



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR

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PRESS RELEASE

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MOD Generating station

Plumes of smoke rising from the former Inter Services Generating Station last week were the result of a problem that occurred when one of its engines failed to restart. This Press Release seeks to clarify the matter for public reassurance.

A problem arose when one of the engines was stopped during the Christmas holiday period to repair an engine cooler water leak and Gibraltar Mechanical & Electrical Services (GMES) technicians attempted to restart it.

The restarting process for engines of this type would have initially led to some black smoke which would be due to the start up of the engine on no load. The situation deteriorated because the engine could not take on load over a certain threshold resulting in the additional white/grey smoke that was seen at the exhaust, due to water (steam) or oil being burnt.

The Gibraltar Electricity Authority instructed GMES to shut down the engine, which is currently being assessed by technicians and may require to be overhauled before it is brought back into service.

A number of problems are being identified in relation to this power station, which were not made public at the time the former Government agreed to take it over as part of the latest agreement with the Ministry of Defence a short time before the General Election on the 8th December. They include the need to overhaul some of the engines, which are well past the due date for proper maintenance, and which will be at considerable cost to the Gibraltar taxpayer. These problems are presently being assessed and will be made public by the Ministry for the Environment in due course.

Environment Minister, Dr John Cortes, said: "This is typical of the many problems we are uncovering. At no time did the previous GSD administration indicate at these problems when they took over the MOD Power Station. We will ensure that any relevant information is put in the public domain as it becomes available.