

PRESS RELEASE

No: 151/2016

Date: 4th April 2016

An expensive terminal does not an attractive destination make.

The 'astonishment' of the Opposition at the success of the Government and Gibraltar Tourist Board in attracting major international airlines to increase their services to Gibraltar is revealing of the Party's lack of vision for and understanding of the tourist industry.

An expensive terminal does not an attractive destination make. In order to generate the will amongst major airlines to increase their seat offerings by 40%, there has to first be a demand for those seats. Such demand is created through investment of time and resources, which has been unprecedented under the current administration, to ensure that Gibraltar has a tourist product that we are proud to sell, and which rivals the most interesting of destinations worldwide.

The tourism boom that Gibraltar has experienced over recent years is because people want to come here, and as a result of the relentless hard work of the Government and GTB in attracting industry leaders, there are companies that are willing to bring them here. The strong partnerships that the Government and GTB have fostered with our partners is evident; increasingly Gibraltar is promoted as a destination by third-party Press and bloggers, is featured in in-flight magazines and our representatives are invited to attend tourism conferences and events worldwide.

Minister for Tourism, the Hon Samantha Sacramento, said: "What is really astonishing is the Opposition's suggestion that an expensive new terminal would by itself attract such a huge increase in the number of scheduled flights as has been achieved for the forthcoming summer season. Tourism has been made a priority for this government and the results speak for themselves. The air terminal was built at extortionate cost – and ran grossly over budget – to comfortably service a million passengers a year, but the previous administration did this with no obvious plan as to how they would bring a million people a year to the Rock. Building a terminal is one thing, building a tourist industry is something else altogether".