



HM Government of Gibraltar

Deputy Chief Minister

PRESS RELEASE

No. 610/2015

Date: 8th September 2015

Government publish Ministerial Code and Code of Conduct for MPs

In line with its manifesto commitments, the Government has today published a Ministerial Code, which will apply to Ministers, and a separate Code for Members of Parliament, which will apply to all MPs whether they are Ministers or not.

This is the first time that such detailed Codes are published in Gibraltar where there have previously been no such guidelines about the way in which Ministers and MPs should operate.

The Ministerial Code covers such matters as the principle of collective responsibility, the question of appointments, departments and the civil service. It seeks to regulate a Minister's private interests, constituency (MP) interests and party interests. The Code says that Ministers must ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between their public duties and their private interests, financial or otherwise. The Code also covers the presentation of policy, Ministers and Parliament as well as travel by Ministers.

It repeats the seven principles of public life which are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

The Code for Members of Parliament is a shorter, separate document which will apply to all MPs in all aspects of their public life. It does not seek to regulate what they do in their purely private and personal lives. The requirements of this Code are additional to the Rules and Standing Orders of Parliament and to the Ministerial Code. The Code spells out that Members of the Gibraltar Parliament have a general duty to act in the interests of Gibraltar as a whole. It says that they should always behave with probity and integrity including in the use of public resources. The Code stipulates that Members shall never undertake any action which would cause significant damage to the reputation and integrity of Parliament as a whole or of its Members generally.

Commenting on the publication of the two Codes, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia said:

"The establishment of a Code of Conduct for Ministers and a separate Code of Conduct for Members of the Gibraltar Parliament were recommendations made by the Commission on Democratic and Political Reform. The Government was already committed to this by its own manifesto. Given that the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission are being

looked at by a Select Committee on Parliamentary Reform, the Government has decided to widen the scope of consultation by formally tabling the two Codes before the Committee for further discussion before they are formally adopted. Indeed, the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament itself states that the detailed application of the Code shall be a matter for Parliament and any Committee that may be appointed for such purposes.

The Government is pleased to have broken new ground with the publication of the two Codes. There has been no attempt to regulate the activities of Ministers and Members of the Gibraltar Parliament in this way in the past. This is in line with our manifesto and with the subsequent recommendations made by the Commission.”