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PRESS RELEASE

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Government Increases Tobacco Duty, Extends Powers of Officers Further and Repairs Frontier Fence

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar has today increased duty on cigarettes. The duty has gone up 10p per packet of cigarettes and came into effect from after midnight on 2nd 1st December, i.e. with effect from 2nd December. [Fuller details of the rise are reflected in the attached Legal Notices.]

The Chief Minister signed the relevant legal notices before his departure over the weekend for Her Majesty the Queen's Evening Reception at Buckingham Palace on Tuesday.

Mr Picardo has also further extended the areas where Police and Customs officers have wider powers to deal with those suspected of acting in breach of existing provisions of the Tobacco Act to include an area between the frontier fence and the Ministry of Defence facility at Four Corners, given that this is now an area in the control of the Gibraltar Government. The area extends to the northern most part of Western Beach. This will now also require further repairs to the frontier fence to the east and west of the entry point into Gibraltar.

The Chief Minister said: "We are continuing to extend the powers available to HM Customs and Royal Gibraltar Police officers in dealing with illicit tobacco activity and investing in repairing those parts of the frontier fence which have been damaged by those involved in this trade. Last year Government spent £129,513.96 on repairs to the frontier fence and erecting new fencing which is harder to damage. The work we commissioned had not been done for years, but now requires further action to protect not just against this illicit trade in tobacco and the danger to our hard working law enforcement officials arising from it, but also the security danger posed by potential unauthorised access to Gibraltar through holes in the frontier. New CCTV installations are being prepared to help deal with this security issue also."

Ends

[A .pdf of the relevant Legal Notices is attached for editors' ease of reference.]