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Policía Real de Gibraltar

Agentes de la RGP se gradúan en la Academia de Policía de Abu Dabi

Gibraltar, 11 de marzo de 2025

Dos agentes de la Policía Real de Gibraltar (Royal Gibraltar Police, RGP) acaban de regresar al Peñón tras completar con éxito un curso de cuatro meses en la Academia de Policía de Abu Dabi.

Los detectives Guy Buist, de 28 años y perteneciente al Departamento de Investigación Criminal (Criminal Investigation Department, CID), y Jade Santiago, de 27 años y perteneciente a la Unidad de Delitos Económicos (Economic Crime Unit), se unieron a 75 policías de 29 países de todo el mundo para asistir a este curso intensivo.

Los agentes recibieron formación sobre armas de fuego, fueron llevados al límite de sus capacidades físicas y se examinaron de innumerables estudios prácticos y académicos.

Ambos agentes de la RGP se graduaron con honores en una ceremonia de entrega de distinciones, en la que pudieron conocer al Príncipe Heredero de los Emiratos Árabes Unidos. Respecto a sus experiencias, coincidieron en que, aunque algunos componentes de la actividad policial eran similares a los de Gibraltar, había muchas diferencias.

La parte académica del curso fue muy amplia e incluyó estudios sobre pensamiento crítico, estrategias de gestión eficaz de la delincuencia, simulacros de escenas del crimen, generación de confianza y colaboración con las comunidades, y mecanismos de colaboración transfronteriza, incluidas las iniciativas de Interpol y la ONU, y la importancia del intercambio de información y la coordinación en la lucha contra la delincuencia transnacional.

Los agentes de las fuerzas policiales de todo el mundo tenían que presentar un informe para ingresar en la Academia de Policía, cuyas lecciones se impartieron en inglés. Todo el programa fue sufragado por el Ministerio del Interior de los Emiratos Árabes Unidos, sin coste alguno para la RGP.

Buist y Santiago añadieron que la formación fue más similar a la que se imparte en una academia militar que a la de una de policía, y que habían tenido “recursos ilimitados”. Por ejemplo, gran parte de su formación se realizó con cascos de realidad virtual, como la práctica de la RCP (reanimación cardiopulmonar).

Durante el curso, los formadores eligieron a 12 de los 75 alumnos para que se convirtieran en líderes durante una semana cada uno, y tanto Buist como Santiago fueron seleccionados.

Al término del curso, ambos fueron elegidos como dos de los cuatro únicos policías internacionales que actuaron como portaestandartes en la ceremonia final de graduación.



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De otra parte, Buist también tuvo el orgullo de quedar segundo entre los 75 estudiantes. A su regreso a Gibraltar, los dos oficiales fueron condecorados por el Comisario de la RGP, Richard Ullger, por su exitosa graduación y por representar al cuerpo de seguridad.

Ullger comentó: “Estamos inmensamente orgullosos de los logros de estos oficiales, que representaron a la RGP. No podríamos haber tenido mejores embajadores. Esta experiencia les servirá de mucho y estoy seguro de que sus carreras prosperarán en el futuro. Queremos dar las gracias al Ministerio del Interior de los Emiratos Árabes Unidos por brindar a nuestros agentes esta excelente oportunidad”.

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PRESS RELEASE

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RGP Officers Graduate from Abu Dhabi Police Academy

Two Royal Gibraltar Police officers have just returned to the Rock after successfully completing a four-month Police Academy course at the Abu Dhabi Police College.

Detective Constables Guy Buist and Jade Santiago joined 75 police officers from 29 countries around the world for the intensive course.

During the school, officers received firearms training, were pushed to their physical fitness limits and were examined on countless practical and academic studies.

Both RGP officers then successfully graduated at an awards ceremony, where they met the Crown Prince of the United Emirates. Speaking about their experiences, they agreed that although some policing elements were similar to here in Gibraltar – there were many differences.

For example, when the officers arrived on the 28 September last year – they were greeted by temperatures of 42c.

“When we first arrived in the UAE, the heat was overwhelming, we struggled at the start of the course, it took a month or two to adjust,” said Guy, 28, who works in the RGP’s Criminal Investigation Department.

“We were also showering at least three times a day and changing into several different uniforms.”

As part of their training, the officers were required to get up at 4am every day.

Jade, 27, who works in the RGP’s Economic Crime Unit, said: “A typical day would start at 4am, we’d be lined up for headcount at 4.20am. Then we would do physical fitness for an hour. After that, we’d have 20 minutes to shower, eat breakfast and get changed into our second uniform of the day for an hour of marching. The marching was exhausting.

“This would be followed by an hour of firearms training, then we would get changed again into our academic uniform and do around six hours of academic studies. We’d then break off for lunch before seeing what else they had planned for the rest of the day.”

The academic side of the course was vast and included studies on critical thinking, effective crime management strategies, mock crime scenes, building trust and collaboration with communities, mechanisms for collaboration across borders, including Interpol and UN initiatives and the importance of intelligence sharing and coordination in combatting transnational crime.

Jade explained that her highlights were meeting police officers from all over the world, experiencing a new culture and learning as much as possible.

“Abu Dhabi became a second home for us,” she said.

“We made a close knit group of friends there and we were a great support system for each other. One of the more useful and interesting things I learned was firearms training. It was challenging for me at the start due to the simple reason that we don't carry firearms as standard in Gibraltar, so I personally lacked that experience and knowledge compared to other officers.”

Jade and Guy got to grips with the M16 assault rifle, the Colt 9mm SMG and a Sig Sauer handgun.

Guy added that the physical fitness side of the Police Academy was “intense”.

He continued: “I like to think I'm a moderately fit guy, and I was surprised at the level of fitness in the Abu Dhabi Police. They routinely train, and have fitness tests twice a year as well as mandatory Ju-Jitsu. If they don't complete these tests, they are unable to progress in their careers, which can lead to not being promoted and or stricter consequences. It wasn't a crazy fitness level – but in my opinion it would take someone several months of training, just to meet the basic requirements to get to the fitness level of an Emirati recruit.

“The fitness was directed towards functional training for the role of a police officer. One exercise we routinely was 4km intervals sprints. We would sprint for 1km, take a short break and repeat it another three times. By the fourth kilometre, most people were falling back and unable to keep up. The idea behind this is police officers don't necessarily need to run a long distance, but need to be quick doing it.”

Jade added: “I got into running whilst out there. It just became part of our morning routine.”

Officers from police forces around the world had to submit a report to join the Police Academy, which was taught in English. The entire program was paid for by the Ministry of Interior at The United Arab Emirates – at no cost to the RGP.

Jade added: “The biggest takeaways of the course for me was the leadership training and the global connections we built. For example, one of the guys we met on the course has put us in contact with someone in Dubai who is assisting us with international enquiries – so it is super beneficial to us as a police force. Pretty much any country you can think of, we now have a contact or know someone who has a contact.”

Guy agreed that the leadership training was one of the most beneficial parts of the course.

“We both had the opportunity to be in charge of 75 officers for a week, which was hectic. It involved getting three or four hours of sleep, running around non-stop and disseminating information from the Colonel in charge of the course, to the rest of the officers and vice versa.

“One of my highlights was meeting the Crown Prince of the UAE – the next president. With regards to the course itself, I enjoyed the firearms aspect. But more than anything I enjoyed learning about the other forces, learning how they operate and what their policies and procedures are. Some of them are so vastly different from us. Some of the ways they did things were better than ours, some of ours were

better than theirs. So, it was good to see how we can consider changes to enhance things in the RGP in the future. For example, we learnt from our American counterparts that the drink driving process in Gibraltar is significantly more effective in terms of processes and successful convictions. In the States, the procedures are generally simpler than ours; however, no American police officer enjoys handling drunk drivers due to the extensive time required – approximately four to five hours. Arresting a drunk driver can occupy the remainder of their shift, involving trips to the hospital for blood tests and back to the station. In contrast, I have arrested and charged a drunk driver at New Mole House in just over an hour, highlighting a significant difference in efficiency.

“The other thing I really enjoyed is that they took us on quite a few expeditions. We were taken to see one of their maximum-security prisons. It was state of the art and they even had a fully functional hospital within the prison itself.”

Jade and Guy added that the course was more like a military academy than a police academy – and that there were “unlimited resources.”

For example, a lot of their training was done using virtual reality headsets – such as practising CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

Jade explained: “The kit instructed us on how many chest compressions to do while wearing the headset. The person on the floor receiving CPR would respond to the first aid as they would in real life.

“They also had rooms where you were sent in as a team of five and had to deal with a major incident. For me, that was the academic highlight for sure.”

As for the crime rate in general in Abu Dhabi, the officers described it as very low and attributed this to laws being stricter.

Jade explained: “Everyone’s very respectful and well spoken. There’s no chaos and it’s a very peaceful environment. I would say their most prevalent crime is traffic offences and money laundering.”

Guy continued: “Rapes, child molestation or any offence of that nature is extremely uncommon, as the punishments are extremely strict. So this provides a greater deterrence for people not to do it.”

As for the locals, Guy explained: “We met a lot of the Emirati people, they were all so hospitable and lovely. Most people I met would be inviting you out somewhere within 5 to 10 minutes of meeting them.”

For Guy the most important training he received during the course was the leadership aspect.

During the course, the trainers chose 12 out of the 75 student officers to become leaders for a week each – and both Guy and Jade were selected.

He added: “I’ve had the opportunity during my time in the RGP to be acting Sergeant on shift with around 16 officers. But going from that to having to deal with 75 people, 24 hours a day, seven days a week was useful. Not all of the international officers were as disciplined as each other - there was variety of standards amongst the diverse group.”

Jade remarked: "We were constantly under scrutiny, with the Colonel always aware if the platoon was out of line, or whether our arms were being swung high enough as we marched. It was the responsibility of the assigned leaders to address any issues."

She also noted cultural differences among the officers, as well as personal problems at home, that were evident in their behaviour and conduct during the course.

Guy added: "We had to manage not only the dissemination of information but also the well-being and emotional state of the officers."

He described it as a challenging week but regarded the experience of handling such responsibilities as one of the most valuable skills gained from the course, emphasising that opportunities like this are rare at their rank.

At the conclusion of the course, both Jade and Guy were chosen as two of only four international officers to serve as sword bearers at the final graduation ceremony.

Guy was also proud to have graduated second overall out of 75 officers.

On their return to Gibraltar, Jade and Guy were awarded commendations by the Commissioner of Police Richard Ullger, for their successful graduation and representing the RGP.

Mr Ullger added: "We are immensely proud of these officers' achievements. They represented the RGP and we could not have asked for better ambassadors. This experience will serve them well and I'm sure their careers will only blossom in the future. We would like to thank the Ministry of Interior at The United Arab Emirates for giving our officers this excellent opportunity."