



PRESS RELEASE

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DEFENCE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE TO BE TRANSFERRED TO GOVERNMENT

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP and the Commander British Forces Gibraltar, Commodore Ian McGhie MA RN attended a Vesting Day Ceremony at RAF Gibraltar to mark the official transfer of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Defence Fire and Rescue Service (DFRS) personnel to HM Government of Gibraltar.

A Memorandum of Understanding was recently signed between Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar and the Ministry of Defence for the provision of Fire and Rescue Services at RAF Gibraltar.

The DFRS will now be designated 'The Gibraltar Airport Fire and Rescue Service (AFRS)' and will provide this service on behalf of HMGoG from 1 October 2015.

This new unit will be jointly funded by both HMGoG and MOD and will continue providing fire cover at Gibraltar Airport during its operational hours as its primary role but will also act in support of the Gibraltar Fire and Rescue Service and MOD as and when required.

As part of the transfer, and in consultation with Unite the Union, the AFRS will now consist of two operational watches working on shifts and a number of day staff support personnel. All the administrative support and facilities management will be carried out by Gibraltar Air Terminal Ltd, a company wholly owned by HMGoG and which currently operates and manages the Air Terminal.

HMGoG will be shortly going out to tender to procure new Fire Fighting Vehicles that will greatly enhance the AFRS's capabilities and ensure that the high standards of service continue to be provided both to the MOD and all civilian users at Gibraltar Airport.

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP said:

"After 23 years of trying, we have today transferred the Defence Fire & Rescue Service from the Ministry of Defence to a wholly owned company of Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar! I promised the great people who make up the DFRS and their representatives from Unite that this would happen and we have achieved it. Thanks to Steve Morgan, Nicky Viñales, Clive Gillingwater and Unite on the staff side. Thanks to CBF Ian McGhie and Simon Argyle on the MoD side. It's been hard work. There have been ups and downs but everyone has shown huge determination to achieve this in the best interests of all parties but, in particular, the people we rely on to ensure



our safety on the runway and their families. On my side, sincere thanks to Michael Crome, my industrial relations and MoD co-ordinator for helping me to get this important commitment over the line in the shortest possible time. We will now work together with the MoD and others like the Gibraltar Defence Police and Water Section to see whether we can also transfer those services using this successful blueprint. As 2017 approaches, I am also very conscious of the need to work to secure the jobs of all others who work for the MoD in Gibraltar and I will be raising these issues with the Minister for the Armed Forces when I meet her shortly. Thanks to everyone who has helped on this who I have not mentioned specifically. I am wearing my Gibraltar Airport Fire & Rescue Service tie with pride today!"

Commander British Forces, Commodore Ian McGhie said:

"I am delighted to be here on vesting day to witness the transfer of the provision of Airfield Fire and Rescue Services from the Ministry of Defence to Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar. A lot of hard work has been undertaken by both parties in the last 12 months to fully realise this commitment. These new arrangements will support and enhance the continued development and operation of this airfield, which remains key to our collective interests.

Mr Terence Lopez, Air Terminal Director and CEO of the Gibraltar Airport Fire and Rescue Service said:

"I am extremely pleased that this moment has finally arrived, and would like to warmly welcome the AFRS workforce. I am confident that with the professional expertise and experience that the firefighters bring with them we will be well equipped in the future to ensure that the Gibraltar Airport Fire and Rescue Service will continue to provide a high standard of safety and operational capability and look forward to working with them."