



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

PRESS RELEASE

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Air Accident Investigation Training

Some 40 members of the Gibraltar Emergency Services recently attended a two day workshop run by the UK Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB), supported by representatives from the equivalent Military Organisation. The workshop provided refresher training to those attending and reinforced the original training on the same subject that was given in September 2009.

The Workshop was led by Mr Philip Taylor, a Principal Operations Inspector of Air Accidents at the AAIB, and he was supported by Mr Afandi Darlington, a Senior Engineering Inspector. The course explained the purpose of air accident investigation, the roles and responsibilities of the AAIB and its military equivalent and most importantly, it provided key training for local personnel in how to manage the initial response to an accident investigation until the arrival of the AAIB inspectors. The latter point is important as depending on the time of day of the accident it would most likely take between 6 and 12 hours for the AAIB inspectors to arrive in Gibraltar.

The Workshop consisted of lectures, case studies of air accident and incidents in other Overseas Territories and a very realistic exercise scenario tailored to Gibraltar Airport, which was developed as the workshop progressed. The Workshop also gave all participating organisations a chance to validate the actions they would take in the unlikely event of such an incident occurring.

The Director of Civil Aviation, Chris Purkiss commented: "The AAIB Inspectors provided an excellent workshop, which allowed all organisations participating in the Gibraltar Airport Emergency Plan the opportunity to review their actions in the event of an Aircraft Accident. The lively discussions generated by the exercise clearly demonstrated the commitment of the relevant organisations to respond as effectively as possible to what could be a very complicated scenario."

The Minister with responsibility for Civil Aviation, Dr Joseph Garcia commented: “The importance of being prepared for such an eventuality that would certainly put Gibraltar in the media spotlight cannot be overestimated. I am delighted that the AAIB were able to deliver the training, which has helped our emergency organisations develop further their plans for responding to an air accident at or in the vicinity of the Airport.”