



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry of Education, Telecommunications and Justice
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Gibraltar

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BUDGET SPEECH 2014

BY THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND JUSTICE

THE HON G LICUDI QC

Mr Speaker, I have the honour to report to the House on the areas that form part of my Ministerial portfolio, starting with Education

EDUCATION

The Estimates reflect that the amount required in the year ending 31 March 2015 for salaries, wages and expenses is £43,309,000. The forecast outturn for the year ended 31 March 2014 of £38,831,000. There is a proposed increase this year of £4,478,000.

A significant part of that increase relates to scholarships. Honourable Members will note a provision for 2014/15 of £14,865,000 compared to a forecast outturn in 2013/14 of £12,396,000, an increase of £2,469,000.

2013/2014 saw 240 Mandatory scholarships being awarded as well as a total of 96 discretionary awards. As a result of the changes the Government has already made since elected into office in respect of mandatory, distance learning and discretionary

scholarships, the Department of Education has already implemented a bespoke student data management system which is capable of keeping track and intelligently make use of student career data and progress.

The Gibraltar Internship Initiative in Washington D.C is going from strength to strength with a record number of applicants expressing an interest this year (more than 30 have applied). The Initiative offers students a unique experience in support of their professional development. Successful applicants will have the opportunity to intern in the executive suites of Fortune 500 companies, international organisations (Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank, and International Money Fund, for example) as well as in great American institutions (Smithsonian, US Congress). The Initiative also includes academic sessions and classes delivered by professors from top US universities. Students are matched with potential employers according to their needs and interests thus developing their skills as well as enjoying an unforgettable experience with students from around the world.

The Department of Education continues to support the private and public sectors with their training and professional development initiatives. Professional qualifications such as ACCA and ACA are funded in partnership with the industry as well as qualifications for port and maritime operations. Government's own Human Resources Department has also been supported in obtaining professional Human Resource management qualifications for key personnel. Income Tax, Department of Transport, GCID, Youth Service and Technical Services, to name but a few, have all benefitted from Government's continued commitment to fund professional development courses and qualifications.

The Kusuma Centre at St Martins was completed on the 16 September 2013. The Kusuma Centre is annexed to the main building and has been funded by the Kusuma Trust, to which the Government is very grateful for its continued support on this and other projects. The annex has a class room for the older pupils in the school, which is equipped with all the necessary facilities to make the area self-sufficient for the educational and other needs of the pupils. It also has a therapy room which is used by the occupational, speech and physiotherapists for group sessions. The Kusuma Centre enables pupils to acquire independent life skills as well as developing self-esteem. The extension comprises a large

classroom facility with immediately adjacent but separate purpose built shower/bathroom and toilet facilities, a store room and a comfort/safe space room. There is also a large therapy room which also doubles up for multi-disciplinary clinics with paediatricians and visiting consultants. At the lobby entrance there is a therapists' office and additional toilet facilities.

The conversion of the Old St Bernard's Hospital site into two new schools is well under way. The old hospital premises will house both St Bernard's and Sacred Heart Schools. The latter will be renamed St Bernard's Middle School. As announced previously, the Government is fulfilling a manifesto commitment to re-locate Sacred Heart in a manner which will allow the school, over time, to take an equivalent number of students as other middle schools.

The First School will have 8 classrooms as well as a range of specialised teaching areas and spaces specifically designed to cater for this age range.

The Middle School will have 16 classrooms, as well as dedicated teaching areas for Music, ICT, Technology, Art and Science, in keeping with the needs of older children. The Headteachers of the two schools continue to be consulted and have been involved in the design process from the onset. The relocation will provide the children and staff assigned to these schools with modern, comfortable premises in an environment which is specifically designed to be conducive to learning.

A noteworthy feature of this school will be a central glass-roofed atrium, which will be available for students and teachers, to enjoy either for social or educational purposes. Both schools will be fully networked and equipped with ICT resources and facilities. They will both be fully accessible in order to cater for pupils, parents or teachers who may have mobility issues.

The new building will also house a shared Sports Hall, with a play area on top of the Hall for the First School. Both the Sports Hall and the play area will be available for community use. This can be accessed separately and will house toilets and changing room facilities.

Mr Speaker, as I have said before, this is an extremely exciting project. We will create much needed school facilities in this area as well as sports facilities for the Community. This will be, in fact, the first Sports Hall that will be built in the Central or Upper Town area. The project also makes use of the existing iconic buildings built in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and which will be tastefully restored.

Minor Works and Refurbishment in Schools

1. The flat roof at Bishop Fitzgerald Middle School, which serves as assembly point for the whole school, will be replaced during the summer recess. The elevated escape routes will also be repaired.
2. Bayside School will have its Drama Studio floor replaced and the internal painting program completed before the commencement of the new academic year.
3. The external façade of Bleak House will be repaired and repainted and the fire escape flooring repaired.
4. St Anne's Middle School will have its existing water membrane to the flat roof replaced in its entirety to prevent water ingress.
5. St Joseph's First School will have a covered walkway leading from the main building to the lunch hall in order to prevent the little ones from being exposed to the elements.
6. St Bernard's Nursery will undergo necessary internal and external works this financial year.
7. Rubber Crumb flooring will be provided to the playing area at St Martins Special School.
8. All exposed timber members at St Paul's First School will be treated with good quality wood primer and finished with a high performance gloss.
9. New fire escape route for St Mary's School.

In the financial year ending 31 March 2014 the following works have been carried out:

- The new facilities at St Joseph's First and Middle School were completed at a total cost of £614,000.
- Two new science laboratories at Westside School have been constructed. The total cost has been £205,000.
- Westside School driveway has been resurfaced at a total cost of £37,480.

- The windows at the western façade of St Mary's First School have all been replaced. The total cost has been £55,916.
- The works to provide the following schools with rubber crumb flooring have been completed at a total cost of £155,396:
 - Governor's Meadow First School
 - Hebrew Primary School
 - St Mary's First School
 - Varyl Begg Nursery
- Windows in the ICT/History area at Bayside School have been replaced at a total cost of £37,240.
- Phased internal painting program at Bayside school has also been completed at a cost of £46,000.
- The Special needs works at Bishop Fitzgerald First School have been completed at a cost of £63,370.
- External repairs have been carried out at the Gibraltar College to its East and South Stairwell of main building. The total cost has been £51,039.
- The toilet block at Sacred Heart Middle School was reconfigured and refurbished at a total cost of £12,510.
- The Reception area at St Anne's Middle School has been relocated, a new storeroom constructed adjacent to the Sports Hall, at a total cost of £20,850.
- St Paul's First School has had the East side fencing repaired, the West side debris netting replaced with a proprietary cover and the playground fence replaced with a brick wall; all at a total cost of £55,604.
- Notre Dame First School has had the deteriorated PVC tiles replaced at some classrooms, throughout all the school, at a cost of £30,000.

Developing Technology in Schools

Safer Internet use

The Department of Education continues to engage with the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority, the Royal Gibraltar Police, the Citizen's Advice Bureau and other appropriate bodies in order to ensure that children and young people are fully aware of the potential dangers of

careless internet use, especially in the light of the dissemination of personal data and content in social networking sites. Schools are kept fully briefed via programmed sessions aimed at children and teachers.

Smartboards

The continued financing of Smartboards has allowed us to have access to over 300 of these throughout our schools. These are housed mainly in classrooms but we will continue to increase their numbers and expand into specialist rooms. A regular maintenance programme for Smart boards was introduced last year and this is already showing benefits in terms of extending the shelf-life of relatively costly consumables such as the halogen bulbs in the Smartboard projector pod.

Computer Science

A new national curriculum programme of study for computing in England, will replace the old ICT curriculum and will set out to teach children 'computational thinking', as from September 2014. The Advisory Service attended a professional conference in London in order to keep abreast of developments in this field. The conference highlighted the changes that will take place within the Primary Sector to achieve this end. I am happy to report that some of the initiatives that were suggested as first steps at the conference, such as introducing children to programming, are already happening in a number of our First and Middle schools. Early programming skills are already being taught through the use of software such as "Scratch". It is expected that all first and Middle schools will be using this in the next academic year.

Tablets

Schools in all sectors are looking to tablets as a means of improving teaching and learning in the classroom. Some teachers have piloted their use and it is an area which teachers are keen to explore. Having access to these is already throwing up very exciting ways of interacting with the pupils. First and middle schools are using them within the course of a lesson to allow the pupils to access software and data relevant to the lesson. They provide opportunities for pupils to practice or extend lesson objectives or to be engaged in active research through the Internet.

At secondary level pupils have been able to access course content and revision exercises set up by the teacher.

Maintenance

IT support and maintenance of ICT equipment in schools has undergone an enormous improvement since the IT&LD has taken over. All schools have reported that the response time to repairs has improved.

Nurseries

Applications for nursery placements are lower in comparison to last year (390). 332 (350 with late entries) have applied. There will again be a nursery place available for every application should parents wish to take up the offer they receive. Due to the fall in demand, it will not be necessary to open St. Mary's and Governor's Meadow nurseries in the afternoon, as was the case last year.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

In the UK the changes to the SEN Code of Practice (2001) are in the final revision stage. The Advisory Service recently attended a conference where the main changes for England were highlighted. The Department of Education is reviewing what the implications of the changes, if any, are for Gibraltar.

The Advisory Service has led a number of twilight sessions on Dyslexia, for secondary teachers.

SENCOS received additional training on how to support pupils with SEN in the areas of sex and relationships. This was a follow up to training they received last year on Autism, where this sensitive and important issue was first discussed. In addition, the Autism Support Group, Gibraltar recently held a 'Positive about Autism' Conference for parents, to which representatives from the Advisory Service and the schools were invited to attend. It was important to listen to parents' perspectives, as it helps to strengthen the parents/schools

partnership. In addition, the Advisory Service has extended In-service Training on Autism to schools on request.

In May, a small number of teachers along with a member of the Advisory Service attended a Hemispheres Think Write Handwriting Programme course which was organised for parents. The course focuses on helping children between 3 - 8 years of age master the skills for writing. The cognitive framework of the Hemispheres Think Write supports children's learning by linking old and new learning together, expanding and categorising learning for ease of storage and retrieval, essential qualities for the development of automatic writing by the end of Key stage 2.

English as a foreign or second language

Due to the increasing number of pupils coming into our education system from all over the world, the Department of Education now has set-up a dedicated team comprising of a qualified teacher and two graduates to support schools with the teaching of English to non-English speakers.

Continuing Professional Development

The Advisory Service has also facilitated In-service in the following areas:

1. Safeguarding Children Tier 1 Training – This multi-agency commitment, which education forms part of, has continued to offer training.
2. Dignified Care and Responsibility Training - this continues to be facilitated by the Advisory Service. Restraining children should always be a last resort strategy. DCRT is commended for its focus on de-escalation techniques and serve to reduce the need to physically restrain children. This course includes both the theoretical aspects such as understanding aggression and aggression cycles, triggers, self awareness and risk assessments, as well as the practical skills needed to safely restrain children.
3. The New National Curriculum is set to 'roll out' in the UK in September 2014. One aspect of the changes is in relation to assessment and the abolishing of National Curriculum levels. Following attendance at a recent conference on 'Effective Primary Assessment after Levels', the Advisory Service will provide appropriate in-service training for the Head teachers in the primary sector.

4. First Aid Courses in schools – this continues and is a part of a rolling programme facilitated by the Advisory Service.
5. Mr Speaker, as I have mentioned earlier, Health and Safety Audits of all schools were completed. We have this year entered into arrangements to train our Headteachers and Deputies in matters relating to Health and Safety. We are now able to provide the Level 2 Award in Health and Safety in the workplace course of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health for our school leaders. The course is designed to benefit our senior managers by providing essential knowledge on a range of issues. The course should highlight typical generic workplace hazards and suggest effective control measures. It is hoped that this should better equip the participants in all matters relating to Health and Safety and, furthermore, make them more aware of how their own actions can affect the health, safety and well-being of others. The ultimate aim is to train as many people as is deemed necessary in order to continue to safeguard the health and safety of all those who work within school communities.

Post-16 developments

Mr Speaker, in my budget speech last year I emphasised that the public examination system in England was in a constant state of flux, and that accordingly the Department of Education was keeping a close watch on 14-19 developments.

These developments in the UK are now gradually taking shape with a return to a more traditional examination system comprised mostly of terminal papers and doing away with the ongoing modular arrangement we currently have. I am happy to report that the Director of Education and Senior Education Advisor attended a conference last November in London which dealt with these proposed changes. The advisory service has already held meetings with the Senior Management Teams of both secondary schools to keep them abreast of these developments and to ensure that our schools are ready to take on the new challenges.

Mr Speaker, we are justly proud of our examination results. It is acknowledged by all that our students do well and that we compare very favourably to other UK schools. Nevertheless, we should never become complacent. This year we have undertaken a

comprehensive analysis of our examination results with the aim of supporting those Departments and teachers who most needed our help. The Advisory Service have met and spoken at length with some of the key players responsible for the constant assurance of quality. Where necessary, teachers have been sent on courses and conferences, to increase their understanding in all matters relating to education. In particular, specific subjects have been targeted. Furthermore, upon their return, teachers have been asked to brief others, sometimes across schools so that information is adequately disseminated. Advisors have also spoken to Heads of Departments and observed lessons. The challenge of course is to ensure that children always learn to the best of their abilities and are afforded the best opportunities possible.

Mr Speaker, our success cannot just be measured by examination results, important as these are. Our view of course is that education is about preparing our children to be the citizens of tomorrow; it is about awakening a passion for learning in all of them, and getting them to enjoy learning for its own intrinsic value. The ethos should be on teaching to learn how to learn. Our children therefore continue to enjoy a range of fascinating activities which we hope will contribute to this:

- Two drama practitioners from the famous Shakespeare's Globe Theatre visited Gibraltar and carried out workshops and after-school sessions with students from both Bayside and Westside Schools and their drama groups.
- The Learning from Auschwitz programme continues to grow in strength and has attracted interest and participation from Year 12 and Gibraltar College students. Pupils from Middle Schools were also involved in the first annual Holocaust Memorial Day.
- The Young Enterprise Scheme continues to grow from year to year. Furthermore, our pupils have also taken part in a wealth of competitions organised by the Department of Education. Amongst the many, the interfaith competition is worth special mention. There was real educational value here, and the level of participation and commitment from teachers and students alike is testament to this.

Schools availed themselves of the opportunities offered by the speakers from the highly successful first Gibraltar Literary Festival. This year's Literary Festival will include even more sessions from prominent speakers and writers specifically aimed at our young

people. The Department of Education has been fully consulted in the choice of authors and personalities travelling to Gibraltar to talk to children about areas such as food, science, literature, language and history.

Furthermore, pupils have also participated in a wide range of worthwhile competitions like e.g., the Gibraltar Post Office's letter writing competition which formed part of the Universal Postal Union International Letter-Writing Competition; Ministry for Culture's Spring Festival Logo and Short Story competition and their ever-popular Young Artist Competition; Royal Gibraltar Police's Poster Competition which was part of their anti-drugs and promotion of sports campaign and the Gibraltar Heritage Trusts 24th Annual Painting Competition whose main aim was to raise awareness of our heritage.

As part of their broader education, Gibraltar's teachers and pupils have helped to keep alive the generosity that Gibraltarians are famous for, and have always prided themselves in, and have continued to raise thousands upon thousands of pounds for both local and international charities.

We are very grateful as always to the Kusuma Trust for their continued support in bringing over outreach programmes in mathematics and science from both the University of Cambridge and the British Science Museum. This year we were once again visited by top British Universities who delivered their lectures and imparted sound advice to our senior pupils. Furthermore, our pupils have also participated in mock interviews designed to get them past the hurdle of even the most stringent admissions tutors.

University of Gibraltar

Plans to create a University of Gibraltar continue on track and are now at an advanced stage. It is envisaged that the University will open for business for September 2015, as per the Government's 2011 Manifesto commitment.

The legal framework establishing the University is also at an advanced drafting stage.

Mr Speaker, I am happy to report that all institutions approached by the Department of

Education have expressed their delight and enthusiasm at the opportunity of working with Gibraltar on the University project.

A number of meetings with senior staff and faculty members from the University of London have been held with a view to setting up collaborative undergraduate programmes. Working links between the Department of Education and the University of London and the London School of Economics have been established as a result and appropriate undergraduate courses, including Computer Science, Law and Finance, are currently under consideration.

An MoU with the University of Seychelles has also been signed during my recent very productive visit to the islands and as a result, there are concrete plans to develop a joint Gibraltar and Sechelles universities MSc in the Marine Environment, designed to cover all aspects of the 'Blue Economy' and is designed for those working or seeking employment in a maritime environment such as shipping, renewable energies, fisheries, conservation and so on. This will be a two-centre masters degree and it is envisaged that this will involve exchanges between Gibraltar and Seychellois students. We also expect that over time this unique course offered in two exciting locations will be very attractive to international students interested in this area. There will be other collaborative postgraduate programmes with selected internationally-recognised academic institutions, a number of which are already under consideration.

The University of Gibraltar, Mr Speaker, will also be a principal driver in the creation and development of a locally-orientated knowledge base serving to underpin the further development of the key elements of our economy. It aims to do this by becoming a centre of excellence and fostering and developing quality academic research. It will also act as a central hub for all aspects of Higher Education activity in Gibraltar.

It will be something Gibraltar will be proud of.

Mr Speaker, our citizens have always been very respectful of each other, celebrating what we have in common and respecting our differences. This all begins in our schools, through

commitment and a quality education which goes beyond teaching just to pass examinations. It gives me a sense of pride to see our young people develop into the citizens of tomorrow, particularly when one looks at the problems which some countries in Europe and the rest of the world face, with emerging extremism and violence borne out of a lack of understanding for each other.

Mr Speaker, let me end by address on Education by reflecting on a policy paper recently announced by the Opposition.

In the first paragraph of the Opposition's policy document on education and training they say and I quote "we believe that significant changes to our education system should be made... in order to meet the educational challenges ahead to make our system the best it can possibly be and one of the best in the World".

Mr Speaker, it struck me as a little odd that having been in Government for sixteen years as they were, that this same party who had the opportunity to make whatever changes they felt necessary should just over two years later make a public statement calling for significant changes to the educational system, but especially so Mr Speaker, when you have a quick peep at Hansard and read what the Honourable GSD Minister for Education said in his budget speech in 2010 when referring to the teachers and professionals involved in the educational process said and I quote it is "through their hard work and dedication make sure that we have in Gibraltar an education service in both academic and pastoral terms, that could well be the envy of any community our size anywhere else".

Then Mr Speaker, 12 months later in their last budget before the 2011 Election the same Minister said the following, and I quote "it is their joint effort... working in a well-resourced, safe environment that ensures that we have in Gibraltar an education service in academic, vocational and pastoral terms that could well be the envy of any community of our size".

Mr Speaker, almost identical language in 2010 and then again in 2011 and no sign of a suggestion that they felt the need for any change, at least that's what they told the people. So how and why in their 2011 Manifesto in such a short period of time after having had sixteen years of opportunity to implement change can they seek to suggest the

“significant changes” that they now profess to be needed. Mr Speaker, the wording of the policy document is basically copied from their manifesto, and released as a new idea.

A new idea which they clearly kept to themselves whilst they were in office for 16 years. The contradiction in what they say and what they actually do is there for all to see and is evident in just about everything which the Opposition does – but that, of course, is not new at all.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr Speaker, I have responsibility for certain aspects of the work carried out by the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority under the provisions of the Communications Act 2006.

The GRA is an independent authority which, under the Act, regulates the following areas:

- electronic communications, which includes broadcasting networks, radiocommunications and licensing of the radio spectrum, and
- international co-ordination of satellite networks and licensing.

There are seven companies operating under the regime set up by the Communications Act providing a variety of fixed and mobile networks and services.

Currently, there are two active mobile operators, Gibtelecom and Eazitelecom, trading as Shine, providing 2G and 3G services. Gibtelecom is the oldest operator and is well established with a range of services. Shine is now offering two pre-paid mobile voice plans and 3G services to customers over their independent mobile network. Shine’s network covers over 98% of the geographical area of Gibraltar.

4G, short for fourth generation, is the fourth generation of mobile telecommunications technology, succeeding 3G. 4G aims to offer users faster, more reliable mobile broadband internet for devices like smartphones, tablets and laptops. Loosely speaking, 4G is around five times faster than existing 3G services.

A 4G system, in addition to the usual voice and other services of 3G, provides mobile ultra-broadband Internet access, for example to laptops with USB wireless modems, to smartphones, and to other mobile devices. Conceivable applications include amended mobile web access, IP telephony, gaming services, high-definition mobile TV, video conferencing, 3D television, and cloud computing.

What does this mean in practice? The faster speeds mean websites load quicker, and that you will be able to stream videos and podcasts without first waiting for them to buffer. Plus, you will be able to download large email attachments or other content from the web faster. Applications which need to download data, such as maps, will work more smoothly, especially when zooming in or out as this generally requires a lot of data. The speed differential should be akin to switching from 3G to Wi-Fi.

In December 2013, the Government, through the GRA issued a public consultation on proposals to license the provision of 4G mobile communications services in Gibraltar. The focus of the consultation was on the process for licensing 4G services and, in this context, to set out the GRA's plans for the spectrum bands which should be granted access for the provision of 4G services.

The fees for the use of 4G spectrum have been considered and the current fees for 2G and 3G have been re-evaluated. The proposed fees have been arrived at considering, but not limiting to, the following factors:

- Demand for spectrum,
- Availability of the required bands,
- Interoperability of technology allowed in the band due to sharing constraints or international sharing agreements.

Built into the award process is a methodology that took into account of the possibility of interest from new operators as well as current mobile operators.

Mr Speaker, I am happy to report that both Gibtelecom and Shine will be rolling out 4G services and have accepted the minimum criteria required for the rollout, which includes:

- Launch date: 4G operators will be obliged to launch commercial services within eighteen months of licence award;
- Coverage at launch: 4G operators will be obliged to provide at least 70% population coverage at launch; and
- Population coverage to be achieved: 4G operators will be obliged to provide at least 95% population coverage within three years of service launch.

These operators will be able to provide 4G services by October 2015 at the latest.

In order to gain a better understanding of present issues that affect the local broadband market, a data collection exercise was undertaken by the GRA. The results of this exercise have served to provide a better understanding of network access and of pricing issues in Gibraltar. This information will provide a useful backdrop to weigh against any competition issues which may arise during an upcoming broadband market review process.

Under the provisions of Section 22 of the Communications Act 2006, the GRA is required to send to the European Commission, the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and other regulatory authorities in the Member States, a copy of a market review notification inviting them to make representations on the proposed measures within a period of one month.

The GRA attended a market review pre-notification meeting with the European Commission in Brussels which dealt with the retail access and calls markets.

Before any National Regulatory Authority (NRA) formally notifies its market reviews, they have the opportunity of meeting the regulatory co-ordination and markets unit of the Commission in order to informally discuss their market analyses and proposed Significant Market Power (SMP) designations. Preliminary feedback on the NRA's investigation is provided by the Commission's team which enables the NRA to make any amendments to its notification before being formally submitted.

The GRA is currently undertaking various market reviews in the electronic communications sector and a consultation on the following retail markets was published in January 2014:

- Access to the public telephone network at a fixed location
- Publicly available local telephone services provided at a fixed location
- Publicly available international telephone services provided at a fixed location
- Wholesale Broadband Access
- Retail Broadband

Markets will be defined, the state of competition analysed and if dominant players are established, SMP obligations will be imposed in the relevant markets.

The Satellite Division of the GRA is responsible for looking after the interests of the satellite industry in Gibraltar, ensuring compliance with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations, all other international obligations, and representing the interests of Gibraltar at international meetings.

The Division also assists with the co-ordination of satellites and orbital locations filed by the UK Administration with the ITU, on behalf of the Gibraltar-based company SES Satellites (Gibraltar) Ltd.

As I mentioned last year, Gibraltar's new national digital TV network, replaced the analogue TV network which was switched off on the 31st December 2012.

The arrival of digital television, and the switching off of the analogue TV network, has been a positive move for Gibraltar. Not only has this new digital service offered TV viewers with a clearer picture and better sound quality, there is also scope for additional TV channels, information services and high definition TV.

At present, Gibraltar has two television broadcasters and two radio broadcasters.

'Gibraltar Freeview', the entity which operates the digital network, is, as the Chief Minister has already said in his address, pursuing business opportunities with other broadcasters to offer new channels, for both TV and radio, and widen the choice of programmes and information services for Gibraltar.

The GRA collects Administrative Charges from providers of electronic communications services and networks, radiocommunications licence fees and other reimbursements. During the 2013/14 financial year, the total collected was £1,474,028.26, which was paid into the Consolidated Fund. This compares to expenditure for all of the GRA's Divisions of £1,558,041.49.

JUSTICE

Mr Speaker, I would start my contribution on Justice by taking this opportunity to thank Mr Justice Barrington Black for the excellent and important work he did for the Judiciary in his acting appointment as Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Gibraltar. He was brought in primarily for the purposes of clearing a substantial backlog of criminal cases, which in large measure he did, and for that I wish to acknowledge his work and praise him for his efforts. I wish him a happy retirement and the very best for the future.

In the same breath, I would like to congratulate Mr Justice Jack who has recently been selected for the post of Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Gibraltar and who will take up his appointment in August of this year. The introduction of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act rightly introduces an expectation that Court matters will be disposed of with reasonable time and it is for this reason that the Government agreed to fund a substantive post for a 4th resident Judge. On behalf of the Government, I welcome Mr Justice Jack to

Gibraltar and I wish him every success in his appointment as a senior member of the Judiciary.

Mr Speaker, I now turn to matters regarding legislation and I highlight some of the issues we have dealt with and are currently working on.

Hate crimes

Mr Speaker, last year I said in my budget address that Government intended to introduce a Bill on Hate Crimes, which made specific reference to crimes based on sexual orientation and disability; providing that the courts must, where it is a contributing factor to an offence, take hatred – on the grounds of race, sexual orientation, disability or religion – into account as an aggravating factor when sentencing. This was done. Furthermore, new offences of stalking and stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm were legislated for; as were new powers for the police, to enter and search premises in relation to cases of stalking, and introducing new sections on injunctions to protect persons from harassment, restraining orders on acquittal and a new offence of harassment of a person in his home.

Rehabilitation of offenders

The introduction of a Rehabilitation of Offenders Act was a manifesto commitment of the Government. Provisions for such legislation were included in the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act 2011. However, such provisions were based on UK legislation, which had become out of date and no longer fit for the purpose to help reformed offenders resettle into society. The UK changed their legislation in March of this year. This was based on research which suggested that the rehabilitation periods were too long and did not reflect the point at which reoffending tails off following a conviction. This meant that there was a very wide gap between rehabilitation periods in the UK and those in Gibraltar. As an example, someone sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the UK had a rehabilitation period of 4 years whereas someone sentenced to the same period of imprisonment in Gibraltar had a rehabilitation period of 10 years. As a result, I introduced a Bill in the last session of Parliament to ensure that rehabilitation periods in Gibraltar were modernised in line with current UK periods. The practical effect of the change is that those reformed

offenders, who wish to go down the right path and contribute to society, are now better able to do so.

Companies

Subject to the commencement of this legislation on 1 September 2014, the Government's manifesto commitment to introduce a much-needed and thorough review of Companies legislation has been completed. The review has involved consideration of proposals put forward by the Company Law Reform Committee set up by the Finance Centre Council and a consultation process including the issue of a Command Paper. The Act, passed recently in Parliament, incorporates a number of issues which were raised during the Command Paper consultation period. Given that our Companies legislation dated from 1930 (albeit amended from time to time) a major overhaul with a view to updating and modernising the legislation was required. There has been extensive work carried out in preparing the new legislation with much participation from private sector practitioners both at the preparation and the consultation stages. I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to this and, as I have said, expect that the Act (together with the legislation passed to bring into effect the Insolvency Act) will be commenced on 1 September 2014.

EU Directives

Further to the increase in staff at the EUID, which I reported last year and which led to Gibraltar being for the first time in modern history up to date with the transposition of EU Directives, I am pleased to inform the House that a further four Legal Assistants have been recruited into the European Union and International Department during the course of last year in order to ensure that we remain up to date. This signals Gibraltar's commitment to compliance with international obligations.

Proceeds of Crime Legislation

The Government will introduce proceeds of crime legislation which, among other things, will allow the forfeiture or confiscation of assets arising from criminal conduct even in the absence of a criminal conviction.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers

Mr Speaker, the Government will introduce legislation to regulate the powers of law enforcement bodies to intercept communications, acquire and disclose data relating to communications and carry out surveillance. Similar legislation was introduced in the UK in 2000.

The provisions of the legislation will include stringent safeguards to ensure that the relevant investigatory powers are used in accordance with the rights contained in the Gibraltar Constitution and international human rights obligations.

Legal Aid and Legal Assistance

The Government has a manifesto commitment in relation to legal aid and legal assistance. My ministry have been involved in a consultation process which has included the Bar Council, the Registrar of the Supreme Court and the Chief Justice.

We are very close to finalising arrangements for a new system. As has already been announced, this will provide a fairer and more cost-effective system which will benefit those in need of assistance and provide value for money for the taxpayer.

I expect to be in a position to announce and publish the changes which will be made before the start of the new legal year in October.

Mr Speaker, I now turn to matters linked with the Gibraltar Law Courts.

Gibraltar Law Courts

The past year has been an extremely busy one for the Law Courts. Notwithstanding this, the improvements in the performance and services provided reported last year, continue to be maintained and further enhanced.

The increase in the administrative staff complement together with the appointment of an Additional Stipendiary Magistrate has enabled the Magistrates' Court to hold 2nd Court

sittings on at least 2 days per week. This has resulted in an unprecedented reduction of waiting time for hearings from 6-8 months to 6-8 weeks.

For the Supreme Court, I mentioned some moments ago that this administration has recognised, that for the administration of Justice to function effectively, both for the purposes of providing an efficient service to our citizens and also to effectively deal with Finance Centre Commercial Litigation, the minimum complement of Judges required at the Supreme Court is the Chief Justice and three Puisne Judges.

The vast majority of applications received at the Supreme Court, continue to receive first hearing dates within five days of application and there continues to be no backlog of civil and family applications waiting for first hearing dates. Also, the dates of those first hearings are typically within 2 to 3 months of the date of the application to the court.

In respect of criminal trials, it is worth noting that the two year appointment of Mr Justice Black came to an end in April of this year, during which time the Court was able to set down for hearing two criminal trials at a time. This resulted in the criminal list being cleared. However, the ongoing lengthy criminal fraud trial which commenced in the first week of October 2013 has meant that during this time only one other criminal case can be set down for hearing and this has resulted in some backlog being created.

In terms of criminal trials, the arrival of Mr Justice Adrian Jack will mean that any backlog that has arisen should be tackled and cleared.

The electronic diary system for the Supreme Court reported on last year has now been installed and court staff has received training on its use. The system will become fully operational once it has been populated with all the necessary data.

The Gibraltar Courts Service website continues to be updated and developed. General forms for both the Magistrates' and Supreme Courts, which previously could only be obtained at the Law Courts counters will soon be available for download in pdf format from

the Website. Furthermore, arrangements are in hand for the Supreme Court daily court lists to be uploaded and displayed in the Website.

Mr Speaker, in addition to the Gibraltar Courts Service website, we also populate and update the Judgments website. Many of the Judgements pertaining to Gibraltar from as far back as 1812 are available for viewing. This is a very useful source of information which is available to use free of charge on the internet.

Counter services have also been enhanced with the introduction of facilities for the payment of Court Fees and Fines via debit card at both the Magistrates' and Supreme Court counters.

Finally, the Gibraltar Courts Service continues to look at ways in which to improve their services especially through the continuous training and professional development of all staff. Staff has already received training in Probate processes and procedures and this training has resulted in Probates and Letters of Administration being dealt with within 1 to 2 weeks, when historically this process took approximately 12 months. This year, the Gibraltar Courts Service will be looking at providing staff training in other areas in order to further improve the level of service to court users.

Mr Speaker, I now turn to HM Prison matters.

HM Prison

Recent Prison Board inspections describe the atmosphere among prisoners as relaxed. There have been around 12 cases of indiscipline reported between June 2013 and May 2014, most of them categorized as minor. This represents a fourfold decrease when compared to the same period for the previous year. Although prison population figures are lower, management attributes such a marked decrease to the sterling work produced by Prison Officers and the rehabilitation and aftercare programs now in place. Of these, I would highlight the support offered by the Ministry of Employment who provide counselling, welfare and work placement programs for prisoners. Over 40% of the prison population is

currently benefiting from these services in one way or another. Through such efforts some prisoners are being released with offers of employment, some finding stable work for the first time in many years.

Mr Speaker, in respect of prison population, figures the first four months of 2014 have seen a gradual recovery in numbers following the marked decrease seen in 2013. Daily average inmate population figures for January 2014 stood at 50 prisoners; the figure for April being 58 prisoners. These statistics should not detract from the benefits being noticed since the introduction of the aforementioned programs. These are having a very salutary effect on the prison population. Recidivism is down and prisoners are giving the prison authorities very positive feedback.

Between June 2013 and May 2014 there have been a total of 14 female admissions and 4 juvenile admissions.

The prison was visited by his Excellency the Governor Sir James Dutton on the 19th March 2014. His Excellency toured the facilities and spoke to officers and prisoners. He appeared to be impressed with the facilities.

Prison management remains committed to the ongoing programmes on rehabilitation of offenders and enhancing educational and vocational opportunities to all those in custody, with a view of breaking the re-offending cycle and successfully reintegrating offenders back into society.

Mr Speaker, I now turn to matters linked with International Co-Operation.

International Co-Operation

Mr Speaker, there is significant international cooperation with jurisdictions worldwide for judicial assistance. The most common types of requests are for service of process and the taking of evidence.

Under our laws, there are several methods that can be used to achieve a desired result. The most common is the Letter of Request (LoR), which is a formal request from a court to a foreign court for some type of judicial assistance.

A European Arrest Warrant (EAW) is sometimes used by EU member states to arrest and transfer a criminal suspect or sentenced person to the issuing state so that the person can be put on trial or complete a detention period.

In a recent case, the Portuguese authorities issued an EAW for the arrest of individual in connection with drug charges.

The individual was sought by the Portuguese authorities on drugs charges emanating from an RGP initiated operation resulting in the seizure of 6,000 kilos of Cannabis Resin in Portugal and the arrest of a number of persons. The individual was arrested in Gibraltar and after a protracted appeal he was surrendered to the Portuguese authorities.

This case serves to highlight the importance of international cooperation and how absolutely necessary it is for judicial assistance to work in order to ensure the pursuance of justice.

Mr Speaker, I now turn to Policing matters.

Royal Gibraltar Police (RGP)

Re-establishment of the Post of Chief Superintendent

Mr Speaker, the Gibraltar Police Authority has approved the re-establishment of the post of Chief Superintendent. This reverses a decision taken some years ago to do away with the post.

The Post re-establishes a needed rank between the Commissioner of Police and the three Superintendents thereby providing the RGP with an improved management structure.

Gibraltar Police Authority – Annual Report

Mr Speaker, the Government has outlined a number of strategic priorities, which have been taken into account by the Gibraltar Police Authority (GPA) in the annual policing plan, namely:

- The protection of children and vulnerable adults through participation in the Child Protection Committee and the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and through education programmes aimed at informing children in particular on certain dangers on the use of the internet;
- The continuing promotion of public safety in the context of zero tolerance with regard to drugs and violent crime and through neighbourhood policing initiatives to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- The development of an integrated IT platform for the criminal justice system to ensure an efficient use of resources and to adequately equip the RGP with a modern communications and management tool.

Mr Speaker, every year the GPA carries out an annual public satisfaction survey in order to engage with the community and gain feedback on the relationship with the RGP.

The latest survey revealed an increase public satisfaction in the RGP. This seems largely due to the effectiveness of the neighbourhood policing concept, the tackling of anti-social behaviour in our streets and residential estates and the noticeable increase in police visibility on foot patrol. In addition, a marked reduction in complaints against the RGP has also been noted.

Mr Speaker, this very positive feedback is welcome news indeed.

Support and thanks towards the RGP has also been expressed by the public for the RGP's continued support for interaction, particularly with juveniles and young children, via social media.

Neighbourhood Policing

The RGP continues to deliver neighbourhood policing, responding to community issues, from District Offices in residential estates. These offices serve as multi-agency bases in the Community.

HMGoG continues to support the RGP in its many activities and initiatives with regards to this strategy. The initiative has already seen very noticeable effects in bringing the police back into the community. Officers operating from District Offices are very accessible and residents regularly turn to the Neighbourhood Policing Teams whenever they have concerns.

CCTV System

Mr Speaker, last year I made reference to Government's continuing plan for the roll out of CCTV in public areas.

CCTV has been installed in many areas around Town and has served as a successful deterrent and a useful mechanism to prevent and detect crime.

The installation of the cameras has proved to be an invaluable asset to the RGP and has further strengthened its capabilities in combating crime and gathering evidence.

Following recommendations by the RGP and calls from residents requesting the installation of CCTV cameras in other areas around Gibraltar, the Public CCTV Programme has been extended to include Mid Harbour Estate. Infrastructure at Laguna Estate is in the process of being upgraded and where necessary created in order to allow for the installation of CCTV. Moorish Castle Estate and Glacis Estate will follow.

Proposals for camera locations within the Government Housing Estates are drawn up by the RGP in consultation with the Estates' Tenants Associations.

Mr Speaker, the expansion on the use of CCTV in Gibraltar continues and is kept under review. The initiative has already served to detect crimes by helping to either identify suspects or provide the necessary evidence for a successful conviction. It has helped to

deter crime and has removed anti-social behaviour altogether in areas which had hitherto been plaguing residents for many years.

New Police Vessel

The RGP has commissioned the construction of a new 25m patrol vessel specifically built to their specifications. The vessel is being built in Croatia.

The acquisition of the vessel will substantially increase the RGP's marine capability by the addition of a further large vessel allowing RGP the capability to remain out at sea for prolonged periods and being out at sea in sea conditions not suitable for smaller craft. This vessel should be in Gibraltar and operational in September of this year.

Criminal Justice Integrated Software

Mr Speaker, last year I mentioned in my budget address that the RGP together with other Criminal Justice partners and Government's IT and Logistics Department were engaged in setting up a fit for purpose IT infrastructure platform suitable for the whole Criminal Justice System. Such a system will serve to improve service delivery within the whole spectrum of the Criminal Justice System. This will proceed during the course of this year.

The solution provides a single integrated solution for Gibraltar's law and justice organisations for the use of the:

- Royal Gibraltar Police
- Gibraltar Courts Service
- Attorney General's Chambers
- Prison Service
- Probation Service

The individual systems will be used on a daily basis by multiple individuals within each of these law enforcement organisations, thus enabling the process of managing information for each respective Department in an integrated solution from which each organisation gains a benefit from. It is intended that the solution will utilise common sets of data. The

software will be designed to prevent double keying and ensuring that the data sets are of a high quality, thus reducing the likelihood of error through duplication.

RGP Dog Section

General Purpose Patrol Dogs (GPDs) are highly trained and specialist dogs. The dogs, under the instruction of their handlers, are a much needed tool in everyday police work and are used successfully in the tracking of persons and recovery of property.

The deployment of the dogs is a useful asset in circumstances where coordinated crowd control and the mass movement of people is necessary.

Funding this year has been increased to cater for the training of handlers and increased kennel costs; given the augmentation of the Section by three specialist dog handlers from HM Customs who now form part of the RGP.

Protective Equipment

Mr Speaker, the Government has made available funding, over a 3 year period, to bring up to speed the RGP's protective equipment for officers, weaponry and ancillary equipment.

Almost £136,000 has been provided for the purchase of additional firearms and protective equipment such as stab proof vests.

Campaigns

Mr Speaker the Government welcomes initiatives that focus on improving road safety and awareness. These campaigns remind all drivers of the personal consequences of driving under the influence of drink and or drugs and that an accident can ruin your life or that of others.

A number of campaigns have been co-organised by the RGP in conjunction with relevant ministries. In particular, I would highlight the anti-drink driving campaigns and drug awareness programs.

Trainee Program

The police trainee program has proved to be very successful. The programme, delivered in conjunction with the Ministry for Employment, allows our youth access to a scheme similar to the Police Cadet scheme, which ran many years ago. It provides trainees with the ability to gain first-hand knowledge on police work, and, at the same time, provide the RGP with prospective candidates for employment if found suitable.

Small Island Forum

Mr Speaker, the RGP has reinstated the Small Island Forum, an organisation that has been inoperative for about 10 years.

Although the Forum has no particular formal status it provides a convenient platform for the Chief of Police of the member small territories to meet and discuss matters of common interest and concern.

The reinstatement of the Forum was instigated by Gibraltar and comprises similar jurisdictions like Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man and now includes the Cyprus Sovereign Base area.

Its main advantages are the sharing of experience, knowledge and processes, of interest to small territories.

European Association of Airport and Seaport Police (EAASP)

The RGP is a member of the European Association of Airport and Seaport Police.

The goal of the EAASP is to make safe international ports against threats of criminal activity and terrorism. The scope of their work includes promoting co-operation with international partners, delivering exchange opportunities between portal agencies and international ports, advising European and international policy-makers, and promoting information exchange as part of a joint-funded project with the European Commission.

In April 2013, the RGP hosted the 40th annual conference of the EAASP in Gibraltar. This was the fourth time the Conference had been held in Gibraltar and it saw the highest number of delegates attending ever.

Not only was it a good thing for Gibraltar to play host to the Conference a fourth time, but shortly after the event, Commissioner Yome was elected President of the Association. The presidency of this influential Association is not only a significant personal accomplishment for Mr Yome, but also represents an important achievement for Gibraltar. The Government is happy to continue to support Mr Yome during his Presidency.

Mr Speaker, before I end my contribution I would like to refer to another matter in which I am involved– the small boats marina.

The tender for this project was awarded after a European public tender process to GJBS – the most economically advantageous tenderer. Work has already started in earnest and the project is on course for completion next summer. Once ready, it will allow many who currently have their boats on land or who wish to have a boat but cannot due to the lack of berthing facilities to enjoy marine activities from fishing to water-skiing or simply enjoying a ride on our waters. The 700-berth facility is the biggest project of its kind ever undertaken in Gibraltar. It will also provide a promenade for public use as well as an outer wharf of around 600 metres for commercial use by the Port Department.

This is a much-awaited and anticipated project. It will be another jewel in the crown and another feather in this Government's hat, a hat which is quickly running out of room with so many feathers already on it.

Mr Speaker, before I end, I would like to thank my staff and all those that work in the various departments which form part of my ministerial responsibilities, for their support, hard work and dedication to their job throughout the year. Public servants play an instrumental part in helping us lay a strong foundation for progress. They are committed to a cause greater than personal ambition, and each day, they tackle many of our most urgent challenges and help us all move closer to a better Gibraltar. Recognition of the value of

their work is important and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for what they do.

Mr Speaker, let me end by saying that I, together with my Ministerial colleagues, continue to work enthusiastically to deliver on the manifesto pledges which the people of Gibraltar have entrusted us to fulfil. And we are, Mr Speaker, well on our way to delivering on what we set ourselves out to do and more that we did not even envisage at the time, a feat that some claimed was impossible to achieve. This Government promotes and supports fairness, equality and transparency. That is how we do business, and I am proud of our record and significant achievements so far which have brought about a positive change which is apparent and is being felt across all areas in Gibraltar.

Thank you.