



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry of Education, Telecommunications and Justice
Suite 771
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Gibraltar

PRESS RELEASE

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Legal Aid – Response

In his latest outburst on legal aid, Mr Figueras has demonstrated that he simply does not get it. In attempting to hide behind the fact that the GSD did nothing in sixteen years to assist either the legal profession or court users and defendants on legal aid or legal assistance, he has shown that he is a lawyer who clearly does not understand the law.

Mr Figueras keeps repeating that the legal aid rules were changed in 2012 and four defendants in a particular case were the beneficiaries of that change. We have already said, and Mr Figueras chooses to ignore, that that change was made following specific advice given to the Government by James Neish of Triay Stagnetto Neish, the firm of which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Damon Bossino, is a partner. In effect, Mr Bossino is a party to the advice given to Government and on which Government acted and must necessarily disagree with the position the Opposition is taking.

It follows from his statements that Mr Figueras is confirming that had the GSD been in office, they would not have followed that advice, they would not have changed the rules and they would have been happy for the case to collapse and the defendants to walk free. It seems that this is Mr Figueras' assessment of what is in the public interest of Gibraltar.

It is no wonder that the electorate rejected the GSD at the last elections. With views like those held by Mr Figueras, they are clearly not fit to hold office.