



PRESS RELEASE

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Customs Counter Smuggling at Western Beach

A number of new measures are being introduced by HM Customs to counter illicit smuggling activity. The Western Beach frontier fence has been reinforced with extra strands of barbed wire extending out to sea and hardened fences placed in parallel to the wire. Officers from HM Customs will now be stationed at the beach to carry out overt and covert operations and a portacabin has been placed at the entrance to the beach for the use of officers.

Additionally, a Bill has been published today in the Gibraltar Gazette to be laid before Parliament to extend the powers of search without a warrant to premises licensed under the Tobacco Act. Additional provisions will be introduced making it an offence to assault, resist or obstruct officers as well as the offence of giving false information by signing any document in respect of the import or sales of cigarettes.

The Collector of Customs John Rodriguez welcomed these new initiatives which provide further tools in the fight against criminal activity.

The Chief Minister said "We will work with Customs to continue to support their work in controlling the illicit trade in tobacco. That means giving them the resources necessary and the legislative powers necessary when they seek that we should provide them with greater powers. John Rodriguez and his team have my full confidence and I thank them on behalf of their community for the sterling work they do."