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PRESS RELEASE

No. 551/2013

Date: 26th July 2013

Tourist Board VIPs are ready for the peak summer season

Over the peak summer season, Gibraltar's visitors will again be assisted by the Tourist Board's Visitor Information Patrols. These smartly-dressed Patrols have become a popular sight in Gibraltar in recent years, assisting thousands of tourists to find their way around the city's sites of interest and leisure amenities.

Twelve local students took part in a one day course for tourist guides at Bleak House last week. The course prepared the young people in several subjects including key historical events and how to deal with the public in a courteous and helpful way to ensure customer satisfaction so that tourists are left with a desire to repeat the experience.

The VIP officers were also briefed on detailed aspects of the tourist product not least, Gibraltar's busy nightlife and entertainment options: the day also included information about the Rock's commercial and tourist development, a virtual Rock tour of the main attractions and a role playing exercise in which Tourist Information Manager Gail Francis-Tiron posed as a tourist asking for directions – with the occasional awkward question!

The VIP teams are an important feature as they are the Gibraltar Tourist Board's frontline operation in direct contact with tourists. It was stressed that causing a good impression while attending to customer queries in a polite and effective way has proven successful in encouraging a visitor to return to the Rock at a later date.

Gail and her deputy, Ajessa Debono, also steered the guides through the detailed VIP study manual while highlighting the importance of the tourist industry to Gibraltar's economy.

The VIPs will be posted at various strategic points in the town area and at Jews Gate ready to share many useful tips to ensure every visitor to Gibraltar can make the most of their visit and enjoy much of what the Rock has to offer.

Minister for Tourism Neil Costa welcomed the success of the scheme.

He said: "We are pleased to see the VIPs going from strength to strength. They have been a regular feature in our streets for many years now and the Government will continue to support a scheme which provides a useful service to visitors to Gibraltar and an opportunity for our students to gain a feel for the tourist industry, learn about the Rock and have a productive summer job."