



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

No. 609/2017

Date: 12th October 2017

Successful Exercise for GFRS and the Ministry for Housing

The Gibraltar Fire and Rescue Service together with the Housing Department and the Housing Works Agency, and observed by the RGP, conducted a successful controlled fire training exercise at Referendum House, Glacis Estate this morning. The exercise consisted of fire fighters conducting a full scale rescue simulation from one of the upper floors within the building, using artificial non-toxic smoke and fire hoses.

This was a routine exercise carried out by the Gibraltar Fire and Rescue Service, but in light of recent events in the United Kingdom the Ministry for Housing took this opportunity to be part of the exercise so as to better understand and assist in its review of all policies and procedures regarding fire safety in housing estates. The Housing Department and Housing works agency will continue to work closely with all relevant agencies and departments in order to ensure that all existing measures are adequate to keep tenants safe. One of the abundantly clear observations in the process was the absolute need to keep corridors and access areas free from clutter and any object that may impede access in the event of an emergency.

Tenants of Referendum House had previously been notified of the exercise in advance by notice last week and housing staff attended Referendum House yesterday to inform tenants who live on the higher floors in person so that no one was alarmed today.

The Minister for Housing, Samantha Sacramento MP also attended to observe the exercise, she said "I have today witnessed what it would be like in the event that there was a fire in a high rise building. It is important that we all work together to ensure that all adequate process and procedures to ensure safety are in place. It was important for Housing senior management and myself to have been present today to contextualise our responsibilities. Having been involved in such a realistic simulation this morning, I am humbled by the work undertaken by the Gibraltar Fire and Rescues Service, and indeed by all emergency services in such an eventuality."

The Housing Department would like to take this opportunity to thank all its tenants for their collaboration during this exercise.