



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

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GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR THE NEW GBC

The Government, in consultation with the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) Steering Committee, has now formally met with the Board of GBC and confirmed the implementation of the plan going forward. Minister Holliday also met the GBC staff today.

The Government has taken the policy decision to relocate GBC in its entirety to a new location at Rooke. The investment will comprise £4.5 million for Building and Structural Works and £6.0 million for fitting-out works, purchase of the latest equipment and ancillary facilities. The project is expected to commence this financial year with practical completion in 2 years.

The physical relocation of GBC to Rooke will take place as soon as the site is transferred to GoG under the terms of the recent Lands Agreement with the MOD and the necessary building and fitting out works are completed. There will be significant investment in new studios and equipment and some enhancement of staff resources, so that the new GBC is able to serve Gibraltar into the future.

The Government will provide a new centre for radio, television, online and office facilities, tailored to the requirements of a broadcasting station. A number of design proposals were considered. However, the preferred option entails the conversion of 50% of the existing building and an extension for studio space on the west face of the building. The proposal involves a minimal amount of alteration and demolition to the existing building. Apart from the proposed studio at the front of the building, a possible future extension of an additional smaller studio could be accommodated within the proposed footprint. Once the building is converted, approximately 2,125m² of usable floor area will be created (i.e. excluding circulation spaces e.g. corridors, stairs etc.).

There will also be an associated increase in operational expenditure to £3.1 million per annum in order to strengthen the overall staff complement at GBC. This will include the post of CEO (Designate). The person selected to fill the post will be a suitably qualified and experienced person from within GBC.

The Government will enact new legislation to govern GBC. A new Broadcasting Act is being drafted and will be finalised later this year.

There is an EU requirement to switchover from analogue to digital broadcasting by the 31st December 2012. Further investment will be made by the Government to cater for this and an announcement will be made in this respect in due course.

Commenting on the investment plan, Joe Holliday, Minister with responsibility for GBC said “GBC has made, and continues to make, a significant contribution to the promotion of our culture, heritage and identity as a people. Despite its importance to Gibraltar, GBC has not been developed, reformed or modernised over the years to reflect its value. I am delighted that the Government has taken the policy decision to rebrand GBC, Gibraltar’s only local broadcaster, to ensure that it is able to survive and prosper in the future, and to retain and maximise its relevance to the Community and serve its needs. Government believes that this view is widely shared by people in Gibraltar. The implementation of the plan will see GBC relocated to suitable premises, will have the financial ability to upgrade its equipment with modern technology, have adequate staff resources and become a modern broadcaster that Gibraltar can be proud of”.