



PRESS RELEASE

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Feetham/Hammond Duo Ignores Inconvenient Truths

The latest press statement from the GSD ignores the explicit references from the Chief Minister, Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, in Parliament last week in the very constructive exchanges between the current and former Chief Minister, Hon Sir Peter Caruana QC MP. Sir Peter had explained his concerns in lay terms as a person who is "afraid of gas" and the potential consequences of an accident, however low the risk of such an accident occurring.

Mr Picardo explained then, in detail, to Sir Peter - in a very positive interlude in the debate - that the assessments of "consequences" of an accident which the Government had been provided with, given the change and tweaking of location, clearly indicate that the residential area of Waterport Terraces would be outside the area affected. In keeping with that assessment, the residential areas of Harbour Views, Sir William Jackson Grove and all others in the vicinity, would NOT be affected either.

The Chief Minister said: "My cordial and positive exchanges with Sir Peter have constructively helped to move the debate onto the important issues, and how well my Government is dealing with them. The inconvenient truth of this debate for the GSD is that they have sold the people of Gibraltar a story of disaster, explosions and fireballs but all the experts agree that they are wrong both in terms of both risk analysis and analysis of consequences of a highly unlikely accident. Quite contrary to the Feetham/Hammond GSD position, Sir Peter put the concerns of the lay Gibraltarian much as we have been doing in our own analysis. The whole of his argument was based on a measured concern about consequences. The consequences of an explosion do not reach ANY residential areas. That assessment is entirely dealt with in the work being done. But the Feetham/Hammond duet in the GSD cannot accept that, because these inconvenient truths hammer away entirely what they have said was going to be their only argument in the election campaign. No scaremongering will change the views and advice of the real experts which the Government has and will continue to follow. At every stage we are working with the experts in an iterative process. We won't do anything that puts anyone at any real risk of serious consequence - and, in making those assessments, we will follow the advice of the real experts at the Health and Safety Laboratory and Lloyd's Register Energy, who do not have any partisan or financial interest, and not those of either of Messrs Feetham or Hammond who have no expertise at all in this respect and a clear vested partisan political interest. Throughout this process we will continue to take the professional advice of Lloyd's Register, HSL and other renowned experts rather than the amateur advice of Mr Feetham and Mr Hammond. The power station is an essential project for the community as is the need for it to be safe and with a minimum impact on the environment. The Government will not allow the Opposition to turn what is a very serious and considerable investment of money, time and expertise into a political game."