



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry of Enterprise, Development, Technology and Transport
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PRESS RELEASE

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The Government is baffled by the concerns raised by the Opposition, with regards to Ship-to-Ship transfers, which show a complete lack of understanding of the matter. The Opposition should get its facts right before issuing a press release which is based on incomplete information supplied to them by Port Operators, who clearly have an axe to grind. By his own admission, Mr Garcia is not aware of what he is talking about. Yet on this basis he makes false and hugely damaging statements that are bound to be seized upon by Gibraltar's nearby detractors.

Ship to Ship oil transfers are normal maritime operations, which happen worldwide and have been taking place in the vicinity of Gibraltar for many years. These operations actually take place in international waters normally at least 15 nautical miles off Gibraltar. The Gibraltar Port Authority monitors these operations, if Gibraltar-licensed port operators are involved. However, these operations are undertaken by operators from Algeciras and Ceuta as well, in the same area. Additionally, the provision of the Yokohama fenders and necessary equipment is also usually sourced from Algeciras, Ceuta and Gibraltar.

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) reviewed its standards and criteria for these operations and introduced new conditions on 1st July 2009. The Gibraltar Port Authority, in anticipation of this, also reviewed the existing licensing criteria earlier this year in order to meet international standards and best practice. The Gibraltar Port Authority is aware that as a result of these new and more demanding standards a certain previous Gibraltar licence holder has been unable to meet the required licensing condition and is no longer authorised to supply or support these operations.

The Government can confirm that the Captain of the Port is not concerned about these operations as long as they are carried out in an effective and appropriate manner, as these are normal and established maritime operations. The Captain of the Port ensures that all international standards are fully complied with by the Gibraltar Port Authority. These standards are constantly monitored and reviewed in order to ensure the Gibraltar Port Authority meets all its international obligations.

The statement by the Opposition that the Minister has, on this occasion, overruled the Captain of the Port is simply untrue and a fabrication by Dr Garcia.

Minister for the Port, Joe Holliday said:-“Once again the GSLP/Liberals align themselves with Gibraltar's critics in Spain to damage Gibraltar with false public statements. If Dr Garcia were genuinely concerned, why does he not check the position with the Gibraltar authorities before issuing statements at the behest of disgruntled parties?”