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Panel Satisfied With Safety

Following the recent visit by the Government of Gibraltar's panel of experts, the Gibraltar Government have confirmed that the panel have delivered their first report.

The panel has stated that it is satisfied that the facility and radiological management measures adopted for the handling of radio active waste are in accordance with good practice.

They further added that "in its original report to the Government the panel had identified the possibility that the specific repair scheme planned by MOD may turn out to be unsuitable for remedying the defect, if the defect was different to what was then thought to be."

"Because the cracks are more extensive, " they say, "and of a different nature to that originally foreseen by the MOD the specific repair scheme planned by the MOD is no longer appreciate for remedying the defect."

The explain that "it will therefore be necessary for the MOD to design, plan test and validate a new specific repair scheme. This will have to be considered by the Gibraltar Governments panel of experts, as occurred with the original scheme. The Gibraltar Government will then be in a position to say whether it remains content for the new repair scheme to proceed here once it has considered the advice of the panel of experts in relation to this changed situation."

The Government further stated that "the panel of experts believe that it will be about a month before a new repair scheme is devised and a further 2 to 3 months before it could be validated and the repairs ready to begin."

"During this "holding" period the nuclear reactor on HMS Tireless remains closed down and temporarily sealed. The panel's advice to the Government is that their improved knowledge of the nature and severity of the defect does not affect their previous advice on the level of daily risk to public safety and the environment. Their advice in this respect therefore remains unchanged."

The Government have assured that monitoring is being constantly undertaken in the meantime