craftsman status. Are any students or any trainees undertaking a Level 3 in that respect, for example the plumbing as one of them?

Hon. C P Santos: Not at the moment, but I would need to check whether the Level 3 in plumbing is actually a requirement that is necessary. I know for Mechanical and Electrical, especially for Mechanical, but for Electrical, there are job pathways just with a Level 2. You can choose to continue to the Level 3, but I would need to check on that for plumbing.

Hon. E J Reyes: Yes, I am grateful Minister is going to check. I can tell you about the qualified craftsman status is achieved with a Level 2 in these sorts of crafts trades. The Level 3 is not a requirement.

It is a desirable qualification, especially for those who work in the industry and hope to make it to, for example, a site foreman level or whatever. It is highly desirable to have a Level 3, which is why I asked the question. It is not just investment in preparing a craftsman for today, but thinking ahead, you need the qualification and you obviously need the experience on the field. Can the Minister confirm that should a trainee wish to proceed to a Level 3 in plumbing, for example, that the capability and the resources are there within the training centre?

Hon. C P Santos: Yes, I am aware that the capability and the resources are there for a Level 3, as it is proved by the three apprentices that have taken this on. It is something that, of course, we need to discuss with the apprentices themselves and see. A lot of them, especially the mechanical and electrical, most of them want to get straight into work from the time I have spent with them in the past 15 months. Yes, the resources are there for the Level 3.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Can I just ask the Hon. Minister, at the beginning of his original answer, I think he mentioned a couple of cohorts. He did it a couple of times, which I assume he means groups of students. Can he tell us how many students we are talking about?

Hon. C P Santos: How many students we are talking per cohort? There is a subdivision of what the trades do, so I would need to add it up but I think we have, in the latest cohort, we started with 44 or 46, and then we have got 22 currently.

Some of them have gone into work and some of them did not pass the course. I do not know the exact numbers, I need to check but I think we have about eight from the past cohort that that is still to complete their Level 2.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: I see. For me to understand it, when he says around 44, then it goes to 22, that is because people drop out or they do not successfully go through the different levels? Is that what he is talking about?

When, for example, he said initially around 44 and then to 22, did he mean that 22 passed Level 1 or Level 2? I am not sure what he meant, if he could clarify.

Hon. C P Santos: Please do not take the 44 as gospel. I will get the exact number. I do not want to be accused of getting the incorrect answer in. Parliament but I know it is in the 40s. I know that there are 22 currently. A lot of them completed the Level 1.

Some of them chose to stay on. Some of them went into other employment or they wanted to start work immediately. Some of them did not pass the course, so some of them may want to retake the Level 1. Currently, that is why the numbers are changing.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: I see. Presumably, these are courses that get done over a number of years, not just one year. That is correct as well, yes?

Hon. C P Santos: It depends on the level. Level 1 takes a shorter period of time. There are three months of tuition and then they go for a few months into placement.

Level 2 takes a longer period of time because they go into placement for a longer period of time and they go back and they have to do their portfolios. So yes, it depends on the level, it takes a period of time.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: So if I was interested, for example, on understanding the uptake at the training centre, I assume from what the Hon. Minister has said in answer to my supplementary that he might not have the statistics of the kind of uptake there has been over a number of years and I would need to ask a fresh question at another session of the House. Is that right?

Hon. C P Santos: Yes, I do not have the numbers on me right now. I need notice of that question. I can only guess and then it would not be an exact number and I do not think it would be fair for myself or for yourself.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

JUSTICE, TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Q137/2025
Domestic offences –
Breakdown

Clerk: Questions to the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.
Question 137, the Hon. A Sanchez.

Hon. A Sanchez: Could Government provide a breakdown of domestic related offences committed, detected, reported, identified or classified as such by specific offence under the Crimes Act or any other relevant or subsidiary legislation for the years 2021 to present date?

Clerk: Answer the Hon the Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): I now hand over a schedule with the information requested.

Madam Speaker: Right, we move on to the next question and then we will revert to this for supplementaries.

ANSWER TO QUESTION 137

A Breakdown of domestic-related offences committed, detected, reported, identified, or classified as such, by specific offence under the Crimes Act or any other relevant or subsidiary legislation, for years 2021 to the present date.

(01 Jan 2021 – 16 Feb 2025)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Abandoning animals contrary to Section 6 Animals Act	0	1	0	0	0
Abduction of a Child by Parent, etc. contrary to Section 184 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	1	0
Affray contrary to Section 57 of Crimes Act 2011	6	3	0	1	0
Arson contrary to Section 355 of Crimes Act 2011	1	3	0	0	0
Assault by Penetration contrary to Section 214 of Crimes Act 2011	1	2	0	0	0
Actual Bodily Harm: Racially Aggravated contrary to Section 176 & 113 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	1	0	0
Affray contrary to Section 57 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	3	0	0
Arson contrary to Section 355 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	1	0	0
Assault by Penetration contrary to Section 214 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	1	0	0
Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm contrary to Section 176 of Crimes Act 2011	26	35	30	25	5
Assault of a Child under 13yrs by Penetration contrary to Section 218 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	0	0
Attempting to Choke, etc. with Intent to Facilitate Indictable Offence contrary to Section 168 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	0	0
Attempting to Pervert the Course of Justice contrary to Common Law	1	0	0	0	0
Being Intoxicated while in Charge of a Child contrary to Section 561 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	1	0	0
Blackmail contrary to Section 414 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	0	1	1
Burglary (attempted) contrary to Section 399 & 22 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	0	0
Burglary contrary to Section 399 of Crimes Act 2011	0	2	5	3	0
Carrying Offensive Weapon in a Public Place contrary to Section 131 of Crimes Act 2011	1	2	1	1	0
Causing a Person to Engage in Sexual Activity without Consent contrary to Section 216 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	0	0
Causing Harassment, Alarm or Distress contrary to Section 89 of Crimes Act 2011	8	2	1	0	0
Causing, Encouraging or Assisting Child Prostitution or Pornography contrary to Section 263 of Crimes Act 2011	1	0	0	0	0
Causing, Encouraging or Assisting a Child under 13yrs to engage in Sexual Activity contrary to Section 220 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	0	0
Common Assault contrary to Section 175 of Crimes Act 2011	120	150	127	123	11
Concealing Offences contrary to Section 49(1) of Crimes Act 2011				1	0
Controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship, contrary to Section 3(1) of the Domestic Abuse Act 2023.	0	0	11	18	2
Cruelty to Animals contrary to Section 5 of Animals Act	0	0	0	1	0
Cruelty to Young Persons contrary to Section 172 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	0	1	1
Destroying or Damaging Property: Value over £500 contrary to Section 354(1) of Crimes Act 2011	4	4	2	3	0
Destroying or Damaging Property: Value under £500 (attempted) contrary to Section 354(1) & 22 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	1	0	0
Destroying or Damaging Property: Value under £500 contrary to Section 354(1) of Crimes Act 2011	14	17	26	13	2
Disclosing, or threatening to disclose, private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress, contrary to Section 97B(1) of the Crimes Act 2011.	0	0	2	3	1

Cont...

CONTINUED ANSWER TO QUESTION 137

Disorderly or Indecent Conduct while Intoxicated contrary to Section 559 of Crimes Act 2011	1	1	2	1	0
False Imprisonment contrary to Section 189(2) of Crimes Act 2011	2	1	10	4	0
Fear or Provocation of Violence contrary to Section 58 of Crimes Act 2011	0	2	6	1	0
Fraud by False Representation contrary to Section 415 & 416 of Crimes Act 2011	1	0	2	2	0
Grievous Bodily Harm / Wounding with Intent contrary to Section 166 of Crimes Act 2011	3	4	6	1	0
Harassing Conduct contrary to Section 92 of Crimes Act 2011	14	22	18	17	3
Harassment of a person in a dwelling contrary to Section 97A (1) Crimes Act 2011	0	0	0	2	0
Improper use of Public Electronic Communications Network contrary to Section 97 of Crimes Act 2011	34	20	24	25	2
Intentional Harassment Alarm or Distress Contrary to Section 88. (1) (a) of the Crimes Act 2011	33	22	22	22	4
Intentional Harassment Alarm or Distress Contrary to Section 88. (1) (b) of the Crimes Act 2011	1	0	2	0	0
Interfering with Vehicles contrary to Section 410 of Crimes Act 2011	1	0	0	0	0
Intimidation, etc. of Witnesses, Jurors and Others contrary to Section 478 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	3	1	0
Kidnapping (attempted) contrary to Section 189(1) & 22 of Crimes Act 2011	1	0	0	3	0
Making Disturbances contrary to Section 82 of Crimes Act 2011	5	3	2	1	0
Murder (attempted) contrary to Section 149 & 22 of Crimes Act 2011			1	1	0
Non-Gibraltarian found in Gibraltar without a valid permit or certificate. Contrary to Section 12(1) and 62(A) of the Immigration Asylum and Refugee Act.	0	1	0	0	0
Possessing Firearm with Intent to Injure contrary to Section 23 of Firearms Act	0	0	0	1	0
Possession of a Controlled Class B Drug contrary to Section 506(2) of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	0	0
Possession of Article with Blade or Point in a Public Place contrary to Section 128 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	1	0
Putting People in fear of Violence contrary to Section 94 of Crimes Act 2011	0	4	1	1	0
Rape (attempted) contrary to Section 213 & 22 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	1	1	0
Rape contrary to Section 213 of Crimes Act 2011	5	4	5	7	1
Rape of a Child under 13yrs contrary to Section 217 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	0	0
Resisting or Obstructing Police contrary to Section 177(2) of Crimes Act 2011	1	5	1	1	0
Robbery contrary to Section 398 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	1	0	0
Sending letters, etc with intent to cause Distress / Anxiety contrary to Section 96 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	0	0
Sexual Activity with a Child Family Member contrary to Section 236 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	1	0	0
Sexual Activity with a Child under the age of Sixteen contrary to Section 221(1) of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	0	1	0
Sexual Assault contrary to Section 215 of Crimes Act 2011	1	2	3	3	0
Stalking involving Fear of Violence or Serious Alarm or Distress contrary to Section 94A of the Crimes Act 2011.	0	0	4	1	0
Stalking. Contrary to Section 92A (1) Crimes Act 2011.	5	6	16	15	0
Strangulation, contrary to Section 167A(1)(a) of the Crimes Act 2011.	0	0	5	10	1
Suffocation, contrary to Section 167A(1)(b) of the Crimes Act 2011.	0	0	1	0	0
Taking a Conveyance without Authority contrary to Section 408 of	2	3	1	0	0

Cont...

CONTINUED ANSWER TO QUESTION 137

Crimes Act 2011					
Theft: Value over £500 contrary to Section 391 & 397 of Crimes Act 2011	0	3	5	3	1
Theft: Value under £500 contrary to Section 391 & 397 of Crimes Act 2011	1	5	9	10	1
Threats to Destroy or Damage Property contrary to Section 356 of Crimes Act 2011	1	3	2	0	0
Threats to Kill contrary to Section 157 of Crimes Act 2011	6	6	9	11	4
Throwing Missiles to the Damage / Danger of any Person contrary to Section 556(1)(b) of Crimes Act 2011	1	2	0	1	0
Trespassing on a Designated Site contrary to Section 545 of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	0	0	1
Unauthorised Access to Computer Material contrary to Section 362 of Crimes Act 2011	1	0	0	2	0
Unlawful Obtaining/Disclosure of Personal Data contrary to section 175 of the Data Protection Act 2004	0	0	0	0	1
Voyeurism contrary to Section 293 of Crimes Act 2011	2	0	0	1	0
Wasteful Employment of Police contrary to Section 49(3) of Crimes Act 2011	0	0	2	0	0
Wounding / Grievous Bodily Harm contrary to Section 167 of Crimes Act 2011	0	1	1	1	0

**Q138/2025
Domestic Abuse Act 2023 –
Remaining provisions**

Clerk: Question 138, the Hon. A Sanchez.

Hon. A Sanchez: Could the Government state when it expects the remaining provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act 2023 to come into force?

Clerk: Answer of the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, I am informed that the RGP is actively looking at provisions required and liaising with other departments to ensure that all mechanisms are in place to fully implement the remaining provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act 2023.

Hon. A Sanchez: Madam Speaker, I am grateful for that answer. Would the Hon. Minister be able to elaborate a bit further as to perhaps the resources or the provisions that are lacking or that are needed or that need to be put in place for the remaining parts of the legislation to come into force and perhaps could you be a bit more specific as to the timeframe?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, I cannot be more specific on the timing because I do not have that information available. What I have said is that the RGP is liaising with relevant departments. The most relevant department undoubtedly is the Ministry for Housing.

I do, however, have some supplementary information as to what the legal issues are concerning the reason as to why this has to be handled with care and I am told and I am reading it out from the supplementary information available to me that the remaining provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act 2023 that needs to be commenced are the new provisions to create Domestic Abuse Protection Notices. These can be issued by senior police officers in urgent circumstances for a limited time where the perpetrator of domestic abuse could be made to leave the premises, in other words a flat which is currently vacant.

Hon. N Feetham: The court could move with the spouse or partner, and the person against whom the notice is made would then appear before the court, who would either issue a order or dismiss the notice. The other comments provisions of the Act also include the equivalent court orders which not only follow the issuing of notices but are also available in other court proceedings. There is no issue of constitutionality as to these orders as they are judicial in nature.

The GLO have advised that before the notices come into force and for them to be constitutional, i.e. those notices that relate to persons being asked to leave the premises, that there should be available an alternative place of residence for the alleged perpetrator for such time as the notice is in force and until it is a court order. Once it becomes a court order, it would be for the person to make their own arrangements.

Hon. A Sanchez: I am grateful for that answer Madam Speaker. In terms of the answer that the Hon. Minister has provided, would he be able to elaborate then on what measures in relation to housing and possible solutions the Government is looking into?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, that is a question which is more properly answered by my colleague, the Minister for Housing, so if the hon. Member opposite would choose to table a question in relation to that, I am sure it will be picked up by my colleague.

Hon. A Sanchez: Madam Speaker, I appreciate that, but given that the Hon. Minister has said that the professionals that are involved with this matter are consulting with the housing authorities to find solutions, to find a way to be able to implement these, I am sure he must have some information in relation to this matter and the possible solutions that are being explored. Perhaps he would be able to share this across the floor, given the importance of the matter.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, I refer the hon. Lady to my previous answer.

Madam Speaker: If the Hon. D J Bossino then I will come to the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. D J Bossino: I am happy to do so.

Madam Speaker: No, no, the Hon. D J Bossino, go ahead.

Hon. D J Bossino: I did not see you, so I was focussing on the chair, making sure that I got it. It follows on from what my hon. Friend has just posed by way of a second and supplementary question. Can he at least say, can the Hon. Minister at least say this, is it that the implementation of the remaining provisions of this particular Act, is it the case that the implementation is being delayed by, in effect, the requirement to have the housing resources in place to cater for those individuals who are removed from the premises that they live in, in order to respond to the issue of the notice and to be able to provide the practical housing resources in order to be able to effect the eviction notice? Is that the only issue which is preventing the implementation of the remaining provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act?

Hon. N Feetham: The Hon Speaker, I understand that an MOU is being discussed and agreed between the relevant parties.

Hon. D J Bossino: I am afraid that does not suffice, and I do not think with the greatest respect to the Minister that he has answered the question. I have asked very specifically whether it is a question in effect of housing resources which is what is preventing the full implementation and the taking effect of this Act. The Hon. Minister answers on the basis of an MOU between relevant parties. That is a non-answer with the greatest respect to him.

Hon. N Feetham: I have said previously that if notice of a question is tabled, then the Hon. Minister with responsibility for housing can address the matter more fully. Therefore, I refer the hon. Member to my previous answer.

Hon. D J Bossino: The Hon. Minister is the Minister responsible for justice. The Hon. Minister was assigned this question by my hon. Friend, Mrs Sanchez. The question was raised specifically about the implementation of the remaining provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act.

He then preys in aid the consultation which has to happen with the relevant departments, in this case the Housing Department. All I am asking the Hon. Minister to say and confirm is that I, as Minister for Justice, am unable to implement the remaining provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act because I simply do not have the housing stock available to house the people that I evict as a result of the implementation of the notices.

Hon. Chief Minister: Madam Speaker, the hon. Mrs Atrish Sanchez has not assigned any question to the Hon. Minister. I have, because I am the one who decides which Minister answers. So the hon. Gentleman's remarks were wrong, first, in that respect, and second, because the question relates to the Domestic Abuse Act.

The supplementary has been specifically about Housing. So Madam Speaker, I would say that the Hon. Minister for Justice, who is assigned that portfolio by me and not by anybody else, is rightly pointing the hon. Gentleman to suggest that his supplementary might be better as a question on the Order Paper to the Minister for Housing rather than as a supplementary to the Minister for Justice. I hope that he understands that that is the best way for him to get the answer to his question, which may not necessarily be the answer that he has suggested rhetorically at the end of his question is the answer he believes he would get.

Hon. D J Bossino: Madam Speaker, I have absolutely no quarrel with the way the questions are assigned and the Hon. Chief Minister is wrong to assume that that is what I was assuming on this side of the House. I have absolutely no quarrel with a specific question being asked of the Hon. Minister for Housing but the reality is that this supplementary question is absolutely relevant and it arises from the answer that the Hon. Minister gave, and I will try once again.

Is it the case that he is telling us, as the Minister responsible for justice, who was assigned this question for answer, is it the case that the position is that the Domestic Abuse Act provisions, which are still unimplemented, is as a result of the lack of resources which have to be provided by housing? I think that that is what the Hon. Minister was saying, but he is not willing to provide an answer. In addition, may I also ask him this, which other relevant departments is the Hon. Minister referring to?

He says other relevant departments, then he says the most relevant departments is Housing. Which other departments is the Hon. Minister referring to?

Hon. Chief Minister: Madam Speaker, no to the first question, and I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer we gave a few moments ago.

Madam Speaker: The Hon. J Ladislaus had a question.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker, my understanding is that, as it stands, when there is a crime committed and a person is brought before a court, a lot of the time bail conditions are imposed. We have just heard the Hon. Minister say to this House that part of the reason why these clauses have not been commenced yet is because we are awaiting accommodation, because otherwise it would make these notices unconstitutional.

What I ask the Hon. Minister to clarify is what difference is there between these clauses and bail conditions that are normally set by court.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, I do not have that information available to me.

Madam Speaker: Yes, the Hon. A Sanchez.

Hon. A Sanchez: Madam Speaker, would the Hon. Minister be able to perhaps provide information to the House as to whether the announcement by the Government a few months ago, weeks ago, in relation to the half-way house, the bridge house that is being considered, whether it is going to be used as a possible solution to this?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, I again refer the hon. Member to the previous answer. If she tables that question to my colleague the Minister with responsibility for Housing, I am sure that she will make that information available to her.

Hon. A Sanchez: Madam Speaker, I am grateful for your answer, but we are genuinely trying to be constructive here. We have asked the Hon. Minister a question in relation to the Domestic Abuse Act, and in his reply he has stated that the relevant professionals are in consultation with the Housing Department because of the issues that they are experiencing. In this consultation, I am sure that as a Minister with responsibility for Justice, he must have information in relation to the possible solutions. If he does not want to share the information, that is another matter.

Madam Speaker: The question is... Finish the question...

Hon. A Sanchez: ...Does he not want to give information in relation to this. is that his position?

Hon. Chief Minister: Madam Speaker, the position remains as I set out a few moments ago. There is a lot happening in the world. There are issues that matter greatly to people who suffer from domestic abuse.

For us to be in this House making light and laughing about these issues, when all we have asked is that hon. Members put formal notice of a question to the Minister for Housing, if what they want is an answer in relation to the Ministry for Housing, is really quite remarkable and, frankly, from the point of view of the Government, quite unedifying.

Madam Speaker: We have had 10 supplementaries. Next question.

Q139-41/2025

**Discrimination offences or hate crimes –
By a person's: race; religion; sexual orientation**

Clerk: Question 139, the Hon J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: How many persons have been charged with offences protecting persons against discrimination or hate crimes by way of a person's race in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021, (iii) 2022, (iv) 2023, (v) 2024, (vi) 2025 to date?

Clerk: Answer of the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, I will answer this question together with Questions 140 and 141.

Clerk: Question 140, the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: How many persons have been charged with offences protecting persons against discrimination or hate crimes by way of a person's religion in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021, (iii) 2022, (iv) 2023, (v) 2024, (vi) 2025 to date?

Clerk: Question 141, the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: How many persons have been charged with offences protecting persons against discrimination or hate crimes by way of a person's sexual orientation in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021, (iii) 2022, (iv) 2023, (v) 2024, (vi) 2025 to date?

Clerk: Answer of the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, the number of persons charged with offences committed during incidents where discrimination or hate was identified relating to a person's race in each calendar year since 2020 is as follows: 2020, 1; 2021, 5; 2022, 2; 2023, 6; 2024, 1; 2025, 1.

The number of persons charged with offences committed during incidents where discrimination or hate was identified relating to a person's religion in each calendar year since 2020 is as follows: 2020, 2; 2021, 0; 2022, 1; 2023, 0; 2024, 0; and 2025, 0.

The number of persons charged with offences committed during incidents where discrimination or hate was identified relating to a person's sexual orientation in each calendar year since 2020 is as follows: 2020, 1; 2021, none; 2022, 4; 2023, none; 2024, none; and 2025 to date, none.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q142/2025
RGP –
Designated LGBTQ+ liaison officer

Clerk: Question 142, the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker, does the RGP still have a designated LGBTQ+ liaison officer? If not, since when has this been the case?

Clerk: Answer of the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, yes, the RGP still has a designated LGBTQ+ liaison officer. The role is currently held by the Police Sergeant of the RGP's Community Policing Unit.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker, just to correct myself, that in fact should read LGBTQIA+ plus, but I'm referring back to 2020, which is when this role was established in the RGP, which is why I have not mentioned IA+, which have since then been added to this acronym, as I understand it. So, Madam Speaker, my question...

Madam Speaker: The original question was posed as LGBTQ+.

Hon. J Ladislaus: The reason for that is because I was referring back to when the role was established within the RGP, which was 2020.

And since then, the acronym has added IA + to that acronym. So now it would be correct to say LGBTQIA+. (**Hon. N Feetham:** Is there a question for me?) Yes, there is a question.

We have heard that the role is now held by the Community Sergeant. Is that different to when it was first established in 2020, when it was held by a police constable?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, I do not have that information available to me. If you table notice of the question, then I will provide an answer.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Perhaps the Minister has this information. Has the role been, should we say, added to the responsibilities of another officer who already has existing roles of his own and responsibilities, or her own?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, I refer the hon. Member to my previous answer.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q143/2025
RGP Drug Squad Officers–
Redeployment

Clerk: Question 143, the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Given the redeployment of the RGP's Drug Squad Officers in 2023-24, due to competing operational priorities and demand levels in other sectors of policing, what is being done to

provide the RGP with the resources to tackle drug crime more effectively than they were able to last year?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, as this Parliament is aware, the decision to redeploy the drug squad officers has been an operational decision by the Commissioner of Police. However, this does not mean that the RGP is not tackling drug crime. Madam Speaker, the Commissioner of Police has emphasised that dealing with drug crime continues to be a priority for the RGP.

This is stated in the RGP's annual policing plan, with the Operations Division having assumed this responsibility. This means that response teams, which are 24/7 uniformed officers together with the Marine Section, continue to be the frontline in tackling drugs. Notwithstanding this, the RGP is not the only law enforcement agency engaged with tackling crime linked to drugs.

Agencies such as HM Customs have an important role to play. HM Customs operates multiple reliefs, which provide 24-hour coverage at the Four Corners Station for non-commercial movement of persons and goods across the frontier, the airport for passengers of private aircraft, commercial vessels and families at the port, and land patrols throughout Gibraltar. Customs also has a 24-hour presence at sea, which patrols British Gibraltar Territorial Waters, coastlines and marinas.

In addition, the organisation has an operations unit that works closely with the RGP. This involves officers from the flexible anti-smuggling team and the drug detection dogs with their respective handlers. In addition, this Government is supporting the RGP to recruit 10 Command and Dispatch Police Support Officers and 5 Detention Police Support Officers.

I am informed that this will lead to the release of 15 police officers to frontline policing in the next four months. This commitment will allow the Commissioner of Police to redeploy his officers where he operationally thinks the risks are high. Furthermore, I am informed that the RGP are currently recruiting police constables, a process which is underway and further demonstrates this Government's commitment to resourcing the RGP.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker, may I refer the Hon. Minister to the latest Policing Report. I quote from that Policing Report where it states:

The past year has seen the RGP Drug Squad Officers redeployed due to competing operational priorities and demand levels in other sectors of policing.

Which is what the Hon. Minister has said, but it goes on:

This has had a major impact of our effectiveness in this area of policing. We continue to target drug suppliers on a reactive intelligence based approach.

Then it goes on:

Drug misuse. The 161 drug misuse offences recorded in the past year is a 21% reduction on the year before. Though we would like to say this is due to a decrease in drug use, this is not likely to be the true reflection of the local drug market and more as a result of the reduction in the resources available to tackle this issue.

This reduction in resources is due to the need to redeploy assets to meet other policing priorities.

Can the Hon. Minister confirm that it is because the RGP simply did not have the resources available to it in order to tackle drugs and that is the reason why they were forced to redeploy officers. Could the Hon. Minister clarify that position?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, not in our view because the RGP has more resources that they have ever had before.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker is it the Hon. Ministers position therefore that things have not changed around the world because if we the more officers than we have before, could the Hon. Minister agree that perhaps that is due to changing policing demands around the world?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, we have had previous questions in this House in relation to this in the past and the reality is that policing is an operational matter for the Commissioner of Police. I had a discussion with him last week although he was not well and he reassured me that he has enough resources available to him including the additional resources that the Police are recruiting, to deal with the demands of policing in Gibraltar.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker, is it the case therefore that the RGP have not submitted any, should we call them business cases, for further resources in the past 12 months? Is that the case? Is that what the Hon. Minister is saying?

Hon. N Feetham: Not in relation to this specific matter, Madam Speaker.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Does the Hon. Minister agree that this specific matter is impacted by resourcing in other areas because officers have to be redeployed and therefore it is a resource issue.

Hon. N Feetham: It is a resource issue like every other resource within the RGP. When officers leave clearly there is a gap created. What the Government has done is given commitments to the RGP to ensure that resourcing is at the point where the Police can discharge their overall responsibility to the public.

Madam Speaker: The Hon. C Sacarello had a question? The Hon. Leader of the Opposition?

Hon Dr. K Azopardi: Given that the conclusions or the observations made in the report that my hon. Colleague asked earlier, which are quite serious, in the sense that it is saying that the reduction in crimes noted in this area is not because there has been a reduction of crime, but rather because of resources issues, and given that obviously the operational matters for the Police but financial resources are for the Government, will the Minister discuss the matter once again with the Commissioner of Police, in relation to specifically, the comments that have been made in that particular report, as to whether it needs, therefore, a reassessment of the Government's position on the allocation of financial resources to the Police.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, this is a matter of constant discussion between the Government and indeed the Commissioner specially now with the next budget round.

Hon Dr. K Azopardi: Can I just ask in his original answer, the hon. Member talked about 10, he called, command and dispatch officers, something like that, and then there was another 5 individuals which would lead to the redeployment of 15 Police officers. Can I ask him, when he called them, I think correctly, command and dispatch officers, presumably he means these are civilian posts, administrative posts to support the Police in a particular area which will redeploy Police officers. So it is not an increase in Police officers but a redeployment of Police officers. When will that happen?

Hon. N Feetham: The recruitment is underway so I would expect for that to happen shortly.

Madam Speaker: The Hon. C Sacarello has a question?

Hon. C Sacarello: Thank you Madam Speaker. Drugs can sadly have a devastating impact on individuals and their families. It is common knowledge. Can the Hon. Minister please offer some clarity and reassurance to the House that of those 15 officers that had to be redeployed at least a fair proportion of those will be designated drug squad officers because notwithstanding the great effort the other agencies are putting into preventing the ingress of drugs into Gibraltar, we do nonetheless need feet on the ground to tackle this problem.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, when I have discussions with the Commissioner of Police on certain matters and I recommend to the Commissioner in the terms that the Hon. Member has put it to me, I am reminded that the Police is operationally independent from the Government. One has to be careful.

Is it my preference that the police should put resources into this area? Personally, yes. I agree with the hon. Member but I cannot give a direction to the Police Commissioner.

Policing is a matter for the Commissioner and the operational independence of the police is paramount.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q144/2025
Criminal trials –
Support to jurors

Clerk: Question 144, the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: What support is available to jurors at the conclusion of a criminal trial during which they may have listened to and had to consider harrowing and traumatic evidence?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Hon. N Feetham: Upon request, jurors are provided with counselling support by the GHA.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Is that support or the offer of that support, are jurors made aware of that prior to commencing jury service?

Hon. N Feetham: I do not have that information available to me. I wish I could say yes but if I did I would be misleading the House.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q145/2025

Criminal Trials –

Support to victims of sexual abuse and witnesses

Clerk: Question 145, the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: What support is on offer to victims of sexual abuse and witnesses before, during and after a criminal trial has concluded?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, a range of specialised support services are available to victims of sexual abuse, including witnesses, ensuring they receive the necessary assistance before, during and after a criminal trial. These services are delivered through the Gibraltar Health Authority and the Care Agency. Furthermore, prior to and during criminal proceedings, there are special measures that can be applied to support victims and witnesses.

Victims and witnesses can access tailored support services during, before and after criminal trials. The GHA and the Care Agency work closely with the RGP to ensure that those affected are signposted to appropriate services as early as possible. This can include access to mental health support. Victims of sexual abuse have access to support as required. If immediate assistance is needed, the Mental Health Crisis Team in St Bernadette's Hospital will assess and support the victim before and during the initial stages. If long-term support or trauma management is required, this will follow a multidisciplinary team support that may include psychology, psychiatry, nursing, etc.

Sexual health services victims are normally referred to the sexual health clinic by forensic medical examiners or by self-referral. Once referred, a comprehensive consultation with risk assessments is provided. This includes sexual health tests in the necessary timeframes, as well as follow-up care such as vaccinations, starting or continuing HIV post-exposure treatment, emergency and ongoing contraception, and referrals to specialists if needed, such as counselling.

Therapeutic support. The Care Agency Therapeutic Team provides specialist trauma-informed therapy for victims and their families, ensuring emotional and psychological support is in place. The team works alongside social workers on any open case pertinent to all clients who have been abused, including sexual abuse. Victims and families are offered both systemic and individual work from a trauma-informed perspective.

Under the Crimes Act, special measures are available during criminal proceedings to assist vulnerable victims and witnesses in giving their best evidence. I am informed by the RGP that, to date, anyone who has requested these measures has received them. These include screening witnesses from defendant, evidence by live link, evidence given in private, removal of wigs and gowns, video record evidence in chief, video record cross-examination or re-examination, examination of witness through intermediary, aids to communication.

Support services remain available to victims and witnesses beyond the conclusion of criminal proceedings. Those requiring ongoing therapeutic intervention can continue to receive specialist counselling and psychological support from the GHA and the Care Agency. By ensuring a multi-agency approach, victims and witnesses receive continuous support at every stage, from the initial report through to the aftermath of a trial, helping them navigate the legal process and receive the support required to rebuild their lives.

Hon. J Ladislaus: I am grateful. One question... The support services that victims and their families continue to receive post the trial process, is there a limit or is that indefinite support?

Hon. N Feetham: I do not have that information available. If the hon. Member wishes to give notice of that question, I will seek the information for her.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q146/2025

Sex offenders –

Resources to assist in monitoring offenders in the community

Clerk: Question 146, the Hon. J Ladislaus.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Given the rise in recent years in the number of sex offenders residing within Gibraltar, have MAPPA designated risk managers submitted a business case in the past two years for further resources to assist in monitoring offenders in the community?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Hon. N Feetham: I have consulted with the Commissioner of Police who oversees MAPPA. The Commissioner has confirmed that no such business case or formal request has been made by the DRMs during this period. Furthermore, after a thorough evaluation, the Commissioner has determined that the current resources are adequate for the effective monitoring of offenders within our community.

It is important to note that these are operational decisions for the Commissioner. The hon. Member's question references an increase in the number of sex offenders residing in Gibraltar. While there have been fluctuations in the number of registered sex offenders over the past years, namely 43 in 2023, 41 in 2024 and 38 in 2025, these variations are influenced by multiple factors.

These include enhanced detection capabilities of the RGP, leading to more local convictions as well as individuals relocating to or visiting Gibraltar who have prior convictions. It is important to understand that the number of registered sex offenders can therefore vary at any given time, including because persons may no longer be in Gibraltar or on the list and with offenders also detained in His Majesty's Prison following prosecution or conviction. In a previous Parliamentary session last year, I highlighted the continuous efforts and training undertaken by MAPPA agencies to enhance their capabilities in managing offenders.

Building upon these initiatives, I am pleased to inform this House that a new dedicated Public Protection Unit facility has been established at Unit 99 New Harbours. This facility is now ready for occupation and will serve as the central hub for the RGP's Public Protection Unit. This development exemplifies the Government's commitment to supporting the RGP and enhancing our public protection infrastructure.

In summary, the current resources bolstered by improved facilities are deemed sufficient and effective by the Commissioner of Police and this is reflected in the excellent work undertaken by the RGP's Public Protection Unit. With the inauguration of the new Public Protection Unit facility, the RGP will actively engage in community outreach initiatives to raise awareness by the public about the existing structures and processes designed to safeguard our community.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker I do not know whether the Hon. Minister will have this information here, now but... How many offenders are designated to each of these MAPPA risk managers? It is precisely because numbers fluctuate, and they can fluctuate quite quickly, that I am concerned. There have been a number of high-profile cases recently in the press, cases have commenced recently as well, and cases have just concluded also within this area.

I ask how many are designated to each of those managers?

Hon. N Feetham: I do not have that information available to me, but the hon. Member has referred to cases that are coming before the courts and indeed cases that have resulted in convictions. I did read the public statements of the hon. Member made last week, including the Gibraltar Chronicle and the RGP. We have got to be careful that we do not misinform the people of Gibraltar on factual information.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Could the Hon. Minister perhaps clarify what is meant by misinformation? I am unaware as to where I have misinformed the public.

Hon. N Feetham: Yes indeed, I will answer this question. In a Chronicle article, the hon. Member opposite referred to SARA's law. She said very publicly in that article, and I have got the article here and I am quite happy to quote from the article, and she repeated it also on GBC that Gibraltar was in need to implement SARA's law in Gibraltar, and indeed she referred to the implementation of legislation.

I referred the hon. Member to the answer that I gave in this House last year, I believe it was in September, when I said that Gibraltar has an equivalent process that results in the same outcome as her reference to SARA's law. She also referred to legislation, Madam Speaker, but SARA's law is not legislation in the UK. It is the implementation of processes, Madam Speaker, and there are relevant processes in Gibraltar.

Therefore, I would caution the hon. Member opposite that when she makes public statements that she actually ascertains what the facts are. I have got all the relevant excerpts here, the Gibraltar Chronicle, the GBC interview, and indeed a press release issued by the Party opposite, all of which were factually incorrect in material terms, Madam Speaker.

Hon. J Ladislaus: Madam Speaker, my article, and I do refer the Hon. Minister to the article, in my article I quote, and as we do, and as I did on GBC as well, I quoted, and in fact I quoted verbatim from Hansard, the answer that I had been given by the Hon. Minister. Now, my suggestion was that we implement a scheme that was more formal than what we currently have in place, because the Hon. Minister had explained that the scheme was very much like SARA's law in the UK, but that we then went on to say that we did not need a scheme like SARA's law. So which is it, Madam Speaker?

If the Hon. Minister could perhaps clarify what is meant by that, because that is precisely what I was referring to, and if one looks back at Hansard, one can see that exchange back in September.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, I will quote from the article. The article is full of inconsistencies. On the one hand, the hon. Member opposite says one thing, and then later on in the article she says something completely different.

I am referring to the references in the article that I quote, where she talks about information being made available to stakeholders in Gibraltar. She says, and [*inaudible*] entitlement to access whatsoever to information which could play a crucial role in safeguarding children and the most vulnerable which is the current position here in Gibraltar. Madam Speaker, that is factually incorrect. Then, in her GBC interview, and I can do a forensic examination of this, Madam Speaker, perhaps we will bring a motion to this House to demonstrate how factually incorrect were the statements of the hon. Member made to the media last week.

In her GBC interview, and I am just reading here two of the parts, and there are other inconsistencies, she refers to the potential introduction of SARA's law, and we do not have a parallel of that in Gibraltar. Madam Speaker, that is what she says. I am quoting, and then in the press release, Madam Speaker, in the press release she says, and I am quoting from the press release of the Party

opposite, Madam Speaker, there is a reference here, that says the Government replied, in other words, that I replied in this House that no such legislation should be introduced in Gibraltar.

What I did say, Madam Speaker, and I got a copy of Hansard here, was that the processes that we have in place in Gibraltar are processes that mirror SARA's law. In fact, last week, over the holiday period, I sought advice again from relevant stakeholders, and I am assured by the Commissioner of Police that the processes that are in place as far as he is concerned, and as far as the Police are concerned, are appropriate and adequate. We also sought advice from an external consultant who made the same point.

All I would suggest, Madam Speaker, is that the hon. Members opposite have to be very careful not to inflame public opinion in Gibraltar, because this is a very sensitive subject, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Madam Speaker, we are certainly not trying to inflame public opinion. The hon. Member does not need to worry about that. When my hon. Colleague speaks about sex offenders and sex offenders lists, it is because not only is she concerned and members on this side are concerned, but it reflects public concern on this issue, as he will be aware.

Can I ask him something more specific? He has clearly come to this House to at least give the impression that he is well aware of the processes. So can I ask him, I do not know if he gave it in his original answer, but in so far as processes are concerned, because of the oscillating nature of the amount of sex offenders who might be residing in Gibraltar and so on, when someone who is on a foreign sex offenders list comes to live in Gibraltar, is there some kind of protocol or regulations by which the RGP would be informed of that arrival of a person?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, if the hon. member tables a question, I will provide the information so that we ensure that there is no misunderstanding. But let me say this, the hon. Leader of the Opposition does not seem to listen to GBC, because there was an interview two weeks ago by one of the officers, a female officer of the RGP, that addressed these very same points and she took the interviewer through what the processes were in relation to the monitoring of any sexual offenders that visited Gibraltar. Obviously he does not listen to GBC and therefore on this occasion I will refer him to that interview, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: I am grateful that he refers me to that interview, but does he not agree that if I did not listen to that interview because I missed it, he who listened to the interview cannot even recall what it said?

Hon. N Feetham: No, Madam Speaker, not at all. I refer him to the interview precisely because she gives very detailed information that obviously the hon. Leader of the Opposition is not even aware of.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Madam Speaker, if there was an answer, then surely he can answer my question, which is what is the process when a foreign offender on a foreign sex offenders list comes to live in Gibraltar? What is it then, if he is aware of it? Tell the House!

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, he is well aware of what the rules of the House are... That information is publicly available information.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q147/2025
Overtime –
Outstanding payments

Clerk: Question 147, the Hon. C Sacarello.

Hon. C Sacarello: Can the Hon. Minister with responsibility for Postal Services confirm if there are any outstanding payments to be made to employees for the overtime work carried out in December 2024? Can the Minister please explain the reason behind the delay, if any, and when they will be paid?

Clerk: Answer the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, overtime payments in Government have always been paid in two-month arrears and therefore all overtime carried out in December 2024 would have been paid in February 2025.

Hon. C Sacarello: Madam Speaker, I would just like to thank the Minister for clarification on the policy, in which case it seems to be failing for some constituents. I will, with his leave, pass all their details on to him, perhaps for his help.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, was that a question? Sorry, apologies. Sorry, apologies, what was the question? Sorry.

Hon. C Sacarello: Madam Speaker, the question I asked was that there are some workers who have been failed by this policy, they have not yet been paid their overtime for work in December 2024, and would the Hon. Minister assist in ensuring that this is addressed?

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Madam Speaker, this is my responsibility as Minister for Public Finances. Nobody has been failed by anything. Everybody is paid in this way, two months in arrears. So I cannot imagine that the hon. Gentleman's question has any logic to it whatsoever.

Madam Speaker: All right, before we move on to the next question, I am just coming back to Question 137. Does the Hon. A Sanchez or any other hon. Member have any supplementary questions on Question 137? No? Anybody else? Next question.

Q148/2025
Sex offenders –
Resources to assist in monitoring offenders in the community

Clerk: Question 148, the Hon. C Sacarello.

Hon. C Sacarello: The Hon. Minister Feetham recently announced a projected record £160 million revenue in corporate tax envisaged to be collected this year. Can the Minister please confirm what percentage of this growth is attributable to the Government's recent budget measure to increase the corporate tax rate from 12.5% to 15%?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, I recently announced that the estimated company tax yield for the financial year 2024-2025 would be at least £160 million. I am informed by the Tax Office that this growth is not attributable to the Government's recent budget measures to increase the corporate tax rate from 12.5% to 15%.

Hon. C Sacarello: Madam Speaker, how is that possible that none of this increases due to the increase in 2.5%?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, it is because it is the way that the tax rules operate. So, I will give you the technical explanation if you want. This is the explanation that has been given to me by the Tax Office.

I do have, I think, a strong tax background but some of these technical aspects are not matters which I can restate without reading the supplementary information because they do relate to year of assessments and accounting periods.

So, payments within this period are not within the scope of this increased corporate income tax rate given that this legislation was not yet effective for the basis periods concerned.

The earliest tax payments in 2024-2025 for the month of April 2024 related to the 31st of July 2023 basis period. So, therefore, it predates the legislation enacted. The latest tax payments for 2024-2025 for the month of March 2025 related to the 30th of June 2024 basis period.

So, it predates the introduction of the enactment. The advance payment due by the 30th of September 2024 related to the 2023 basis period. Again, predating the introduction of the legislation.

The advance payment due by the 28th of February 2025 relates to 2023 and pre-July 2024 basis periods. For all those reasons, Madam Speaker, the answer is as I have communicated to the hon. Member opposite.

Madam Speaker: Next Question.

Q149/2025
Taxable profits –
Total amounts generated

Clerk: Question 149, the Hon C Sacarello.

Hon. C Sacarello: Can the Hon. Minister confirm the total amount of taxable profits generated by corporates for the years 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25, the latter being the projected figure upon which the figure of £160 million was generated. Please break these figures down into two categories. Small businesses with a turnover of less than £10.2 million and all other businesses with a turnover of over £10.2 million.

Clerk: Answer the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, the hon. Member refers to the “total level of taxable profits”, not the total tax revenues. However, I provide both figures in case that is what he intended to ask. As the hon. Member will know, taxable profits and actual tax revenues are not the same.

Tax revenue by financial year turn-over less than £10.2 million. For the 2022-23 financial year, the tax revenue was £57.6 million. For the financial year 2023-24, the total tax revenue was £69.6 million. For the financial year 2024-25, the tax revenue was £44.5 million. Turnover more than £10.2 million. For the financial year 2022-23, the total tax revenue was £101.8 million. For the financial year 2023-

24, the tax revenue was £76.6 million. For the financial year 2024-25, the total tax revenue was £97 million. Now, if we turn to taxable profits by financial year, the turnover was less than £10.2 million, which is the question that the hon. Member asked. For the financial year 2022-23, taxable profits were £400.2 million. For the financial year 2023-24, the taxable profits were £559.1 million. For the financial year 2024-25, taxable profits were £702 million. The turnover than £10.2 million. For the financial year 2022-23, taxable profits were £1758 million. For the financial year 2023-24, taxable profits were £2,513 million. For the financial year 2024-25, taxable profits were £2,067 million.

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q150/2025
Income Tax –
PAYE levels

Clerk: Question 150, the Hon C Sacarello.

Hon. C Sacarello: The Hon. Minister Feetham recently declared income tax has gone down. Will the Minister acknowledge that, in reality, PAYE levels have only been lowered back to where they once were, as a direct result of having been raised in the first place by this Government by 2% in 2022, as a temporary COVID recovery measure?

Clerk: Answer the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Hon. N Feetham: The hon. Member wrongly attributes to me the statement that income tax has gone down. If he intends to suggest that the overall income tax, i.e. PAYE revenue, has decreased, this is simply not the case. The year-to-date personal income tax yield for the financial year 2024-25, covering the period 1 April 2024 to today, stands at £220.2 million, compared to £213 million for the year 2023-24. This demonstrates that, despite the reduction in tax rates, revenue has actually increased. The hon. Member refers to the COVID-related uplift introduced in 2022, but tax rates, like all fiscal measures, fluctuate over time, depending on economic conditions and policy decisions. What matters is the outcome.

The Government has successfully reduced personal tax, i.e. PAYE rates, while delivering higher revenue. This is no small achievement, considering that when we announced this reduction in the last Budget, we estimated this to be worth £17 million. This Government has ensured that we can reduce PAYE tax rates while maintaining and even improving revenue collection.

That is the real point here. Additionally, I would remind the hon. Gentleman that the COVID debt was acquired with the full support of his party at the time. Whilst we may all agree tomorrow, we must surely all agree that it must be paid back.

Hon. C Sacarello: Madam Speaker I thank, first of all, the Hon. Minister for his reply and his pointers but I am afraid he has misinterpreted the question. I am surprised he cannot remember his own radio interview only a few weeks back in which he made the statement saying that income tax has gone down. I am surprised that he did not glean from the question that I was referring to, because it was in the public domain, made by himself. Nonetheless, perhaps I will give him a chance to correct the statement and answer the question properly.

I would just like to add additionally to that that the PAYE in fact has actually gone up for people in real terms, given that under the GIBS, the Gross Income Based System, the tax bands, particularly at the lower end where it is most keenly felt, have remained pretty constant for this Government's tenure, dating back to 2011. Would the Minister not agree that this in effect is an increase in tax due

to fiscal drag on those that need it most, where the cost of living is keenly felt and will he and his Government not agree to do something about it by helping working people take home more in their pocket?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, first of all, I did not misunderstand the question. I did not misunderstand the question by the hon. Member. He did refer in his question to me having said and declared that income tax has gone down.

You could interpret a statement of that nature to mean that I have suggested that income tax collection has gone down. Therefore, by reference to that particular statement, Madam Speaker, I made it a point of putting before this House factual information which shows that despite the statement that the hon. Member has made in this House, income tax collections have gone up. I then acknowledge the fact that I did say in the interview that the tax rate had gone down.

He is referring to the income tax having gone down but I also said in my answer, Madam Speaker, that tax rates go up and tax rates go down. Therefore, is he trying to level criticism of the Government because the Government decides to reduce tax rates?

Let me remind this House, Madam Speaker, if I can, because if he is going to give a lesson to those of us on this side of the House as to what we should do in terms of tax policy, perhaps I ought to remind the hon. Member that the rates of tax were reduced significantly by those who were here on this side of the House in previous administrations since 2011, and I have got the information here, Madam Speaker, the Government has since 2012 systematically reduced personal income tax rates for the lower-paying in our economy.

The rates have dropped as follows under the allowance-based system, Madam Speaker. The highest rate of tax from 40% to 39%. The mid-range rate of tax from 30% to 17%. The lowest rate of tax from 17% to 14%.

Madam Speaker, if we are going to get lessons in tax history, can I remind this House that this Government removed the 5% rate under the gross income tax system for the ultra-wealthy that was in place prior to 2011. I know that the hon. Member from a sedentary position say that is brilliant. Thank you very much for acknowledging the fact that the work that was done by my predecessors on this side of the House is brilliant.

Equally, Madam Speaker, instead of chastising us for actually saying publicly that we expect record tax receipts, and indeed that at the same time as we expect record corporate tax receipts, and as of today we also have increased personal tax collections in comparison to last year, perhaps he ought to congratulate us instead of asking a question as to why I said in a GBC interview that we have reduced tax rates by 2% and that is something that we ought to acknowledge, the very reverse thing to what I have actually stated here today, Madam Speaker, and it is he that clearly didn't understand the interview and comes up with questions which are totally irrelevant and from a historical perspective factually incorrect.

Hon. C Sacarello: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon. Minister for that and also point out that I find it hugely ironic that only a few questions ago in my hon. Friend's Question 146, one of the replies of the Minister to this supplementary was, be factual with the information given, perhaps he should take heed of his own advice in these radio interviews and perhaps tell the last bit of the sentence which was, we have lowered it to where it was a few years back. I would like to ask again the question because this question was not answered, there were facts given on the allowance-based system but not on the GIBS, the gross income-based system, where the stats state, just for factual correctness and completeness, for incomes up to £25,000 per annum, the first band has been £10,000 since 2009-2010.

In other words, not their administration. The second band was £16,000 which was increased to £17,000 in 2011 and since then none have been increased under the GIBS. So the question I reiterate

is, will the Government not look at addressing this problem on fiscal drag for those that most keenly feel it, that salaries under £25,000 and raise those tax bands?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, it is an entirely new question. That is not a supplementary question based on the original question and therefore I think it is more appropriate either that you give notice of the question and you table a question in the terms that has been articulated by the hon. Member or you wait for the Budget debate and we all have a debate around tax policy. Let me say this, Madam Speaker, there is no animosity in anything that I have said. Please take it whether to the hon. Member opposite or indeed to the hon. Member with responsibility for Justice.

In two weeks' time we are off to that Parliamentary Conference and I hope that we will be able to have dinner together and we can have a discussion on fiscal policy. I would love that very much indeed,

Madam Speaker: Next question.

Q151/2025
Income tax –
Amount collected

Q152/2025
Company tax –
Amount collected

Clerk: Question 151, the Hon. R M Clinton.

Hon. R M Clinton: I am jealous, Madam Speaker. Sorry. Madam Speaker, can the Government advise the amount of income tax collected in the following month being January 2025?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, I will answer this question together with Question 152.

Clerk: Question 152, the Hon. R M Clinton.

Hon. R M Clinton: Can the Government advise the amount of company tax collected in the following month being January 2025?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, as we are now in the final quarter of the year the Government will wait until the end of the quarter to provide the figures in order to ensure they are reliable.

Hon. R M Clinton: Madam Speaker, the Government had no such problem providing the numbers last year and they have no such concern as to reliability. Does the Minister have any other reason as to why the Government is no longer willing to provide this information across the floor of the House? In fact, the Minister may perhaps inadvertently not realise he has already given me those numbers in respect of corporate tax. **(Hon. N Feetham: Personal Tax.)** No corporate tax in his answer to question

149 when you gave the numbers to date. All I have to do is take the difference and that will give me the amount for the month of January. So, Madam Speaker, I will ask the Minister again.

Can he please give us the information as requested, as the Government has provided us in the past?

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Madam Speaker, as the Government has said in the past, these numbers are not reliable until the end of the year. We are already starting the budgetary process. I am already having meetings with different Ministers and different Departments.

Numbers fluctuate, in particular in numbers in relation to revenue. They are booked at a particular rate. They sometimes go up and down.

We are in the last quarter, so for all of those reasons, Madam Speaker, I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer that my hon. Colleague has given. That is the Government's position. We are going to finalise the accounts for the year in less than 35 days.

There we will be able to give more reliable figures, which will be final.

Hon. R M Clinton: Madam Speaker, given that we on this side of the House have quite happily accepted the caveat, as these numbers have always been provided across the floor before, that they may be unreliable. I am willing to accept that, Madam Speaker. I am not asking for the actual exact final numbers.

What I am asking is for an indication. The Government has been quite happy to provide this in the past, Madam Speaker. Now suddenly they decide, well, no, we are not going to give it to you because it is the last quarter of the year.

Well, why the last quarter of the year? Why not the last half of the year? Why not the first quarter of the year?

Madam Speaker, I really do not understand why the Government suddenly has adopted this policy of not providing information. Is there anything more that the Government can provide other than I will refer you to my previous answer?

Hon. Chief Minister: No, Madam Speaker, the hon. Gentleman is absolutely right. He is right to say that we should not take this attitude just in relation to the last quarter of the year. The figures are unreliable. They can lead to an impression being created as to revenue, which is then not going to be made out accurately. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I will accept the hon. Gentleman's point and will no longer be providing these figures at all.

Hon. R M Clinton: Madam Speaker, the Chief Minister has managed to completely distort what I said. I said we were willing to accept the numbers with the caveat that they might be unreliable. We are not asking for the final numbers.

I am not inviting him not to give them to us. In fact, the practise has been over the last year and in fact up to the last session of Parliament, the last month, that the Government was willing to provide these numbers. I really do not see why suddenly the Government has decided to adopt a policy of not giving us this information.

I mean, rather than laughing with his colleague, perhaps he could provide some serious answer to this Parliament, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Chief Minister: Really, Madam Speaker, I have given the Parliament a serious answer about the reliability of figures, about the Government not wanting to provide figures which cannot be relied upon, and for that reason, Madam Speaker, accepting the hon. Gentleman's point that it is not necessarily right to say that we will not give them in the last quarter because they are not reliable, we should take the same view in relation to the full period of the year. We provide the figures, we provide the figures when they are reconciled and reliable, and we shall do exactly that, Madam Speaker.

Hon. R M Clinton: Madam Speaker, I put the Chief Minister on notice that I intend to continue filing these questions, and I continue to come to this House and tell us that he will not give us the numbers.

Hon. Chief Minister: Madam Speaker, I will put the hon. Gentleman on notice that I shall give the hon. Gentleman exactly the same answer, that the Government is intent in the public having the information when it is reliable, not when it is unreliable, that the Government publishes more figures than have ever been published before, that these figures will be published as they were published in the past, Madam Speaker, which is when they are reliable, that the Government will therefore ensure that all of the information provided to this House is information which is entirely reliable and can be referred to in the future by hon. Members as being figures which have been given on the basis of them being final figures, and not give what is in effect a management account on the day-to-day or month-to-month accounts of the Government as to revenue. The hon. Gentleman may wish to have more information, but unfortunately the people of Gibraltar have decided, on the three or four occasions when he has asked them to make him a Minister, where he would have access to all that information, that they prefer that we should have access to it, not him, and therefore however many times he files the questions, which will only be, Madam Speaker, not as often as he likes, but as often as you like that he should be able to do so, he is on notice that we shall continue to give him this answer.

Hon. R M Clinton: Well, Madam Speaker, that was a great party political broadcast. Can I ask the Chief Minister then, since he is such a keen fan now of the accuracy of the numbers, will he give an undertaking, not to me, Madam Speaker, but to this House, that when the Budget Book or the Estimates Book is prepared with the accurate and final numbers, that he will then provide a schedule in that Estimates Book with the numbers I have been asking for by month, in the same format for income tax, corporate tax and import duty, by way of an additional schedule to the Estimates Book, since he is such a fan of accuracy and transparency, and he has given so many numbers to everybody, he is the most transparent Government on this planet.

Hon. Chief Minister: Madam Speaker, the hon. Gentleman might wish to ask me for undertakings or promises or whatever he wishes. The Government will continue to provide the Budget Book in the manner that it is advised by the professionals that advise it, and not by the hon. Gentleman from the basis of his supplementaries across the floor of the House. We are very confident that the figures that we provide are the most open and transparent that have ever been provided.

Hon. Members just need to go back and look at the Estimates Book that they used to publish until 2011-12, and compare it to the Estimates Book that we publish now, and see that there is more information, more readily available there than ever before, not least the fact that the Estimates Book is now published online. When I give my Budget speech, I actually refer Members opposite, and those who may be listening or watching, to the relevant page of the Budget Book that is online that they can go to. Madam Speaker, I would be delighted to take the advice of those who are paid to give me advice as to whether there should be any changes in format in the way that we publish the figures that we bring to this House, but I am not going to take advice from him, and I am not going to make policy on the hoof.

Q153/2025

**Property, Digital Assets, etc –
Possible legislation**

Clerk: Question 153, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Madam Speaker, is the Government considering possible legislation along the lines of the Property, Digital Assets, etc. rather, currently being considered by the UK Parliament?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, HM Government of Gibraltar is monitoring the progress of the UK's Property Digital Assets Bill, which is currently under consideration in the UK Parliament. The Bill is currently at the report stage in the House of Lords, with several amendments pending. Once the UK Parliamentary process has been completed, HM Government of Gibraltar will assess how best to adapt any relevant aspects of the final UK legislation to Gibraltar's legislative framework.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Madam Speaker, before I put my supplementary, it was remiss of me when I stood up before to address the hon. Member not to congratulate him to be seated in the seat of the heir apparent today. I hope he does not get too sad when he goes back out of the chair of the heir apparent.

I welcome the fact that the Government are considering this matter and monitoring it, but can I perhaps suggest that the Government do a bit more than just monitor the progress of this Bill for the UK Parliament, because the Bill itself, the hon. Member I suppose will have seen it, is very short. It is a Bill that simply recognises, the courts in England have already recognised crypto assets, digital assets, as being capable of being considered property for the purposes of injunctive relief and so on, but the Bill simply enshrines into English law a similar provision and the recommendations that were made to the UK Parliament by a commission that was set up for this purpose not only says that it wishes to align English law with developments in the United States and Singapore and in Dubai, but part of the impetus is so that England remains competitive as a jurisdiction and with his hat as financial services, I am sure he would wish Gibraltar to be competitive, because in the past his department has wished us to remain at the forefront of DLT Digital Asset Development. So can I ask him to do perhaps a bit more than monitor and consult the industry on legislation in this area.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, I detect a bit of political hurt on the part of the hon. Member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, simply because I pointed out earlier on that he doesn't seem to listen to pertinent GBC reports when he puts a question before this House. He stands up and he prefaces the question by saying that I ought to be careful about where I sit. Whatever, Madam Speaker, you have got to have thicker skin than that, Madam Speaker.

The hon. Member opposite refers to Gibraltar needing to be competitive and at the cutting edge of the crypto global landscape, and indeed he also has made the point or said that the Government needs to consult. Well, Madam Speaker, I am very happy to report to this House, that there is a sub-committee of the industry and the regulator, and indeed my officials are also represented in the sub-committee, where we are looking at all aspects in relation to digital technology in Gibraltar and the regulatory framework of that. This Bill is actively being considered by that sub-committee, Madam Speaker.

I am sure that the hon. Member will be pleased to learn that.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: I am indeed pleased, Madam Speaker, and I am not hurt at all, by the way, by whatever comment he passed before, because I was genuinely congratulating him about where he sits. I am not really that bothered about where he sits, but clearly he is bothered, because the first opportunity that he has seen the air appearance chair to be vacant, he has rushed over to sit next to the Chief Minister. Can you tell us who is on this sub-committee advising the Ministry?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, if the Hon. Leader of the Opposition tables a question in Parliament, I will endeavour to provide that information. Madam Speaker, if I had sat at that end of the seating here, on this side of the House, he would have stood up and accused me that there was a conspiracy between me and the Chief Minister. Indeed, it is a reflection of a divide, ideological or otherwise, between the Chief Minister and myself, which is certainly not the case.

Therefore, I made it a point of sitting here precisely, because we are a collegiate Government, and therefore I sit next to the Chief Minister. Indeed, I would have sat next to any of my colleagues here today, had there been these spaces here, and it is not the first time that I do so. Clearly, he is, of course, feeling hurt by the observation that I made before, in answer to a previous question, Madam Speaker.

Q154/2025

European Commission –

Removal from list of EU high-risk third countries with strategic deficiencies

Clerk: Question 154, the Hon Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Madam Speaker, can the Government update the House on any recent discussions with the European Commission to ensure that Gibraltar is removed from the EU's list of high-risk third countries with strategic deficiencies as regards anti-money laundering, the EU's so-called grey list of finance centres? Answer, the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry.

Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham): Madam Speaker, last month, on the 15th and 16th of January, I was in Brussels to engage with the EU institutions on the question of Gibraltar's continued presence on the EU list of so-called high-risk third countries and jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies in their anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing regime. I visited Brussels at the very first opportunity, following the formation of a new College of EU Commissioners on the 1st of December 2024. The timing of the visit, only a month after the appointment of new decision-makers in Brussels, reflects the importance that the Government attaches to this issue, a sentiment which I deeply share, not least given the excellent work being carried out by Gibraltarian officials and law enforcement agencies in propelling Gibraltar to the vanguard on the fight against money laundering and the financing of terrorism. Whilst in Brussels, I met the Director General of the European Commission's Directorate General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, Mr John Berrigan. Mr Berrigan, the most senior official in the DG, is one of Brussels' most respected experts in his field, having risen through the ranks to the top post in a career with the European Commission spanning close to 40 years.

Given the weight of Mr Berrigan's opinion, not only was I satisfied with the fact that our meeting had been very constructive, I was also especially pleased to have received only recently, on the 17th of February, an exceptionally positive letter from him with his perspective on our meeting. In this letter, Mr Berrigan underlines that the Commission is, I quote, "well aware of Gibraltar's efforts in further strengthening its AML-CFT regime beyond its FATF action plan". Progress which Mr Berrigan, on behalf of the Commission, I quote, "acknowledges".

Mr Berrigan also reminded me that it was the European Commission itself which, after having been satisfied from a technical, forensic, expert perspective that Gibraltar does not meet the criteria to remain on this list, had proposed the formal removal of Gibraltar from this list along with other jurisdictions. This was the proposal the Commission delegated at, which the hon. Member will recall, did not enter into effect given the European Parliament's exercise of its veto right, a right it exercised chiefly for political reasons and because of concerns it had with respect to other jurisdictions on the list for removal. Was no doubt the hon. Member would agree that we should commend ourselves for having done the work necessary to allow the European Commission to once again hold Gibraltar in high esteem.

To me, this is not enough. We will not rest, we will not remove a foot from the pedal until Gibraltar is legally removed from the EU list with our reputation justly restored. For this reason, I took great reassurance from the fact that Mr Berrigan, during our meeting, also confirmed that the Commission intended to come forward with a new proposal to update the EU list as soon as possible.

This commitment was repeated in writing in his letter to me. This will be the next stage in this process. In other words, we now need to wait for the Commission to come forward with a new decision which we have been told is in the works.

Whilst in Brussels and given the new Commission decision, when it comes, will equally need to be approved by the European Parliament. I also took the opportunity to meet various influential MEPs who gave useful insight into the background leading to the Parliament's objection to the entry into force of the last decision adopted by the Commission. The MEPs I spoke to were eager to discuss with the Commission an approach which would ensure that a new Delegated Act would be supported by the Parliament and they were keen to hear about Gibraltar's efforts in the AML-CFT space both before coming off the FATF grey list and what is just as important to me since coming off that list.

This is all that I can share with this House at this moment in time. Our officials working in Gibraltar House in Brussels will continue to keep me updated with developments which I will share with the hon. Member as necessary. All in all, Madam Speaker, more so after my visit to Brussels, I am hopeful that this issue will soon be resolved.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: Madam Speaker the hon. Member knows that he has our support in that process. We appreciate the delicacy of the work that needs to be done in that regard. I have a couple of questions. Before I do that, I am glad that he is sitting where he is apparently to deal with the speculation that there should be any rift between him and the Chief Minister and certainly from this side of the House I can tell him that sitting there absolutely does deal with that speculation decisively, I am sure.

Can I ask him, he got a letter on the 7th of February from the European Commission from Mr John Berrigan who is a senior official in the DG as he has pointed out to us. He has quoted some things from it and I appreciate that he has given the House what he might think he can give but not others. Is it possible for the Minister to share with me, with the Members on this House, a copy of that letter on a confidential basis?

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, we would be delighted to share a copy of this letter with the hon. Member opposite on a confidential basis.

Hon. Dr K Azopardi: I am grateful. He talks about a process that will lead to another vote in the European Parliament which of course last time was complex, hopefully this time will be less so and he knows the Government has our support in getting us off that list and it will require a new Commission decision which will then be put presumably to the European Parliament for a vote. Does he have any visibility on the kind of timescales that we are looking at because we share the view clearly that until that happens the work is not done.

Hon. N Feetham: Madam Speaker, we do not have visibility on the actual timing because of course we are not in control of that timing. What I can tell the hon. Member is that according to the information that we have and we continue to be in touch with the Commission in relation to this, the Commission is actively engaged with the European Parliament and indeed institutions within the European Parliament in order to be able to ensure that when the Delegated Act comes before Parliament that it receives the support of Parliamentarians.

Adjournment

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Madam Speaker, sometimes when people talk about heirs apparent I am presumptive when looking across the floor of the House one wonders whether they might not be looking more closely towards themselves because in doing so they might find that where they see rifts opposite them in fact it might be actually the moat in their own eye that they are reflecting and that might be a convenient thing for them to reflect on in the adjournment I now propose between now and 10am on Thursday.

Madam Speaker: All right, I now propose the question which is that this House to now adjourn to 10am on Thursday. I now put the question which is that this House to now adjourn to 10am on Thursday. Those in favour? (**Members:** Aye.) Those against? Passed.

This House will now adjourn to 10am on Thursday.

The House adjourned at 5.30 p.m.