




# THE BOBBY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL GIBRALTAR POLICE



in this issue:  
**McGrail's 21st century  
challenge**  
**Down and Out in the  
streets of addiction**  
**When "The Police" are  
real musicians**



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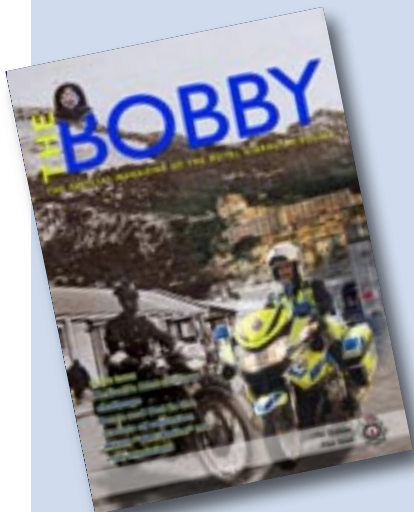


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*Time Cops: PC James (Jaime) Ignacio riding his bike in mid 1950s through two generations to meet his grandson RGP Sergeant Aaron Ignacio in 2019.*

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# Commissioner's Foreword



**Ian McGrail**  
 Commissioner of Police

## Dear Reader

Welcome to the latest edition of The Bobby magazine, the official publication of the Royal Gibraltar Police.

In this issue you will once again be able to gain an accurate insight into some of the work that the RGP carries out in its various tasks and key responsibilities, with a good cross section of noteworthy events, activities and items of public interest that readers will find appealing.

The passing out parade for the 2018 intake of new police recruits, the ongoing challenges facing the RGP, and some of the specialized training carried out by officers in this case VIP close protection and Public Order are also featured. Also an interesting piece on the rehabilitation of two drug addicts, what our more artistically inclined members get up to in their spare time, some Commissioner commendations and a news round-up since our previous edition.

I am also delighted to have an excellent piece by GHA psychologist Dr Gustavo Camino on how uniformed officers deal with their emotions in situations of distress encountered in difficult policing experiences.

I would like to thank our editorial team, the sponsors for their kindness and stalwart support for the publication, and also to the collaborators and officers who have helped put the magazine together.

Warm greetings and best wishes to all our readers. Happy reading!



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# Close encounters of the police protection kind

*RGP officers have been undergoing an intensive four week VIP close protection course under the auspices of the UK College of Policing delivered by the Joint Firearms Training Unit (JFTU) – the official training body for British police forces.*

Ten RGP and one GDP officer successfully completed the training. The role of the highly specialized Personal Protection Officer (PPO) – a bodyguard in popular language -- is to ensure the safety at all times of what is termed as 'the principal', who can be a high ranking politician, a state representative or any other person who by virtue of their public office or position are deemed by the police to require protection.

RGP Sergeant Mark Diaz who coordinated the training programme and assessments, explained that a major part of the instruction is to equip officers with the ability to tackle seven different hostile scenarios on foot and in vehicles, from knives being pulled in a congested location, to dealing with an ambush, advancing through a crowd, a kidnapping attempt or dealing with a firearm attack inside a car.

It also covered the comprehensive reconnaissance of public areas and buildings ahead of a planned visit with the VIP.

He also wished to dispel common misconceptions created by film culture that being a 'bodyguard' simply involves drawing a pistol, emphasizing that PPOs have to develop numerous other attributes and personal qualities to neutralize a threat, such as quick thinking, courage, organisational abilities, problem solving and reactive competence.

In police jargon the whole range of potential incidents they are trained to respond to are known as 'dilemmas'.

Dealing with one hostile person in a crowd as opposed to contending with an antagonistic group, fending off friendly attention in a tactful but effective manner and preserving reputation, for instance in the case of female dignitaries, blocking potential upskirt photographs, is also within their safeguarding remit.

For the purposes of the training course, RGP civilian staff volunteered to stand in and role play as members of the royal family or heads of state to make the scenes more realistic.

Sgt Diaz said: "Our responsibility can also involve making quick risk assessments and taking decisions on security arrangements to ensure the safety of the dignitary you are responsible for, taking into consideration their needs and requirements."

The 'bodyguard' has to ensure both the personal well-being and expeditious movement of the principal while under protection by applying appropriate tactical options to deal with any immediate or perceived threat.

He added that other than the physical skills, de-



fensive techniques and other protection procedures, they also have to be mindful of managing and mitigating risks to the public as part of their policing duty.

PPOs are also required to have driving abilities, be able to select safe routes for the conveyance of the VIP and as part of reactive tactics, to use the vehicle as an escape contingency if necessary.

## JFTU

The course was delivered by qualified instructors from three Welsh police forces – South Wales, Gwent, and Dyfed Powys – who form part of the JFTU and conduct this training across the country to National Protection Officers Course standards set by the UK College of Policing.

Further development training will be provided in house by the RGPs own firearms instructors.

The training was conducted in numerous venues and public areas including the Cable Car, Upper Rock, tourist sites, Victoria Stadium, The Convent and Convent Place and one of the 'live' exercises involved the recent Passing Out Parade of the new intake of police recruits that took place at the Piazza.

"We are grateful to all of them for their positive support in allowing us to use their space," said Sgt Diaz.



Action scenes of the close protection training course involving a simulated firearm attack on a vehicle carrying a VIP.

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November 2018

# Lupe Aldorino retires from RGP

Lupe Aldorino-Bacarisa member of the RGP Civilian staff at the Roads and Neighbourhood Policing Unit retired at the end of last month after forty two years of service.

Lupe a cheerful and popular member of the hard working team, performed secretarial and administrative duties during a long career with the force.

"Yes, everything from parking tickets to summonses. And I even helped to distribute the last edition of The Bobby," she says with a smile.

She is married to former police officer Adrian Bacarisa who is also retired.

"I've had very good times with great work mates. It has been like a second family. They're a decent bunch of people who've taken good care of me, and I've been very happy.

"They are not only work colleagues but also friends and we have struck a close relationship over such a long period of time. I will certainly miss them.

"There have been many good moments and some difficult ones too, also very busy periods working under pressure, but I like to think that I have always been there for my colleagues when they have needed me."

"I would also like to thank the commissioner for having me in the organisation."

Lupe who has always been involved with voluntary charity groups is keen to retake some of those activities and also looks forward to spending much more time with her family and taking care of her elderly mum.

"I've been working all my life and sometimes you miss out on things because of work commitments. Now what I am most looking forward to is having time to enjoy being with my family much more."



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# MCGRAIL'S CHALLENGE

## 21st century policing on the Rock



By F Oliva

Social media has radically altered the public perception of policing, introducing 24/7 scrutiny by members of the public and an element of added pressure, RG Police Commissioner Ian McGrail declared during a recent wide ranging interview with *The Bobby*. Mobile phone footage of February's dangerous driving traffic incident at the Petroil station by the Waterport roundabout quickly went viral, provoking a public outcry and misplaced criticism of the police's handling of a startling episode that is still under investigation.

Add to this the extra demands placed on an overstretched organisation which already has its work cut out in the current international security climate, by many more public events, festivals and social celebrations that need to be policed, and the challenge to manage all the complex safekeeping strands and stay ahead of the curve in a tightly knit community like Gibraltar, becomes formidable.

"With the speed of social media anyone in Brisbane in Australia would have seen that simultaneous to us here, but what is important when something like this occurs is how we respond to it," said Mr McGrail.

The Commissioner believes that people are perfectly entitled to express their views and share their disquiet, but points out that the

RGP responded to the incident in the most professional and proportionate manner, arresting five people, bringing them to justice and impounding a car.

"This is what we are here for, to address those concerns, but by the same token, we achieved our objective. The following day walking down Main Street, many people who are not necessarily on social media, were congratulating our speedy response and how we had dealt with it," he declared.

Mr McGrail said that police had worked around the clock producing effective results but critics are unfortunately less forthcoming in their acknowledgement of police successes.

"Each has their own sort of ideologies behind it and we respect that,"

The Commissioner declared that RGP working arrangements have been modelled around the busiest times of the week and as was to be expected, police heat maps show that it is weekends -- Friday and Saturday nights, particularly during the summer months -- when police resources are most in demand and there is more personnel out on those days, lesser on others.

"Friday nights are renowned to be the most hectic nights for us and that is unfortunately

our 'bread and butter', dealing with drunken behaviour, drugged behaviour, dangerous driving and the like."

### ***Balancing priorities***

Mr McGrail is acutely aware that the public wants more visible police officers on the beat and he subscribes to the expectation, but reckons that this has to be balanced with relevant priorities such as the Rock's aspiration to become a global financial centre of excellence, which requires having robust safeguards in place and effective law enforcement infrastructure with specialized capability to deal with the financial crime it will inherently attract.

The Commissioner says that fighting financial crime which by its very nature happens away from the public view, is not something that bothers the man in the street by comparison, "unless it affects them directly", yet if the police do not do it, "from a strategic perspective you are bringing disrepute on Gibraltar because it is then regarded as a lawless financial centre."

Mr McGrail explained that the police had evolved to mirror changes in society, while prioritization of tasks & deployments and specialization had become the order of the day.

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Whereas two decades and even ten years ago one pool of detectives contained in the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) did all the detective work, now this had become segmented into dedicated teams such as the Safeguarding and Public Protection Units that look after the vulnerable and manage sex offenders, the High Tech Crime Unit, since practically all crime today has a cyber connotation to it, and the Economic Crime Unit that had evolved from the Fraud Squad of the 1990s which investigates serious crimes and has subsections tackling money laundering and terrorism financing cases.

"All these investigative specialities that did not exist in the past, have come from the original pool of detectives," said Mr McGrail.

The Commissioner further emphasizes the crucial need to strike the right balance of having high visibility uniformed officers in the street and having adequate resources in place to do the vital "unseen police work", often involving specialist skills to operate around the web, detect pedophiles and financial swindlers.

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*"We need to get the right formula of promoting how we actually do our business on a day to day basis so that the public understand that if they do not see an officer on the beat it is not because the officer is not there, he may not be visible but he is certainly well occupied with whatever he has been tasked"*

---

"I have to ensure that serious sex offenders do not reoffend, and this cannot be done by a police officer on the beat, nor will the white collar fraudster be caught by a police officer on the beat, nor the pedophile will be caught by a police officer on the beat," he said.

However he fully understands the public reassurance that is gained from the high visibility presence of uniformed police officers walking up and down the street.

"This is of great importance to the public and I recognize that; achieving this balance is a huge challenge," he admits.

#### **Communicating with the public**

Mr McGrail concedes that without giving away operational intricacies, there is still scope for

improvement in communicating to the public how the RGP goes about its business in a more detailed way in terms of how resources are committed at any given time. Although the public are kept fully abreast of incidents that occur, be it in the context of a domestic setting, or a burglary or a traffic accident, "they do not know the often meticulous, time consuming, intensive work that goes into resolving any of that."

This is a 'predicament' the Commissioner is eager to convey.

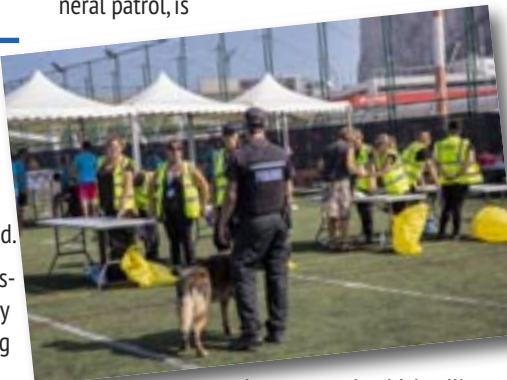
"We need to get the right formula of communication, promoting how we actually do our business on a day to day basis so that people can understand that if they do not see an officer on the beat, it is not because the officer is not there, he may not be visible but he is certainly well occupied with whatever



he has been tasked," he said.

Additionally there are less than infrequent occasions when the police also have to deal with rogue callers who seek to divert police attention to a given location while a felony is perpetrated somewhere else. The RGP take a serious view of this as it can be deemed an obstruction to the administration of justice, a waste of valuable police time and an inconvenience to the public.

Intelligence led policing as opposed to the general patrol, is



another approach which will increasingly influence deployments going forward, to make a better and more focused use of resources. This will help identify and target particular locations of concern, whether it is in a housing estate or in an area at night where there is anti-social behaviour.

Although a firm believer in the "invaluable asset" of the direct interaction with the public that patrolling affords the police officer, something which was commonplace when he joined the force in the 1980s and even ten years ago, Mr McGrail accepts that this has now become much more difficult and additionally, the system of checks and balances that the RGP is obliged to comply with, does not allow these to happen so naturally.

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*"I am aware there have been occasions when officers working under stress in the control room, a very upbeat environment, have told someone calling in about a double parked car, or a neighbour playing loud music late at night, that we haven't got any resources to send. That is not what we want. We have to empathize with the caller who has to be made to feel that their call is important because from their point of view it is, and that we are going to attend to them but not necessarily with the urgency that they want."*

---

"Our officers have routine calls lined up and while in the past an officer could for instance, spend time talking to a victim of crime, they now have to cut that contact short to move on to another assignment," he said.

Mr McGrail is also keen to ensure that whenever phone calls that do not meet the standard emergency or urgency thresholds are received, the correct style of communication with the public and the customer focus is well ingrained in the police dispatcher's mind, so that the right message is conveyed to the caller -- even when resources are stretched and the RGP may be attending to several serious incidents at that time.

"There are times when officers working under stress in the control room, a very upbeat environment, have told someone calling in about a double parked car, or a neighbour playing loud

music late at night, that we haven't got any resources to send. That is not what we want. We have to empathize with the caller who has to be made to feel that their call is important because from their point of view it is, and that we are going to attend to them but not necessarily with the urgency that they want."



Mr McGrail argues that these situations can potentially dent public confidence in the organisation and they have to seek that person's understanding, and offer as much reassurance as possible that it is not that the police do not want to attend, but that it will possibly take slightly longer to attend to a call.

*The RGP also want to encourage other forms of interaction with the public such as online communications, via email or social media, even online reporting of crimes which seems a logical step for the digital age.*

Although Mr McGrail considers himself "an old school policeman", who values face to face contact, he concedes that this is the way forward because today in the context of the extra demands on police time, the purely human interaction is not always possible.

#### **Bumper to bumper**

The Commissioner also advanced a policy decision in respect of minor traffic accidents and bumper to bumper scratching of cars, traditionally attended to by police officers which will now be left entirely to the insurance industry with which they have engaged in this regard.

"Police officers will not necessarily get involved anymore and in that way it will release va-

luable time for them to deal with more pressing matters that are required by the public"

Police will continue to attend if an incident escalates, if cars are extensively damaged, there are injuries or blockage of roads.

In respect of the maximization of existing resources, Mr McGrail said that as part of the business case accepted by the Gibraltar Government, in the Custody Suite where detainees are processed and kept in cells, it has been a police sergeant who has historically managed the facility. This has been a legal requirement but the post of assistant will no longer be carried out by a

sworn police officer who will thus be released to frontline duties, and the position will be filled by a detention officer.

The switch is part of a drive for civilianization of posts that do not require a police officer, a move that will be complemented shortly with a fresh recruitment campaign to boost establishment numbers in accordance with the mandate agreed with the Gibraltar Government.

Mr McGrail said the extra human resources will level out a lot of the pressures and resultant stresses that the workforce is feeling right now, and should lead to a better service delivery and a happier workplace. This increase in the establishment is being planned over a three year period.

## **Police cross-border cooperation post Brexit**

A border is by its very nature a deterrent to criminal activity, but the movement of money from criminal proceeds is something we have to be wary of, RGP Commissioner Ian McGrail has said.

Speaking to The Bobby, Mr McGrail expressed hope that from a law enforcement perspective, Brexit will not impinge too much on the effectiveness of existing and future cross-border police cooperation, and if it does that the impact is minimized by providing a sound framework that will continue to facilitate this cooperation.

The Commissioner declared: "If the border hardens as would be the case in a no deal Brexit

scenario, its use as a drug smuggling point would also be impacted upon. But, drug smugglers will find innovative ways to deliver on demand, so a harder border does not necessarily mean an end to illicit activity. They would merely switch to innovative forms of concealment in the body, in vehicles, to circumvent any stricter border controls that may arise out of Brexit."

Mr McGrail has also highlighted the need to enhance border and customs measures to identify money laundering activities from one jurisdiction to another, given La Linea's proximity, "a hive for organised criminality as we have seen in recent times."

He said: "It is clear that Brexit will bring unforeseen and unwelcome challenges to law and order agencies as stated recently by the UKs top police officer, Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick. The existing legal instrument to extradite criminals from one country to another such as the European Arrest Warrant mechanism will have to change, and the sharing of intelligence and data will have to be reviewed as we will no longer be able to form part of European intelligence sharing networks.

"But as far as counter terrorism goes, I hope the cooperation will continue despite these hiccups along the way. National security comes under the remit of the Governor and it is our intention to enhance our connections with UK counter terrorism colleagues, and also reach out to the hinterland and improve communications with our counterparts there. Gibraltar's new terrorism laws will be aligned to UK and provide more powers to Law Enforcement Agencies to act in all matters related to terrorism." ■

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**GIBWATCH**

*Cop Class of 2019 Passing Out Parade*

# More Bobbies 'on the beat' to keep Gibraltar safe

By F Oliva

A cloudless March sky witnessed the enthusiasm and marching efficiency of the seventeen new officers who proudly took to the streets of Gibraltar to complete the traditional policing rite of passage in the Piazza, right in the heart of the Rock's civic quarter.

Flanked on one side by the magnificent Parliament building – the seat of local democracy – and on the other, by the historic Town Hall, the new intake received the warmest acknowledgement from RGP Commissioner Ian McGrail for having attained “a milestone in their career.”

The crisp winter evening did not dissuade a good gathering of members of the public who joined senior officers, dignitaries and the relatives of the newly qualified recruits who, having successfully accomplished four months of arduous physical and tactical training, took centre stage in the square to receive their eagerly awaited certificates of achievement from the chairman of the Gibraltar Police Authority Joey Britto.

And, like previous generations of coppers who preceded them in the fulfilment of honourable duty, the new intake – 14 RGP, 3 GDP – now stand ready to renew the RGP's untiring and deeply ingrained pledge to uphold law & order and keep the community safe from all forms of crime.

For the first time ever, the passing out parade was streamed live over Facebook, to reinforce what Mr McGrail calls “the link with the public”.

In his address the commissioner told the new officers to be versatile, “like a Swiss Army knife,” and prepared to serve the community “in all kinds of emergencies.”

The disciplined and well executed drill from the rookie detachment to the accompanying music provided by the Royal Gibraltar Regiment marching band, provided a commendable ceremonial spectacle, a fitting and well received finale to the induction period that heralds a demanding albeit exciting chapter in their occupation as uniformed police constables on the beat.

It was also emotional as members of the public broke into spontaneous applause as the officers exited the square at the conclusion of the event.

In his speech Mr McGrail said that police officers in Gibraltar have become “a sort of General Practitioner,” and besides a natural role as law enforcer, may be called upon to perform as a first-aider, social worker, counsellor, negotiator and many other roles.

He said the RGP was one of the most rooted institutions in the community and arguably one of the most challenging professions going round.

Mr McGrail said: “Becoming a police officer is a significant commitment to help keep Gibraltar safe for all of those who live here and visitors alike. It is a challenging but rewarding role. Though the jurisdiction continues to be a safe one, the criminal landscape is changing with significant and complex threats becoming more apparent – and we are certainly well exposed to all of these threats, and I mean the type of serious crimes any major city suffers from.

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*“We will strive to be more receptive to constructive criticism; whether it comes from inside or outside the organisation – with the key word here being ‘constructive.’”*

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“At the heart of policing, though, is our link with the people and we are fortunate that we enjoy the support of the vast majority of people across Gibraltar. Notwithstanding this, the peoples' support cannot be taken for granted. We are here to serve them over and above





"You will not always be appreciated to the degree you think appropriate, you will not always be respected like you deserve. You will be required to work when you're exhausted. You will not always get the assignment or promotion when you want it. You'll be asked to do things that are unpleasant. You'll be forced to make hard choices. You'll be expected to do the right thing when it's difficult. You'll see things that others never want to see. You'll experience things that will break your heart. In all of this you'll always be expected to be a better person, to keep your head up and continuously push forward and stay on course.

"I am delighted that you, such a group of talented individuals, have chosen to join us to help to deliver a safer Gibraltar. I want to end by thanking the training staff for the great job they have done in inducting the student officers and ensuring they meet the grade to start the operational journey as probationers. Welcome to the family. Well done."

#### **Training**

The recruits have been trained by the excellent RGP Training Staff to meet Police National Occupational Standards, the benchmark of professional policing in UK. They are now ready to exercise wide powers and discharge duties such as gathering and submitting evidence, conducting criminal investigations, stopping and searching individuals, conducting interviews of witnesses, victims and suspects and policing public disorder.

Timmins, Richard Cunningham, Jordan Recagno and Allan Bartram. ■

## **Costa highlights terrorist threat during passing out parade**

Minister for Justice Neil Costa spoke out against the horror of "the barbaric terrorist atrocities committed in European countries", during last month's police passing out parade at the Piazza.

Mr Costa said that the new RGP and GDP officers would now form an integral part of the criminal justice system in Gibraltar as members of organisations committed to fighting crime and keeping Gibraltar safe from any threats – including terrorism.

"Gibraltar is not immune to this worldwide scourge and Government supports you, by listening to your advice and by providing investment for protective measures in equipment and training," he told the new intake in the presence of their superiors.

The Minister further expressed the Government's full commitment to support the police and provide the necessary legislative and material backing in the fight against crime.

During his speech at the event, Mr Costa highlighted "the deep sense of responsibility, duty and honour" felt by police officers and urged them to uphold the law and act fairly in the pursuit of justice.

The Minister also noted that during their training period, the police recruits had been involved in assisting an operational deployment that led to the coastal search and recovery of almost three tons of cannabis resin with a street value of £14m.

"Government is extremely grateful for the work that the Royal Gibraltar Police and the Gibraltar Defence Police carry out, day in and day out, to protect our community and to keep us safe," he declared.

The Minister said the first and only loyalty of police officers is "to the persons we serve."

Mr Costa concluded his intervention stating that everyone in the community was immensely proud of them and wishing them all the accomplishments for the future.

anything and building public confidence in the RGP is something all officers should be committed to doing.

"Anything designed to undermine or prevent this public confidence from growing has no place in our organisation and we should strive to placate any adversity with positive action.

"Too often, especially lately, some in our society are openly vocal about their criticisms of the Police. Often judgment is passed on officers before facts are known and without considerations for the difficulties and complexities of what we are asked to do.

"I look at you as new entrants of the RGP and say...

Your reputation is just what people think of you. Your character is who you really are so protect it at all costs by doing the right thing.

Although officers have been issued with their warrant cards and will be deployed operationally, professional development will continue as they will continue to receive instruction in different skills and topics. The RGP instructors are Inspector John Louis Olivera, Police Sergeant Scott Strachan and Police Constable Sharon Berini.

#### **Presentation**

Course certificates were presented to the 17 recruits while three individual awards were also made. These went to GDP PC Caruana as the Best All Round Recruit, PC Arnold as Best Academic Recruit and to PC Guarnieri the Momy Levy award to the Most Improved Fitness. The rest of the intake is as follows: GDP Wesley Warwick, Jay Marin; RGP Casey Azopardi-Francis, Darren Gonzalez, Matthew Hayward, Nigel Kells, Tanya Reddy, Natalie Atkinson, Matthew Myhill, Robert Perry, Kris



# Ralph and James Down and Out in the Streets of Addiction

By F Oliva, RGP Press Officer



*Ralph*

"I was a criminal, a junkie, a thief, a bad person and a loser," reformed Gibraltar drug addict Ralph, now in his 50s told a group of new RGP recruits during a training session at New Mole House.

The informal gathering provided novice officers with valuable background knowledge of the narcotics underworld and an acute insight into some aspects of the often complex psychological forces at play inside a drug addict's mind.

Ralph, whose real name has been withheld to preserve his identity, has managed to turn his life around after numerous failed rehabilitation attempts and inevitable relapses into the "recurring nightmare of drugs," with a great deal of effort and perseverance. Today having

put that period of his life behind him, he has become a proficient sportsman and ultramarathon runner – he has no less than thirteen marathons and half marathons under his belt – and an adviser for Hospitals and Institution, a branch of NA and AA (Narcotics/Alcoholics Anonymous), an international NGO that supports recovering drug addicts and alcoholics through charity based initiatives.

"I see what I have been through as an experience and an asset that needs to be shared with others, to provide help to those who have fallen prey of drug addiction. All addicts need guidance in the right direction to positively 'reconnect' with society and a hand to get back on their feet. There is no magic formula – it is impossible to do it alone," he says.

Ralph emphasizes the point that pushing away addicts and seeing them merely as a scourge of society is not the answer. "I would still be an addict had I not found people along the way willing to help me and that is the message I am passing down to you."

As a youngster, Ralph saw himself like an outcast of society and for much of his later life accepted that he stood apart from the rest, floundering in his own inner realm of personal anxieties and self-doubt.

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*"Drugs gave me everything I wanted, but that was only an external appearance; inside of me I was full of fear, guilt and shame. I was a shy person, withdrawn, I had been abused by a neighbour and all of this had amounted to serious defects of character."*

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Ralph's problems were compounded by his family upbringing, a unit which he candidly describes as "dysfunctional," although he is quick to point out that not all addicts come from this type of milieu, fraught with tension and struggling under the burden of an alcoholic father.

At school too, he felt out of place, not excelling at sport and envying the kids who were good at football.

"I fitted in better with the gangs of kids who were just thieving around, and running away to





the 'jungle'. With them I felt comfortable, accepted as part of a group."

Ralph was 15 when he started to break into buildings and commit burglaries and thefts, unsolved emotional traumas and anger management problems further complicating his difficult teenage years.

He admits that when he first started to use drugs, valium his narcotic of choice, made him feel good and helped him dispel inbuilt fears and low self-esteem.

"It gave me the Dutch courage I so badly needed to be able to socialize with others. I grew my hair long and then started to smoke joints, listening to rock music and seeing myself as a rebel."

He recalls that his favourite pastime was to drive up the Rock with his friends to smoke joints, but that he was not a big drinker at this point.

"I just wanted to do drugs all the time, for the rest of my life."

He was barely 16 when his family had had enough and packed him off to UK in the belief that pulling him away from his friends, whom they saw as responsible for Ralph's misconduct plus a change of scenery would straighten him out.

"Of course," he says, "my friends were not to blame, and it was all down to me. It was I who was messing up."

In UK he started drinking heavily and mixing alcohol with mind altering substances, a dangerous combination that would have far reaching effects on his health.

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*"I was suffering from an obsessive-compulsive disorder, and now I can see that quite clearly, though at the time I was not aware that I was ill. I would pick up a first drink and carry on and on. I was unable to stop."*

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The net result of his heavy drinking and drug consumption was a string of failed relationships, being unable to hold on to jobs and not finding any kind of stability in his life.

"I have four kids with three different women, have toured a good number of detention centres, psychiatric hospitals and rehab units in

UK -- luckily though, I have never been to prison."

Ralph was a committed addict wherever he went, scoring drugs in UK, in Gibraltar, and he recalls "in the Junquillo in La Linea where I would buy heroin."

"Drugs had become essential to remove all my insecurities; first it gave me the confidence to go to school, but then it became something I needed to do to eat, to sleep, to confront life itself."

There were many occasions when he tried to wean himself off opiates by using methadone, which would only have a short term effect, and he would come off that only to return to using heroin, cocaine and morphine.

Having been hooked on drugs since an early age he would try to convince himself to stop, find a thousand different excuses to turn his life around at some unspecified point in the future setting himself targets – when his daughter was born, or when he got a new job, to do so.

Tomorrow would always be the last time, however the fear of giving up substances he had relied on to cope with the simplest day to day things, always prevailed and any sincere desire would fall by the wayside.

"I simply could not function without drugs and alcohol and was actually terrified by the thought of ever stopping because I had been doing it all my life."

It was only when he realized that he was "dead in the soul, emotionally extinct," and could no longer look himself in the mirror that he resolved to escape "the recurring nightmare" he was trapped in.

"I just wanted to break the daily cycle, that first waking thought centred around drugs doing whatever it took, 'beg, borrow, or steal' if necessary to do it," he said.

His sons had never spoken to him in the past but now he prides himself in having a great relationship with them and with his ex-wife. The person he once disliked whose life centred on the consumption of drugs not even to get high, because they ceased having that effect, but "just to be normal," has now become one who leads an honest and decent life.

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*"It was like learning how to walk again, step by step. It was tough but my life started to change. Now I love the person I have become, with the people around me and with myself, having shed all the resentments of the past."*

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Ralph adds that, drug addiction is a disease that is difficult to understand and that although statistics as to the success of rehabilitation therapies are not very heart-warming, the key to recovery remains in society as a whole deepening its knowledge and understanding of this malaise.

"The opposite of addiction in this sense is connection, shunning addicts will not solve the problem. Social rejection achieves nothing, we must pursue the opposite. The best way to deal with addiction is by connecting and reconnecting addicts meaningfully and productively with society."



Andrew Brookes/Getty Images/Cultura RF n

James

James has led a similar life to Ralph. Now 50 and clean for the past 12 years, he is still haunted by memories of waking up in the middle of the night as a child, to the sound of his alcoholic father beating up his mother. He also recalls having difficulties in school and was picked on and bullied by other children.

"I saw myself as different to others, and had the feeling that I did not fit into society," he says.

Drugs led him to experience what he describes as "a spiritual death", hitting rock bottom, losing his family and ending up in prison.

While understanding the saying "once a drug addict, always an addict", both he and Ralph believe that change is possible, and that the past can be left behind.

Sport, the friendship, assistance and good advice offered to him by people, including the police officers he encountered during his time as a drug offender, afforded him a lifeline that he finally managed to grasp.

"I was finished, that's how I saw myself. My life had been destroyed by drugs, I had lost my family, and I felt that I had lost everything. I was directionless, just wanting a big hole to open up and swallow me."

His message to the RGP recruits when they have to deal with drug addicts in the custody suite is "don't just arrest and forget about them, give them advice and help to go into rehabilitation".

His formal education was poor having quit school at the age of 10 and starting to work on fishing trawlers when he was 17. He then left Gibraltar to join the Spanish Legion, and subsequently started to get involved with illegal drugs.

"It did the trick because the drugs removed me from the world in which I felt trapped and from the suffering I was feeling. I was drinking and smoking joints and I quite liked it."

In the 1990s at the height of the notorious fast launch era in Gibraltar, he became a tobacco smuggler and later a drug trafficker, extending his drug taking to amphetamines, cocaine and pills.

James made a great deal of money and the more money he had, the more he spent to feed his drug habit which grew stronger and stronger to the detriment of everything else. He was seriously injured in a fight but the drugs allowed him to push all his problems underneath the surface.

"With drugs I forgot about my injuries and the distress it had caused me, about my father and about my mother, and all I was interested was



having fun, partying and taking drugs. It was enjoyable, because otherwise I would not have done it."

Police arrested him on a boat with 252 kilos of cannabis and he went down in court for almost six years imprisonment. This did not deter him, and when he was released continued his trafficking activities and drug addiction. He acknowledges that his criminal conduct, constant stealing etc, was causing harm to other people he came into contact with.

James married shortly afterwards and had his first child but admits he was not a proper father to his children and when his wife walked out with the kids, he was overwhelmed with guilt, also with feelings that his life was empty and not worth living.

*"I felt dead inside; it's the worst sort of death, a spiritual death because you are still alive but your spirit collapses. There is just pain and nothing else."*

Having reached the end of the tether, he was drifting along a futile drug fuelled existence

that was squeezing the very life out of him, life which no longer seemed to have any purpose.

Paradoxically it was that bleak realization that marked a turning point in his life, a sense of devastation that impelled him to take the necessary steps to go into rehabilitation

James acknowledges that if he is here today, alive and with a new purpose to his life, it is thanks to the RGP and the help he received from individual officers some of whom became close friends.

"Today I go riding a bicycle with them and I am involved in several sports other than cycling, such as swimming and running which are my favourite."

*"Life makes sense to me now, I have my family, my wife and children and they know that I am there for them. Being drug free has changed my life around, making a full recovery possible."*

His message to the police recruits was that they should always bear in mind that behind an addict, deep inside there is always a human being, a person, and they should always offer advice and support so they can go into rehabilitation.

Beyond that he believes that a police response to an addict should be proportional to that person's conduct, and if they become violent they have to be restrained adding that when sober, addicts are "nice people."

"Enforce the law in the custody suite but show compassion and kindness," he adds. ■

Thanks to DRUGS FREE KIDS Canada.Org for their kind permission to use these images



*The RGP is an open and transparent organisation always keen to assist young students and researchers in their work and was pleased to host professional photographer Luke Archer's one day visit to New Mole House police station as part of his extended photography project about Gibraltar. Luke has been able to see from close quarters, the basics of RGP's day to day policing, road patrols, the Marine Section, frontier traffic arrangements and the custody suite. The Bobby took advantage of Luke's stopover to interview him about his work and what he wanted to reflect with it.*

## 'Shooting film, not bullets' – Rock policing through the lens of a Londoner

London-based photographer Luke Archer spent some time with the Royal Gibraltar Police last year, to gain a first-hand impression of a modern law enforcement agency.

Now he is back again on the Rock after having completed an MA in Photography at the Arts University, Bournemouth, as part of an extended project that seeks to delve into the 'real' Gibraltar, one far removed from the tourist brochures or cringeworthy clichés about the Rock that are so prevalent in the UK tabloid press. Luke was a guest of the RGP earlier this month capturing the dynamism, action and verve of a cross section of day to day policing activities. He focused on various practical elements such as road patrols, the marine section, the frontier traffic arrangements, and also moved off in other directions to incorporate the construction industry featuring some GJBS buildings, the military and the Port Authority.

His current assignment seeks to take his MA much further, to broaden its scope and although mainly pictorial will also include lines of text.

"There is a limit to what you can learn only from pictures, and text and image tends to work very well together to provide a greater insight."

In his previous Gibraltar related work, Luke discerned various social elements and other layers of the complex cultural strands that go into the formation of identity, a theme that he wanted to examine in greater detail.

**"I wanted to delve deeper into the Rock's uniqueness, showing sides that often go unnoticed by investigating its culture and landscapes both physical and human."**

One of the main aims of his new endeavour is to dispel popular assumptions about Gibraltar as simply 'Brits abroad' displayed in mainstream UK television programmes.

"I wanted to illustrate what life looks like here.

**Relatively little is known about the territory back home. I wanted to expand people's understanding about what it means to be Gibraltarian,** give greater depth to what is sometimes a one dimensional portrayal by the UK press," he declared.

Luke has visited the Spanish hinterland on several occasions over the years and since he also has family links on the Rock, he thought it would be a good idea to spend some time finding stimulating pictorial content for his project. He has always been interested in Gibraltar as a location for photography.

"With Brexit looming it seems people are more receptive to stories about locations that are going to be impacted such as Gibraltar," he said.

But he reckons this could be a catch-22 situation in that people in Britain will latch onto the obvious flag waving Britishness, for example what happens on National Day.

"These things have to be there but only as one chapter of a bigger narrative. I want to tell the wider story, and be able to explore the difference between reality and perception."

One of the things that has struck him most has been the religious diversity he has found in Gibraltar, where various faiths co-exist in a confined space.

"I've seen different religions co-existing side by side, very close to each other. This is unusual. In other places this does not work out and I was keen to show it."

Luke believes that "with the world shifting to the right," Gibraltar's diversity and diversity generally is "something that ought to be celebrated."

**"Being British is not about red telephone booths and fish and chips. It is the acceptance of others, and that chimes with my experience of what it is to be British."**

As Luke's project develops, his aim is to "dig deeper" meet more people, and continue to learn what it means to be Gibraltarian.

He said: "Gibraltar is a melting pot, on the one hand it is fiercely British, but it also has a Spanish influence that some may not want to acknowledge. As an outsider, it is often easier to see where it is that the cultures merge. Gibraltar has certain similarities with mainland England but has its own unique culture, in the same way as Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland have theirs, and my aim is to get this across."

"Gibraltar has a long and complicated history and it is hard for outsiders to get their head round that. I am still wrestling with it, and it is always throwing up surprises," he admits.

### Londoner

Living in London he is acutely aware of the pressures faced by police forces in the capital and how often a surge in crime has been linked to insufficient numbers of police on the ground. Luke has been able to form a view about some of the policing challenges Gibraltar faces and the differences to the situation back home.

"As an outsider, the RGP seems very unique, although Gibraltar is very small in size it appears the police force has to handle a wide variety of situations that other police forces simply wouldn't encounter. I'm no expert but I can't imagine many forces in the world have an international land and sea border on top of all the regular domestic duties. From what I've seen, police numbers are also more proportionate to the population in Gibraltar.

"Coming from London and visiting Gibraltar it is nice to see a full police presence out and about, I guess it acts as a good deterrent. In London you are less likely to see the police on the street more likely to hear the sirens of police zooming to respond so I guess policing is more reactive."

He reckons that Gibraltar is a safe place despite its high density population which is often associated to a higher incidence of crime.

"It is atypical in this too because in other places people living on top of each other, does not work out so well in this context."

### Kodak fan

Luke has been using film for about nine years but there has been a huge resurgence in its use in more recent times, similar to the vinyl revival, where people who have grown up in a digital world are rediscovering analogue technology.

"I'm pretty loyal to Kodak as my grandad worked for them all his life! Knowing this, people often buy me things related to film photography and one was a patch that says 'Shoot Film Not Bullets - To Capture and Preserve' - you can tell it's from America as thankfully access to firearms is pretty limited in the UK." ■

David Parody

# When 'The Police' are real musicians...

Royal Gibraltar Police officers have normal lives outside of their day to day responsibilities. Many of them engage in a plethora of artistic activities, hobbies, pastimes and relaxing diversions to disconnect from the stresses associated to a high pressure occupation like modern policing in a small, tightly knit community like Gibraltar. In successive editions The Bobby will be speaking to the policemen who combine their day job with interesting parallel pursuits, in this case related to music and performing, having achieved notable proficiency as instrumentalists, live performers and recording artists. In the current issue, The Bobby will be featuring guitarist Aaron Ignacio and Bandmaster Craig Philbin.



## PS Ignacio Rock 'n' Roll Star

Aaron Ignacio has been playing the guitar since he was 12. A sergeant in the Roads and Neighbourhood Policing Unit, when he takes off his uniform, the chances are that he will be heading for the rehearsal room for band practice. Since 2016 he has been carrying out guitar duties for Jetstream, which recently supported 90s band Toploader at a well-publicized and attended gig in London that was featured on BBC Radio London.

**"I was anxious as a kid and picking up a guitar and playing was very relaxing, it made everything else disappear," he says.**

Now 38, Aaron formed many bands as a musically active teenager during his time in school, later teaming up with the Fernandez brothers, one of them, Albert, a policeman as well, also featured in this series, to create Underhill, an outfit with strong punk influences of the Green Day and Blink 182 variety. He also formed part of other bands that have played regularly in Gibraltar, appearing in the Gibraltar Music Festival, and making incursions further afield in Spain, with the likes of Metro Motel and Karma 13.

Where did it all start for him?

**"When I first saw Slash in full swing in a Guns and Roses video at a very young age I knew at once that I wanted to be a guitarist like him."**

Aaron is a self-taught, eclectic and intuitive musician, whose energetic on stage persona contrasts with his soft-spoken, good natured disposition. His range of styles is diverse and he can move comfortably through rock 'n' roll genres from pop to grunge and melodic rock to punk.

**"I am not a technical guitarist, I play with feel and mostly by ear. This is how I learned the guitar, listening to the radio and trying to play along. No YouTube back then"**

His house is an extended music studio with numerous guitars and other instruments scattered around. Now his children are also following in dad's footsteps.

Aaron is quite candid in terms of what music does for him, how he needs the enjoyment, the rewarding creative and therapeutic benefits that derive from it. When he takes to the stage it affords him a complete detachment from the outside world.

**"I give it my all during a live show. When I play the guitar I can disconnect from all the stresses in my line of work, I can step out of**

**the world and let everything go. Music is a good way of dealing with it. When I come off the stage I am in a very serene mood."**

He started listening to grunge music growing up, Nirvana and Pearl Jam were huge at the time but he soon widened his scope to incorporate all genres, from Clapton to Metallica and Bruno Mars to John Mayer and anything in between.

At present he is a weekend musician, a part-time performer, immersed in "an expensive hobby", although this does not tell the whole story.

**"My work commitments have always determined when it is that I can play with Jetstream either locally or abroad. Usually it would be weekends that I can take a flight to London if need be on a Saturday to perform, and return to the Rock on the Sunday as with the Toploader gig."**

Aaron has to juggle his multiple commitments, as a responsible parent and husband, a serving police officer and a musician. And although it is his ambition to attain full time involvement, he recognizes how hard it would be to make it in the music industry, which often feels like "a bit of a lottery" and harbours no unrealistic expectations of this materializing.

**"I balance my different facets to accommodate everything as best as possible. I would not just get up and leave on the back of an off chance. The music business is very competitive and it would have to be something pretty massive to take that step. Although it would be my dream come true to just tour and live off music, I am a very level headed individual and understand this would not be the ideal scenario for my work and family life"**

Aaron also has links with highly rated Spanish indie band IzaL, just one of his many good contacts in the Spanish music industry from his Karma 13 days, which he hopes to explore to further his band's prospects.



Doing things with the family and music, with his wife when they won Indio Rock Festival in Malaga 2018



Gibraltar International Song Festival Winners 2017 with song Starlight





## PS Craig Philbin, a musical journey

RGP Sergeant Craig Philbin is a consummate and veteran musician and bandmaster who originally hails from Manchester. He has toured around the world and among his artistic highlights, performed on stage with the great Jools Holland and as a guest soloist with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for the Queen in 2005 at a concert commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. Big band music, Jazz and military tunes are the coordinates of his thrilling artistic journey.

Craig began his musical career at a very early age playing the trombone at the age of 5, trumpet at the age of 6 and piano at the age of 10. He joined the Army at 16 enlisting as a musician in the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and in 2005 graduated as a Bandmaster with a Bachelor of Music with Honours degree from the Headquarters of Army Music in Kneller Hall, Twickenham and was appointed to the position with the Royal Lancers Band based at the time in Germany.

During this time, he was the Trumpet Major of the "Golden Eight" fanfare team whose duties included the announcing of HM the Queen at various events in London. He was later presented to her, an experience which he describes as his "proudest moment".

Craig returned regularly to London where following his love of Big Band Music, formed the British Army Big Band with the very best jazz musicians in the army and went on to perform with notable stars including, Ruby Turner, Michael Buble and Jools Holland.

In 2006 the band backed popular Irish boy band Westlife during a Philip Schofield Christmas TV show seen by nine million viewers. Following the disbandment of the Royal Lancers band, he was appointed as the Bandmaster of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment, where he served for two years before being posted to Chatham in Kent to take up the appointment as the Bandmaster of the Corps of Royal Engineers.

During his time with the Engineers, Craig became good friends with Jools Holland who owns a castle not far from the barracks where the Engineers band are based. Craig performed with Jools on a number of occasions as both are keen boogie-woogie piano enthusiasts and still keep in regular touch.

Craig was very fortunate to be posted back to Gibraltar in 2011 to take up his old post with the RGR Band and Corps of Drums and subsequently formed the band The Soulmates a 12-piece soul band complete with an awesome horn section featuring fellow police officers the Riley brothers, on saxophone and trumpet.

In 2012 the Royal Gibraltar Regiment was given the honour of performing public duties at Buckingham Palace as part of the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year. This saw the band perform on several high profile occasions led by none other than Drum Major Ian

McGrail who retired from military service on the Regiment's last day of public duties at the palace.

In 2013 Craig retired from the Army and joined the RGP. During the time of his training school Craig was also heavily involved in the organisation of the 3rd Annual Gibraltar International Jazz festival whose star performer was Jools Holland and his Rhythm and Blues Orchestra, featuring guest artist Melanie C of Spice Girls fame. Craig was invited to join the band as a guest soloist during the concert which for him was the best possible way to cap his 26-year military music career.

When asked about his current artistic ventures Craig said: "I still really enjoy music and practice every day. I'm working with a new 5 piece rock band at the moment and should be out in public performing gigs with them by the summer time. I can read music, play by ear and improvise which means I'm pretty versatile when it comes to performing as a guest with other bands as I often like to do. I can mix it with anybody as and when needed. You could say that I am a 'gun' for hire," he added.

Craig appears regularly at the Jazz Society's jazz nights at the Elliott Hotel on Thursday evenings. ■





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*Guidance to Police Officers*

# Processing emotions to deal with the distress of Crime Scene Investigations

By Dr G Camino

*Dr Gustavo Camino is a GHA Clinical Psychologist, CMHT, Coaling Island, Gibraltar*



## Abstract

Crime scene investigations require a professional approach that may encompass psychological elements to it, which may be able to allow police officers to work safely when performing their duties. The rationale for such an assumption stems from the fact that, the exposure to crime scenes could constitute a source of occupational hazard, not only to the police but also to other professionals such as fire fighters, prison officers, health workers and incidental witnesses. Crime scenes involve a great deal of unpredictability, and may contribute to the formation of complex and long lasting impressions for those who have to deal with them. Those impressions may connect with previous experiences, knowledge and memories that if well managed, could potentially lead to increase professional skills and abilities to manage emotionally intense situations or contrary to that, contribute to emotionally destabilising the officer, and hinder their normal function in the work place, or in their private life. The aim of this article is to establish and offer some introductory psychological guidance to police officers and professionals alike, who may be exposed to crime scenes during the course of their professional interventions.

## Introduction

Crimes involve complex investigative tasks and a mindful approach to human nature. Normally, a team of police officers composed of a varied degree of seniority and expertise will deal with the ample range of tasks that require a

routine investigation. Very often, when securing the premises where the crime took place and establishing an understanding of the incidents, they will be exposed to disturbing material. That sort of material can range from dealing with photographic evidence, human remains, blood and body parts that may be found as result of an incident. It is quite logical to assume that contact with those experiences would trigger important emotional reactions to the lay person and maybe not to the experienced professional. However, and at least from my experience, I believe that no one is free from feeling upset about it. At the same time, it is quite important to recognise how normal and necessary it is to “normalise” whatever reaction we may have when exposed to difficult material.

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*“I would recommend that professionals accept distress as part of what they should feel sometimes, rather than assuming automatically that damage is done because the distress they feel is a symptom of it. There may be indications of damage only when distress lasts for many months and the person does not let it go.”*

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## How Normal is to Feel Abnormal

Regular and routine life experiences bring predictability and a sense of control to most people. Most of us aspire to have a life, with moderate levels of excitement and rewards so we can continue indefinitely being motivated and focused in what we ordinarily do. However, and at the same time, life may also bring unexpected experiences and outcomes that may throw people to extreme levels of emotionality and leave them on edge and with a sense of vulnerability. Without the appropriate personal resources to recover, the task of getting back to normal can be perceived as a huge or even an impossible task. One of the things that create the expectation that we will not be able to come to terms with a difficult experience is the overwhelming effect of the emotions that come with it. We are normally knowledgeable of how positive emotions affect our lifestyle and quality of life, and in fact, we pursue

activities that may deliver such mind states. However, lay people believe that negative emotions are intrinsically bad, and are associated to mental disturbance or completely unnecessary learning. Scientific psychology suggests that negative emotions are not necessarily a symptom of any illness. Quite the contrary, they can be the product of normal and healthy reactions to difficult events. Consequently, an important and practical recommendation to make to those exposed to potentially damaging or disturbing events, is that they must accept that feeling upset or distressed about it, is a completely acceptable state of mind. Having said that, it does not mean that we must also expect that we will remain distressed for the rest of our lives. Despite that, it is not easy to accept it initially, given the very unsettling nature of distress. When under distress, humans might assume that they cannot bear it. If the person under distress adopts a more understanding and compassionate view about himself/herself, it is likely that the distress will be processed better and the intensity of it will gradually decrease. This would in turn permit the person to learn from what happened and ultimately make sense of it. If that is achieved, the memory of the events will be adequately processed and incorporated as part of the person’s experience. If this is not achieved, there are a number of difficulties that can potentially arise, including stress, inability to cope with normal life, and ultimately trauma reactions. However, as I said, this is not an obliged pathway and most people end up processing difficult events quite well. Summarising it all, I would recommend that professionals accept distress as part of what they should feel sometimes, rather than assuming automatically that damage is done because the distress they feel is a symptom of it. There may be indications of damage only when distress lasts for many months and the person does not let it go.

“Educating officers and professionals into emotional processing and regulation could be a helpful way of preventing stress and trauma reactions. It is not inevitable to fall into extremes of mental disorders when facing adversity.”

## Mental Health and Good Health

As I said in the previous heading, distress in isolation is not a symptom of mental health problems. Educating officers and professionals into emotional processing and emotion regulation could be a helpful way of preventing stress and trauma reactions. It is not inevitable to fall into extremes of mental disorders when facing adversity. Health



education is part of the role of mental health professionals and we are available to provide assistance in the matter. If trauma takes place, then it is our role to treat it. However, this requires allowing the potential sufferer to initially attempt to deal with it by themselves. The principle behind such recommendation is the assumption that people are inherently healthy, and consequently, they must learn to cope with threats naturally, before any artificial method is tried. This would positively compare to the recent trend in medicine which avoids the use of antibiotics and only prescribe them when is absolutely necessary. It is not viable to have a clinical psychologist ready for an emergency case, whereas it is much more realistic to let people face their life decisions and experiences so they can develop their own natural mechanisms to defend themselves. This is particularly apparent when we are experiencing a huge growth of demand of mental health services for problems which are, most of the time well managed without professional intervention.

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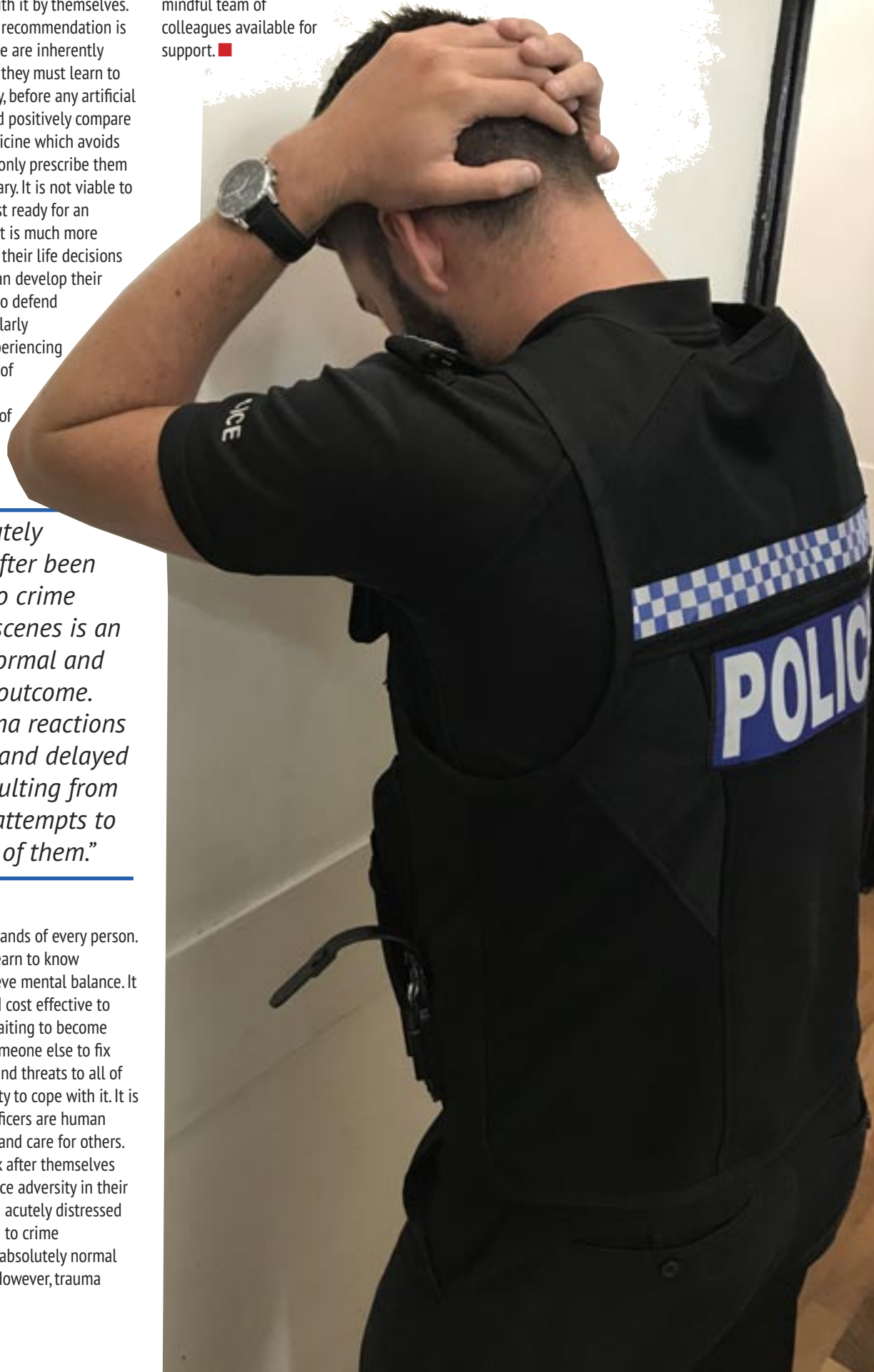
*“Feeling acutely distressed after been exposed to crime investigation scenes is an absolutely normal and acceptable outcome. However, trauma reactions are protracted and delayed responses, resulting from unsuccessful attempts to make sense of them.”*

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### **Conclusions**

Mental well-being is the hands of every person. People can develop, and learn to know themselves better to achieve mental balance. It is much more efficient and cost effective to look after yourself, than waiting to become mentally ill, and expect someone else to fix you. Life brings adversity and threats to all of us. We have a natural ability to cope with it. It is called, resilience. Police officers are human beings who have feelings and care for others. However, they have to look after themselves first, if they are going to face adversity in their work environment. Feeling acutely distressed after having been exposed to crime investigation scenes is an absolutely normal and acceptable outcome. However, trauma

reactions are protracted and delayed responses, resulting from unsuccessful attempts to make sense of them. It is possible to prevent trauma by accepting distress as a normal reaction and having a mindful team of colleagues available for support. ■



# RGP PUBLIC ORDER TRAINING AT BUFFADERO



RGP officers carry out basic public order training once every six months at the Buffadero Training Centre on a whole range of different manoeuvres and procedures which includes general foot cordons, basic shield and violent person tactics.

Speaking to instructor Police Sergeant James Rodriguez, he explained that the instruction (training day) is chiefly aimed at shift officers, so that they can acquire an essential knowledge and understanding of the various disciplines in case they are called upon to conduct public order functions.

"Aside from this we have a designated Police Support Unit which undertakes more specialised training of foot cordons, intermediate shield tactics, round shield tactics, petrol bomb reception tactics, (what are commonly known as Molotov cocktails), building entry tactics and dog tactics," said PS Rodriguez.

Additionally during the police recruit school period, the new intake of officers also carried out the training where they were introduced to the shield tactics and other situations that can be encountered in a public order breach scenario.

The various modalities of foot cordons are used as a crowd control device, even if there is no violence, also to disperse a mass of people, and to prevent access to a given point. They are also employed to close roads.

Shields are deployed when there is an increased risk of attack from missiles, weapons, etc, and includes when police are under attack from windows or buildings and various formations can be adopted, for instance the 'Overhead' (Roman) formation with the protective shields above the heads to counter any hurling

of missiles toward them and with the squad moving at a fast pace towards a building.

In hostile mob situations the 'round shield' tactic envisages the use of batons to disperse the crowd. Police dogs also form part of the training and are used as a spearhead, proving tremendously effective in these type of settings and in bringing a violent person under control to carry out an arrest.

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*The 'intermediate shield' tactic is used when controlling and pushing back crowds to keep them away.*

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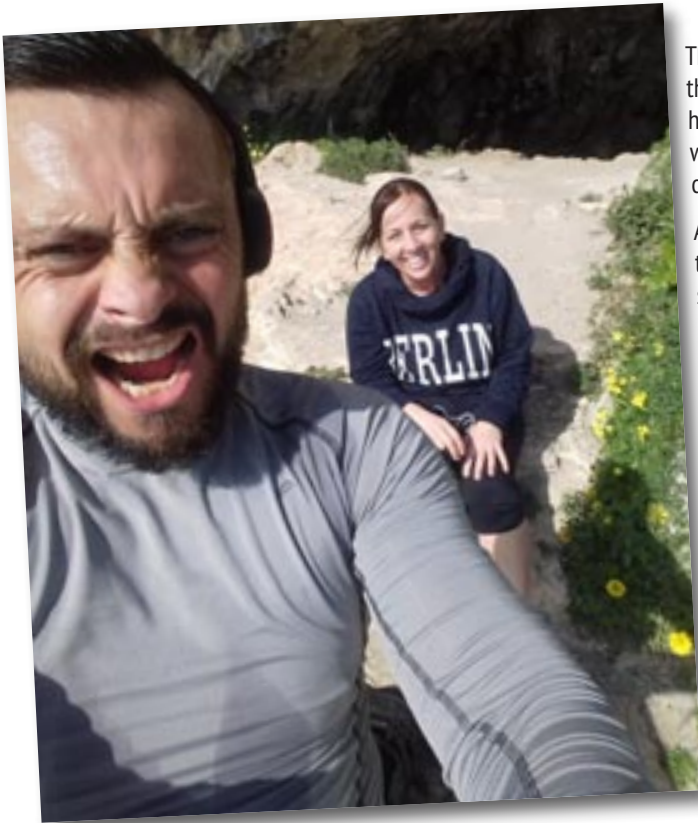
PS Rodriguez is a fully fledged police instructor who recently underwent four weeks specialised training in Manchester and a subsequent two week tactical advisor course in Kent.

Officers are trained to deal with numerous situations and act as required to neutralize danger. Violent person tactics can also be deployed with the use of riot gear to gain entry into a building dynamically with shields, to challenge and detain an offender barricaded inside and suspected of carrying a knife or other bladed weapon.

The violent person tactic was successfully applied in the drugs raid at the Queen's Hotel in February.

The PSU was deployed to good effect for the GFA match against the Republic of Ireland at the Victoria Stadium last month. ■





PC Tony Gaul and PC Sharon Berini training in Gibraltar

## RGP officers train for Lisbon marathon

By Ashley Maer

Three police officers are preparing to pound the streets of Lisbon and Edinburgh to raise thousands of pounds for cancer charities

Three Royal Gibraltar Police officers will be swapping their polished boots for running shoes as they prepare to run marathons for charity later this year.

Sharon Berini, Tony Gaul and Scott Strachan are hoping to raise thousands of pounds for The Cancer Relief Centre and the Teenage Cancer Trust by completing the gruelling 42km runs.

The officers started their training at the beginning of the year and can now be seen pounding the pavements of Gibraltar several times a week.

Sharon Berini, 43, who was born in Peterborough, and has been in the RGP for 12 years, is running her first ever marathon in Lisbon, Portugal, on the 20th of October.

The officer will be running the marathon in memory of her mother Catherine Berini, who passed away from cancer in January 2018.

Asked what made her want to run her first marathon, she told the Bobby Magazine: "It was a moment of madness I think! I wanted to raise money for the Cancer Relief Centre in Gibraltar as my mum was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer in September 2017, where she was devastatingly told she had about a year to live. Sadly she only made it to four months as she passed away in January 2018. The Cancer Relief Centre offered my mum and family support during her illness

and to me and my sister after her passing.

"I wanted to show them our gratitude for what they do and initially thought about doing a parachute jump but I had already raised money for charity in that way and although it was challenging, as I am quite fearful of heights, it wasn't challenging enough. I am not a runner and never have been, so the most challenging thing I could do was run a marathon."

Sharon, who is hoping to raise £5,000 for the charity, added: "In September 2018 my partner's father was diagnosed with terminal cancer and passed away within a very short period of three weeks. Tony will be running the marathon with me to help drag me to the end and in honour of our parents and everyone else who has been touched by cancer."

Also running the Lisbon Marathon is her partner and fellow police officer Tony Gaul.

Tony, 45, who is from the Isle of Sheppey, Kent, and has been in the RGP for three years, explained that he hopes to test his endurance and raise money for Cancer Relief Gibraltar.

The former soldier ran the Manchester Marathon in 2002 and a 105km ultra marathon in 2015, whilst serving in the British Forces Gibraltar.

When asked about his training so far, he said: "It has been so enjoyable, especially as I have found the love again for physical training and fitness. I definitely lost my way for about a year. So no surrender ever again!

"I hope to raise as much as possible, I'm not going to put a figure on it. That said I would

like to take this opportunity to thank all of those in the RGP that have already donated.

"As for what time I'm aiming for, I am running this marathon with my partner so the only aim is to complete it as a team, I'm not too bothered about the time it takes. As the saying goes, it's about the marathon, not the sprint."

Running his first ever marathon in Edinburgh on May 27th is Scott Strachan.

Scott, 31, from Glasgow, who has worked as a police officer in Gibraltar for four years, told the Bobby Magazine that he wanted to run a marathon to test himself and tick it off his bucket list.

He said: "I also saw this as a good opportunity to do something I enjoy which could benefit a worthy cause, the Teenage Cancer Trust.

"Training has been tough and very demanding, with the most difficult thing being avoiding getting injured which causes setbacks. I've also had to give up the beer!"

Scott initially planned to raise £500 for the charity, but raised that amount in the first few days of fundraising. So now he has set his target to £1,000.

Hoping to finish in 4.30 minutes, he added: "I'm not mentally worried about completing the marathon. However, I do worry that physically my body won't get through it. I'm hoping to stay injury free in training and on the day of the race!"

To sponsor Sharon and Tony visit [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Sharon-Berini](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Sharon-Berini)

To sponsor Scott visit [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/scott-strachan1](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/scott-strachan1) ■



PC Scott Strachan



## Commendations to officers after class 'A' drugs bust in housing estate

*Police Commissioner Ian McGrail has presented commendations to RGP officers who successfully apprehended a Class 'A' drugs dealer operating in Moorish Castle Estate last December.*

Police Sergeant Craig Goldwin and Constables Joseph Cassaglia and Michael Heap had spotted a man acting suspiciously in the area who, when challenged by officers handed over a plastic bag containing 43 grammes of cannabis resin and a wrapper with 33 grammes of cocaine.

A digital set of scales in working order was also confiscated by police.

Commissioner McGrail praised the officers' "excellent work and observation skills,"

together with their "methodical and professional approach," which resulted in an effective anti-drug operation.

The drug dealer was subsequently convicted in court and handed a three year prison sentence.

Mr McGrail further stated that the case had brought to light the positive interaction of police officers across Gibraltar, by means of intelligence led targeted neighbourhood patrols and close vigilance strategies that can often go unnoticed but are vital to detect and disrupt criminality.

He said that the RGP will continue in its untiring efforts to thwart drug related activities in the community.

The Commissioner continued: "The public can rest assured that police officers are doing their work diligently, monitoring drug movements and in a state of preparedness to act quickly in order to frustrate dealers and confiscate illegal substances.

"This case also highlights the importance of teamwork to secure the arrest of culprits. We look forward to continue enjoying public support in this regard to become even more efficient in the future."



## RGP officers obtain Commissioner's commendation and praise from Chief Justice

One of the best yardsticks to measure the success and effectiveness of a policeman's efforts is the evidence that is placed in front of a judge and jury, RGP Commissioner Ian McGrail told officers during the presentation of commendations to the investigating team involved in securing a successful conviction in the Lishman murder case.

Mr McGrail also noted that his citation incorporated Chief Justice Dudley's positive comments and recognition for the RGP's good work at the conclusion of the case.

"He (the CJ) does not dish them out easily, and to get praise from him is worthy of note," said the Commissioner.

Mr McGrail said that Gibraltar could be proud that a case such as this, which is the most serious – short of terrorism – that a police force is called upon to investigate, had been tackled and resolved in a professional manner from start to finish, "from first responder to family liaison to forensics."

The Commissioner reflected on how policing methods had advanced in the past thirty years stating that nowadays DNA profiling and 3D reconstruction of crime scenes were valuable tools at the disposal of police investigators.

Mr McGrail added that fortunately Gibraltar did not come across these type of cases very often and "touch wood that long it may remain the same." ■



*The investigating team receiving their commendation from Commissioner McGrail*

# Three new dogs join the RGP canine unit

*The three new police dogs Flash, Nyx and Gus that commenced service at the beginning of the year with the RGP canine section, were on standby along with the rest of the pack during last month's soccer match GFA v Eire at the Victoria Stadium.*

This was the animals' first task since their passing out ceremony in January in the presence of Commissioner Ian McGrail, but the match turned out to be a peaceful affair so their services were not required.

Police dog handlers PC Harrison, PC Almeida and PC Rowbottom received certificates of achievement from Mr McGrail after a gruelling 16 week training period, a programme approved by the UK National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC).

Additionally, a week of assessments was conducted by an outside force, on this occasion it was a Bedfordshire Police assessor who came over to certify the dogs and the training.

The three dogs completed a demonstration of their searching and restraining abilities at the New Mole House courtyard, and displayed a high level of training and discipline, obeying the instructions from their respective handlers at every moment.

At present there are nine dogs in the unit, mostly German shepherd dogs, five for general police operations, two for searching explosives and another two for drugs and firearms.

These animals are very versatile and trained in a range of skills which include searching for persons, drugs, firearms, explosives and other objects. They can also be engaged in criminal investigations, finding and tracking offenders, and following a human scent, to discover a hidden person in an area or a building.

Police dogs can also be used for public order tasks as their mere presence tends to deesca-

late situations very quickly without the need for the use of force.

Dogs are carefully selected for service and handlers will seek certain traits and characteristics in the animal, often contained in their lineage, such as a high drive, determination, the capacity to hold on to something and not let go, and a retrieving instinct.

Police handlers Sergeants Pisarello and Finlayson added that the training of dogs is an ongoing exercise with refreshment training taking place every three months, and the dogs will attain an advanced level one or two years into the job. Police dogs normally retire and are rehoused at the age of seven or eight.

"Outside of Police work they are very friendly and approachable dogs, they are not biting machines as the public may think, what they do is hold and restrain. In Gibraltar they are used to being in close proximity with the general public," they said.

The course instructor was former police officer Louis Baglietto of Let K9 Services who was contracted to provide the tuition and the dogs.

Police dogs were introduced into the RGP for the first time back in 2012.

Commissioner Ian McGrail welcomed the three police dogs to the RGP family confident that their rigorous training would be put to good use, and provide a valuable service to police operations across a whole spectrum of police work.

At the end of the passing out ceremony, PD Stig who retired from RGP service was presented with a badge of honour by Commissioner McGrail in recognition to his valuable contribution in numerous policing operations.

The names of the dogs with their respective handlers is as follows: PC Harrison and Police Dog Flash, PC Almeida and PD Nyx, PC Rowbottom and PD Gus, PC Peñalver and PD Prince, PC Olivero and PD Ness, Sergeant Pisarello PDs Alfie and Bella, Sergeant Finlayson PDs Snipe and Spencer. Also in the picture RGP Commissioner and Dog Instructor Louis Baglietto. ■







## Two Special Olympians at the RGP

Two Special Olympics athletes Marvin Zammit 27 and Gianni Ochello 17 form part of the RGP's full time Support Staff at the vehicle compound in Rosia Battery.

They both carry out maintenance duties for the police vehicle fleet.

Marvin an all-round sportsman who has represented Gibraltar at several events in the Special Olympics has been with the RGP for the past ten years, while new addition Gianni a student at the Gibraltar College of Further Education forms part of the Special Olympics football and 8-Ball Pool teams.

He is currently undergoing gaming work experience as part of his college course.

The two Special Olympians trained hard with the rest of the local squad and while Marvin competed in the World Summer Games that took place in Abu Dhabi, the United Emirates March 14-

21, Gianni recently travelled to Bridlington UK for the pool championships.

The two Special Olympians are now in training with the rest of the local squad gearing themselves up for the challenge of competing in the World Summer Games that take place in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates from March 14-21.

The games will involve 7,500 athletes from at least 170 nations, participating in 24 different sports. They take place in venues throughout the United Arab Emirates.

Inspector Malcolm Figueras said: "Law enforcement agencies have always supported the Special Olympics, and in Gibraltar the RGP has close links through the Torch Run and other charity initiatives.

"It is something close to home for us and emergency services generally. Having these two lads working in the organisation ties in nicely with our support and collaboration with the Special



Olympics movement."

Commissioner Ian McGrail said: "The RGP embraces equal opportunities and it is a great pleasure to have those two loving characters among us.

"They are two great lads who bring a lot of affection to the workplace and are regarded as part of the RGP family. They are also excellent ambassadors for Gibraltar in their sporting disciplines."

21<sup>st</sup> February 2019

## Minister Costa meets RGP and GDP trainees at New Mole House

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, Neil Costa MP, addressed the new intake of Royal Gibraltar Police (RGP) and Gibraltar Defence Police (GDP) recruits ahead of their passing out parade.



Minister Costa's visit to the New Mole House Police Station, which he undertakes annually, since his appointment as Minister for Justice, allowed him to gain first-hand insight into the final stages of the new recruit's preparation, prior to becoming operational Police Officers.

The current recruit intake is made up of 14 RGP and 3 GDP recruit constables, who are currently undergoing a 17-week initial police training course. The training includes: criminal offences, police powers and other legislation, along with investigative skills and interview training. The recruits are also involved in practical sessions, including public order, unarmed defence tactics and the use of, and exposure to, incapacitant spray. The recruits completed their passing out parade at John Mackintosh Square on Wednesday 13th March 2019, prior to becoming operational.

Commissioner of Police, Mr Ian McGrail said: "A Minister's visit to New Mole House provides recruits with an invaluable opportunity to have close contact with a Government Minister, which is not something that will be very common, once they start their operational duties. As with previous occasions, it was encouraging to see how new entrants pose interesting

questions to politicians, which helps them to understand their thinking. Given the law and order challenges that Gibraltar faces in the coming months and years, it is very important that we have clear lines of communications with the government of the day to ensure that vital policing issues are prioritised and given the importance that they deserve."

Minister Costa highlighted the vital role that police officers play in upholding law and order in our community, providing a key public service and keeping Gibraltar safe.

He stated: "I would like to thank Commissioner McGrail for offering me the opportunity to, once again, address the new recruits at New Mole House. To serve and safeguard one's community is an honour and a great responsibility. Every one of the new recruits is taking a brave step in facing the trials and sacrifices that come with a career in policing. I wish to reiterate my strong support and admiration, and that of the Government and, I am sure, of our community, for the invaluable work the police forces carry out. As Minister with responsibility for Justice, I am entirely committed to ensuring that the RGP is adequately resourced and equipped to deal with the challenges that arise."



22<sup>th</sup> March 2019

## Car overturns after spectacular traffic accident

*There was a spectacular traffic accident at Devil's Tower Road in the early hours of March 22 2019 when a car overturned after a collision with the central reservation. The four occupants were unharmed although the driver, a local 21 year old man was arrested for dangerous driving.*



The Gibraltar registered vehicle was extensively damaged and the road had to be closed for over four hours. A total of twelve officers were committed to this incident, with tasks ranging from first response, initial investigation, recording and examina-

tion of the scene, traffic management and tow truck drivers. Additionally, a Fire and Rescue Service appliance and full crew were also involved as were two GHA ambulances, Highways and GibElec personnel.

25<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## RGP hand over crime suspect to Spain after European Arrest Warrant

Spanish national Fabian Sanchez Vega 46, wanted in Spain for alleged drug and money laundering offences was extradited to Spain this morning and handed over by RGP officers to the Policia Nacional at the border. The suspect had been arrested in Gibraltar on February 12 2018 on the strength of a European Arrest Warrant, following an RGP operation in support of a major organised crime crackdown by the Guardia Civil in the neighbouring region.

Sanchez Vega appeared in the Magistrates Court on February 15 2018 and did not contest the EAW issued by a Spanish court.

The judge subsequently ordered the extradition to proceed.

Under Spanish law he faces a maximum term of 28 years and six months imprisonment on conviction.

RGP Commissioner Ian McGrail expressed satisfaction at the smooth hand-over and reiterated the excellent cooperation that exists with Spanish law enforcement agencies to bring organised crime groups to justice.

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7<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## SEXUAL OFFENCES CONVICTION

British national Andrew Grey 57, charged with two counts of possession of indecent images of young persons was sentenced to two years and three months imprisonment at the Supreme Court for each of the 2 counts, which are to run concurrently.

Grey was arrested in January 2018.

He appeared before the Court in May 2018 and pleaded guilty to the charges, which related to a total of 73 videos files containing indecent images of young persons, but argued that he had done so unintentionally and the matter was therefore set down for a Newton Hearing. However, on appearing before the Court Grey informed the Court he accepted the Crown's case and was not disputing the intentional downloading of the images.

Grey has been on remand since his first Court appearance in May 2018. ■

15<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## Four men arrested during Queen's Hotel hostel police drugs raid

Four men were arrested by RGP officers yesterday afternoon in connection with an anti-drugs operation carried out at the Queen's Hotel government hostel. A quantity of controlled drugs believed to be amphetamines, approximately in excess of 300 grammes was seized in one of the apartments.

The suspects, three Gibraltarians aged 41, 36 and 44, and a Spaniard aged 36, were arrested for alleged possession and possession with intent to supply the controlled class B drug.

The extensive police operation included the execution of search orders, uniformed officers, Scene of Crime officers and the dog section.

The four men were conveyed to New Mole House for questioning while exhaustive police enquires continued until the early hours. All four men were subsequently released on bail while investigations continue. ■

5<sup>th</sup> March 2019

## MURDER CONVICTION

Real Lishman 43, was today convicted at the Supreme Court for the murder of his wife Carolina Elizabeth Lishman, aged 32.

The incident occurred at the Lishman's home address in Apricot Court on Wednesday 8th December 2017. The RGP would like to express its gratitude to all those who assisted police throughout the investigation. 1st sentencing will take place on the 15th April 2019, the conviction brings to a conclusion an extensive and arduous police investigation that has been emotionally taxing on all those involved. The RGP wishes to once again express their condolences to Carolina's family, and in particular to her young daughter who has lost both her parents. ■



13<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## British national arrested for possession of cocaine

RGP Drug Squad officers yesterday conducted an anti-drugs operation to detect a suspected class A drugs dealer.

The 34 year old British national was arrested outside a military establishment and found to be carrying several individual wrappers suspected to contain approximately 56 grammes of cocaine.

He was apprehended for possession and possession with intent to supply the said amount of drugs.

The operation also involved search warrants being executed at two different locations with the aid of specialized sniffer dogs.

The man has been granted bail with conditions. ■





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