



PRESS RELEASE

No: 362/2017

Date: Monday 5th June 2017

Employment Tribunal Reforms

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar notes the comments made by the opposition regarding the Employment Tribunal and can confirm that there are now Mediators in place who will be able to mediate employment tribunal cases. Although this process has taken longer than originally envisaged, the Department of Employment has followed the robust appointment processes to the benefit of all parties involved in these important cases. The reforms have successfully introduced rules that are straightforward and make the Tribunal accessible to persons without substantial funds whether they be employers or employees.

The reforms were carried out with extensive consultation from key stakeholders, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Gibraltar Federation of Small Businesses, Unite the Union, the Gibraltar Teachers Association and the Gibraltar General and Clerical Association. Having achieved the aim of simplifying and speeding up the employment adjudication process, the benefit of the reforms is there for the parties in dispute to enjoy.

For the first time in employment dispute history, free compulsory mediation services are provided to parties in dispute with the hope that cases will settle instead of proceeding to be heard in a more formal Tribunal setting. Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is confident that over time, this innovative feature will produce results for employers and employees alike and offer a new avenue of redress for the parties in dispute. As a subsidised measure, it is one that will make mediation more accessible and less costly for those involved before the dispute is escalated to the Tribunal. These measures have delivered a flexible, effective and modern Tribunal system that meets the reputation and aspirations of Gibraltar's modern day economy.

Our reforms have also seen the introduction of new forms and detailed guidelines aimed at easing the burden of initiating and defending a claim.

Furthermore, HM Government of Gibraltar has invested in training and maintaining the professional development of the Tribunal chairpersons by bringing over the very same people who train the judges in the UK and providing customized training courses. This training was also attended by Tribunal staff, building on their experience.

Cases will start to be heard this month and it is hoped that the backlog will be cleared in the shortest possible time.