

PRESS RELEASE

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Government Offers Accessibility Training

The Government has a robust agenda on equality issues. As part of its awareness action plan, the Department of Equality is introducing a series of lectures and seminars aimed at the private sector to show how an inclusive business can mean a more profitable business. The series will be called “Equality Means Business” and will commence with an awareness seminar and training workshop on accessibility to the physical environment.

As a matter of Government policy, every single new Government project is entirely accessible. The Government encourages the private sector to follow suit, and is looking to highlight the business case for doing so. The Department of Equality is fronting this with an awareness initiative with the aim that principles of inclusion and equality are embraced in both the private and public sectors. Accordingly, the Government wishes to assist in providing training and awareness on accessibility to buildings for the disabled and elderly.

The Department for Equality has organised two different seminars:

1. A seminar on how to make your premises accessible on Monday 30th November between 2pm-5pm at the O’Callaghan Elliott Hotel.
2. A 2 day, more in depth, training workshop from the 1st to 2nd December 2015 to be held at the University of Gibraltar on access audit training. A detailed outline of the training programme is available upon request.

Both the seminar and training sessions will be delivered by Ian Streets, Managing Director of About Access Ltd. Mr Streets is no stranger to Gibraltar, having delivered some very successful training sessions last year. He has been providing advice to clients in the UK on the Disability Discrimination Act, Equality Act and access to buildings/sites for disabled persons. His clients include both the national and local government in the UK, housing associations, national charities and businesses. His work ranges from single site audits to portfolios with over 300 sites. A regular part of his work includes preparing plan appraisals and advice to national/local government bodies and businesses on policy relating to access.

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The seminar will provide a general overview on the main barriers to access and how to identify solutions in making your premises accessible. Mr Streets will advise businesses on how to ensure their customer base includes disabled people. If a disabled person cannot use facilities or service in a particular shop then they will stay away and their family will almost certainly do the same.

The training sessions will enable those attending to be able to identify the main barriers to access, identify possible solutions or at least know where to look for possible solutions and be able to carry out an access audit of premises. It will examine the common problems that people encounter, such as glass panels that are not visible, a ramp that is too steep or a policy that does not allow assistance dogs into a restaurant. Also to be considered are issues around signage and colour contrast, the requirements imposed by legislation and how an access audit can help identify and overcome problems.

Registration for the seminars is essential. Anyone interested in attending should contact the Department of Equality on telephone number 20070112 or by email mfess@gibraltar.gov.gi

Minster for Equality, the Hon Samantha Sacramento, commented: "This Government is fully committed to equality and the principles of inclusion. We have, therefore, taken the responsibility of organising awareness seminars and training sessions, which we are offering to the private sector free of charge in parallel to the training that we provide within the public sector. We are delighted to welcome Ian Streets once again to Gibraltar to provide both the private and public sector training on accessibility to buildings. The aim of these sessions is to provide key persons in both the public and private sector with up to date information to enable them to identify and eliminate barriers to access within their workplace or business premises."