

2023

BLUE LIVES





About the Sponsor: The General Soft Drinks Co Ltd has been operating in Malta for over 50 years and is an independent Coca-Cola bottler and the sole licensed bottler for products of The Coca-Cola Company (TCCC) in Malta. Our Company is responsible for manufacturing a wide range of soft drinks owned by TCCC Ltd including Coca-Cola, Diet Coke, Coke Zero, Fanta, Dr. Pepper, Sprite, Schweppes and Kristal.

Through our sister company, GSD Marketing, we sell and distribute TCCC products manufactured in Malta as well as import, sell and distribute other TCCC products including Cappy Juices, Fuze Tea and Powerade. We also import, sell and distribute other leading brands including Monster, Bavaria, Stella Artois, 8.6, Lowenbrau, Leffe, Hoegaarden, Sol, Caffé Mauro, Aquarius, Peak and Somersby.

Together, we're united by a belief that we are in the business of consumers' happiness and that we can be a force for good in our society by refreshing our communities and making a difference.

contents

INSPECTING THE MINISTER'S VISION.....	4
TRANSFORMATION AND FACT VERSUS PERCEPTION OR THE REALITIES OF CRIME	5
PROVIDING A PROFESSIONAL AND TRUSTED POLICING SERVICE	6
TECH-DRIVEN POLICING	8
INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCIENTISTS AND RESEARCHERS	10
STOP. THINK. DRIVE.....	12
PRIORITISING VICTIMS	14
EYES IN THE SKY	16
FLEXING OUR MARITIME MUSCLE.....	18
FROM PRINTS TO BIOMETRICS	22
A UNIFORMED HISTORY OF THE MALTA POLICE FORCE.....	24
SILENT VICTIMS.....	26
THE SCHENGEN INFORMATION SYSTEM ... QUO VADIS?	28
WHEN IT COMES TO SCAMS, PREVENTION IS THE ONLY OPTION	30
TRANSFORMING WORKSPACES	32
A CENTURY OF MUSICAL EXCELLENCE	34
THE POWER OF TEAM WORK	36
FROM CHALLENGES TO SOLUTIONS: A COMMUNITY POLICING SUCCESS STORY	38

Embracing Transformation

As we celebrate the 209th anniversary of the Malta Police Force, I cannot help but look back and remember a time when we admired the practical, high-quality uniforms and modern equipment adorned with high-visibility livery of other police forces across Europe. As proud members of the Malta Police Force, the oldest police force in Europe, we yearned for our equipment to reach the desired level of excellence. Today, as I pen this editorial, I do so wearing our new uniform, amidst a backdrop of remarkable investments, including an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and two impressive RHIBs (Rigid-Hulled Inflatable Boats).

However, the dynamic nature of our work brings its fair share of hardships and countless challenges. Yet, as we embark on the third year of the Malta Police Transformation Strategy (2020-2025), we do so with immense pride and gratitude. While embracing change, we are poised to confront the challenges that lie ahead with confidence, all in our unwavering commitment to ensure the safety and well-being of the communities we are dedicated to serve.

INSPECTOR RODIENNE BARTOLO HAIDON
EDITOR

Editorial Team

PRESIDENT:

Inspector David Bugeja

EDITOR:

Inspector Rodienne Bartolo Haidon

MEMBERS:

Sergeant Louise Busuttil

Constable Charlene Cilia

Constable Sloune Gatt Fabri

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Constable Clive Pace

CORRESPONDENCE:

Blue Lives Magazine

Communications Office

Police General Headquarters, Floriana, Malta

magazine.police@gov.mt

Inspecting the Minister's Vision

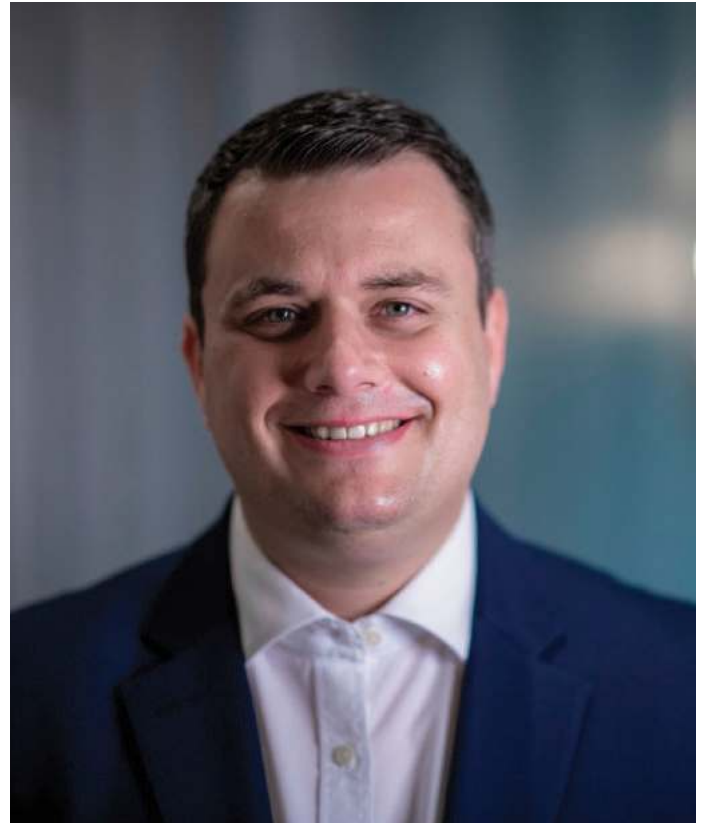
'Blue Lives' is often used to express support for law enforcement officers. It is typically used to argue that, you, as law enforcement officers, face unique challenges and risks in your work and rightfully deserve respect and support. Even emphasising the importance of law enforcement can help maintain law and order in society.

The term 'blue lives' is derived from the blue uniforms which police officers wear nearly universally. It is meant to emphasise the dangers and sacrifices that law enforcement officers face while performing their duties to protect and serve their communities. It is thus essential to acknowledge and appreciate the work of police officers, who play such a crucial role in maintaining law and order.

Our community is being kept safe, although we acknowledge that guaranteeing safety is unenviable. Your efforts have been endorsed by the Maltese, whose appreciation and trust have increased to 90% according to the NSO survey and 70% according to the Eurobarometer's survey. Irrespective, both confirm the highest rate in the past ten years.

This success results from your toil, coupled with a consistent and focused strategy backed by an unprecedented capital investment which has increased during the last decade. As government, we invested in merited better pay and pension packages, which will be again consolidated in the next sectoral agreement. Meanwhile, specialised training programmes have increased, and the Corps has better tools and initiatives. This administration has put money where the mouth is.

The transformation of the Police Corps will remain the mainstay of the reform strategy aimed to mould the Force on



HON. BYRON CAMILLERI

solid structures. The civilisation of the Corps and new intakes of recruits will consolidate the changes underway.

We are committed to enhancing your working environment and rolling out the community policing initiative to build on its success story, as evidenced by the drop in the national crime rate.

Above all, we are committed to remaining four-square behind you since we are more than convinced that you shall continue to serve and protect.

Transformation and Fact versus Perception or the Realities of Crime

Midway through the Transformation Strategy, the public's right to be informed about the changes effected and the resultant outcomes, even if in transition, is ever valid. As change occurs, and the Malta Police Force strives to gain ground, the public, as the ultimate client, posits various questions on what is working and what is not.



PROFS. SAVIOUR FORMOSA

Gearing up a centuries-old entity is not a smooth ride; in fact, it is steeped in difficulties, ingrained cultural imperative, and natural human reluctance to change a squeaking wheel, while dealing with pain points necessary in the transformation of such a large entity that was steadily approaching a gridlocked dysfunctionality. The Transformation Strategy was drafted with the aim to go beyond a Reform Strategy, but one that is implemented through a radical transformation in both the culture and modus operandi of the entity. Transformation as set goes beyond the operational, structural, and tactical rethinking within the internal structures, but expands itself towards a holistic approach in the transformation of the social, natural, and physical environments. The drive was, and still is, one wherein the Malta Police Force exists in the society it operates in; thus, its transformation directly affects and is, in turn, affected by societal change. The target to understand what did not work in previous attempts, to understand the political will, or lack thereof, to drive change over the past decades, and to understand bottom-up approaches to ensure everyone's ownership of any change, was undertaken. This is where Governance and Operation constructs come together.

Recalling the three strategic outcomes, primarily, the first two focusing on public trust and police effectiveness, respectively, the results on the ground are testament to a successful Strategy implementation which is midway through its execution. The reduction in crime rates, while experiencing also a drop in actual crime as the population increases rapidly, is a gauge against which the public's feelings of safety and security are measured. Interestingly enough, last year's 5% drop in actual reported crime and the lowest crime rate per 1000 persons at 28 crime reports are testament to a changing societal impact. Note that, as reported crime figures drop, one needs to be attentive to potential dark figures of crime (non-reporting that is monitored regularly in Malta, and which is a constant in western societies), while understanding that,

as deterrence becomes effective, more policing efforts are launched, more effective case resolution is registered, and then, more serious crimes take precedence and are perceived to be growing. This is mitigated by the MPF's drive to solve crimes such as homicides in very short spans of time, such being the case over the past years.

The debacle caused by perceptions that crime is increasing, fuelled by social media and interested others who ignore facts, but seek clickbait mileage, was not consonant with the outcomes emanating from the transformation, calling for a measured and objective approach to understanding crime and its reporting. National and international trust surveys and fact-checking have verified the facts. Therefore, it would be ideal to avoid sensationalism in one's debate on the MPF's Transformation outcomes. Public reactions to such show otherwise since the trust factor has increased, while being aware that one incident may shift the balance. Therefore, while critique is ever appreciated, destructive criticism is anathema.

The Malta Police Transformation Strategy and its implementation are at midway, and should be concluded in 2025. However, such has been the rate of change that change itself has become the means, not an end; thus, a new strategy that revisits the first one, the resultant crime dynamics, and new societal changes, all require a rethink in terms of measures gained. In turn, foresight is the fulcrum of what can be implemented over the next years to ensure that the Transformation consistently gathers pace and becomes the proactive collective enterprise. The past passive mode was closed during the initial months following the launch of such a strategy, and it will only be revisited to gauge the extent of the transition, and to assess the successes, pitfalls, lacunae, and struggles for each of the objectives. The MPF has become a live entity, but only a continuous Resolve to Reform can sustain its survival.

Providing a Professional and Trusted Policing Service

Policing was never meant to be an easy profession. Our police officers, who, day in day out have been demonstrating great resilience in the face of unforeseen challenges, while dauntlessly adapting to novel operational practices as part of the execution of an ambitious Transformation Strategy, deserve all our praise.

Within such a turbulent world, where the only thing constant is change, it was fundamental for the Malta Police Force, an over two-hundred-year-old agency, to embark on a transformational process. The five-year Strategy launched in September 2020 sets a clear vision: *for the community to trust us in ensuring a safe and secure society for everyone.*

While much energy had been placed in the drafting of the Strategy, the most challenging part of the entire process remains its implementation. And the past three years have



POLICE COMMISSIONER ANGELO GAFÀ



OUR POLICE OFFICERS, WHO DAY IN DAY OUT HAVE BEEN DEMONSTRATING GREAT RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF UNFORESEEN CHALLENGES WHILST DAUNTLESSLY ADAPTING TO NOVEL OPERATIONAL PRACTICES AS PART OF THE EXECUTION OF AN AMBITIOUS TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY, DESERVE ALL OUR PRAISE

been no walk in the park for the Malta Police Force to not only continue executing its duties at law contributing to Malta's safety reputation, but to also embark on a change management process built around leadership, engagement, upskilling, and insight.

As expected, initial changes were met with varying levels of resistance, but ownership was gradually taken up by the different levels and operations within the organisation. Concrete change is a hard pill to swallow, but over the months, the realisation that the transformation would not go away seeped in, and the benefits gradually overcame the hardships.

This has all been documented by the most recent Employee Engagement Survey conducted with our workforce earlier this year through PricewaterhouseCoopers. This study, the second of its kind, established a significant rise in our workforce's

motivation (74%) and pride (89%), up from 58% and 76%, respectively in 2021. Moreover, 86% of our officers reported seeing a positive change through the implementation of our Transformation Strategy.

The increased sense of pride and motivation by our officers is translating into a significant increase in public trust and confidence in our men and women in blue. In fact, according to the latest Eurobarometer survey, the Malta Police Force today enjoys a trust rating of 70%, the best result achieved since 2008, placing us on a par with the EU average for the second consecutive time. These Eurobarometer results represent a leap of 16% in public trust in the past three years.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of the Malta Police depends entirely on the public's participation in policing, both in preventing crime and in solving offences, especially the most serious ones. It is for that reason that our mission statement places great emphasis on community partnership.

The Malta Police's pledge to partner with communities remains a topmost priority. The community policing project first launched as a pilot in 2019 is now covering more than 80%

of Maltese localities and all Gozo.

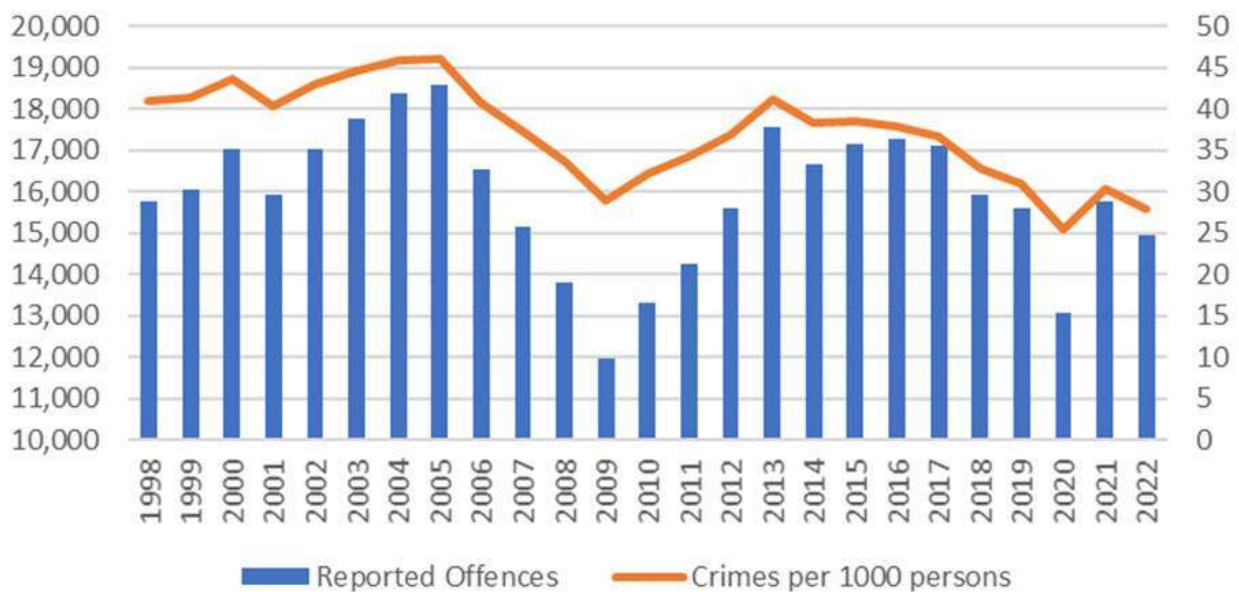
This project fits nicely within the intelligence-led policing philosophy we have been embracing over the past months. The proactive policing strategies embarked on, incorporating all areas of the Malta Police Force, steered by a reengineered Central Intelligence & Analysis function, are proving their operational effectiveness.

Therefore, despite forecasts to the contrary, given the increase in population, the rapid economic growth, and the increase in multiculturalism and tourism, crime reports last year continued to drop by over 5%, compared to the preceding year.

Moreover, last year's crime rate per capita represents the lowest figure registered in the past 25 years, bar the anomalous COVID-19 year of 2020. For example, while, in 2005, this figure stood at 46 crime reports per 1000 inhabitants, last year, Malta experienced 28 crime reports per 1000 inhabitants, a substantial drop of 64%.

While we do not intend to convey a message that all is rosy, these statistics prove that our country remains one of the safest in the world.

Malta Reported Offences and Rate per 1000 persons



The Malta Police Force remains bound by its mission to provide a professional and trusted policing service to ensure safety and security in partnership with the community. I am convinced that, through a motivated and proud workforce

and the effective execution of well-planned evidence-based policing strategies, we shall keep evolving into a more efficient and effective organisation, contributing towards a safer Malta!

Domine Dirige Nos!

Tech-Driven Policing

Community Policing was introduced in 2019, with a pilot project of just four police officers. Since then, this new policing strategy has grown to cover the majority of Malta, and now, Gozo, with a complement of Community Officers, in excess of 100, and still growing.

This policing method brings communities and the police together to solve the problems that affect the quality of life of those living in these neighbourhoods. Partnership is the key to success as maintaining law and order is everyone's responsibility.

Community policing teams have forged meaningful and sustainable partnerships for all agencies to come together and address these issues as a collective. The success in Marsa and,



TECHNOLOGY IS A VITAL TOOL IN ALL OUR WORK, AND SINCE 2020, THE COMMUNITY TEAMS HAVE BEEN USING SOFTWARE, WHICH GREATLY IMPROVES THEIR WORK ENVIRONMENT



About the Sponsor: A specialised B2B team within GO that caters to the communication and technology needs of the local business community. Our team is made up of sales and customer retention specialists, as well as solution designers and support staff. We strive to give businesses, individual attention to provide them with the solutions needed to help their business thrive. Let us help you spend less time and effort thinking about technology, and more time doing what you love doing most.

more recently, Marsalforn Gozo is testament to this strategy as the working community safety partnerships have grown and developed into effective groups. More partnerships are being formed every day as local police officers are working hard to introduce this concept.

Technology is a vital tool in all our work, and since 2020, the Community teams have been using software, which greatly improves their work environment. This application on each officer's phone helps us to deploy officers to incidents in their neighbourhoods with precision and, most importantly, in a timely manner. We are able to see incidents developing, and take immediate action to ensure that our service to the local community is greatly improved.

This application records our work in these neighbourhoods, hence creating a picture, enabling us to set our work priorities

that are important to residents. Another additional benefit is the ability to monitor crime trends and task our officers to deal with emerging and critical incidents, alleviating the need for other resources.

Neighbourhood policing is about local officers solving local problems, and this application has shown how successful modern technology can be when identifying crime and tackling the root causes. Since introducing this vital piece of technology, Community police officers have been able to deal with thousands of incidents across their areas of responsibility, freeing up other resources to focus on their core functions.

The introduction and use of this technology have provided our local officers with another tool in their toolkit, thus improving their work conditions and support, not only to the Malta Police Force, but more importantly, to the public they serve.



Inspiring the Next Generation of Scientists and Researchers

Esplora Interactive Science Centre is a unique facility that aims to ignite a culture of scientific curiosity and creativity in children. The Centre inspires young minds to explore the wonders of science and technology, cultivating a lifelong passion for questioning, investigation, and discovery. Its aim is to instil in children a love for STEM fields, and to prepare the next generation of scientists and researchers.

One of the key features of Esplora is its emphasis on hands-on, experiential learning. Children are encouraged to

touch, feel, and interact with the exhibits, enabling them to better understand and retain scientific concepts. Additionally, the Centre offers a range of workshops, activities, and shows designed to complement the exhibits and encourage further exploration. The Centre also offers educational programmes for schools and other opportunities for youth groups, helping to further disseminate its message of science education to a wider audience.

Investing in science education is essential to ensure that



About the Sponsor: Esplora Science Centre is a Captivating Journey of Discovery. This innovative science centre offers an immersive experience like no other, captivating visitors of all ages with interactive exhibits, engaging workshops, and mind-blowing shows. Esplora cultivates a culture of scientific curiosity and creativity, making it a must-visit destination for those with a passion for questioning, investigation and discovery.

the next generation of professionals is equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to address complex scientific and technological challenges facing society. The Esplora Interactive Science Centre is a prime example of how science education can be delivered effectively to children of all ages. By instilling a love for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), the Centre is nurturing future scientists and researchers who will play a vital role in solving the world's most pressing challenges.

In addition to the creation of a pipeline of STEM professionals, science education also has broader implications for society. Science education fosters a culture of critical thinking, creativity, and innovation, which can be applied in various sectors of the economy. Furthermore, science education contributes to the development of a scientifically-literate society, which is essential for informed decision-making in areas, such as, public health, energy policy, and environmental management.

The approach of the Esplora Interactive Science Centre to science education, with its focus on hands-on, experiential learning, is a vital investment in our collective future. This approach is in line with the Malta Police Force Forensic Science Laboratory (MPFSL).



THE ESPLORA INTERACTIVE SCIENCE CENTRE IS A PRIME EXAMPLE OF HOW SCIENCE EDUCATION CAN BE DELIVERED EFFECTIVELY TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

The MPFSL is currently made up of 61 employees, 30 of whom are civilians with a keen specialisation and interest in science. These employees perform the role of forensic analysts within different areas of the Laboratory, including Scene of Crime Officers, Fingerprints, Documents experts, and more.

ESPLORA and the MPFSL have collaborated in different events, and while ESPLORA aims to inspire a love of science in its young audience, the MPFSL highlights the prospects that await these aspiring forensic experts.



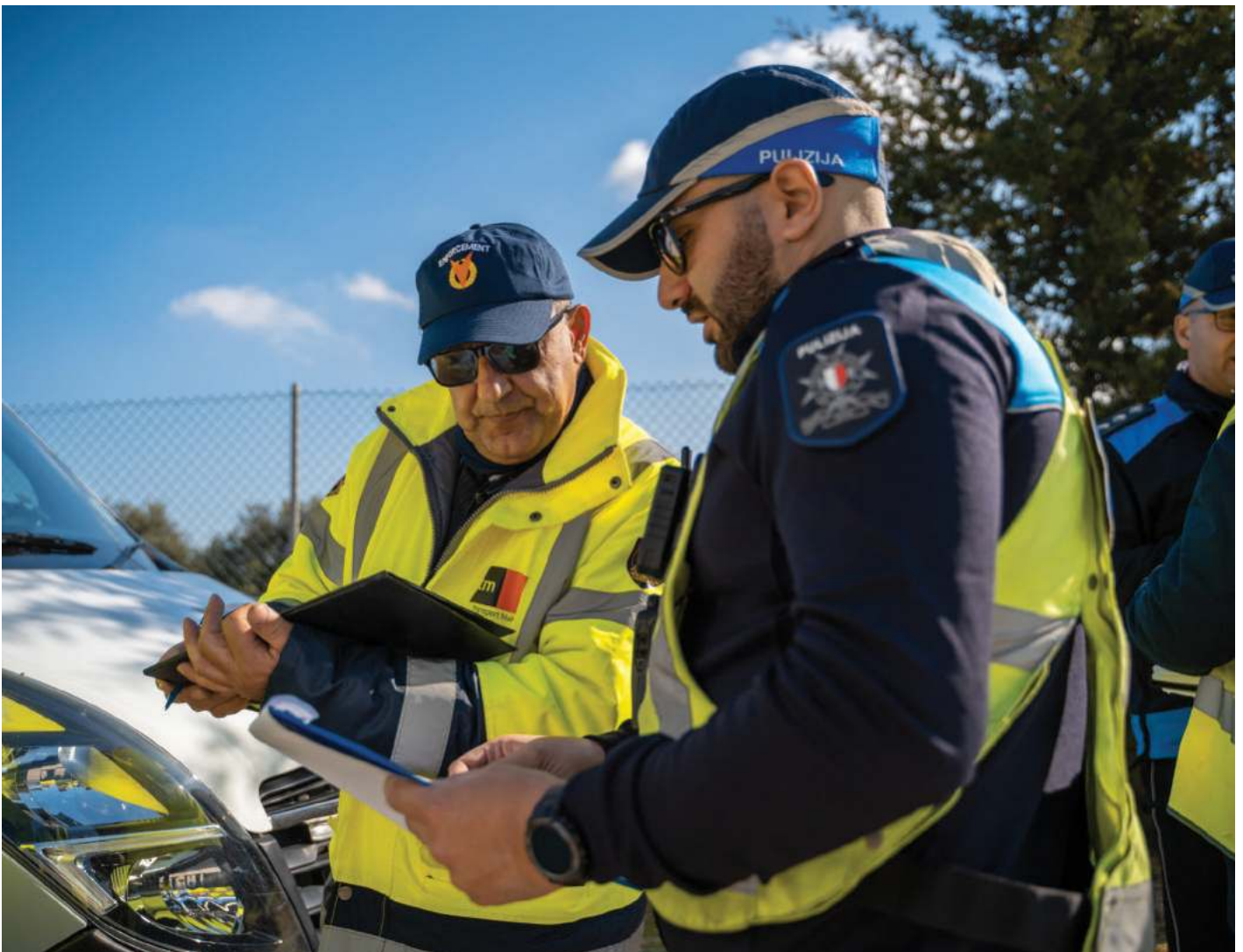
Stop. Think. Drive.

Road safety is a critical concern for any country, and Malta is no exception. To ensure the safety of citizens and visitors on the road, Transport Malta (TM) and the Malta Police Force (MPF) have joined forces in a collaborative effort to conduct roadside inspections and raise awareness of dangerous driving, such as, the use of mobile phones while driving and on-the-road worthiness of the vehicle (including checking for a valid licence and insurance).

This collaboration aims to address the growing concerns of road accidents caused by distracted driving and dangerous

driving, which have become major contributing factors to road accidents in Malta. Through a multifaceted approach that includes enforcement, education, and awareness, the collaboration strives to create a safer driving culture in Malta and reduce the number of road accidents and fatalities.

One of the primary areas of focus for the collaboration is the use of mobile phones while driving. Distracted driving, including texting or talking on the phone while driving, has become a prevalent issue worldwide, posing serious risks to road safety. In Malta, the use of mobile phones while driving is



About the Sponsor: Transport Malta is the Authority for all transport in Malta. Besides its enforcement section on land and at sea, it is responsible for registering all vehicles, ranging from cruise liners, airplanes, to micro scooters. This Authority is currently running a number of schemes to encourage more owners to switch to environmentally friendly vehicles. Visit transport.gov.mt for more details.

strictly prohibited, and the collaboration between the MPF and TM aims to raise awareness of the dangers of this behaviour through targeted roadside inspections.

Roadside inspections are conducted by TM and the MPF in various locations across the country. These inspections involve stopping vehicles and conducting checks to ensure compliance with road safety regulations, including the use of mobile phones while driving. Offenders are issued fines and penalties, and their vehicles may be impounded, as per the law. By conducting roadside inspections and imposing penalties on offenders, the collaboration aims to deter the use of mobile phones while driving and promote safer driving habits.

Dangerous driving is another critical issue addressed by

the collaboration. Dangerous driving is a leading cause of road accidents worldwide, posing a significant risk to road safety. These two authorities work together to conduct checks and enforce traffic regulations to ensure that drivers adhere to them on the roads.

This collaboration is a crucial step in ensuring road safety in Malta. Through the combined efforts of enforcement, education, and awareness, the collaboration aims to promote responsible driving habits and raise awareness of the dangers of distracted driving, including the use of mobile phones while driving and dangerous driving. By working together, the Malta Police Force and Transport Malta strive to create a safer driving culture in Malta, making roads safer for everyone.



Prioritising Victims

The aftermath of a crime can be devastating for victims. This may lead to self-isolation, mental and physical sickness, inability to work, grief, anger, shame, and helplessness. Victims often feel neglected and voiceless, particularly due to the lack of information about what to do and how to proceed forward.

The Victim Support Agency was especially established to promote victims' rights, and facilitate access to victim support services. Operating as a one-stop-shop for victim support, the Agency strengthened the work carried out by the Malta Police Victim Support Unit, and enhanced cooperation with other public entities and NGOs to ensure a holistic service for service users.

Since its establishment in 2021, the Agency has assisted around 3,000 crime victims aged between 15 and 80 years. These victims would typically endure various crimes, including domestic violence-related offences, fraud and theft, insults and threats, property damage, assault, and other physical violence.

Recently, the Victim Support Agency launched a National Support Line for victims of crime, 116 006, an EU-harmonised number, accessible free of charge, and attended by professional trained staff. This National Support Line for victims of crime operates every day from Monday to Sunday, including public holidays, between 7:30 am and 7:30 pm. Our professionals are there to listen, assist, and support victims. We offer emotional support through psychological and counselling services, legal aid services, and follow-ups on police reports and court cases.

In order to facilitate requests for updates on police reports, the Malta Police Force provides an Official Report Card to the person filing the report as an acknowledgement. The card indicates the police officer's rank and number and the respective report number.

We are dedicated to providing you with better service, and we recently introduced a Satisfaction Rating Survey to allow the police to obtain direct feedback from those who filed police reports in order to detect any problems and further enhance the service.

IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF CRIME CALL FOR ASSISTANCE

116 006

THE VICTIM SUPPORT AGENCY IS THERE TO SUPPORT AND EMPOWER VICTIMS

GVVERN TA' MALTA
MINISTERIU GHALL-INTERN,
IS-SIGURTÀ U RIFORMI
U L-UCWALJANZA

VICTIM SUPPORT AGENCY



About the Sponsor: The Victim Support Agency provides information and follow-ups, emotional support, and legal guidance (including accompaniment of witnesses to court). The Agency may also be contacted by email at vsasupport@gov.mt, or through VSU Officers who are assigned with the Agency at victimsupport.police@gov.mt



Rate Our Service !



Our Mission:

To Provide a Professional and Trusted Policing Service to ensure Safety and Security in Partnership with the Community.

Eyes in the Sky

A recent unique ongoing investment for the Malta Police Force is the procurement of a light Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV). The aim is to use this UAV to provide an accurate aerial view and monitor entry points of illegal migration. The implementation of this investment is currently in its final stages of completion.

This UAV is able to scan accurate ranges and feed a real-time image, which is also available in infrared light for night vision, and will be operated inshore (within 12 nautical miles) of the Maltese territorial waters. Complementing the UAV is a customised van, which will serve as a Ground Control Station and a means of transportation for the UAV. Specialised training in remote piloting, Gimbal camera, and maintenance has been given to the operating police officers. Furthermore, secure

premises have been renovated to the highest standards, including a helipad from where the UAV shall operate, while internal recruitment for a drone pilot/operator was undertaken in order to increase the human capabilities of the Malta Police Immigration Department in this sector.



THIS UAV IS ABLE TO SCAN ACCURATE RANGES AND FEED A REAL-TIME IMAGE

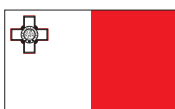
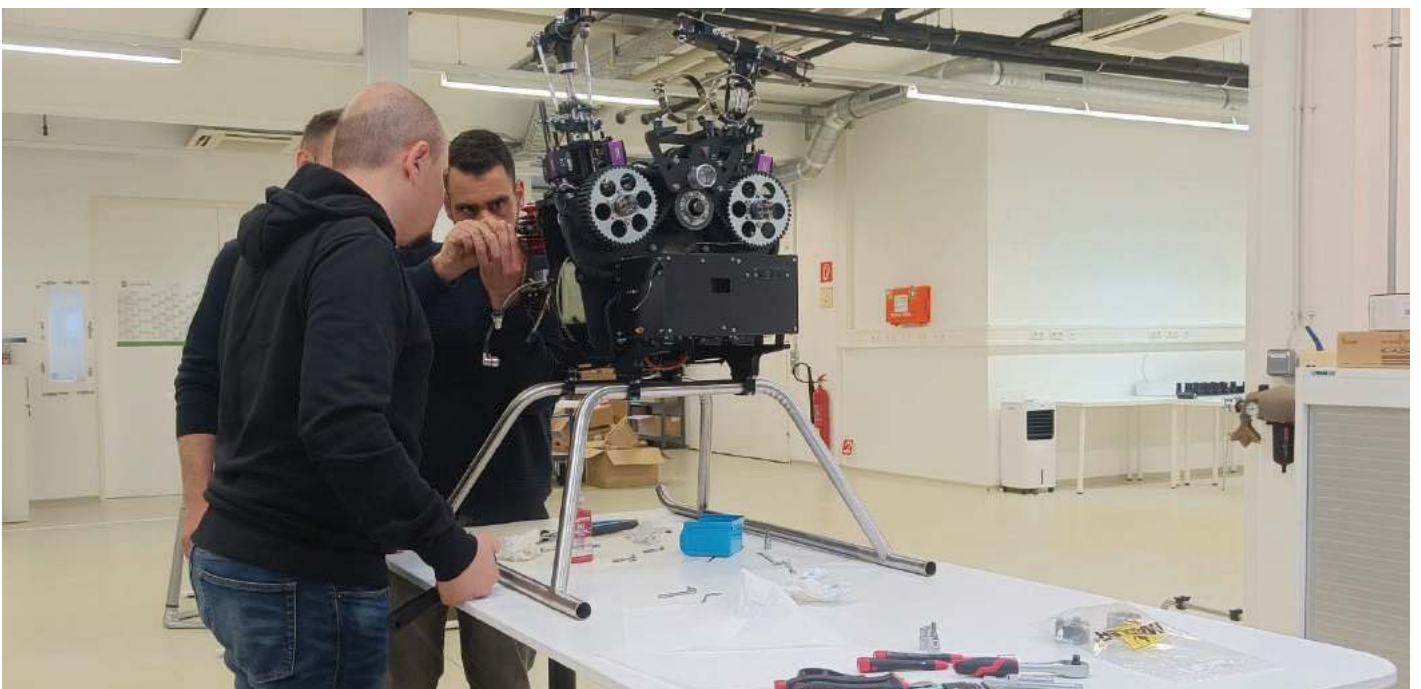
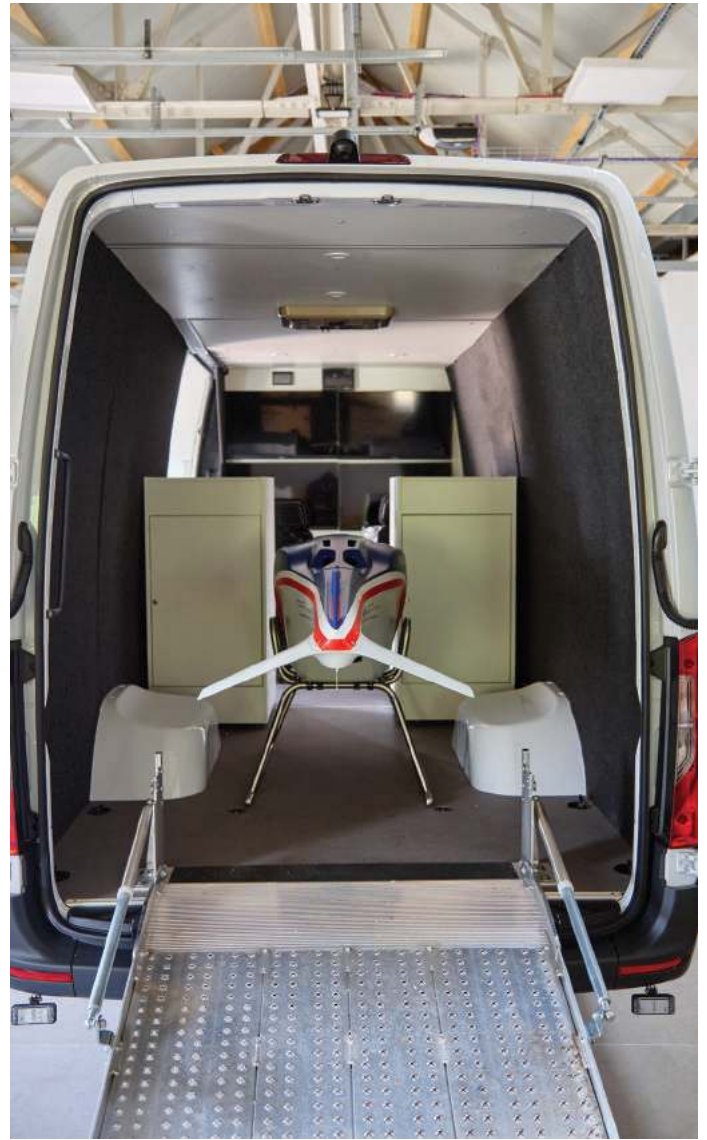


About the Sponsor: APCO Limited is a trusted technological leader in Malta, specializing in automation and security systems. With a legacy since 1984, we deliver cutting-edge solutions to sectors like public, banking, retail, and Horeca. Our strong partnerships with renowned vendors ensure world-class solutions in cash management, EV charging, UAVs, and security equipment. Our core values revolve around fostering innovation and providing unparalleled premium support to our valued clients.

Ultimately, the purpose of this investment is to address irregular migration as it continues to increase at the EU's external borders. The UAV shall elevate the capabilities in tracking illegal migrants. Moreover, the Malta Police Force will increase its knowledge of coordination in risk and threats in strategic entry points through training that immigration and field personnel have completed successfully on this latest addition to border surveillance tools. This tool shall serve as an added value to the European Union as the Malta Police Force is now equipped to assist accordingly in any necessary operation both locally and on a regional level for border surveillance.

The total cost of this EU-funded investment exceeded €1,000,000, and was part of the Malta Police Force's Specific Actions for Border Surveillance, an EU-funded project under the Internal Security Fund (Borders & Visas) 2014-2020.

APCO Ltd is the security system supplier which shall deliver the UAV.



Internal Security Fund (Borders and Visas) – Specific Action
Project is part-financed by European Union
Co-financing rate: 90% EU Funds; 10% Beneficiary Funds
Sustainable Management of Internal Security



Flexing our Maritime Muscle

The Malta Police Force will, over this summer, have two new Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs) in operation at sea around the islands, whose purpose is to enhance the inshore capabilities of the Malta Police Force by patrolling remote areas, accessible only with maritime vessels. These RHIBs are powered by two 400 hp outboard engines capable of surpassing 45 knots. Through the assistance of their specifically procured trailers, the RHIBs can use different slipways, depending on the emergency of the situation.

A radar and external gyro-stabilised thermal imaging camera are mounted on the cabin to assist in search and rescue operations during both daylight and night-time. This investment also included appropriate training in the operation of the RHIBs and their features. Furthermore, a new area has been allocated, where routine maintenance for both RHIBs and trailers shall be carried out, serving as a shelter for the RHIBs.

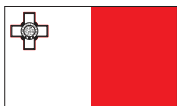
The ultimate goal of this investment is to serve as an added tool to address irregular migration, which is always on the rise at the EU's external borders. Through the purchase of these RHIBs, the Malta Police Force will improve its ability to locate and intercept illegal immigrants at sea. The training that immigration and field staff have successfully completed on this most recent addition to border surveillance technologies will also help to improve coordination capabilities in relation to risk and threats in strategic entry points. Moreover, with the addition of the RHIBs, the Malta Police Force shall be able to provide assistance in any necessary operation both locally and at European level.

The total cost of this EU-funded investment exceeded €800,000, and was part of the Malta Police Force's Specific Actions for Border Surveillance, an EU-funded project under the Internal Security Fund (Borders & Visas) 2014-2020.

The RHIBs, complemented with trailers, were supplied and delivered by United Equipment Co. (UNEC). Ltd.



About the Sponsor: United Equipment Co. (UNEC) Ltd. was pleased to be awarded the tender for supplying these two RHIBs to the Malta Police Force. The Rhib's are manufactured by Ribcraft, a leading global supplier of Police & Patrol Rhib's. This is also confirmation of UNEC's position as the premier supplier of high-quality professional Rhib's and marine equipment in Malta. UNEC is the official agent for renowned brands such as RIBCRAFT, Cummins Marine, CAT Marine, Onan Marine Generators, and Whisper Power.



Internal Security Fund (Borders and Visas) – Specific Action
 Project is part-financed by European Union
 Co-financing rate: 90% EU Funds; 10% Beneficiary Funds
 Sustainable Management of Internal Security







From Prints to Biometrics

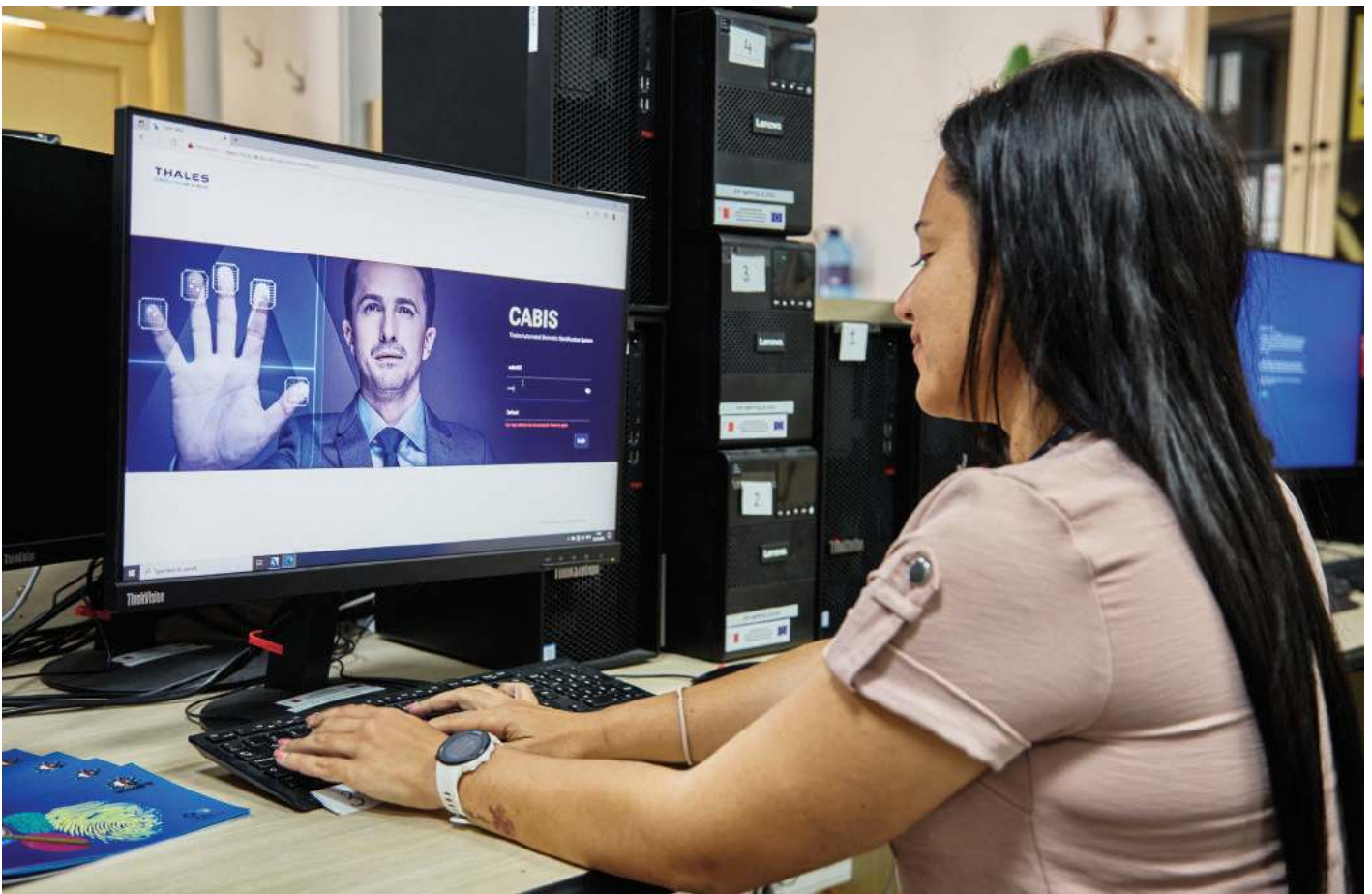
The Malta Police Force has recently benefitted from funds under the Internal Security Fund (ISF – Police Cooperation) in order to procure a new Automated Fingerprint and Identification System (AFIS) for the Malta Police Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL).

Specifically, €2.1 million in EU funds were used to upgrade the department's AFIS, which has been in operation for the last 10 years, to a newer, more advanced system from Thales. Such a brand new, contemporary system can also be upgraded to an Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) adding other modalities like Face, Iris or speaker recognition to name a few. It complies with the requirements and regulations of the Prüm Treaty and the ISO/IEC17025 standard.

The new AFIS software was also developed for the specific use of the department, and was installed using a number of hardware equipment bought for the same intent. Furthermore, 10 new biometric enrolment stations called Livescans were also procured and installed at the Rahal Gdid, Zejtun, Zurrieq, Sliema, Birkirkara, Qawra, and Victoria Gozo Police Stations, the Financial Crimes Investigations Department (FCID), the General Headquarters Lock-Up, and the Forensic Science Laboratory.

FSL officers received comprehensive training that will facilitate their use of the new system, while giving them greater confidence, and yielding more effective results. The police station officers received training as well, including train-the-trainer sessions on the usage of Livescans.

This project was finalised last March, after 12 months of implementation.



About the Sponsor: Thales is a global leader in advanced technologies within three domains: Defence & Security, Aeronautics & Space, and Digital Identity & Security. Thales delivers end-to-end biometric solutions to Police Forces and Operational Defence Units, enabling them to process biometric evidence in the context of a criminal investigation, and facilitating suspect identification. With its new CABIS 7 solution, Thales is strengthening the Criminal Automatic Fingerprint Identification System of the Malta Police Force. www.thalesgroup.com



Internal Security Fund 2014 – 2020
This project is part-financed by the European Union
Co-financing rate: 75% EU Funds 25% Beneficiary Funds
Sustainable Management of Internal Security



A Uniformed History of the Malta Police Force

The Malta Police Force, Europe's oldest civil police institution, has a rich history intertwined with its distinctive uniform. Though the earliest members lacked a standardized uniform, their accessories like swords, truncheons, and firearms set them apart.

Around the 1820s, the first police uniform emerged, featuring a dark blue, closed-necked jacket, matching trousers, and a snake-clasp belt. Topping off the ensemble was a top-hat, while police identification numbers adorned the jacket's collar.

In the late 1830s, the uniform was slightly altered. The jacket was shortened, and the top-hat was replaced with the first police cap. This cap displayed the words Malta Police alongside the identification numbers in the center.

During the Queen Victoria era in 1870, a significant addition was made—the introduction of the first emblem. This rounded badge showcased the Queen's crown and the words Malta Police Force.

In 1958, the Chinese collar-style jacket was replaced in order to include the tie. Consequently, the identification numbers were no longer worn on the collar, but on the shoulder, a practice that continues to this day.

Another considerable change was the introduction of the blue winter pull-over, which was introduced in 2005. Over the years, the colour of the shirts also varied, from white, to khaki, to blue.

However, the most drastic transformation occurred in January of this year. The police uniform underwent a comprehensive upgrade to an all-weather, gender-neutral, made-to-measure practical style. The traditional shirts were replaced with polo shirt-type tops, accompanied by flexible trousers. An interesting feature is the introduction of seniority for constables and sergeants worn along the identification numbers on the shoulder.

The journey of the Malta Police Force uniform is a testament to the institution's commitment to adaptability and functionality, while honoring its historic legacy.



2023



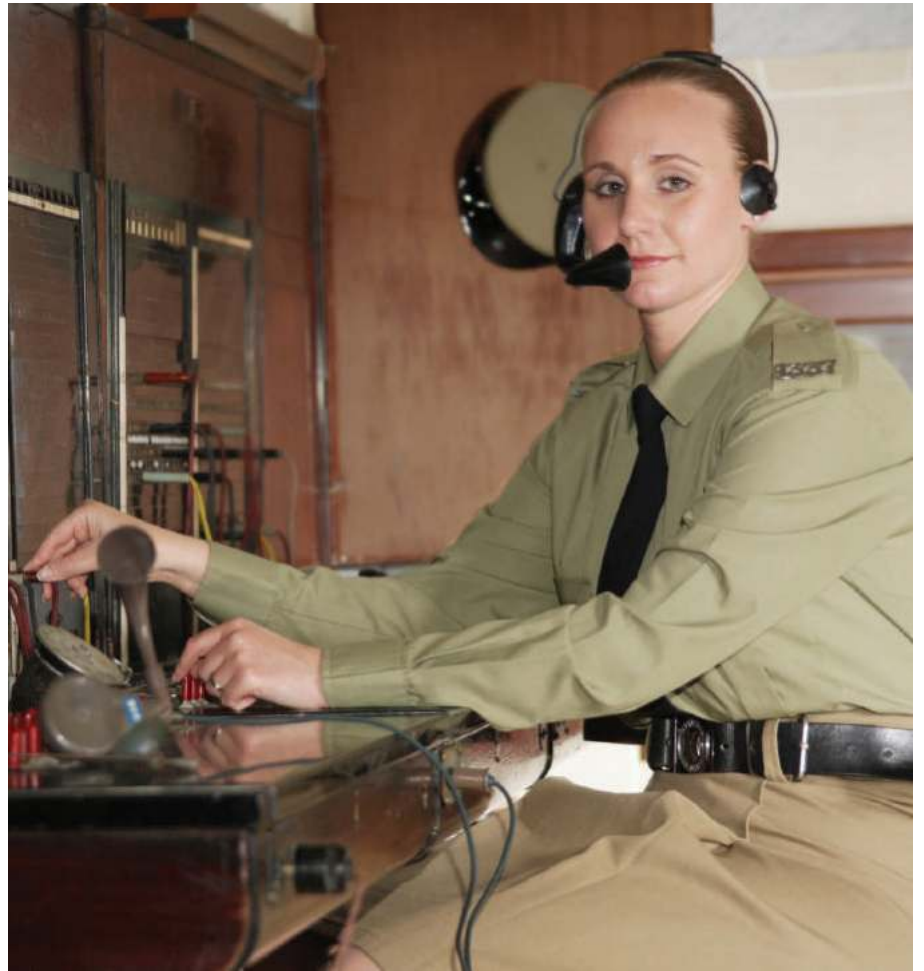
2000s



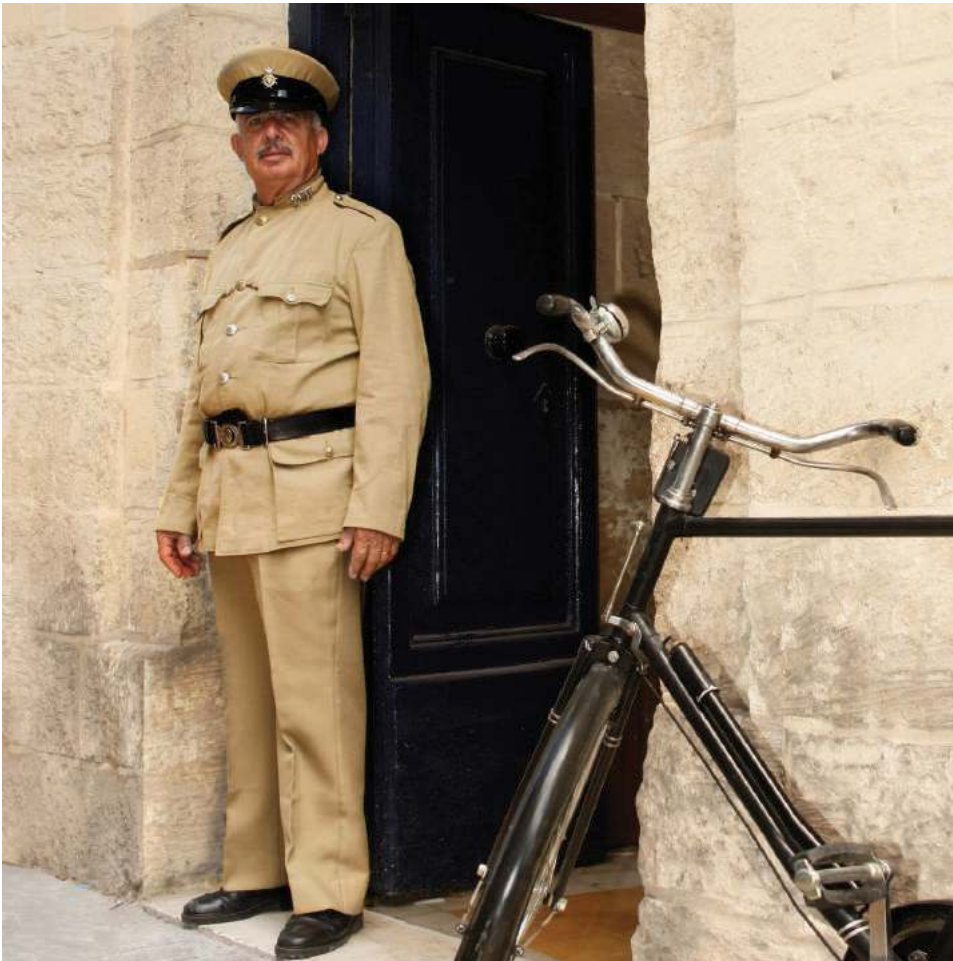
About the Sponsor: Partenon was founded in 1958 and is specialised in designing, developing and manufacturing police uniforms using technical fabrics. Furthermore, the company offers a comprehensive supply service. Partenon uniforms are worn by law enforcement officers in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Belgium and as from this year Malta. Grazie ħafna!



1990s



1965-1988



1920 - 1960



1890 - 1920

Silent Victims

Child-to-parent domestic violence is a distressing and often overlooked issue that affects families worldwide. This form of abuse occurs when a child or adolescent uses coercive or violent behaviour against their parent(s) or caregiver(s). This article aims to shed light on this concerning phenomenon, its causes, and the potential steps that can be taken to address and prevent it.

Child-to-parent domestic violence involves a range of abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional, and verbal abuse. While most people associate domestic violence with adult partners, children can also perpetrate violence within the family dynamic. This form of abuse can manifest in various ways, such as, physical assaults, threats, property damage, or manipulative tactics.

Numerous factors can contribute to child-to-parent domestic violence. These may include exposure to violence in the home, a lack of appropriate parental boundaries, substance abuse, mental health issues, or the child's difficulties in managing anger or frustration. Additionally, witnessing domestic violence between parents can normalise aggression and perpetuate a cycle of violence.

Child-to-parent domestic violence is a serious issue that demands our attention. By understanding its causes and consequences, we can work towards breaking the cycle of violence and providing the necessary support and resources to families. The Malta Police Gender-Based and Domestic Violence Unit works closely with the Domestic Violence Services within Aġenzija Appoġġ to address this type of abuse through education, intervention, and prevention efforts. Together, we aim to create a safer and healthier environment for both children and parents affected. Aġenzija Appoġġ also provides supportive and therapeutic sessions to adolescents who are perpetrating violence towards their parents or caregivers with the aim to stop the abusive behaviour and improve relationships in the family. This is further reinforced through a holistic and systemic support which is offered to other family members alongside the young person.

Anyone who wishes to seek support or information can contact the **Police Gender-Based and Domestic Violence Unit** on **2294 2717/2777**, **gbdv.police@gov.mt**, or the **Domestic Violence Services** within **Aġenzija Appoġġ** on **2295 9000**. Alternatively, one can call Supportline on **179**.



Foundation for Social Welfare Services
Here for you

About the Sponsor: The Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) is a national entity which helps vulnerable people by providing a variety of free services. The Foundation offers services associated with children, families, communities, and addictions, amongst others. The Foundation is committed to developing its services further according to the needs of society, while remaining at the forefront, and improving social solidarity.

ANYONE WHO WISHES TO SEEK SUPPORT OR INFORMATION CAN CONTACT THE POLICE GENDER-BASED AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT ON 2294 2717/2777, GBDV. POLICE@GOV.MT, OR THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES WITHIN AĠENZIJA APPOĠĠ ON 2295 9000. ALTERNATIVELY, ONE CAN CALL SUPPORTLINE ON 179.



The Schengen Information System ... QUO VADIS?

The 7th of March 2023 has become yet another important milestone for border control, law enforcement, and judicial cooperation in the Schengen Area.

The Schengen Information System (SIS), the largest EU information system used for border management, law enforcement, and judicial cooperation, has been renewed with new alerts, additional alert data, and new functionalities.

The renewed SIS includes several new alerts on persons, including return decisions, vulnerable children at risk of abduction or being unlawfully taken abroad, vulnerable adults at risk of gender-based violence, and inquiry checks for suspects.

It further contains a new alert aimed to identify unknown perpetrators of terrorist offences or other forms of serious crime. These alerts include only essential alert data and the dactyloscopy (fingerprints) data believed to belong to the

perpetrator, discovered and collected from scenes of such crimes. This alert complements the exchange of information based on the Prüm regulations.

The categories of objects for discreet, inquiry or specific checks have been increased. Moreover, new alerts on parts of vehicles and industrial equipment, as well as for certain pre-agreed information technology items, have been added to the alerts for seizure or use as evidence.

Additional data may be added to alerts on persons to facilitate their localisation and necessary action. The alerts can now contain identification document data, including scanned copies. Moreover, these alerts can also include data on certain objects, e.g., vehicles that the person being searched uses or was last seen using. These functionalities aim to facilitate the timely access of relevant data by front-line officers.

Apart from the above-mentioned updates, complementary updates aiming to facilitate and ameliorate the exchange of supplementary information about these alerts were introduced in the SIRENE Channel.

The implementation of these novelties and improvements entailed several years of preparation by the European Commission, the European Agency for Large-Scale IT Systems in the JHA Area (eu-LISA), Frontex, Europol, and Member States authorities.

The Malta Police Force, like other Member States, had to upgrade the communication infrastructure and all national applications, integrating them with the SIS. The Maltese authorities consequently embarked on various EU and nationally-funded projects to upgrade their infrastructure, including software development of the SIS Recast, whose cost of €1 million was forked out from national funds, and the acquisition of hardware equipment and other software services, costing €1.2 million, fully funded by the EU.



About the Sponsor: PTL Limited (part of the Harvest Technology plc group), is an ISO-9001 and ISO-27001 certified IT solutions provider founded in 1946, having over 40 years' experience in the technology industry. The company is a multi-brand information technology solutions provider, and leverages on its enterprise architecture capabilities, expertise in hardware infrastructure and software business applications to provide clients with value-added insights and solutions to drive their businesses. PTL offers hardware infrastructure solutions, software development within web / back-office solutions, and other digital transformation services around cloud deployment, systems integration, databases & middleware administration, networking and information security. PTL currently provides end-to-end services to a well-diversified client base in Malta, UK, Germany and Mauritius.



THE MALTA POLICE FORCE, LIKE OTHER MEMBER STATES, HAD TO UPGRADE THE COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND ALL NATIONAL APPLICATIONS, INTEGRATING THEM WITH THE SIS



Internal Security Fund (Borders and Visas) 2014 – 2020
This project is part-financed by the European Union
Co-financing rate: 100% EU Funds
Sustainable Management of Internal Security



When it comes to Scams, Prevention is the only option

Lately, we have heard a lot about scams, not merely attempts by scammers that are becoming more frequent and sophisticated, but also more people falling victims to malicious fraudsters and their tactics.

The Malta Police Force issues frequent warnings to the public on social media and in the news. Banking transactions seem to be the most prized targets as internet banking, mobile banking, and card transfers have become the scammers' easiest bait. Tactics to make scammers seem genuine and legitimate include spoofing of telephone numbers and mimicking of websites impersonating banks via calls, emails, or SMSs.

Banks are stepping up their game when urging their customers to identify scams. They often provide useful tips on how to stay vigilant whenever something suspicious crops up. Recently, for example, Bank of Valletta has launched an online educational campaign called Spot the Scam which can be followed on the Bank's official Facebook and Instagram pages.

IS PREVENTION ENOUGH?

The answer is that prevention is the only option. There is no cure for scams! The Malta Police Online Fraud Office receives numerous reports of such scams, but investigation is complex and time-consuming, especially because it usually involves large foreign criminal organisations that manage to wire stolen monies through a multitude of foreign banks in different jurisdictions.

WHAT IF I GENUINELY FALL VICTIM OF A SCAM?

The secret here lies in immediacy and accuracy! Victims need to act fast and have precise information about any links clicked and who initiated the fraud. Inform your Bank immediately!

Take note of the link you were asked to click on so that the malicious website is tracked down. The bank will try to recall the transaction as soon as the report is made, but if the scammers are ahead of you, your money may have already travelled through three or four different banks in different countries. The longer the lapse, the more difficult it becomes to retrieve your funds.

Some foreign banks may also require proof that the transaction was fraudulent. Therefore, in the unfortunate event of falling victim to such scams, one needs to file a police report at the nearest police station, and if need be, the police report should be presented at one of the bank's branches.

WILL FUNDS BE REIMBURSED?

There is no clear yes or no for this. It all depends on whether victims would have authenticated the transaction. If they would have wilfully authorised the transaction by means of fingerprints, pin numbers, or passwords, it is very unlikely that funds are reimbursed, unless, of course, the bank manages to recall the transaction in time. This means that, ultimately, if funds are recovered by the bank, they would be refunded to their rightful owner.

So, always be vigilant and cautious. Do not trust any sites that are not official, and think twice before clicking on links. Do not give out bank account or card numbers in full, card CVV details, card PINs, internet or mobile banking passwords, codes, signatures, one-time passwords, or multi-factor authentication. Bank employees never ask customers to divulge information to conduct financial transactions over the phone. After all, as we have seen here, when it comes to scams, prevention is the only option.



LOOK OUT FOR SCAMS

Scams can be prevented, not eliminated!

PREVENTION TIPS

- Use only trusted sites
- Do not give out any Credit/Debit card or Internet Banking details
- Remember! The bank will never ask you for sensitive information over the phone
- Think twice.. Always!

for more scam related tips and warnings, scan this QR code



Transforming Workspaces

Creating a conducive work environment is crucial for ensuring a positive employee experience and delivering high-quality services. In line with the Malta Police Transformation Strategy (2020-2025), several refurbishment efforts are being undertaken in police stations and CPT (Community Policing Team) offices, with a focus on meeting public expectations and improving service provision. It is important to note that police officers operate in various work settings beyond traditional stations, such as, vehicles, training facilities, and specialised units like the K9 and Mounted sections.

Conventionally, our police stations, which serve as primary points of interaction with the general public, were adapted from private properties to accommodate police operations, rather than purposely-built facilities. Many of our properties have been leased for over 80 years, with rental rates as low as €6 per month. However, the surge in real estate values has prompted property owners to reclaim their premises for higher

returns. Identifying the priority for the refurbishment of police stations posed a challenge, requiring thorough assessment and evaluation. Consequently, Imsida, Hamrun, St. Julian's, Rabat, Siggiewi, and CPT offices were identified as having a pressing need for refurbishment, necessitating comprehensive makeovers, rather than mere maintenance or furniture upgrades.

We are also proud to highlight a significant milestone in our recent efforts. Indeed, the Marsascala police station represents the first instance where a police station was purposely-built from scratch, solely dedicated to serving as a police facility. This accomplishment marks a significant step forward in our commitment to provide modern and efficient infrastructure to our officers.

Challenges in planning and execution are critical elements in any estate project, and police station refurbishments are no exception. One of the major challenges encountered is



About the Sponsor: At Grech & Ellul, we are proud to contribute to the progress of our community, and our recent project involved refurbishing the police canteen at the Head Quarters. As part of our commitment, we focused on providing top-quality flooring solutions tailored to the specific needs of the space. Grech & Ellul remains committed to serving the community and surpassing expectations in every project we undertake. Together, let us build a safer and aesthetically pleasing environment for those who serve and protect us.

the relocation of operations, which incurs costs, and requires the identification of suitable temporary sites. As a government entity, the Malta Police Force operates within a predefined budget, and procurement regulations impose certain constraints that can delay tangible outcomes.

When putting everything into the balance, the Malta Police

Force reused and repurposed certain premises to serve the community's needs. After all, the aim, scope, and purpose of our entity revolve solely around giving the public a professional service, where the public's security and safety are at its heart. It is fair to say that we all deserve welcoming premises and functional ones that suit the needs of both employees and citizens.



A Century of Musical Excellence



Established in 1920, under the leadership of its inaugural Director of Music, Mro. Emmanuele Magro, the Malta Police Force Band has a rich and storied history. In its early years, the band included talented musicians from the esteemed King's Own Regiment and the Malta Royal Artillery. Since then, the band has evolved over the years to become a beacon of musical excellence.

Throughout its existence, the band has faced several episodes of disbandment due to operational requirements. However, it experienced its most recent reactivation in 1994, coinciding with the 180th anniversary of the Malta Police Force. The momentous occasion was marked by a grand march in St. George's Square, Valletta, graced by the presence of the distinguished Russian Moscow Military Ensemble and the Banda dell'Arma dei Carabinieri.

In December 1999, the Malta Police Force Band made its maiden appearance in a massed-bands display alongside the Armed Forces of Malta Band. The event, held in Valletta, commemorated the 25th anniversary of Malta's establishment as a Republic.

Over the years, the band has captivated audiences both locally and internationally with its enchanting performances. In a remarkable milestone for local music, the Police Band became the first Maltese ensemble to introduce a dedicated Pipes & Drums team in 2006.

Following a two-year hiatus in band commitments due to the disruptive COVID-19 pandemic, the Malta Police Force Band made a triumphant return in 2023. In addition to the existing group of talented police officers, more than 30 professional musicians have been recruited, elevating



About the Sponsor: As the guardian of over 8,000 years of history, Heritage Malta is the national agency for museums, conservation practice, and cultural heritage. Established by the Cultural Heritage Act of 2002, the agency proudly manages over 90 museums and landmarks, national monuments, and underwater sites. The agency has three main objectives. It is committed to building a strong emotional connection with the Maltese community, while raising our international profile by inspiring and engaging visitors to visit Malta, hence making the necessary income to ensure the agency's longevity and self-sustainability. Through its various activities, Heritage Malta promises to safeguard and ensure a future for a heritage which is part of us, and to inspire generations to come.

the band's total membership to 50 skilled artists. As we celebrate a century of existence, we remain committed to embarking on an exciting journey for many years to come.

On the 12th of July 2023, which coincides with Police Day, the Malta Police Force will perform a captivating concert at the historic Fort St Elmo in Valletta that is part of an ongoing collaboration with Heritage Malta. This collaboration with Heritage Malta allows the Malta Police Force to also participate in several events organised by the national agency. Recently, for example, visitors to an open day organised at Fort Delimara in Marsaxlokk were treated to demonstrations by the Malta Police Force's Mounted Section and Dogs Section. Visitors were captivated by the extraordinary abilities exhibited by the canines and their close relationship with their handlers. Additionally, the Malta Police Force Band is committed to performing annually at four esteemed Heritage Malta sites.



The Power of Team Work

The main role of the Malta Police Special Intervention Unit (SIU) is to provide close protection to high-risk subjects and intervention in high-risk operations using special tactics designed to reduce casualties and save lives. Every member of the Unit must possess a de-escalating mindset, a humble personality, the ability to communicate effectively, a strong work ethic, and, above all, total commitment to be a team member and put the team ahead of oneself.

Teamwork is an essential element for any successful Special Weapons and Tactics Team. The nature of the job requires a team of highly skilled individuals who can work together efficiently and effectively to achieve their goals. The importance of teamwork in the Malta Police Special Intervention Unit reaps multiple benefits to the team's overall performance.

A team that works together cohesively and communicates effectively is more likely to overcome challenges and obstacles that arise during an operation. This allows the team to act quickly and decisively, which is critical in situations where every second counts.

Teamwork promotes accountability and trust. When team members work together towards a common goal,

they develop a sense of accountability to each other. Each team member is responsible for their role, and they must perform their tasks to the best of their abilities to ensure that the team's objectives are met. This sense of accountability creates a level of trust among team members, which is vital for effective communication and coordination.

High-risk operations often create high levels of stress and danger to the members. Consequently, a strong sense of camaraderie within the team can help to alleviate some of this stress and provide emotional support. When team members know that they can rely on their colleagues for support and assistance, they are more likely to perform their duties to the best of their abilities.

In day-to-day duties, teamwork encourages a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Each member brings a unique set of skills and experiences to the table; thus, the sharing of knowledge and skills helps to improve the overall capabilities of such a vital team which the organisation relies on in the most escalating situations to ultimately keep our communities safe.



About the Sponsor: Introducing Go&Fun, a highly successful 100% Maltese brand of natural energy drinks. Distinguished by its unique taste derived from four plant extracts (Mate, Guarana, Rhodiola, and Ginseng), Go&Fun sets itself apart with no taurine, artificial colours, or gluten. Additionally, our products offer the added advantage of antioxidant-rich green tea.



From Challenges to Solutions: A Community Policing Success Story

Marsalforn in Gozo is a thriving town, with a number of businesses operating throughout the year, particularly in the tourist season. The area experiences a population surge in the spring and summer, followed by a return to normalcy as autumn draws near.

The locality experienced a surge in a number of crime types in 2021, particularly antisocial behaviour, drinking, and offences against people of variable severity. In addition to this, there was a discernible increase in drug usage and supply, similar to other thriving places that draw large crowds.

The recently introduced Gozo Community Policing Team endeavoured to solve these mounting issues through a long-term and sustainable plan. A great deal of research was done, engaging with the community, businesses, and other important stakeholders. The results were subsequently analysed, and a structured approach was devised to provide responses to the identified problems.

The area along the seafront was highlighted as the main focal point of disorder and crime-related activity in the locality. The Ministry for Gozo was approached with the findings, and a detailed plan of the area was commissioned, followed by the installation of 33 CCTV cameras along the promenade.

Furthermore, the Malta Police Force increased human resources in the locality. High visibility patrols increased with the aim to serve as deterrent, while providing a great deal of public reassurance. These actions led to resounding positive feedback from the community.

Community safety partnerships were instigated, and neighbourhood policing was the building block in ensuring the safety of the area and the long-term solutions. Through this positive approach, Marsalforn was soon restored to a thriving community, safer, and cleaner for all those who work, live, and visit there.



According to a satisfaction survey carried out in the initial days of the Community Police operating in the locality, 56% of the community reported that they were happy with police presence. The survey was conducted again shortly after all the above-mentioned changes were carried out, and this time, 95.9% confirmed that they were happy with police presence. This also reflects an increase in trust and confidence in the police service. Feedback from the officers on the field also revealed that the business community was reporting less incidents, and the 'feel good factor' in the area was revived.

The adoption of the SARA problem-solving process will remain the standard practice for the Community Policing Teams. This includes targeted overtime patrols and operational briefing from every officer on patrol. These, together with the cooperation of important stakeholders and partners, are contributing to the success within the localities. Our main partner in this regard is the Ministry for Gozo that has stepped up to the plate, providing the police with excellent assistance.

We are eager to introduce this approach in other prosperous Gozitan areas, like Xlendi.



I worked hard all my life, and they were always there

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow



Learn more on
apsbank.com.mt/you

APS Bank plc is regulated by the Malta Financial Services Authority as a Credit Institution under the Banking Act 1994 and to carry out Investment Services activities under the Investment Services Act 1994. The Bank is also registered as a Tied Insurance Intermediary under the Insurance Distribution Act 2018.

 **APS bank**
values you can bank on