



PRESS RELEASE

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‘How dare Mr Hammond insult the professionals?’

Mr Hammond seems to have had a ‘Eureka’ moment, having discovered that the government is considering the potential for LNG bunkering. In fact, the Government has continually made it clear that it has been studying this potential for some considerable time. One of many examples is the Government’s Press Release 869 from 23rd November 2015 in which it said:

“It is no secret that Shell and the other bidders have expressed an interest in developing the LNG bunkering market in the Strait of Gibraltar as part of a wider global network. The potential to establish an LNG bunkering market in Gibraltar was a key reason for global players such as Shell bidding for the project to supply the power station. The Government has always been open about this.”

We are therefore surprised that Mr Hammond should feel so smug when he discovered that part of the recent Shell contract would, indeed, involve an LNG bunkering project, a project which will be subject to the Government’s policy of stringent environmental processes and studies, including Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) procedures. Shell have also committed to carry out a Joint Development Study by 1 January 2018 which will deal with the regulatory framework, safety and technical standards without which the bunkering project cannot proceed. Quite simply, without all these environmental and safety requirements being satisfied, there will be no LNG bunkering.

How can Mr Hammond possibly describe all this as a ‘U Turn’?

Furthermore, the Government is astonished that Mr Hammond has the audacity to suggest that the staff at the Ministry of the Environment, Gibelec and Environmental Agency professionals, and presumably the professionals at Shell and at the Health and Safety Laboratory ‘have no idea what a Risk Assessment or Hazard Analysis looks like.’ How dare Mr Hammond, with no professional qualifications in this field, insult them in this way?

The various safety and environmental studies undertaken thus far have all be carried out in a highly professional manner and the Opposition should not fall into the trap of believing its own hyperbole. They really are becoming ‘The Party of Fear’ whose first rule is to scare the living daylight out of the public.

The Government is confident that, by the date of the next general election, our various LNG facilities will have passed all necessary scrutiny: if they have failed to do so then, clearly, the facilities will not be in operation.

Finally, the Government recommends that the GSD agrees to write a joint letter with Spark to LLOYDS, telling them to release their full report of June 2015 so the public can see just how much



of it they redacted. Members of the public can then judge for themselves whether to trust a party which is willing to edit a document in order to base a safety report on misleading information.

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo said, "Mr Hammond is an experienced Air Traffic Controller. Perhaps he should stick to air traffic control and leave others to their own area of professional expertise. He is not an expert in safety, security or hydrocarbons, yet readily proceeds to criticise under the pernicious, unstated, assumption that all the professionals in government and Shell are not up to the job. How dare he insult these professionals who care about safety first and foremost?"