



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER
No 6 Convent Place
Gibraltar**

PRESS RELEASE

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Garcia visits border queue monitoring office

On Tuesday Morning, The Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Joseph Garcia visited the frontier queue complaints counter and the frontier monitoring control office, both of which are located in the Air Terminal Building.

The office has been open for less than two weeks but it has already received 263 complaints either on-line or in person. The majority of the complaints are being submitted on-line by persons of different nationalities who have been made to wait in a frontier queue enter or exit Spain.

There is a considerable effort underway to collate and coordinate data and other information in relation to the frontier delays. This may form part of further complaints to the European Commission or be the basis of a court case in the future. The data collection includes video, photographic and statistical information. Individual experiences of persons in the queue are also being compiled.

A tentative pattern has already emerged which points to the Spanish authorities deliberately engineering delays to exit Spain on weekdays from about 9.30am until 1.30pm, with the delays then switching to enter Spain from about 5.30pm to 9.30pm. This is a general pattern which may change from day to day. Indeed, on Tuesday afternoon, for example, the delays to enter Spain started at about 3.00pm. The incoming queue was one and a half hours at that time.

The delays on Saturday to enter Spain tend to be from about 10.00am to 2.00pm. On Sundays the queues switch to exiting Spain from about 6.00pm to 10.00pm. It is relevant to note that on Bank Holiday Monday, at the end of August, the incoming evening queue was generated on the Monday and not on the Sunday.

There are other intermittent delays caused in other areas, for example the commercial gate, experienced a four hour delay for incoming commercial traffic on Monday morning.

The information gathering exercise is being run by the Office of the Deputy Chief Minister whose Principal Secretary has been despatched to a frontier queue control centre in order to coordinate the whole operation, along with other staffing and resources which have been deployed for the purpose. The data is being compiled and submitted to the Government of the United Kingdom and to the European Citizen's Action Service (ECAS) which is based in Brussels and which has filed a complaint of its own to the European Commission.

Commenting on the matter, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia said:

"A clear pattern is emerging of politically motivated delays at certain times of day either to exit Spain or to enter Spain. This pattern is unrelated to the volume of traffic or to the ridiculous excuses that Madrid has given for such delays. A detailed analysis is being carried out of the statistical and other data that is currently available.

"Persons coming into Gibraltar are now being asked to provide the time that they have spent in the queue and to give details of the questions that they are being asked by the Spanish frontier authorities on their way out of Spain. Indeed, one such person was Liberal Democrat MEP Sir Graham Watson, who was himself stuck in a one and a half hour queue to enter Gibraltar over the weekend. All this information is also being compiled and coordinated in addition to the statistical data.

"The delays continue to be totally disproportionate and undermine the right of EU nationals to freedom of movement through an EU border."

The Government continues to urge people who have experienced the delays created at the border by the Spanish authorities to complain. Complaints can be made to:

1. The Gibraltar Government via the on-line form on the website www.gibraltar.gov.gi/onlineforms
2. European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)
Email : rights.clinic@ecas.org
Skype: [ecas_europe](#)
Twitter: [@ecas_europe](#)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/european-citizen-action