



MEDIA RELEASE

MHRA objects to the timing of works carried out in prime Tourism areas

MHRA was astonished to learn about the announcement of the immediate commencement of works in connection with the re-building of the Xlendi road in Gozo, which is to be carried out throughout the six month summer period, when business in tourism zones such as Xlendi starts to pick up after a long winter. Similar works commenced two and half weeks ago in Marsaxlokk during which, restaurants and similar establishments witnessed their business almost grind to a halt because of the rebuilding of the road on the front and its promenade.

MHRA has been advocating the need to upgrade and maintain Malta's key tourism zones for the past decade and undoubtedly welcomes such upgrading projects, nevertheless it deplores the timing of such works, irrespective to reasons given by the authorities responsible to justify the timing. It all boils down to lack of proper planning. Whatever the cause, such works should never commence at the start or during the summer season. Despite existing legal notices which prohibit such works in the summer season, it appears that Government is the first to contravene them, whilst consultation on such works with the affected parties, leaves a lot to be desired. In the case of the Marsaxlokk, restaurant operators were given five days notice through a letter advising them of the commencement of the works, whilst plant and machinery was being mobilized on site. One can hardly describe this as a consultation process. We were told that such works cannot be undertaken in the winter months because of inclement weather, one wonders how northern countries, who are subject to worse weathers conditions than Malta, cope with such works. It all boils down to lack of planning.

MHRA strongly feels that Government is insensitive to the concerns of the affected business operators whose livelihood depends upon the business generated through the months of May to September. This, is more so when one considers the decline in business experienced in the past year as a result of the affects of the recession. MHRA is also concerned about the negative affect that such works has on tourists visiting these areas. MHRA calls for better planning and for Government to better appreciate the negative affects such works can create when carried out during the summer season.

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Tuesday June 1st , 2010

About MHRA

The MHRA has been established since 1958 and today represents 70% of all hotels in Malta and 35% of all restaurants, collectively representing an investment of over Euros 1.1 billion and employing in excess of 20,000 people. For the past 50 years the MHRA has represented the interest of hoteliers and restaurateurs on the Island acting as a lobby group to ensure that the policy decisions taken on the Island are in line with what the tourism industry needs to flourish. For more information about the MHRA visit www.mhra.org.mt or call (356) 21 318133. The MHRA is also a member of HOTREC and an Affiliate member of World Tourism Organisation