



PRESS RELEASE

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The GHA regrettably finds itself in the position of having to publicly clarify the misconceptions that may have arisen as a result of a television interview given by Mr David Oliva regarding the circumstances surrounding his mother in law, Mrs Mo Li Guo. These are the facts as the GHA understands them:

- Mrs Guo is a 54 year old Chinese National who is the mother in law of Mr Oliva. She had suffered a serious traffic accident in China as a result of which she was permanently disabled.
- Mrs Guo visited Gibraltar on a single-entry tourist visa on 4th October 2002. She was granted the usual initial 4 days stay and advised to approach the immigration authorities to regularise the full duration of her intended tourist visit. This was not done.
- On the 27 December 2002 Mr Oliva wrote to the Chief Immigration Officer seeking an extension of stay on the grounds that he and his wife wished to seek specialist treatment in Spain for Mrs Guo. A one month extension was granted on the condition that he submitted proof that arrangements had been made to return Mrs Guo to China. Mr Oliva agreed, but did not comply with the stipulated condition.
- Mr Oliva then appealed directly to Government and, despite that non-EU nationals would not normally be so permitted, it was exceptionally agreed that Mrs Guo would be issued with six-monthly renewal permits. This was on the agreed terms of a guarantee by Mr Oliva that Mrs Guo would be looked after by her family and would not be a burden to the Gibraltar tax payer given that she had no connection with Gibraltar. This guarantee was given by Mr & Mrs Oliva and verified by Dr SG Barber, Consultant Physician & Elderologist, who confirmed in writing that he was confident that Mr and Mrs Oliva were "capable of looking after Mrs Guo and were not likely to abuse the system".
- In June 2003, Mrs Guo had several hospital admissions as a result of episodes of acute illness. The last hospital admission was in November 2003 and she has remained in hospital ever since occupying a hospital bed, even though Mrs Guo has not required acute medical treatment which would require hospitalisation since 2004. Apart from some episodes of epileptic fits her medical status is as one would expect of a person in her 50's, albeit with her disability. Mrs Guo is not in pain as Mr Oliva suggests.
- In 2004 and then in 2005 the GHA made contact with Mr & Mrs Oliva with a view to discharging her into their care in accordance with their assurances to the Government. This did not materialise due to Mr & Mrs Oliva's non-cooperation.

- In February 2007 the GHA again made contact with Mr & Mrs Oliva with a view to discharging Mrs Guo into their care. Despite their assurances to the Government, Mr & Mrs Oliva stated that they could not take her as they lived in a one-bedroom flat on a 4th floor, Mr Oliva was unemployed and Mrs Oliva was going to be made redundant. Another period of grace was granted to allow Mr & Mrs Oliva to seek suitable accommodation from the Housing Department and to address their employment problems.
- The Housing Department has informed the GHA that at no time have Mr & Mrs Oliva made any request to them for different accommodation. Furthermore, Mr & Mrs Oliva accepted their current accommodation of one bedroom when Mrs Guo was already living in Gibraltar as their dependent. No mention of a dependent relative was made to the Housing Department when Mr & Mrs Oliva accepted their current accommodation.
- Mr & Mrs Oliva's employment status is now stable. Mrs Oliva was not made redundant and Mr Oliva is working in Barcelona.
- On the 13 March 2008, the GHA held a meeting with Mrs Oliva. It was noted that their employment situation had been resolved and that they had failed to seek alternative accommodation. A discharge date and time was given for the 29 April 2008 at 4.00pm, together with information on private carers and residential homes in the vicinity of Gibraltar.
- The GHA once again contacted Mr Oliva by phone the week of the 25 March 2008 to reiterate the discharge date and time. Written correspondence then followed between Mr & Mrs Oliva and the GHA together with further telephone conversations.
- Mr & Mrs Oliva were seen by the GHA's Chief Executive at their request on the 24 April 2008. The CEO reviewed the facts surrounding the decision to discharge and provided a written response on the 25 April 2008.
- The GHA telephoned Mr Oliva on the 27 April 2008 to ensure he had received the CEO's letter. Mr Oliva confirmed that he had and that he would be seeking legal advice. The discharge date and time was again reiterated. This was the last verbal communication between Mr & Mrs Oliva and the GHA.
- On the 29 April 2008 as arranged, a GHA ambulance conveyed Mrs Guo to Mr & Mrs Oliva's residence. Mrs Guo remained in the ambulance whilst the GHA Bed Manager ensured there was someone at home to receive her. Nobody answered the door and Mrs Guo had to be conveyed back to hospital.

The GHA considers that it has shown the utmost flexibility and has provided Mr & Mrs Oliva with plenty of opportunity and time to make the necessary plans to accommodate to the situation. It is the view of the GHA that Mr & Mrs Oliva have abdicated their responsibilities in caring for Mrs Guo, despite the guarantee which they gave when Mrs Guo was allowed to remain in Gibraltar. The GHA has at all times offered its assistance to Mr & Mrs Oliva in finding more suitable accommodation and has been willing to intercede to the Housing Department on their behalf. The offer of assistance has never been taken up.

In the above circumstances of this case, the GHA cannot make itself responsible for looking after Mr Oliva's mother in law when she has been medically discharged and has therefore no need to be in hospital, and when many local families are caring after their own high dependency relatives at home.

The GHA is now considering its options.