



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

THE LIGHTHOUSE REFURBISHMENT PROJECT: UPDATE

The Hon. Patricia Gordon-Pamplin, JP, MP

Minister of Public Works

Friday, 30th May, 2014

Mr. Speaker,

I am pleased to rise this morning to announce that the Gibb's Hill Lighthouse, one of Bermuda's most historic and recognizable tourist attractions, has for the past few months undergone a major repainting and refurbishment project. The works which were long overdue have now been completed and the Lighthouse has been restored to its former glory and is once again open to the public as our tourism season gets into full swing.

Built in 1844 by the Royal Engineers, the Gibbs Hill Lighthouse is the taller of two lighthouses on Bermuda, and one of the first lighthouses in the world to be made of cast-iron. This is because at that time, steel still was not able to be bent. While it is not extremely tall by lighthouse standards with only 185 steps to the top, the hill that it stands on is one of the highest on the Island.

Airplanes can see its flashes from over 100 miles (160 km) away. Many a fisherman who has been offshore at night has been comforted by the regular flash of the light letting them know they weren't far from home. Until 1964, the light was run by hand, but in June of that year, the whole system was automated and has run on electricity ever since.

Mr. Speaker,

Six contractors were approached and asked to tender for this project and only two did. The contract was in two parts with a contractor responsible for the preparation and painting of the

main structure and another contractor responsible for the preparation and painting of the observation deck and guard railings. The intent was to complete these works over the winter period so that the lighthouse would only be closed for part of the "tourism off season". However, this is also the worst time of year to do such works as the winter weather guarantees high winds and rain. Whilst the contract which started on 6th January was planned to be completed by the 31st March, the weather caused significant delays and the works were finally completed on the 16th May. The lighthouse itself was closed but the public still had access to the restaurant whilst the works were being carried out.

Mr. Speaker,

The initial contract for the works was for a total of \$334,211 made up of \$299,691 for the main structure and \$34,520 for the observation deck and railings. There were two subsequent change orders for the project, one for \$9,450 for modifications to the paint for certain areas of the structure and \$20,655 for clean up of the site as there was significantly more dust and debris than expected.

In addition to the works on the structure itself, works to the grounds and car park have been completed and the only outstanding works are some signage and mobile restrooms with handicap accessibility.

Mr. Speaker,

Many of you will have seen the rust stained eyesore that the lighthouse had become as its maintenance had been neglected for many years. I would encourage you to go and take a look at it today, as it really has been restored to its former glory and is open and ready for the tourist season.

Thank you Mr. Speaker