



PRESS RELEASE

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FREEDOM OF THE CITY TO BE BESTOWED UPON THE ROYAL GIBRALTAR POLICE

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, is today giving notice of his intention, on behalf of the Government, to move a motion which would bestow the Freedom of the City upon the Royal Gibraltar Police. The Leader of the Opposition has been advised of the intention and indicated that the Opposition will support it.

This will mark the start of a process through which all of Gibraltar's emergency services will be awarded the Freedom of the City.

The Chief Minister said: "We have rightly bestowed the Freedom of our City on many individuals some of whom are from outside Gibraltar and who have been responsible for helping us, as a Nation, achieve what we have today. Many of those are no longer active in our affairs, but it is right that they should have that recognition. It is also right that we should recognise the people who provide our emergency services and who ensure we are protected day and night. From the RGP to the Gibraltar Fire & Rescue Service and the other emergency services, we must start a process of recognition and of bestowing this honour on the men and women who are the guardians of our security, safety and physical well-being. I want to start with the RGP for two reasons, first because they are often on the front line of a matters affecting the security of our community and secondly because they are the second oldest police force in the world and that too must be recognised by us. I hope and believe this motion and the others I will bring for the other emergency services will pass with the unanimous support of the Parliament, as those upon whom we will be bestowing these honours deserve. Despite healthy criticism and their own desire to always further improve their performance, the RGP do an excellent job for Gibraltar and all our citizens, whether it is dealing with harrowing cases like that of Boscetti's Steps or in the day to day work they do, very often putting their own safety and security at stake. The fact that current Commissioner Eddie Yome is presently the President of the European Association of Airports & Seaports Police and Vice President International Association of Airports & Seaports Police shows the exceedingly high calibre of officers in the RGP and the excellent work they do for our Community dealing with both major and minor crime and security matters."

The history of Gibraltar's police force goes back to 1830, when the "Town and Garrison of Gibraltar" became the "Colony of Gibraltar" and its administration passed from the War Office to the relatively new Colonial Office. On the 21st June 1830, a Proclamation was issued which in effect removed the responsibility for policing the Town from the Town Major and the military



authorities, and brought it under civilian responsibility. This proclamation appointed Major James Rowan to the office of Civil Police Magistrate for the Town and Territory of Gibraltar and Mr Henry Morgan as the Director of the Police and Supervisor of Market.

Thus, on the 25th June 1830, the Gibraltar Police became operational. It is now the oldest Police force in the Commonwealth and the second oldest British Police force in the world. The Metropolitan Police had been formed some nine months earlier by Sir Robert Peel, and the Gibraltar Police was modelled along the same lines. Metropolitan Officers were seconded to Gibraltar to assist in its formation.

The first Chief of Police, Henry Morgan, remained in the post from 1830 until 1859 and under his leadership the Gibraltar Police achieved a very high standard.

Patrols were maintained jointly with the military authorities and all civilians detained would be dealt with by the Police Magistrate. In 1871 the Gibraltar Police assumed a more dominant role over the military patrols, which were now required to leave their weapons in the Guard Room when undertaking such patrols.

In 1930, the Gibraltar Police celebrated its Centenary. The whole force, under the command of Chief of Police Gulloch, paraded at Casemates Square on the 1st August that year. An all-ranks banquet was held that same evening and the duty to police Gibraltar was left in the hands of the Rover Scouts who were sworn in as Special Constables for that evening.

In 1937 William Gulloch retired as Chief of Police and was succeeded by Dudley S Gowing, who was the first to bear the title of Commissioner of Police.

The opening of the Frontier in 1985 brought additional responsibilities to the force, as numbers of visitors to Gibraltar increased considerably.

Over the years the Police have evolved and developed in order to meet present day requirements, and it has become necessary to establish specialist departments in order to fight crime and keep pace with all other aspects of police work in the most efficient manner possible.

On the 12th June 1992, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II graciously conferred the prefix "ROYAL" to the Gibraltar Police.

On the 25th June 2005, the Royal Gibraltar Police celebrated its 175th Anniversary, a significant milestone in its history. Officers paraded in Casemates and marched along Main Street to the Piazza where a salute was taken by His Worship the Mayor.

Today the Royal Gibraltar Police maintain a close relationship with the community and follow a neighbourhood policing ethos, which forms the backbone of the Service. This motion to bestow the Freedom of the City upon the Royal Gibraltar Police is in recognition of their history of hard work and excellent service to Gibraltar.



The other services to have the Freedom bestowed on them will include the Gibraltar Fire & Rescue Service, the Ambulance Service, the St John's Ambulance, the Defence Fire and Rescue Service and the Gibraltar Defence Police.