



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

PRESS RELEASE

No: 210/2014

Date: 8th May 2014

Government forward over 500 border complaints to the European Commission

The Government have sent the European Commission over five hundred complaints against the delays at the border since their six month countdown commenced in November. These complaints have come mainly from EU nationals who work in Gibraltar and who live in Spain but also includes residents of Gibraltar as well as non-EU nationals and tourists.

These are important in the evidence gathering process as they reflect the views of ordinary citizens who are being affected by the deliberate and lengthy delays which continue to be generated by the Spanish frontier authorities at their land border with Gibraltar.

A series of detailed statistical reports covering the state of the border on each day for each particular month has also been forwarded to the European Commission. This data was first expanded to include delays coming into Gibraltar as well as delays going out. It was then expanded further after the Spanish Government extended the deliberate delays to pedestrians crossing the border into Spain.

The statistical data has been accompanied by photographs of vehicular and pedestrian queues as well. The information dossier has also included press articles on the delays at the border from the Gibraltar, the Spanish and the international media.

The statistical data shows that there were delays of an hour or more to outgoing traffic:

on 24 days in November 2013;
on 25 days in December 2013;
on 23 days in January 2014;
on 21 days in February 2014,
on 26 days in March 2014 and
on 25 days in April 2014.

The longest recorded delay to vehicles was 240 minutes on 12 November, 9 December and on 18 December. The outgoing traffic queue was 215 minutes on 21 April.

Indeed, the latest figures since the beginning of May, which have not yet been sent to the Commission, show that there have been outgoing delays of an hour or more every day of the month so far with a peak of 150 minutes on 2nd May and 5th May.

The longest waiting time for pedestrians was 90 minutes on 24th February followed by 75 minutes on 11th March.

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

“My office has been tasked with compiling the data, preparing the reports and sending them to the European Commission. I have personally read every single complaint that is submitted through the website. They provide a very real picture of the level of human suffering and of the disruption that is being caused to the lives of ordinary people. In one case a complainant calculated the amount of hours spent in the queue in a particular week and it amounted to 7.5 hours, which is practically a working day. I have highlighted that fact to the Commission.

It will be recalled that the Commission intended to close the investigation at one point and then decided to keep it open in the light of new evidence and information that had been sent to them. It is not clear at this stage how the situation will evolve from here. The Gibraltar Government, in keeping with the six month deadline, has been busy implementing the recommendations that were made on 15 November. There has been little activity on the Spanish side, although recent reports suggest that minor demolition works have taken place.

The bottom line is that these delays are politically motivated, they are illegal and they should be stopped.”

