



MEDIA RELEASE

MHRA deploras works at the Sliema front

MHRA strongly objects to the infrastructural work which has persisted at The Strand in Sliema, in spite of the fact that the Malta Transport Authority (ADT) has not given approval for these works. Under a policy order dated 12th May of 2006, all such works must be covered by an ADT permit to proceed. This policy order copied to The Minister for Urban Development & Roads, The Minister for Tourism, Malta Tourism Authority, MHRA, GRTU, Federation of Building Contractors, Chamber of Commerce, Local Councils Association and NID, clearly states that no trenching works will be allowed between 1st May and 31st October in front or around hotels and holiday apartments. Failure to obtain such a permit would automatically place the offender in breach of Code of Police Laws, Chapter 10, para 25 and 29.

A copy of the request for a permit to drill 25 boreholes to test the rock terrain structure for possible EU funded projects that can be carried out along the Sliema Strand was received from ADT by MHRA on the 17th August 2009. However MHRA objected to these works being carried out in such a prime area at the height of Summer.

However in total defiance of current regulations, the Ministry of Resources and Rural Affairs went ahead with their plans by engaging a private contractor to carry on with the works in full knowledge that these works were not covered by an ADT permit.

MHRA categorically deploras this attitude and cowboy tactics and calls on the relevant regulator as well as the Commissioner of Police to stop these works immediately in the interest of law and order. It is totally unacceptable that Government officials can simply take the law in their own hands and decide to proceed with their own plans without obtaining the relevant permits.

At a time when tourism - one of the main pillars of our national economy, is suffering badly, these brash and imprudent actions are already resulting in a number of complaints from foreign guests residing in accommodation establishments in the immediate vicinity of these illegal works. To make matters worse, these works persist late into the night, causing great disturbance to tourists and local residents alike.

One must seriously question such an attitude from our Government, which on one hand declares that all is being done to preserve this vital industry and the many thousands of jobs that depend upon it, while on the other blatantly ignores the same regulations that were created specifically for this purpose.

Immediate and decisive action must be taken to put a stop to this abuse of power.

Friday 11th September 2009

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.