



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR

Ministry for Health & Civil Protection

Floor 7, Block 1, St. Bernard's Hospital, Harbour Views Road

Gibraltar

Telephone: (350) 20072266 Ext. 2005/2006 Fax: (350) 20059942

PRESS RELEASE

PR NO: 287/2011

DATE: 29th September 2011

The GHA totally rejects the Opposition's claim that it has been vindicated in its arguments regarding the ambulance service, just because 2 ambulances have not passed the MOT. The GHA also strongly rejects the Opposition's allegation that the GHA only had 2 emergency ambulances over the weekend and that there were insufficient vehicles available to respond to an emergency.

Minister for Health, Yvette Del Agua said: "it is evident that the Opposition will use any trick in the book to try and gain the upper hand, even if in so doing they irresponsibly subject our community to unnecessary stress and worry. This can only be seen as another deliberate ploy to divert the public's attention away from the fact that both Mr Costa and Mr Picardo have been caught out lying over the issue.

The fact that 2 ambulances failed the MOT does in no way justify or vindicate the Opposition's feeble arguments on this issue, which have been based all along on lies and distortions. The Opposition's continued insistence that ambulances are not being properly maintained, only serves to undermine and put into question the professional integrity of the City Fire Brigade mechanics, who service and repair our vehicles.

Ironically, it was 2 of our newest vehicles, purchased only 4 years ago, that failed the test, whilst the older one, which the GHA is replacing as part of its fleet replacement programme, passed with flying colours. The faults identified were minor and neither of the vehicles failed due to the tyres being 'threadbare or overused', as the Opposition previously claimed, or because "their brakes did not work properly", as they are claiming now. Once again, they have twisted and distorted the facts to try and make maximum political impact.

As a last ditch attempt to try and extricate themselves from the web of lies that Mr Costa and Mr Picardo have spun for themselves, they now sit on the fence and allow a spokesman for the Opposition to proclaim that ambulances should never develop faults. This unrealistic and ridiculous proposition only serves to demonstrate an alarming level of ignorance and immaturity which

does not befit a Party that has such high aspirations to become the next Government of Gibraltar”.