



## **PRESS RELEASE**

No:52/2009

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> March 2009

### **GHA/CFB AMBULANCE STAFF SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE COURSE ON EMERGENCY AMBULANCE TRAINING**

Ambulance Service Staff from the GHA and the City Fire Brigade are celebrating their successful completion of the latest courses offered by the GHA as part of its strategy to develop and improve emergency care services in Gibraltar. The latest course ran over 8 days starting on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February. All of the 23 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) of the GHA Ambulance Service and 6 Fire Brigade ambulance personnel were trained in new emergency care skills and updated in others. There were 4 groups, each undertaking 2 days of training, under the tuition of an experienced paramedic instructor from the UK, Nigel Roberts. Nigel has been a paramedic for over 20 years and his wealth of experience brought valuable insight to Gibraltar's emergency crews. His medical knowledge and, more importantly, his real-life application of them served to enhance the life saving skills of the emergency ambulance crews in Gibraltar. The course included the use of defibrillators,(a machine that delivers an electric shock to restart a heart that has stopped beating); the management of trauma injuries that can arise from road traffic accidents, as well as the management of sick infants.

These courses are now an annual event, in which the GHA ambulance service collaborates with the South East Coast ambulance service in the UK to develop the skills of Gibraltar's EMT's. There have also been voluntary placements in which ambulance crews from Gibraltar have worked with experienced paramedic crews out on the road in the south of England, including Brighton and Redhill. These experiences have not only developed the skills of Gibraltar's EMT's but have also helped the Gibraltar Ambulance Service maintain the standards set by UK ambulance services. The Tutor noted the extremely high results from examinations at the end of training, with staff attaining an overall average of 81%.

The Minister for Health and Civil Protection, Yvette del Agua said "Since the ambulance service moved into the GHA in September 2007, an exciting development programme has been underway to modernise and improve emergency care services in Gibraltar. This programme has also included ambulance staff from the City Fire Brigade. I have noted with pride the high examination marks achieved in this latest course, which demonstrates not only how hard the staff have worked and how much they have learnt, but also reflects the high standard of patient care being provided by our ambulance service. I congratulate all of them on their results". The Minister also

commended Michael Valarino, a GHA EMT, for his significant achievement in attaining his tutors course after 18 months of study both in Gibraltar and the UK.

#### Notes for Editors

Michael Valarino and his colleague Paul Watson will be presenting a paper at this weeks First International Conference in Pre-Hospital Emergency and Disaster Medicine at the John Mackintosh Hall. A programme is attached for information.

Photographs and interviews can be arranged by contacting Natalie or Diane on 20072266 Ext 2316/2311.