



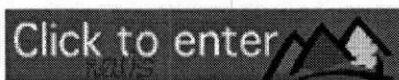
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Friday, January 12, 2001

## **GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON HMS TIRELESS**

(full statement)

The Gibraltar Government's panel of nuclear experts met with MOD and its experts at the Rolls Royce Plant in Derby on Wednesday. The Government expects the panels' formal report of that meeting on Monday.

There are three distinct remaining stages to the process affecting Tireless. These are (1) the carrying out of the repair works (i.e. welding on the new section of pipe), (2) the subsequent testing of those repairs (known as cold hydro testing which involves the circulation of water at high pressure through the system), and (3) the subsequent start-up of the nuclear reactor. The Government's panel will assess each stage separately. Passing through one stage does not commit to the subsequent stages.

On Wednesday the panel was able to consider in detail that part of the safety validation procedure which relates to the welding work itself. This is currently being considered by the Government's panel. The other parts of the validation procedure relate to the diagnosis and analysis of the causes of the defect. These parts of the safety case have not yet been completed by MOD. It is expected that they will be made available by MOD to the Government's Panel of experts at a further meeting scheduled for 18th January 2001, When it is provided to them, the Panel will then have to consider all that information and report to the Gibraltar Government as to their view of the safety of the proposed repairs process. The Gibraltar Government will then adopt a position on the matter based on that advice.

The Government has noted tress reports attributing to the MOD the statement that the repair works will start on 22nd January. The Gibraltar Government is aware that the MOD would like to start on 22nd January. Needless to say the Gibraltar Government will oppose the commencement of any works before the Gibraltar Government's Panel has been able to report its advice to the Gibraltar Government and Government has decided, based on that advice, whether or not to oppose the repairs. According to the Panel it seems unlikely that this will be

Panel it seems unlikely that this will be available by 22nd January.

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