

# Gibrael discusses Covid impact on business, technology, cybercrime and jobs

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Gibraltar Government's Chief Officer, eServices and Innovation Julian Baldachino, Bayside School's CyberCenturion Team Leader Stewart Harrison and the Royal Gibraltar Police's Detective Chief Inspector Paul Chippolina, discussed working from home, local innovations, and gaps in the market alongside Gibraltar Chairwoman Ayelet Manno Shay.

The event was moderated by GBC reporter Shelina Assomull, who quizzed the panellists for over an hour.

The need for more local talent in the technology sector was highlighted by Mr Hook and Mr Harrison who said they are working together to address this gap.

Mr Hook said it has been difficult to find technical staff in Gibraltar, at times having to hire remote workers abroad.

"There's an interest but the problem is exposing them to the right jobs," Mr Harrison said.

"There is a big culture in Gibraltar where traditional jobs or careers which are economically very good for them and where they know they have a job for life."

"The knowingsness that there are other careers out there is something that needs [to be addressed]."

"So students are aware of what jobs could potentially get with the skills they actually have."



Photo by Johnny Bugajia

Mr Harrison added that with CyberCenturion it has given students a different outlet and choices of careers.

He said his students would like to work as developers, create games or be cyber security experts. "The school could never have given them the exposure for a cyber security career," he said.

do these specialised types of jobs, for example within just the mobile space there are radio engineers, network engineers, core network engineers, edge network engineers, back office IT engineers, there's a whole range of specialisations.

"The use of technology locally increased during the pandemic, and has since not returned to previous levels, Mr Hook said.

He detailed how prior to the pandemic bandwidth usage would peak from 6pm to 11pm nightly, now instead traffic remains high from 8am to 11pm, flattening the curve due to more sustained usage.

Likewise, so did the need for the e-Gov platform increase during the pandemic.

"Some departments in Gibraltar are great, they have great back office systems, some rely very heavily on paper and files."

"Putting services online is not straight forward."

Mr Baldachino said the team managed to put together a virtual office very quickly which enabled staff remotely.

"We had to change our way of working, we had to accept people could take a photograph of a document and upload it. We had to adapt very quickly."

Ms Manno Shay added for the business community they needed to quickly adapt to e-commerce.

"One of the businesses set up for e-commerce business in four days," she said.

"To tell you it was perfect, well it wasn't perfect at all."

"At least it was an income for him."

exposing yourself to a totally different environment," DCI Chippolina said.

broad spectrum of cyber crime."

He added the pandemic offered criminals the opportunity to diversify their exploits, just as businesses and entrepreneurs.

The app used on mobile devices would be able to track contacts with others also using the app. The hope was this app would notify people is a close contact had tested positive.

"Not only were new typologies identified in terms of scams, everything from contact tracing, people being contacted from phishing emails about they had an appointment or they had to register for a vaccine all the way through PPE and all sorts of things," DCI Chippolina said.

The app was downloaded over 36,000 times.

"Yes definitely, I suppose you could say its common sense when you place yourself in an environment and the longer you do it for, you are exposing yourself more to the opportunity to be targeted."

"Now that requires for people to have the app switched on, working in the background, recording the log."

"Which is why at the outset of the pandemic we identified the need to be frequently pushing out awareness messaging around the

Mr Baldachino said the technology side of the project worked, but recognised that the apps effectiveness relied on the people that used it.

## First woman inspector hopes others will follow

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of the force now comprised of women.

Her promotion, she added, has spurred on women in the force to consider applying for promotions.

In time, she hopes others will follow in her footsteps.

For Ms Jones, the promotion, which comes in the wake of her pregnancy is a career boost and she continues to look forward to her future in the RCP.

Jones thinks this is due to more women police officers patrolling the streets.

"As there are more women out on the streets we are seeing more police females driving vehicles and running departments, I think that has opened the doors," she said.

"There have always been the question, why aren't they going through the ranks. That was always one of the issues."

"I know there are women here