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NEW





Rodienne Bartolo Haidon

Sergeant

Community and Media Relations Unit / Editor

THIS IS NOT SOMETHING WE DO, THIS IS WHO WE ARE

Welcome to the first edition of the Blue Lives magazine. Most of you have probably come across the Blue Lives Matter slogan on social media, especially recently in Malta. Why Blue Lives, and why do they Matter so much?

This magazine is aimed to provide our readers with a very brief insight into our lives, both on the job and outside of it. We lead normal lives, but are surrounded by extraordinary circumstances. We are given applauses, but are also sometimes faced with harsh criticism. Nonetheless, we have taken an oath to serve as best as we could anyone who needs assistance, irrespective of whether this falls directly within our remit.

Applications for jobs within the Force are currently open, and thus, we believe that this edition may serve as an opportunity for prospective recruits to explore what this job entails. In a few days, the Malta Police Force will celebrate its 205th anniversary since its foundation. Therefore, if you are looking for job security, this is one guarantee we can surely provide, along with a roller coaster ride work experience, where adrenaline rush is the order of the day.

I now leave you to enjoy the articles we have prepared, while in the midst of heavy election commitments and preparations for the 205th Police anniversary activities, whose full programme may be found on page 46. *

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Hon. Michael Farrugia

Minister for Home Affairs and National Security

INVESTING IN THE MALTA POLICE FORCE

For many years, members of the Malta Police Force had a number of aspirations which, to their disappointment, were either not fulfilled, or else the members were led to believe that they were impossible or next to impossible to achieve. Throughout the 205 years of its existence, the Malta Police Force went through a number of changes. For a modern police force to be able to succeed in the prevention and investigations of serious and organised criminality, innovation is of paramount importance. Therefore, new initiatives have already been put in place, while others commenced, and others are at the planning stage.

Over the last two years, the Malta Police Force managed to see an 8% decrease in reported criminality and has been successful in solving high profile crimes. We are keeping our promise to invest in human resources, while upgrading and modernising equipment and software to fight economic crime and cybercrime. We promised better forensic services, and we will deliver this promise through a new state-of-the-art forensic laboratory equipped with the latest technology, which will be built in the near future. Investment in training personnel complements this project in order to reap the maximum benefit. We promised unprecedented investment in the Malta Police Force, and this is what we are delivering.

However, the biggest investment that took place affected directly the sworn members within the Force.

Similarly to all other members of the disciplined forces, police officers had long been told that they could not be members of a union of their choice. This government made this possible. Since they were not unionised, any collective agreement was imposed on the police and left no room for discussion round a table. After several years, a few months ago, an unprecedented collective agreement was signed with the participation of the unions, representing the interest of the workers.

Police officers were always told that the pay covering a 46-hour week was something they had to live with. Their working week has now gone down to a standard 40-hour week for most officers, while officers working on a 42-hour week shift to ensure a 24/7 service to the general public are being compensated at overtime rate for the extra hours worked. Furthermore, improved profession at work has now been introduced. Extra duty allowance is now being taxed for the first time at the rate of 15%, while certain duties are now being covered by police officers who are being called in on an overtime rate, especially with regards to fixed points and certain hotspots, hence ensuring increased police visibility within our communities.

Prior to 2013, police officers were further told that they had no right to be paid for overtime carried out between 1993 and 2009, which in fact, was never paid. Three years ago, all those officers started being compensated for their lost income. Police officers who ended up with a disability following injury while on duty, leading to their retirement before the 25 years of service, are now being paid the full pension rate as if they had completed the full service. This also applies to the widow/widower of a police officer who dies in his/her line of duty prior to the 25 years of service. Recently, another milestone has been reached with the introduction of an insurance scheme covering all members of the disciplined forces, customs officers and security services. This policy offers compensation should they suffer from disability, or loss of life in their line of duty.

All these achievements became possible because of the positive shift in the economy. The plan is to further introduce a new uniform which is more comfortable for police officers. Looking ahead, the Malta Police Force has to keep adapting itself to the needs of society, such as, installing more CCTV cameras and intelligent cameras in hotspots. It gives me great pleasure and satisfaction to learn that trust in the Malta Police Force improved by 15% from the previous years. I strongly believe that should the general public be more informed on what is happening behind the scenes to prevent and solve criminality, this trust will be much stronger. Nonetheless, I am aware that it is not always possible to divulge details of ongoing investigations and initiatives to fight organised crime.

I encourage more youths to embark on this profession, especially now that work conditions have improved and the future looks brighter than ever before. ✨

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Lawrence Cutajar
Commissioner of Police

FORTY YEARS OF SERVICE TO MALTESE SOCIETY

I cannot believe that more than forty years have passed since I took the oath to join the Malta Police Force on 5th February 1979. Times were different back then. I clearly remember collecting the uniform and being ordered to proceed to the Santa Venera Bridge to be on the lookout for anyone who attempted to cause disruption during the buses strike.

I always recollect this episode when meeting new recruits, who nowadays follow a structured course at the Academy for Disciplined Forces intended to prepare them for the world of policing.

I pride myself in being a ranker which enables me to understand better the difficulties encountered by our personnel. As a result of my experience in the various ranks I have served, I can often propose ways of addressing such problems. The fact that I spent nearly 33 years in district policing is also an advantage in order to comprehend better the citizens' difficulties and their expectations of the Police.

I am further proud to say that during my tenure as Commissioner of the Malta Police Force, we have achieved great success. We have taken the fight against drug trafficking to another level, and it has almost become a common occurrence to report massive drug seizures. Crime reports last year decreased by 7%, marking the largest decrease since 2009.

With a 470,000 residing population in Malta, the 2018 crime rate translates to 34 crimes per 1,000 residents, rendering Malta one of the safest countries in the world. Thanks to specific measures instituted by the Force, last year, St Julian's and Paceville registered a significant decrease in reported crime which plunged from a soaring 19.5% in 2012 to 9.4% in 2018, the lowest level in the last 14 years.

Despite this decrease in crime, we are fully aware of new challenges brought about by emerging crimes, principally financial crimes and computer-related offences. The Malta Police Force has already taken bold measures to step up the fight against these two genres of crime. Therefore, over the past months, we have doubled the human resources within the Financial Crime Investigations Department, which has now been restructured into two separate units, namely, the Economic Crimes Squad and the Anti-Money Laundering Unit, both led by their own superintendent. This Department has been further extended by professional financial crime analysts as well as adequate analytical tools to aid in our fight against serious and organised criminality.

Crime prevention is a major commitment of the Malta Police Force under my charge. In today's dynamic environment, we are fully aware that effective policing can only be exercised in partnership with other agencies and society in general. This publication is sufficient proof of our commitment to engage with society whom we thank for the constant support afforded to the Malta Police Force. ✱



Angelo Gafà
Chief Executive Officer

WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK

As a democracy, Malta abides by the principle of the rule of law which places all human behaviour subject to law. Central to this principle is the establishment of executive powers vested in the police with the aim of preserving law and order in society and bringing those who infringe the laws before the courts. Within this context, the police are our 'thin blue line' standing firmly between chaos and order.

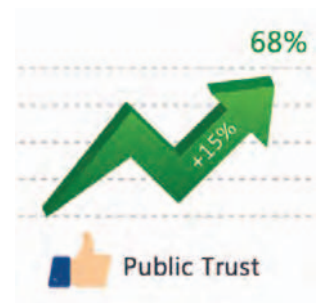
Founded in 1814, the Malta Police Force has for the past 205 years stood the test of time and has constantly striven to accomplish its mission 'to promote and maintain Malta as a safe and secure State' for the benefit of Maltese residents and the millions of tourists who visit our country. We pride ourselves in being the main contributors towards keeping Malta one of the safest countries in the world.

Recent results are proof of our commitment towards Maltese society. The 2018 statistics demonstrate a 7% reduction in reported crime despite increased criminal opportunities as a result of greater affluence. Consequently, the general public is acknowledging police effectiveness, so much so that the

latest Eurobarometer survey has demonstrated that the Malta Police Force has garnered a noticeable 15% increase in public trust, the largest increase by far across all EU law enforcement agencies.

These outstanding achievements are the result of hard work and coordinated efforts and do, at times, come at a price, with police officers risking life and limb to maintain an orderly society. The hit-and-run incident of traffic police officer Simon Schembri a year ago and the 145 other cases of violence experienced by police officers in 2018 exemplify the dangers our officers in blue are exposed to in the course of their daily duties.

Fully aware of growing and changing public demands for our services, the Malta Police Force is committed to adapt to a constantly changing complex environment. We understand that adaptation entails more flexible organisation designs, participatory management, and problem-solving capabilities, based primarily on commitment to the rule of law and secondly, to the informed opinions of citizens and employees.



Therefore, the Malta Police Force has embarked on a process leading to a Transformation Strategy through EU funding, whose aim is to transform the Force into a modern, data-driven, transparent and agile police organisation to serve the public, guided by principles of efficiency and effectiveness. Ultimately, such process is intended to increase trust, confidence, legitimacy and responsiveness of both the society we serve and our committed officers.

While we look forward to having you on board in the course of this exciting project, we would be very pleased to receive your constructive feedback to ensure a better police organisation at ceo.police@gov.mt.

We thank you in advance for your valuable contribution to make Malta a safer place. **Domine Dirige Nos ✨**



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Stephen Mallia
Assistant Commissioner

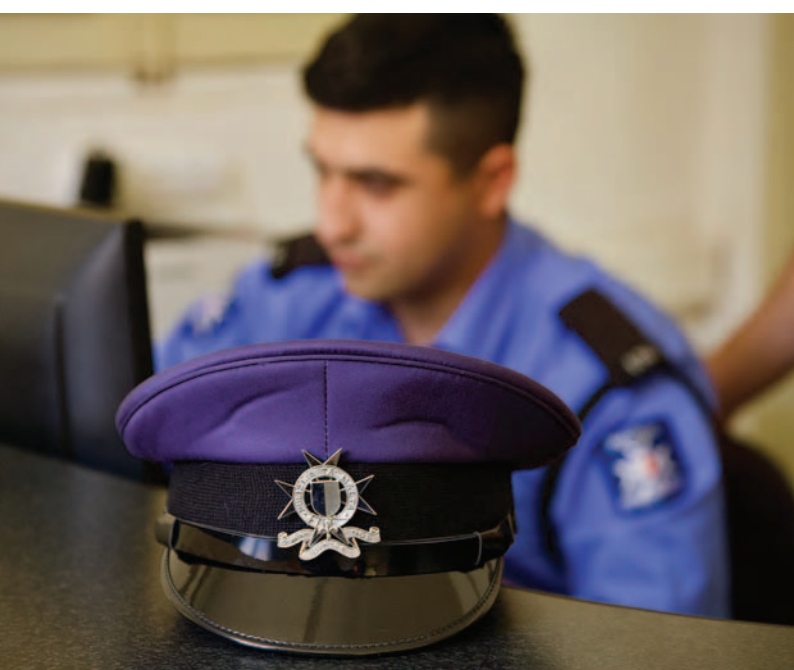
District Police have always been, and to a large extent, are still considered by many as the front-liners of the Police Force. They provide 24/7 services, with high performance demands and safety risks, ready to intervene in any situation when citizens need help. Traditionally, Maltese society has been accustomed to having a police station in every locality, a culture which goes back a hundred years and beyond.

The exigencies brought by modern times have gradually changed this culture as technology has replaced most of the traditional aspects of policing. However, contact with the community remains essential for effective policing. Regular surveys clearly indicate that the public wants and, rightly so, expects the police to be present and available amongst the community. The police are expected not only to intervene in cases of emergency, but residents want to have their minds at rest when they are both in the comfort of their homes and while they are away.

Conscious of the public's expectations, the ongoing restructuring of the Malta Police Force is focusing on redeploying its resources aimed to enhance police visibility. Out of a complement of approximately 2,400 officers, around half of them are posted in the eleven districts situated around Malta and Gozo. Their primary role is community engagement, serving and guarding the people. Day and night, our beat officers are committed to serve the public, a mission they vouched to fulfil when they took their oath of office upon graduating from the Academy.

Serving on the 'beat' gives the police officer a sense of pride since, being in direct contact with the citizen is considered most essential and rewarding. Nothing is more rewarding for the officer than a satisfied customer provided with an excellent service which extends beyond expectations. Our community, locals and foreigners alike, regularly expresses gratitude towards the police, and the significant positive feedback received from satisfied people who experienced a good service is testimony to this. This benefit is realised through increased time and interaction with the community and greater approachability of officers on foot patrol. The relationships with the community increase the flow of information to the foot patrol officers about crimes and community concerns, enabling the officers to prevent and solve crimes and address community concerns, including those that might not have otherwise come to light. →





Our officers rarely expect praise for their work which, at times, involves acts of bravery, requiring them to even put their lives at risk. Much of the police work performed by district officers is carried out quietly, but their effective contribution to society has a direct impact on the public's perception of the police.

Police service at district level cannot be effective without the help and active participation of the public. As Sir Robert Peel, founder of modern policing, rightly affirms, "the police are the public and the public are the police". In line with the foregoing, the police can only be successful if everyone is on board in our assignment to ensure a safer society. Therefore, the Malta Police Force is constantly seeking active assistance from every facet of our community by establishing and maintaining strong relationships in order to build mutual understanding and a level of trust. This requires time and is an ongoing effort.

Beat officers have the advantage of working in direct contact with the community, and many times, the public entrusts the police with dealing with their concerns. Therefore, the police are expected to act fast and solve the problems as best as they could to make life better for the citizens.

This community engagement can only take place if our police officers show integrity and respect towards the public they serve. The public's trust in the police is of utmost importance for an efficient service, and in turn, this trust motivates officers to continue providing the best service possible for a safer and secure community.

The Police Force is seriously increasing its commitment towards the community. We encourage our district officers to outreach by walking around neighbourhoods to engage the residents in a transparent and welcoming way. Our goal is to offer a pro-active community service rather than being reactive, and this approach is leading to a steady reduction of certain crime. Considering that our communities are becoming more culturally diverse, our officers are doing an excellent job and are providing culturally-sensitive services as best as they could.

We will continue with our efforts to strengthen and enhance community-police relations within our communities today and for the years to come. These relationships require sustained engagement and collaborative approaches to be maintained as we truly believe that this is the cornerstone of policing.✱



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Sylvana Gafà
Inspector

TRANSFORMING CRIME VICTIMS INTO SURVIVORS

Any person can be a victim of crime, and for some, this can be a devastating experience. A person's lifestyle changes dramatically when trying to cope and deal with the traumatic incident. This is why it is important to be aware of the support which is available and how to benefit from such services.

You are a crime victim if you have suffered injury or loss as a direct result of an offence. Family members of individuals who have died as a direct result of a crime are also considered victims and shall receive the same support.

Rightly so, in the past, victims of crime complained that they were not given the importance they deserved in the criminal justice system. In recent years, however, there have been considerable improvements in this field to ensure that victims of crime are given the right support and protection.

Ensuring that victims of crime can access information about support and assistance immediately after the incident is often critical to their recovery. Victims require the assurance that the police are doing their utmost and working in their best interest. This is recognised as one of the most important needs for those who have suffered a crime.

To ease this process, the Malta Police Force established its Victim Support Unit in 2017. This evolving Unit housed at the Police General Headquarters offers immediate support and information to victims about what to do and where to find help soon after filing a police report.

Staffed by professionals hailing from counselling and youth work, the Victim Support Unit provides:

- A single point of contact for crime victims;
- Crisis counselling services;
- Referrals to other support services;
- Ongoing training to police officers on victim-centred practices; and
- Effective communication and working relationship with key stakeholders, both governmental and NGOs.

The services offered by the Victim Support Unit are intended to minimise the adverse emotional and psychological stress endured by victims of crime, while catering for the various police obligations emanating from the Victims of Crime Act. Amongst others, this legislation requires the police to provide victims with written acknowledgement of their reports, information about the outcome of investigations, and referral to victim support services.

The Victim Support Unit has additionally published a Victims of Crime leaflet, containing information about the victims' rights, and its copies are visibly available in all police districts and branches. All victims are offered to be referred to the Police Victim Support Unit for further support and information, and following their acceptance, they are immediately contacted by the Unit. The Victim Support Unit can be reached on 22942160 and/or via email address victimsupport.police@gov.mt. While wishing that nobody suffers any crime, we promise to do our utmost to ease the journey from a crime victim to a survivor. ✨

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EVERY CONTACT LEAVES A TRACE



Antonello Grech
Superintendent

In 1904, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle published the tale entitled *The Adventure of Black Peter*. In this story, the celebrated fictional detective Sherlock Holmes declares that “as long as the criminal remains upon two legs so long must there be some indentation, some abrasion, some trifling displacement which can be detected by the scientific researcher”. A few decades later, in 1934, Dr Edmond Locard, a renowned French scientist and criminologist, one of the pioneers of forensic investigations and responsible for one of the most important principles in forensic science, penned his famous Locard’s Principle of Exchange theory, and thus, the fictitious words uttered by Sherlock Holmes became fact. According to Locard’s theory, “any action of an individual, and obviously, the violent action constituting the crime, cannot occur without leaving a trace”. This has indeed become the basis of forensic investigation. Put simply, those involved in a crime always leave a trace behind them.

Since then, forensic science has changed how criminal investigations are handled. By examining and analysing the physical evidence and reconstructing the circumstances of the crime, forensic investigators are able to come up with scientific information that they can present in court.

To understand Locard’s theory, it is important to understand the importance of trace evidence to forensic investigation. When a crime is committed, the police and investigators are left with fragmented pieces of a puzzle. The forensic team helps to reconstruct the puzzle with the help of trace evidence, which refers to evidence left behind by the criminal at the crime scene. This can be anything from hair, fibres, shoeprints, pieces of clothing, blood, fingerprints, etc. The Malta Police was already adopting scientific methods during criminal investigations even before Locard’s 1934 theory. →





As a fact, the Malta Police Forensic Science Laboratory can trace its origins back to 1931. In that year, two police officers from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) were given training in the taking and identification of fingerprints. In its early years, all forensic investigations were carried out under the auspices of the CID. Subsequently, in the early 1950s, a photographic section was also introduced as part of the CID. During the same decade, various members were given intensive forensic training in the United Kingdom and the forensic science laboratory was formally established. In the following years, the Police Forensic Laboratory continued to grow and expand.

A Scene of Crime section was introduced in 1984 as part of the Forensic Science Laboratory, with a complete overhaul taking place in 1995, when 15 Scene of Crime officers undertook intensive training delivered by University of Durham experts. This Scene of Crime has since then become a core unit within the Malta Police Forensic Science Laboratory. Ongoing training has become a major component within the Laboratory's annual plans, with the most recent prestigious one being held earlier this year. The five-week training course was provided by the Netherlands Forensic Institute experts in crime scene techniques, and subjects taught included DNA sampling, scene of crime photography, and bloodstain pattern analysis, amongst others.

A scene of crime expert works alongside police investigators to help solve crimes. Their role is to locate, collect, preserve and catalogue evidence from a crime scene, placing evidence into protective packaging and sending it for forensic analysis. These so-called Crime Scene Investigators (CSIs) are constantly putting Locard's principle of exchange into practice by collecting the evidence that the criminal leaves behind. The scene and each piece of evidence are carefully

photographed, and then, properly collected and conditioned to avoid contamination, to be subsequently analysed in the laboratory. This expert additionally writes a thorough report of the scene and describes the evidence found. Once in the forensic laboratory, all the pieces of evidence are analysed and interpreted. One of the important principles taught to every police officer, both during recruitment training and in the course of continuous professional development exercises, is the significance of proper preservation of the scene of the crime. The most important aspect of evidence collection and preservation is protecting the crime scene. The first police officer on the scene is responsible for preventing other non-essential police personnel and civilians from entering the scene and often establishes a perimeter around the crime scene with police tape. If witnesses are present, they are identified and remain outside the perimeters of the crime scene while waiting for questioning by the investigation team. This is very important as one of the drawbacks of Locard's theory is the tampering with and destruction of evidence. In most cases, this is not done deliberately, but by the actions of the victim, witnesses and even the police themselves. These factors can lead to the removal or obliteration of the evidence, which can often mislead the investigators and cause problems with crime reconstruction. Misinterpretations or misleading evidence can lead to inaccurate crime reconstruction. To avoid this, the investigator needs to make sure that the crime scene investigation and reconstruction are carried out with care. This is one of the reasons why, when examining crime scenes, Crime Scene Investigators wear protective clothing and masks since it is of utmost importance that the evidence found is not contaminated.

In conclusion therefore, if you happen to be a crime victim or witness to a crime, please phone the police straight away and do not touch anything since every contact leaves a trace! ✨

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AN OFFICER, A NATIONAL ATHLETE, AN ALL-ROUNDER



Charlene Cilia
Constable

Sergeant Elisia Scicluna is considered by many as one of the strongest women in the Malta Police Force. At the age of 26, she has achieved most of her ambitions. With a determined character, albeit still soft hearted, she managed to acquire particular skills and abilities while dealing with male-dominated environments, both in her police career and in sports.

The youngest of the siblings, Sergeant Scicluna was introduced to sports way back in her primary school days. Rain or shine, Elisia trained hard and proved herself when, at only 13 years of age, she was selected to join the Malta National Netball team. For the very first time, and at such a young age, her team won the Maltese Netball Championship.

Apart from having the opportunity to participate and play overseas, including in the European Championship, netball for Elisia was crucial in her teens. "Had it not been for sports, especially between 14 and 17 years, I could have easily followed a different path in life. But sports kept me focused." The team trained five days a week and played games every Sunday. This was beneficial to Elisia, enabling her to cope with her stressful routine at that time.

After finishing her O and A level exams, Elisia was prepared to pursue her dream and become a Physical Education teacher. It was while she was engaged in a chat with a friend that she was first introduced to the Police Force. "A friend of mine could sense that I was sceptical of pursuing my studies at university and said, 'why don't you join us at the Force?'" Until then, she had never thought of this career, but after giving the idea some thought, she decided to look up some information about the police on the internet.

Elisia took her oath as police constable seven years ago, and after five years of service, she was promoted to the rank of police sergeant. From day one at the Police Academy, she challenged herself and set a goal to become the best recruit. And so it was. After a long and sweaty year, she managed to attain the best recruit award out of around one hundred comrades. Sergeant Scicluna was assigned duties at the Valletta Police Station, where she still serves. Notwithstanding the initial shock, given the varied commitments within this district, she believes that the numerous challenges she encountered helped her to acquire policing skills faster. "During my first days at the Valletta Police Station, I was assigned

the role of an orderly, which meant being the first contact for citizens who called or reported personally to file a report. Believe it or not, I am afraid of telephones. So that was a challenge for me, and the first week was a struggle; but today, the handling of telephone calls is an everyday task for me."

The role of a police officer is a vocation, assisting and helping people. According to Sergeant Scicluna, one needs to feel the desire to help others. "Yes, thinking about the 25 years of service, especially if you're 18 years of age, can be very enticing; but that's not enough, and one must think twice before enrolling." Being a front-liner, like all officers at police stations, and listening to people's problems helped Sergeant Scicluna to look at life's problems from a different perspective. "Sometimes, it makes me think that my problems are nothing compared to what life sometimes holds for an individual. Even though I have struggled through a rough patch in my life, I now know that nothing is impossible to solve. Only health issues frighten me, because serious health problems cannot always be overcome; everything else...that can be solved. It might take time, but you'll get there." Sergeant Scicluna describes her job as giving and feeling pleased about it. "The



contentment you feel when you help or solve people's problems, sometimes even giving support by listening, or being there to hold their hand, or just a pat on one's shoulder, goes beyond satisfaction...and I found this fulfilment and gratification in the Police Force." Indeed, there has not been a single day during the past seven years when Elisia thought of taking up a different job. "The Police Force is who I am, and I won't change it for anything else."

Last February, she was invited to take a three-day Taser Instructor Course together with other male police officers. Undoubtedly, she completed this course with flying colours. Besides her duties as a sergeant, Elisia marched with the Police Guard of Honour, and it was at that time when she was given the opportunity to follow a course with the Armed Forces of Malta to become a Drill Instructor. Little did she know that those weeks would be the most demanding she had to face since joining the Force. However, she drilled in excellence, and once again, proved that she can be a multi-tasker.

Elisia's passion for sports did not fade away when she joined the Police Force. After quitting netball, she went for cross fit. "I just couldn't imagine my life without sports." However, since she is a competitive person, she needed competition, and felt the desire to have

a goal in order to constantly prove to herself that she has the ability to achieve more. One fine day, she was approached by her cross fit trainer who invited her to participate in a weight lifting competition. This was three years ago, and since then, Elisia realised that she was born to lift. "Training is tough; you need mind and body working together, coupled with lots of concentration." Despite the necessity to train laboriously, Elisia does not want it any other way. She trains hard and works hard for sports, and being in the National Weight Lifting team is not an easy task. However, Elisia never gives up, making her achievements well deserved. While on the subject of achievements, last April, Elisia was honoured by the Prime Minister for her success in the 4th Charles Mifsud Open Weightlifting tournament.

Being a police officer and a national sports player could raise some eyebrows since some might erroneously believe that joining the Police Force means that one would have to give up all hobbies or other commitments in life. This is certainly not the case, so much so that Sergeant Scicluna and her officer colleagues, who are national players in other sports disciplines, are granted special sports leave in addition to their already entitled vacation leave. In Elisia's own words, "this serves as an added stimulus to keep training hard while giving my utmost at work".

As a Police Community and Media Relations officer, I was aware of Sergeant Scicluna's several achievements since we do not miss an opportunity to promote them on The Malta Police Facebook page. It was a great pleasure to catch up with Elisia and get to know her better through this interview. Indeed, we chatted for almost two hours, and I couldn't help but ask her: "but how do you manage all this...work, training, leisure time...I mean, do you have any free time? Do you have any hobbies?" "My days are work and training. My shift is fixed; so I plan weight lifting training around that. Everything else – well, I manage," she answered smiling.

Elisia has recently bought her own property, but for the time being, she still lives with her mother in Zabbar, "my mother is my backbone, my number one supporter; and I know she is proud of who I've become." It is very evident that Elisia has a special bond with her mother. On mentioning her, Elisia's eyes lit up and her voice broke. Her mother Margaret was initially surprised when Elisia told her that she was going to join the Malta Police Force since Elisia had never made any such reference before. Today, however, her mother is proud to see her daughter advancing in her career within the Malta Police Force. Upon the realisation that we actually come from the same town, we were compelled to mention our village feast. Elisia smiled and instantly expressed that the Zabbar festa is very dear to her. "I love being with people who embellish our beautiful town for the feast; and for the whole two weeks, you'll find me voluntarily helping with that. I don't mind if it's a tough job. I can carry and lift poles easily."

Sergeant Scicluna encourages youths who desire to join the Force not to be afraid of what lies ahead of them. "It's true that at times, we have to deal with difficult and dangerous situations; but let's face it...that's the thrill of it." Being part of the Blue Lives family is actually a rewarding, gratifying and definitely an unforgettable journey. ✨



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MARCHING TO THE TUNE OF THE POLICE BAND



Anthony Cassar
Assistant Commissioner /
Director of Music

This year marks the 99th anniversary since the establishment of the Malta Police Band. Reaching this incredible milestone has been a vibrant and satisfying journey, with 99 years of service, adding to the musical landscape of Malta and making the Force proud. While we are heading towards our first century of existence, we strive to continue on this exciting journey for many years to come. Established in 1920 by then Commissioner of Police, Lieutenant Colonel Henry William Bamford, the Force's first bandsmen were selected from the Kings Own Regiment, and the Royal Malta Artillery Maestro E. Magro, was appointed as its first bandmaster.

As service exigencies meant that the Band had to be disbanded several times throughout the years, this year marks the 25th anniversary since the Malta Police Band was last re-activated.

Over the years, the Malta Police Band has played an important part in the Force's public and community relations programme

through its participation in numerous performances, including those in aid of charitable organisations, all of which are extraordinarily well received by both spectators and audiences alike.

The Band consists of 45 musicians and 5 pipers, all of whom perform daily policing duties in the various districts and branches of the Force. The Band's aim is to support the Malta Police Force during ceremonial and other occasions, besides performing regularly during other festivities.

Several milestones have been reached during the past decade. In December 1999, the Police Band featured in a bands' display with the Armed Forces of Malta Band in Valletta during the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the proclamation of Malta as a republic. The Band also performs regularly in the annual Malta Military Tattoo and was further invited to play in Sicily, where it was very well received. →





The Malta Police Band plays quite a wide variety of music, ranging from military marches, light classical selections, and modern songs, to local pop tunes, making it one of the finest ceremonial and functional bands in Malta. Pride of place in our history was felt when recording three compact discs, which included some of the best numbers from our music repertoire. Over the years, we have performed with great artists, including the internationally acclaimed Maltese tenor Joseph Calleja.

PAST CONDUCTORS

The first conductor of the Malta Police Band, Maestro E. Magro, was appointed following a call issued by Commissioner Bamford, founder of the Band. Maestro Magro started rehearsing with a small group of musicians from the King's Own Regiment which had just disbanded. Gradually, the number of musicians increased, being joined by members of the Royal Malta Artillery. Maestro Magro retired in 1939 at the age of 60. Sergeant Major Carmelo Brincat succeeded Maestro Magro and continued building on the work of his predecessor. The Band continued increasing in size and capabilities, until in 1956, Maestro Brincat also retired. At this point, the Band had to be suspended for a time due to the exigencies of service. Senior Inspector Vincent Bonnici took over in 1957, after the Band was reconstituted, and immediately started taking part in a variety of parades and functions. However, even under his direction, there was a time when the Band had to be suspended again due to service exigencies. Maestro Bonnici retired in October 1965. Sergeant Vincent Cremona commanded the Band until 1973, but was

replaced once again by Maestro Bonnici. At this stage, many bandmen retired without being replaced. This meant that the Band had to suspend operations until 1980. In 1986, I took over the Band with the specific brief of making sure that the Band would start operating once again. New instruments were also purchased.

LATE 1980s TO DATE

The newly-reconstituted Malta Police Band debuted in Valletta's Great Siege Square on 21st December 1986, and later, to a packed hall at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, where it was very well complimented for an outstanding Police Christmas Show programme with Demis Rousous, the Greek singer of international fame.

Following a short suspension, in 1994, the Band performed together with the Banda dell'Arma dei Carabinieri and the Moscow Military Ensemble in Valletta. It was on this occasion that the Band first performed the Force's official anthem. Other memorable occasions included the 200th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Malta Police Force in 2014. As the Band continues to grow in strength, reputation and success, we are very keen to feature in our next main appointment, that is, the Band's 100th anniversary celebrations to be held next year. Meanwhile, you are all invited to join us for this year's Police Week celebrations, culminating on Police Day, which is celebrated on 12th July, and during our vast array of activities, as part of the celebrations, we are planning to commemorate our 100 years of existence.*

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PLUG AND PLAY



Timothy Zammit
Inspector

The 'Internet of Things', or 'IoT', is a term that has been used increasingly in the past years to describe new forms of interactions with and through technology. To some, these technological advancements are something that we will experience in the future. However, the reality is that the IoT revolution is closer than we think...it has already started!

Smartphones, smartwatches and smart TVs are, perhaps, examples of IoT devices that most of us use on a daily basis. IoT devices can also take the form of baby monitors, CCTV cameras and light bulbs that are connected or accessed through the internet. As our use of these devices becomes more prevalent, it is imperative that we use them responsibly in order to better safeguard ourselves.

The cliched maxim 'prevention is better than cure' encapsulates such responsible use. As users, we cannot rely solely on device manufacturers, service providers and the authorities to look after us. Cyber security is a shared responsibility, and users too must do their part! The following article provides tips that everyone should consider as we venture into this new reality together.

SHOP WISELY

Use the internet as a source of information in itself. Prior to purchasing a new device, go through online reviews about the product. While functionality and ease of use are both important considerations, look for information about any recurrent subscription costs you need to pay in order to use your smart device.

Be wary of cheap unbranded devices. When compared to well-known brands, the difference in price might be attributed to different security features within the device itself. Device sharing over a network should be done through secure (encrypted) communication protocols to prevent eavesdropping by unauthorised third parties.

Furthermore, well-known brands may offer additional online support, such as, user manuals and firmware updates. These increase the longevity of the expected service life of the device, while also providing better peace of mind in terms of any warranty claims that may arise. →





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- Threat visualizations and alerts - turning data into analyst actionable insights

Intelligently Uncover



Big amounts of security data can cause big problems when tying together security events to actual attacks without:

- Unstructured threat data analysis and correlation from security sources like bulletins, blogs, research papers...
- AI assisted threat investigations to identify threats faster than attackers can react

Seamlessly Stop



Once you identify the assault on your systems, stopping those threats needs:

- Automated response systems that close the gaps between alerts and remediation
- Dynamic policies to change risky users' access across applications or databases
- Customized identity and access policies to block malicious users, activities, and endpoints without disrupting business



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CYBER CRIME UNIT: BEING THERE!

'Being There' is the underlying vision of the ongoing reform of the Police Cyber Crime Unit. Investment in human resources and tools within the Cyber Crime Unit needs to be continuous. Training courses, upgrading of existing equipment as well as the introduction of new capabilities within this team are just a few examples of the measures being undertaken through locally funded initiatives and EU funded projects as the Cyber Crime Unit readies itself for tomorrow's challenges.

Minimising the risk of cyber crime is not exclusive to the Police. While improving on our in-house capabilities, we are also placing much effort on strengthening the collaboration with other stakeholders, such as, other agencies, the private sector, academia, and the community in general. We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the support we have received throughout the years and look forward to continuing our work together for a safer society, both online and offline!

SECURE YOUR DEVICE

An unsecure device is a recipe for disaster. When setting up your smart device for the first time, change any factory-set default passwords for the device. These default passwords are not only easy to guess, but also common throughout most devices manufactured by the same brand.

Furthermore, protect your device with security software. For instance, anti-virus software and a firewall are essential to ensure the security of our devices. Unfortunately, although smartphone use has increased drastically throughout the past few years, the uptake of security software to protect such devices lags behind.

One must take into consideration the fact that our smartphone is another computer that contains personal and sensitive information. To this end, we should protect this device in the same way we protect our laptop or desktop computer.

WATCH THOSE DOWNLOADS

Be very cautious of any emails, pop-up windows or other messages directing you to download files or follow links. Phishing messages can be very convincing nowadays, and you may not realise that you have downloaded malware until it is too late.

When installing applications on your devices, use official app stores or other reliable sources. Likewise, be aware of any 'permissions' to access or share data required by the applications you are installing on your devices. If you are uncomfortable with any of the permissions being sought, find an alternative application!

MANAGE YOUR NETWORK

Similarly to a chain which is only as strong as its weakest link, your network is as secure as the weakest device connected to it. A device would be best protected when it is running the most recent software version. Any firmware or software updates must be installed straight away to ensure that any vulnerabilities identified by the manufacturers have been addressed. While providing internet access to anyone visiting your house might make you a good host, be aware that persons connecting to your network may have visibility of all devices connected to your network and the information stored on them. Therefore, consider configuring a guest network on your internet router to segregate your visitors' internet access from the rest of your connected devices. This does not require a considerable effort since most modern routers offer this function.

ENJOY IT TO THE FULL!

Embrace technology since, in the balance of things, technological advancements are having a positive effect on our lives. Keep yourself updated with the latest trends and cyber risks. The human factor remains the greatest liability when it comes to cyber security; this is mostly due to lack of awareness and complacency.

While most IoT devices that consumers purchase are essentially 'plug and play' devices that will connect to a network with very little need of user interaction, care must be taken to ensure that these devices are not exposing us to unnecessary risks. Most of the precautions mentioned in this article require only a few minutes of your time to implement. In turn, the added security and peace of mind that such measures bring with them are far more long-lasting.✱



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THE BLUE LANTERN



Joseph Borg
Sergeant Major

The traditional blue lantern seen hanging outside every police station in Malta is a symbol of identification for the general public which dates back to circa 1825-1830. The custom of the blue lantern, amongst others, had been brought to our islands by the British. In fact, the first lamps affixed to the facades of the police stations were of the same type and model of lamps that the British had already started using in England. The lantern is traditionally Victorian in style, mainly due to the fact that police stations opened during that era. A copy of the original can still be found at the Police Museum in Floriana. At the time, the lantern was lit up with oil or kerosene, and of course, there was a very little glow, and thus, the colour blue was reflected through its tinted glass.

According to tradition, this lantern symbolised a secure location for persons seeking refuge or solace from difficult situations. The choice of a blue lantern outside a police station is attributed to various theories, from cults and ancient beliefs, old religions and military institutions, while also representing nobility in its wider interpretations.

Today, the blue lantern is still lit daily from sunset to sunrise, but with electricity, rather than using oil or kerosene like old times. We must further ensure to always keep this very particular police icon in good condition as is appropriate. ✱





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MODERNISING THE MALTA POLICE FORCE THROUGH EU FUNDS



Stefania Sgandurra
Senior Manager

Reform is the buzzword of our time. The Malta Police Force is constantly adapting in line with obligations emanating from EU regulations. In order to be on a par with our counterparts in the EU Member States in the field of cooperation, prevention and combating crime and crisis management, the Malta Police utilises all the funds it can get. To achieve technology upgrades and systems creation, EU funds and local capital investment are crucial. Therefore, over the past months, the Malta Police has established its Projects Office for better management of its projects; however, this article will focus on EU-funded projects.

EU-funded projects under the police umbrella are either awarded through the National Programme of the Internal Security Funds (ISF), which focus directly on police matters and borders, or the Asylum Migration and Integration Funds (AMIF), which aim to promote the efficient management of migration flows. Alternatively, they are awarded through direct

competition with the EU Commission in various fields. These funds have different co-financing rates, ranging from 75% to 90% EU funds, while the remaining 10-25% from our own budget.

Presently, the Malta Police Force is managing 17 ongoing projects, with an approximate value of €9.5 million, and another seven that are either at evaluation or draft stage worth €13.5 million. In total, the Malta Police will invest €23 million by 2022. These investments cover different fields, including migration, national security, forensics, ICT, international relations, cyber crime, economic crime, traffic, and victim support. In the past five years, the Malta Police has further secured EU funds worth an additional €5 million in projects that boosted counter terrorism and border security. In fact, surveillance has been improved and police officers have better protective equipment, such as, flame retardant suits, riot gears, and bullet proof vests. →





The benefits for Maltese and EU citizens emanating from these EU-funded projects are varied. The external borders of Malta and the EU are better safeguarded through the new systems and legislation that come with them. These interoperable systems put Malta on a whole different level. For example, if a person goes missing, s/he will instantly be searched for internationally. The same applies to cases of stolen goods like motor vehicles and documents. In the virtual world, there are better safeguards too, and the Police Cyber Crime Unit is enhancing its capabilities through EU funds.

Many of these projects are IT systems that cannot be showcased in photos, but let us reassure you that much effort goes into them. Such IT projects include interoperable databases, including those held by Interpol and Europol, constantly updating case management systems with the aim of switching from paper to digital working practices, as well as central depository systems with analytical capabilities aimed to enhance the fight against financial crime, including money laundering.

Major EU-funded investments are going into an Entry Exit System (EES) and the European Travel Authorisation System (ETIAS), with both systems expected to be adopted shortly EU-wide. EES, worth €6.4 million on its own, is a system that will eliminate the physical stamping of passports of Third Country Nationals, and a digital stamp will instead be utilised to ensure that the system is more accurate and cannot be tampered with. Most importantly, it will provide a list of illegal persons on EU soil. The illicit labour market will automatically diminish, and thus, the Malta Police will be protecting taxpayer's money and jobs indirectly. We are planning to invest a further €3.2 million in ETIAS, a system which will see travellers submitting their application online ahead of their travel, thus knowing exactly who is coming in and out of Malta

and the EU. For these past four years, the Malta Police has been conducting random searches in order to identify people who are suspected of staying in Malta illegally. The Activities of Forced Return is a project that caters for the flight tickets of these people as usually they do not have the finances to go back to their country of origin.

Other projects are more visible to the public eye. We are acquiring Automated Border Control Gates that will check that travellers crossing our border are the rightful owners of the documents they present. These gates will be installed by the end of this year in the non-Schengen area of the Malta International Airport, both at arrivals and departures. We are concurrently working on a facial recognition system at the borders, allowing the police to trace wanted persons crossing our borders. In the forensic arena, the Malta Police is in the process of acquiring forensic equipment which will determine the nature of substances, whether illicit drugs or explosives, without having to wait for laboratory results. The Malta Police Forensic Science Laboratory is currently involved in a number of EU projects. One of the innovative forensic projects concerns research in conjunction with Mittweida University of Applied Sciences in Germany. This project is funded under the Horizon 2020 Programme, and a consortium of scholars, law enforcement agencies and commercial entrepreneurs will attempt to make evidence from mobile phones more court-proof.

All projects have a common scope, namely, to strengthen the capabilities of the Malta Police Force in order to serve the Maltese and European citizens more effectively and efficiently. Allow me to send a heartfelt thanks to all those involved in projects at the Malta Police Force; they are committed to keep Malta and the EU a safe place. ✨

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ONCE A POLICE OFFICER, ALWAYS A POLICE OFFICER



Ray Zammit
Ex-Superintendent

As the saying goes, 'once a police officer, always a police officer'. Għaqda Pulizija Pensjonanti was founded in 1980. The name was eventually changed to the current Malta Association of Retired Police Officers (MARPO) during the Annual General Meeting held on 26th June 2011. The 1000-strong organisation consists of retired police officers, including widows and widowers.

The aims of the Association include the safeguarding of the rights of its members, the promotion of their welfare, and the organisation of cultural, educational, religious and social activities, while being in contact with civil authorities.

The esprit de corps which we proudly demonstrated during our careers still inspires enthusiasm nowadays. We consider the job of a police officer not merely a money-earning opportunity, but a special vocation with devotion for a service towards the citizen. The Oath of Office taken and held for the duration of the service puts a burden on the officers who carry it at all times, with difficulties, but certainly also with satisfaction.

As retired police officers, we hold our morale as high as it was during our service years. It encouraged us to carry out our duties, and still does. It gives us the capacity, as members of MARPO, to maintain our belief in the Police Force and its members as an institution. We encourage all members of the Force to keep the spirit of a group that makes them want to succeed.

Similarly to all workers in the varied industries, police officers require the necessary tools to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.

The civil authorities are expected to provide all the necessary resources for the members of the Police Force to carry out their duties diligently for the benefit of the general public. At the same time, the authorities shall constantly seek the enhancement of the welfare of police officers, while showing respect and gratitude for such an important service.

We are thankful to the general public for showing appreciation towards the serving members of the Force who, God willing, will complete their service and join us as retired police officers.

As MARPO and the retired police officers who have served Maltese society with great pride, we do strongly encourage youngsters to join the Malta Police Force and pursue a highly rewarding career. No other career can provide the satisfaction earned from serving the community each one of us forms part of.

MARPO appeals to all, public and civil authorities, to keep giving the necessary support to all serving members of the Force and to appreciate and respect retired officers, those who have in the past laid the foundations for a safer Malta. ✪

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Police Week

2019

Celebrating the 205th Anniversary of the Malta Police Force

Tuesday 2nd July 2019 - Valletta 10:00am
Freedom Square

- Concert by the Malta Police Band
- Shows by the Precision Drill Team and the Dog Section
- Static display of old and modern Police vehicles
- Two horses from the Mounted Section and a Traffic motorcycle/rider
- Information Stand (Police Recruitment Week)

Wednesday 3rd July 2019 - Mdina 08:30pm
St Paul's Cathedral Square

- Concert by the Malta Police Band
- Shows by the Precision Drill Team and the Dog Section
- Information Stand (Police Recruitment Week)

Friday 5th July 2019 - Sliema 08:30pm
Tower Road

- Concert by the Malta Police Band
- Information Stand (Police Recruitment Week)

Monday 8th July 2019 - Marsascala 08:30pm
Mifsud Bonnici Square

- Concert by the Malta Police Band
- Shows by the Precision Drill Team and the Dog Section
- Two horses from the Mounted Section and a Traffic motorcycle/rider
- Information Stand (Police Recruitment Week)

POLICE DAY - Friday 12th July 2019 - Valletta
St John's Co-Cathedral

- Solemn Mass 09:00am

St George's Square

- Displays by the Guard of Honour, Police Band and the Precision Drill Team
- Firing of Feu de Joie by the Guard of Honour
- Information Stand (Police Recruitment Week)

Saturday 13th July 2019 - Bugibba 08:30pm
Bay Square

- Concert by the Malta Police Band
- Show by the Dog Section
- Two horses from the Mounted Section and a traffic motorcycle/rider
- Information Stand (Police Recruitment Week)

Monday 15th July 2019 - Gozo 07:30pm
Marsalforn (Menqa)

- Concert by the Malta Police Band
- Shows by the Precision Drill Team and the Dog Section
- Two horses from the Mounted Section and a traffic motorcycle/rider
- Information Stand (Police Recruitment Week)





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